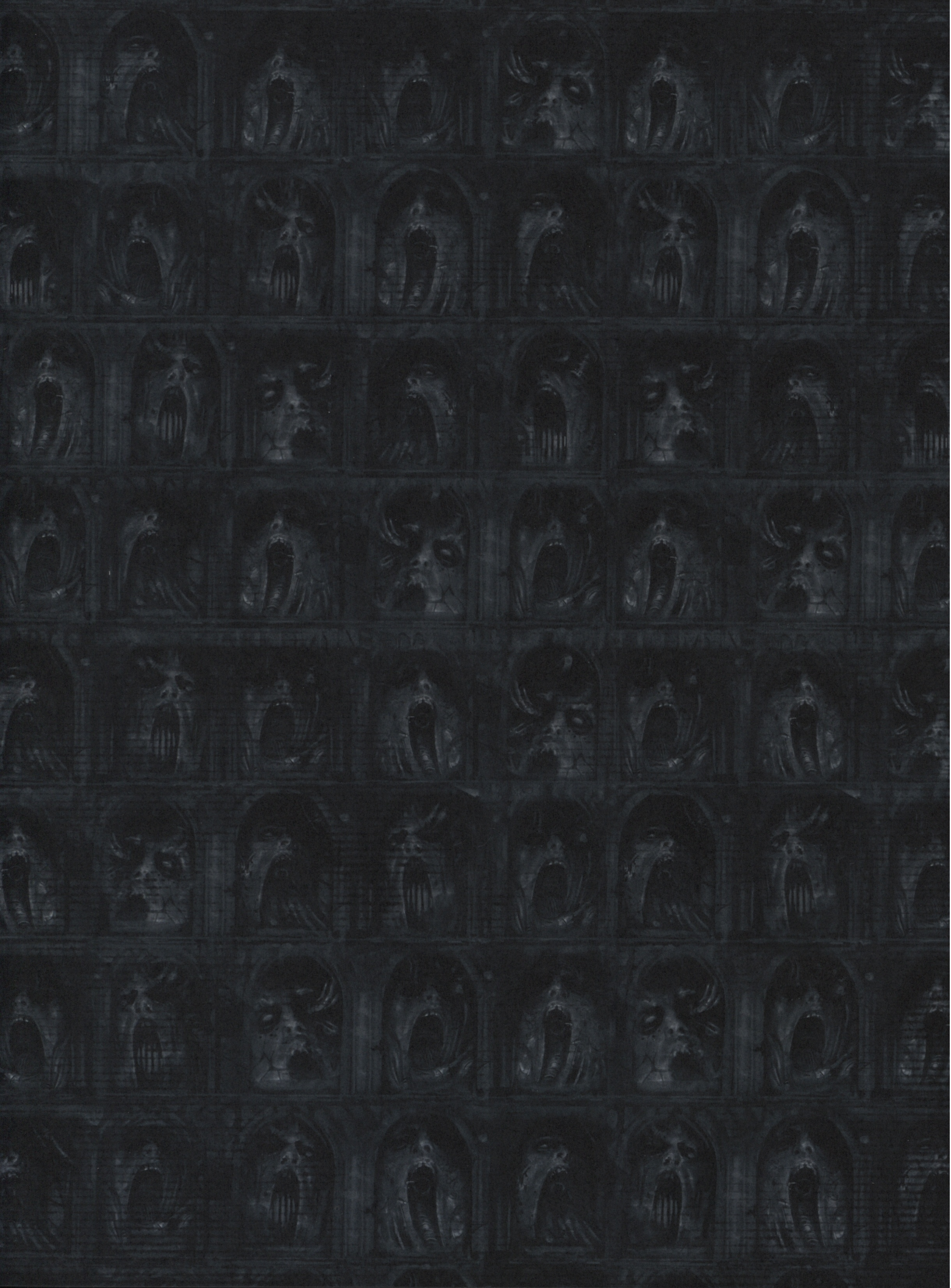
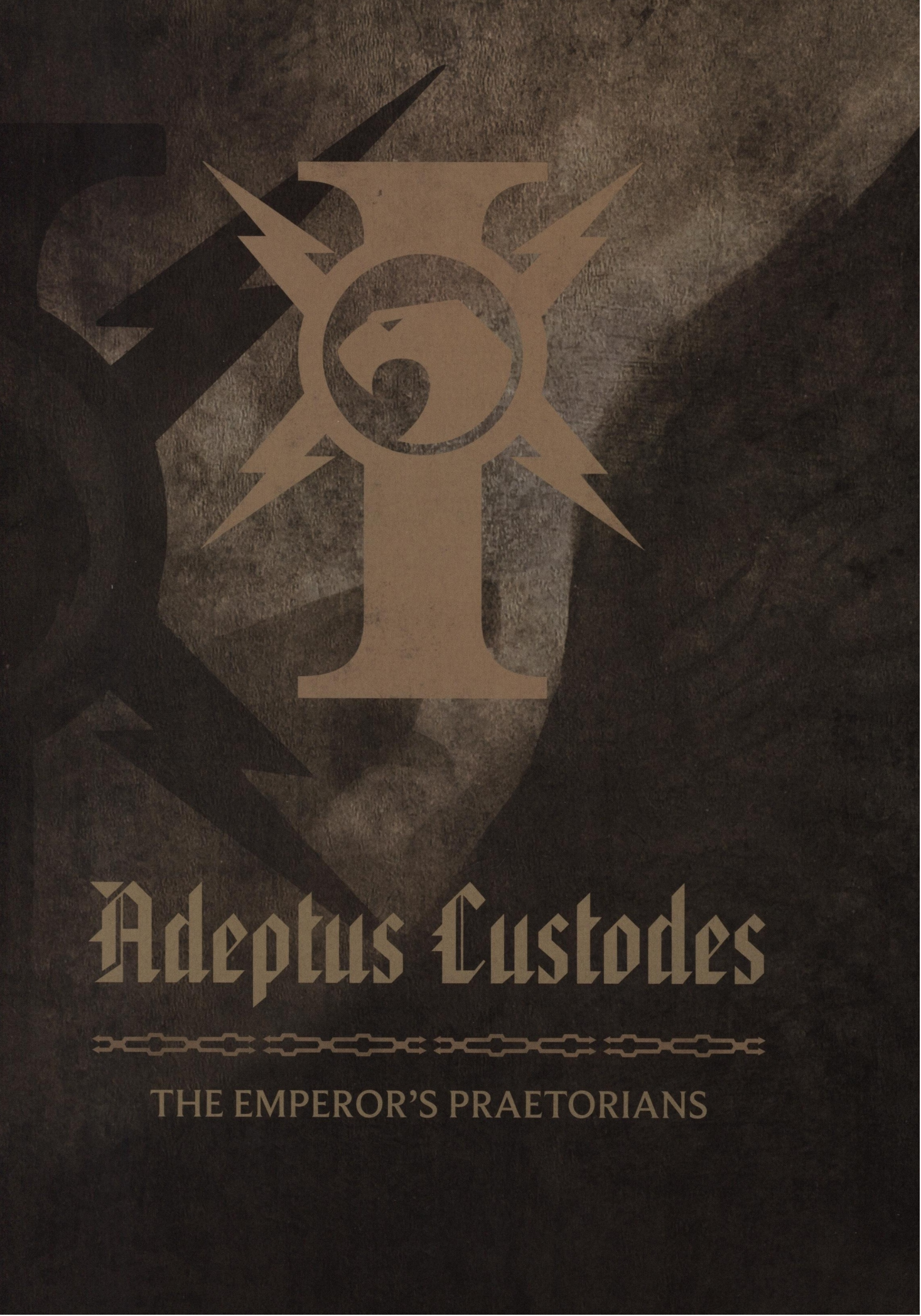


CODEX

ADEPTUS CUSTODES






Adeptus Custodes
THE EMPEROR'S PRAETORIANS

CONTENTS



GATHERING OF DEMIGODS 6-43

Discover the history and martial might of the Adeptus Custodes and Sisters of Silence.



SHOWCASE 44-55

Adeptus Custodes and Sisters of Silence miniatures arrayed for battle.

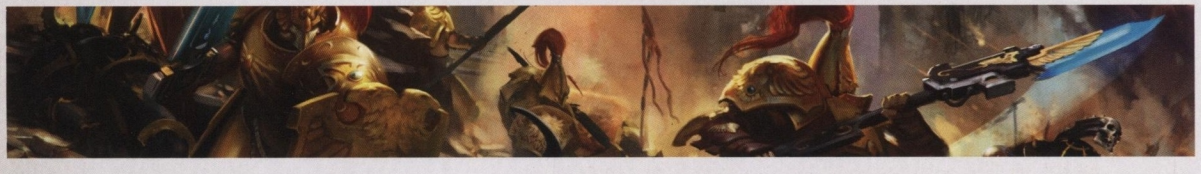


COMBAT PATROL 56-65

Command Tristraen's Gilded Blades in fast-paced games of Combat Patrol.

FORCES OF THE ADEPTUS CUSTODES 66-93

Select your Detachment then use your units' datasheets to claim victory.



CRUSADE RULES 94-109

Forge your army's narrative with these bespoke Crusade rules.

Introduction 96
Magisterium Lex Ultima 97
Battle Scars 101
Agendas 102
Requisitions 103
Battle Traits 104
Crusade Relics 106
Artefacts of the Vaults 107
Crusade Badges 108
Adeptus Custodes Name Generator 109

POINTS VALUES 110-111

All the points values you will need to muster your army.



Introduction **68**
Army Rule **69**
Detachments **70**
Talons of the Emperor 70-71
Shield Host 72-73
Null Maiden Vigil 74-75
Auric Champions 76-77
Datasheets **80-93**
Trajann Valoris 82
Shield-Captain 83
Shield-Captain in Allarus Terminator Armour 84
Shield-Captain on Dawneagle Jetbike 84
Blade Champion 85
Valerian 85
Knight-Centura 86
Aleya 86
Custodian Guard 87
Custodian Wardens 88
Allarus Custodians 89
Vertus Praetors 90
Venerable Contemptor Dreadnought 90
Venerable Land Raider 91
Prosecutors 92
Vigilators 92
Witchseekers 93
Anathema Psykana Rhino 93

PRODUCED BY THE WARHAMMER DESIGN STUDIO

Codex: Adeptus Custodes © Copyright Games Workshop Limited 2024. Codex: Adeptus Custodes, GW, Games Workshop, Space Marine, 40K, Warhammer, Warhammer 40,000, the 'Aquila' Double-headed Eagle logo, and all associated logos, illustrations, images, names, creatures, races, vehicles, locations, weapons, characters, and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are either ® or TM, and/or © Games Workshop Limited, variably registered around the world. All Rights Reserved.

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

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

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

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

Games Workshop Ltd, Willow Rd, Lenton,
Nottingham, NG7 2WS

WARHAMMER.COM





Gathering of Demigods

THEY ARE THE EMPEROR'S BODYGUARD, HIS TEN THOUSAND, THE GOLDEN DEATH. THEY ARE HIS NOBLE EMISSARIES AND HIS PITILESS EXECUTIONERS. BY THEIR HANDS ARE HIS SECRETS PROTECTED AND HIS VAULTS GUARDED. UNSWERVING IN THEIR LOYALTY AND UNSHAKEABLE IN THEIR PURPOSE, THEY ARE THE SYMBOLS OF THE EMPEROR'S UNSTOPPABLE WRATH. FOR TEN THOUSAND YEARS HAVE THEY STOOD SENTINEL OVER THE MASTER OF MANKIND AND DEFENDED HIS GLORIOUS PALACE.

THEY ARE THE FINEST WARRIORS IN THE IMPERIUM, PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY FASHIONED TO A DESIGN NONE BUT THE EMPEROR HIMSELF CAN EVER TRULY UNDERSTAND. THEY ARE AN ELEVATED ELITE, WHOSE RAW STRENGTH AND WILLPOWER ARE INSURMOUNTABLE. EACH IS HIGHLY INDEPENDENT AND IS AN ARMY UNTO THEMSELVES. CLAD IN NIGH ON IMPREGNABLE AURAMITE ARMOUR, IT IS WITH INDIVIDUALLY CRAFTED WEAPONS THAT THE CUSTODIANS CUT DOWN ANY WHO THREATEN THE EMPEROR.

FOR TEN THOUSAND YEARS THEY OPERATED IN THE GALAXY IN SECRET. NO MORE. NOW THEY STRIDE THE STARS IN NUMBERS NOT SEEN IN MILLENNIA. WOE BETIDE THOSE WHO OPPOSE THEM.



ORIGINS OF THE CUSTODIANS

The Custodian Guard have been a part of the Imperium for as long as records exist. They were the Emperor's companions throughout the Great Crusade and before – advising, standing by his side and protecting him through some of the greatest conflicts in all of Human history. The story of their origins is known to few but themselves, and for outsiders it is all but impossible to learn anything about them.

ANCIENT ORIGINS

No student of Imperial history knows how far back in time the Adeptus Custodes can trace their origins. Even the oldest and most fragmentary accounts – recovered by Roboute Guilliman's Logos Historica Verita – include quotes that refer to the Emperor being escorted by tall and mighty warriors clad in gold.

The Master of Mankind inherited vast amounts of knowledge on gene-forging from numerous scientist-kings and technodemagogues – those that ruled over Terra's disparate tribes during Old Night and the dark periods that followed.

Legend has it that the Emperor rose around this time, and with his unimaginable intellect was able to make use of accumulated troves of genetomantic lore. It is this, the learned few believe, that allowed the Emperor to make the Adeptus Custodes. The truth is hidden within crude cave etchings, hieroglyphics, stasis-locked scraps of parchment and gene-sealed tomes no living person can open. These fragments speak of trusted bodyguards and advisors, and great victories won against monstrous beings. Some historitors know such texts exist, and are frustrated by the fact that they can never access them. Most are lost or hidden, whether that be on Terra, Mars or a handful of other worlds.

There is a similar lack of detail about the Custodians' role in the Horus Heresy, that goes even beyond the usual sparsity of apocryphal sources from that dark time. It is thought that the first Custodes leader was a warrior named Constantin Valdor, who disappeared from records after the Horus Heresy.

Some historitors believe the Custodians fought against the Thousand Sons on the traitorous Legion's home world of Prospero, and also defended the Imperial Palace during Horus' assault against the Throneworld. A handful suggest that the Custodes fought their own war in a parallel dimension before the Siege of Terra, one that only they could have won, the details of which are now lost to time. It is impossible to separate myth from fact. Now, if folk know of the Custodians at all it is as towering golden giants who bestrode the stars at the Emperor's command, living embodiments of his holy light given physical form or gilded dragons of Terran myth, whose talons tore the dark daemons of scripture asunder.

One thing is clear however – the Horus Heresy changed the Custodians forever. In the final stages of that horrendous conflict, the Emperor met Horus in single combat aboard the Arch-traitor's flagship, the *Vengeful Spirit*. He defeated and slew Warmaster Horus, but was mortally wounded by him in their titanic clash. In that moment – and for the only time before or since – the Custodians failed in their duty.

For thousands of years after, most Custodians never left the Imperial Palace, with only a handful making pre-emptive strikes where necessary elsewhere. Many donned black cloaks of mourning, and a near obsession to never leave the Golden Throne out of their sight took hold. They have ever borne the terrible shame of their failure, and have sought never to forget it, nor be absolved of it.

RECRUITMENT

If the Space Marines are the scions of the Primarchs, then the Custodians are the progeny of the Emperor – at least in every way that matters. His might permeates them, burns in their eyes and flows through their veins as surely as their blood. His hand shows clearly in every aspect of their creation, their abilities, and even their outlook upon the galaxy and the Imperium. Potential Custodians are taken in at a very young age to better survive the rigours of their transformation – no older than late infancy – for the fundamental changes that will be wrought upon their flesh, minds and souls are tantamount to apotheosis. It is considered a great honour for those of Terran noble houses to submit a child.

Some clans have, in the past, given over entire generations of offspring to become inductees. When such individuals go forth to begin whatever process lies ahead of them, huge crowds line the Avenue of Sacrifice, cheering and chanting frenzied prayers.

The Adeptus Custodes also seek out suitable candidates by other means, or encounter them by chance on their missions to protect the Throneworld. None besides the Custodians themselves truly know what criteria they require. How a Custodian is made is an arcane and ancient process born out of the mind of the Emperor himself, made up of decades of alchemical augmentation, psychological and cognitive conditioning and memetic training.

E-I/41/87-P
THE SOLBLADES

The Fourth Tyrannic War has begun. The insidious tendrils of Hive Fleet Leviathan uncoil across Segmentum Pacificus, madness and horror spreading before them even as deathly silence reigns in their wake. Grand strategic cogitations indicate a growing risk that - if left to advance on their projected paths - the xenos swarms may drive deep into the Segmentum Solar to threaten Terra itself. Swift response fleets - codenamed Solblades - streak out into the void bearing elite war hosts whose mission is to disrupt and fragment the Tyranid advance wherever possible. Alongside Space Marine strike forces, Adepta Sororitas Missions and other elite formations, many Solblades are led by shield companies of the Adeptus Custodes. Driven by their oaths to defend the Golden Throne, the Custodians consider any and all tactics valid - and almost any casualties acceptable - while winnowing the Tyranid swarms.



THE COMPANIONS

The Companions are a three-hundred-strong force that forms the direct bodyguard of the Emperor while he sits upon the Golden Throne. There can be no more important duty in all of the Imperium than to shield the Emperor himself.

The vigil of the Companions is unending, and though they are of course rotated out for brief periods of rest, it is still a purgatorial duty. Arrayed in ranks around the Golden Throne, these sentries stand for incredible lengths of time, unmoving, unspeaking, poised constantly upon the cusp of battle readiness in case the slightest threat were to present itself. It is mentally and spiritually exhausting, even for the Adeptus Custodes, and so when it is judged that a Companion has served long enough they are rotated out with immediate effect, replaced by a fresh inductee to their ranks. This is no mark of dishonour, merely a pragmatic admission that even a Custodian cannot perform such a taxing duty indefinitely. The longest any individual has stood the Companion's Watch was Astoran Kalos, who endured for a full century before at last surrendering his place.

Many Custodian Wardens join the Companions. Equally, many of those who have stood amongst the Companions' ranks, but not yet served long enough to become Wardens, will do so once they have passed the requisite five centuries in the Emperor's service. These grim ceremonial watchers are known amongst their comrades as level-headed and endlessly patient. They wield either the iconic guardian spears of the Adeptus Custodes, or else heavy-bladed castellan axes.

CREATION

Custodians are created using methods from the Dark Age of Technology, honed by the Emperor to make the perfect counsellors, bodyguards, warriors and executioners. To create beings with such a range of talents requires total physical and mental reconstruction – the mindset and intelligence needed to be of use to such a being as the Emperor is immense to say the least.

The Adeptus Custodes' inductees are remade at a genetic level. This process involves incredibly intricate gene-craft and alchemistry, working upon the most minute level of the candidate's cellular structure and genome employing techniques that could only have been envisioned by the Emperor himself. Only the most accomplished chirurgeons and bio-alchemists carry out this work, many themselves recipients of enhancements of one kind or another. They do so in gilded laboratories hidden far away from even the most determined of prying eyes. The work done to a candidate is thus invisible, the process unique to each inductee. There are no organ implantations or surgical grafting.

What is done to the Custodians' inductee is several degrees more exact and changing than work carried out to create a Space Marine, producing warriors much tougher, faster, stronger and with greater intelligence than even the Adeptus Astartes. Some believe that the process even affects a Custodian's soul. It is thought that the Emperor himself, whose mind no Human – augmented or otherwise – could ever hope to match, once oversaw the ascension of each Custodian.

A Custodian must be totally loyal, remorseless, vigilant and tireless. Their sense of duty to the Emperor must be all that matters to them, their discipline reaching deeper into their psyche than unconscious desire. A Custodian becomes duty. They become discipline. For this to happen, every inductee is mentally indoctrinated – their psyches are rebuilt from the ground up, creating mental architecture as well fortified as the Imperial Palace itself. They undergo thousands of hours of psychoconditioning, psycho-memetic drilling and mnemic training. Information is poured into their minds at such a punishing rate that some are driven mad.

The Custodian candidate's training and inculcation goes beyond the instilling of unstoppable determination. They must learn diplomacy, statecraft, astrogation, interstellar geography, history, philosophy, art, theosophy, artistry and countless other subjects – all of which they become true masters of. The Emperor once demanded their counsel, and so they have to be versed in any manner of subject. This ensures that the Adeptus Custodes retain the knowledge and perspective commonplace during the Great Crusade. Additionally, the threats to the Emperor are so myriad that they may manifest in any way. A Custodian can trace the most innocent-sounding philosophical question to outright treachery, or foresee how a marauding alien force might grow to threaten Terra – even if it currently terrorises a remote system at the edge of the galaxy.

The Adeptus Custodes are also aware of truths that no one else in the Imperium has ever learned. They know some of the galaxy's gravest secrets, for they must be able to face down and defeat the darkest terrors. They recognise how far Mankind has fallen from the original ideals of the Emperor, of enlightenment and secular sophistication. The inductees learn that many truths cannot be shared, that some would cause wholesale damage to the Imperium – as corrupted from his original vision as it has become. Some cannot handle this knowledge, or bear the tragedy of what Humanity has descended into since the Horus Heresy, when their forebears failed in their solemn duty. These candidates do not become Custodians, and so through this learning are the unworthy culled.

Such is the intensity and brutality of the process candidates undergo that many thousands do not survive. The Adeptus Custodes have thus become known as the Ten Thousand, for the harsh processes they go through mean it is highly unlikely that their numbers could ever substantially exceed such a figure. That being said, no one outside the organisation knows the Adeptus Custodes' true martial strength, and it is a fact kept as secret as any in the entire Imperium. With so many Custodians fighting throughout the galaxy now, it is even harder than before to count. It is not impossible that the name Ten Thousand has been cultivated to deliberately mask the organisation's true size, and to help deny that knowledge to any enemy.

Those survivors of the induction process that emerge as Custodians are changed in every way, their minds so altered that they have entirely new personalities. They are rendered physically superior and their skills with all kinds of weapons are sublime. Custodians even change their names, choosing those of gods, monarchs or heroes drawn from the most ancient texts. In this way the Custodian themselves is fashioned anew but also the pride and dignity of Terra's noble houses is preserved. With no outward indication of which inductees ascended to the ranks of the Adeptus Custodes and no hope of recognising in these towering beings the infants they began their lives as, no Terran aristocrat can be gainsaid when they claim with pride that theirs, undoubtedly, was a successful offering.

MISERICORDIA

When an aspirant ascends to the ranks of the Adeptus Custodes, they are presented with a beautifully fashioned knife known as a misericordia. These weapons are filigreed with gold and theldrite, their hilts moulded to the owner's unique grip and their blades imbued with micromolecular dissonator spirits that allow them to slice through the thickest armour.

More than a lethal sidearm, the misericordia signifies something greater. Its traditional meaning is said to date all the way back to the darkest days of Terran history, when cruel warlords ruled by the blade alone. These weapons of oppression were known as misericordia. Yet as the Emperor led his Wars of Unification, his Custodians are believed to have co-opted the term for their own use. No longer would the misericordia be a symbol of tyrannical rule. Instead, it came to represent the right of the bearer to act as the arbiter of the Emperor's judgement, and to put to death those tyrants, lunatics and demagogues who stood against them.

The misericordia still shows its wielder to be the Emperor's sanctioned executioner, yet since his fall these blades bear a second, grimmer meaning. They have become weapons of vengeance, to be turned upon those who betrayed the Emperor and left him a broken shell. Every time a misericordia is plunged into a traitor's heart, so it is said, a minuscule measure of revenge is exacted on behalf of the Emperor himself. Thus, though Custodians have the right to carry their misericordia or not as they see fit, it is rare indeed that they go to battle against the hated warriors of the Heretic Astartes without these blades sheathed ready at their hips.

With enormously extended lifespans, Custodians do not grow old as Humans do, but they can be slain in combat. Each Custodian is blessed with protections that leave them less vulnerable to the powers of both the psyker and the null, making them perfectly suited to fight alongside the Sisters of Silence. Additionally, the Custodians never exhibit psychic powers of their own as, though battlefield psykers are undoubtedly powerful living weapons, they are also incredibly unstable ones. Their minds are prone to invasion by warp entities, and this is a danger no Custodian will ever face. It appears that the Emperor wished for no chink in the defences of his bodyguards, thus granting them no gift of psychic ability.

In all this, a Custodian is designed to be the death of any being or creature that might threaten the Emperor, and so they are superior in every way – as comparable to a Space Marine as a Space Marine is to an unaugmented Human. They are the greatest Mankind has to offer, though few can say for sure if they are Human any longer.

GUARDIANS OF THE GOLDEN THRONE

For ten thousand years the Adeptus Custodes have stood guard over the Golden Throne. In that time, not a single enemy has gained access to the Sanctum Imperialis.

The Custodians have many tasks upon Terra. It is they who watch over not just the great gates that lead to the Emperor's throne room, but all of the domains of the Imperial Palace. Considering the complex is a continent-sized sprawl of interconnected fortresses, cathedrums, armouries, dungeons, macro-habs, judiciariums, archives, sanctums, spaceports and countless other structures, this is no mean feat.

It is the Adeptus Custodes alone who decide who will be permitted audience with the Emperor, and it is an honour that is granted only in the rarest of circumstances. They patrol the endless lines of petitioners that wend through the Imperial Palace, ever watchful for those of xenos taint or heretical bent who might have contrived to penetrate the structure's outer defences. They oversee the process that sees thousands of psykers each day drained of their life force in order to sustain the Emperor and his Astronomican.

The Adeptus Custodes guard the deepest vaults of the Imperial Palace, wherein lurk sanity-blasting secrets from the Dark Age of Technology. They dispatch shield companies to inspect the defences of the Sol System, and to eliminate anything that presents even the slightest hint of a threat to the sanctity of Holy Terra. They play their endless Blood Games, one of their own number taking the role of invader or assassin to test the defences and, in doing so, to strengthen them still further.

For millennia the Custodians have gone about their duties, bound to traditions that have become ritual and rote. Yet even as the wider Imperium has stagnated around them, and the Emperor's lesser servants have come to view them with a mixture of superstition and awe, the Adeptus Custodes have done what they can to fend off ennui, and have never permitted it to take them. They barely notice the fleeting mortal Humans that scurry around their feet, and insist on keeping even the most ardently loyal Space Marines at a spear's length, for what has proven fallible once may do so again.

This is a mantra the Custodians apply also to themselves, and thus they have never permitted themselves a moment of laxity or introspection. At times their Captain-General – highest ranking within the entire Adeptus Custodes – has stood amongst the High Lords of Terra. At others, they have served as one of the council's most powerful advisors. Either way, the Adeptus Custodes marshal the defences of Terra as they see fit and continue to exercise the full authority of the Magisterium Lex Ultima which renders them answerable only to the Emperor himself in matters of security, sanctity and strength.

E-I/41/565-S
THE JOVIAN PURGE

Acting upon warnings brought to them by Ordo Malleus Inquisitor Xie, a shield company from the Solar Watch stages a surprise raid on Platform XI of the Jovian orbital shipyards. Accompanied by Null Maidens of the Outer Solar Vigil and supported by an assassin of the Callidus Temple, this force uncovers a seething infestation of Vashtorr-worshipping tech-cultists. The heretics have been corrupting Imperial warships by hiding biomechanoid parasites within their sacred workings. Their diabolical efforts are brought to a spectacular end by the Custodians and their allies, who sweep through Platform XI with cold and vengeful fury.





THE KA'TAHS

With vast repositories of Human cultural, military and political history theirs alone to study, the Adeptus Custodes have gleaned the secrets of countless martial arts and subtle disciplines. These they term ka'tahs. Each has a particular focus, be it the masterful marksmanship of the Salvus Ka'tah, the entrapping close-quarters techniques of the Kaptaris Ka'tah, the horde-slaying Dacatarai Ka'tah, or the myriad esoteric disciplines of the Politik, Oratorial or Philosophik Ka'tahs. Each requires decades, sometimes centuries of study and practise for a Custodian to master. The Emperor's Praetorians are more than willing to devote spans of time to this goal. While some amongst the Adeptus Custodes seek to master particular strands of ka'tah – all of the Martial or Politik, for instance – many others seek a broad grounding in many different disciplines. After all, one never knows precisely what skills will be needed to counter each new threat to Terra.

THE DEFENCES OF TERRA

The Emperor's Palace on Terra is the largest and most impregnable defensive structure in the Imperium. It sprawls across an entire mountain range, stretching for thousands of miles over the surface of the Throneworld. The Adeptus Custodes are responsible for the defence of this immense fortress, a duty they discharge with tireless diligence.

In the days of the Great Crusade, it is said that the Imperial Palace was a surpassing wonder of engineering and grandeur. In the wake of the Horus Heresy, however, the much-abused palace was steadily rebuilt into the mightiest fortress in Human history.

The ten millennia since have seen it become ever more bloated, polluted and immense. The palace's former asceticism lies buried beneath strata of gothic ornamentation and the brutal splendour of the Cult Imperialis. What was believed to have been bright and magnificent is now vast and lowering, a hunched architectural monstrosity that wears its martial might like a challenge to the terrors of the darkling void. There can be no clearer metaphor for the fate of the wider Imperium, but though the palace is a grotesque mockery of its former self, still the Adeptus Custodes guard it well.

This is a huge task. The circumference of the palace's outermost walls is measured in thousands of miles. The towering spires of its macro-habs and spaceports break through the atmosphere and rise into the void like the spines of some bioluminescent beast. Its sub-levels dig deep into Terra's holy bedrock, in some places reaching a depth of hundreds of miles below the surface. Its corridors, chambers, vaults, fastnesses and plazas are so multitudinous that no single record remains to list them all, and the societal sub-nations, clan holdings and techno-urbanic serf tribes that dwell within its walls could populate entire star systems.

Despite all this, the Adeptus Custodes have always proven equal to the duty of overseeing the palace's defence. It is they who walk the colossal and seemingly endless walls, who stand guard over the sanctums and armouries, who patrol the petitioners' highways, the famed spaceports and the colossal fortifications. They inspect the endless miles of orbital guns and defensive silos, and maintain a wary guard over the hidden vaults deep within the palace that contain secrets so dreadful they could bring about the fall of Humanity were they ever released. The Adeptus Custodes have remained unwavering in these duties for thousands of years. Now, even as the galaxy darkens around them and new wars arise for them to fight, they stand as inviolable as ever.

THE SOLAR FASTNESS

There was a time when the invasion of Terra was unthinkable. With the advent of the Great Rift, that time has passed. The Sol System boasts some of the most formidable fortifications in the galaxy, manned by determined warriors and shielded by technology and faith. Yet still its greatest defence is the Adeptus Custodes.

Should some courageous or foolhardy invader approach the Sol System, they would find themselves facing immense star fortresses, void minefields of sprawling size, and huge, deep-space hunter servitors of terrifying aspect. Were the invader to overcome these hazards, they would find resistance stiffening the deeper they pushed into the system. Heavy naval patrols from Battlefleet Solar thunder through the darkness, their craggy silhouettes presaging death to any who fall beneath their sights. Monitor-shrines, dock-fortresses, fighter bases and countless weapons platforms dot the darkness. Indeed, the defences of the Sol System appear virtually impregnable to invading armies. Yet there are subtler threats to the Golden Throne, against which the Adeptus Custodes must be especially vigilant.

From across the Imperium come endless streams of pilgrims, merchants, zealots, emissaries and refugees. Thousands of ships translate every day. An unending river of Humanity pours along the system's space lanes and fills its structures to capacity and beyond.

It is amongst these masses that rebellion, sedition and heresy can and do foment. Thus the Adeptus Custodes maintain their presence, performing patrols and monitoring sweeps throughout the Sol System. They supervise the vetting of the countless Imperial citizens who pass through Terra's monolithic spaceports every day. They enact surprise sweeps and inspections of the Sol System's defences, following no set pattern beyond their own intuition to prevent any from predicting and avoiding their vigilance.

The Custodians seed listening devices, spy servitors and dictalarcenous subroutines through the hives of the Throneworld and beyond. They gather and analyse every scrap of information from even the darkest reaches of the Sol System, feeding ship names, population movements, labour schedules, vox intercepts and more into macrocogitators the size of battleships.

The data-prophecies that emerge from these immense engines aid the Captain-General in their command decisions on a daily basis, and help the Ten Thousand to be ever vigilant against threats from every quarter.



Custodian Calladayce Taurovalia Kesh stood upon the bridge of a Cobra-class destroyer. Named *Vigilant Flame,* the warship belonged to the mighty Battlefleet Solar. She lingered in the shadows at the back of the bridge, positioned at a spot where she could observe the actions of every crew member be they in the instrumentation pits, at the armament shrines or – in the case of Shipmaster Lethwyck – stood ramrod straight before his command throne.

It was to Lethwyck's credit, Kesh reflected, that the man managed to attend to his duties without so much as looking around at the golden-armoured giant in the shadows. He was certainly nervous enough, despite his efforts to maintain a cool facade. Every man and woman present was similarly afflicted. Kesh could taste the subtle tang of adrenaline on the recycled air, feel the tympanies of their thumping hearts against her eardrums. They remained efficient, however, as one would expect from a crew judged worthy to form part of the Sol System's own patrol fleet.

Kesh was exploiting that efficiency. She was wilfully perverting the very selection processes intended to ensure only the most loyal, obedient and resourceful crews were entrusted with the void-borne defence of the Throneworld.

Subterfuge was just another weapon with which she armed herself, the better to do her own duty. Indeed, Kesh mused, there was precious little in this galaxy that one of the Adeptus Custodes could not employ as a weapon at need. This thought, in turn, spawned another and moved her to speak.

'Shipmaster,' she said. Though Kesh had not raised her voice, its rich contralto carried over the efficient chatter on the bridge like a rumble of distant thunder across windswept grasslands. Silence fell, but for the binharic clatter of crew servitors and the tectonic throb of the *Vigilant Flame*'s realspace engines.

'My lady?' asked Lethwyck, keeping his eyes on his crew. Kesh noted the man's knuckles were white where he clasped his hands behind his back.

'What is the condition of the payload?'

Lethwyck did not respond at once. Instead the shipmaster turned his stare upon an officer in a starched uniform whose bionic eye connected via cabling to the cogitator at which she sat. Her fingers flew over her rune-keys and she muttered into her vox-bead before reporting.

'Classified munition remains stable, sir. Stasis field steady. Magos Kleist reports zero energistic emissions escaping containment measures.'

'And the teleportarium?' Kesh asked, directing her question to the officer. The woman paled but retained her composure as she called up fresh data-streams with swift keystrokes.

'Magos Kleist reports the device's machine spirits are in robust choler, my lady. Power-well now ninety-seven percent filled. Levels still increasing within acceptable tolerances towards one hundred percent.'

Kesh nodded then dismissed the bridge crew from her thoughts. All was in readiness. The teleportarium – installed on the *Vigilant Flame* by tech-magi who the Custodian had then quietly disposed of – would be her delivery mechanism. She would prime it with metaphysical coordinates and dataclavises so secret the High Lords of Terra were not cleared to know them. She would then command the ordnance – stolen from a secret armoury of the esoteric and unutterably lethal at great personal risk – be placed upon the teleportarium's dais.

After that, it was a case of waiting for the crew of the *Vigilant Flame* to deliver her into strike range then triggering the teleportation sequence.

There were risks, unknowns even one of Kesh's puissance could not avoid. The esoteric layers of warding around her target were ancient, the truth of them long lost even to those who sheltered beneath their aegis. They might overmaster Kesh's codes, eradicating her ordnance during transit or triggering it and killing everyone on the *Vigilant Flame*.

Even should the payload materialise on target, there might be shielding and containment measures even Kesh was not privy to. There were secrets that only the Captain-General knew. It was likely, Kesh mused, that there were even secrets he did not. Some knowledge now resided only within the memories of the Master of Mankind himself.

Even before all that, there were tests of Human will and ability to be passed or failed. She reflected, not for the first time, that it was strange to strive with all her superhuman ability and intellect to achieve a goal so utterly opposed to her life's purpose. None of that would stay her hand, of course. Such was the nature of duty.

If all Kesh's plans came to fruition, in just over three Terran standard hours she would deposit a compact cyclonic warhead upon the polished floor of the Emperor's throne room. In theory, it would then detonate, annihilating the Companions and the Master of Mankind in a single apocalyptic detonation.

Most Blood Games involved more direct attempts at assassination or sabotage, of course. Custodians had crept into the palace under the cover of falsehoods, sent hired killers of every stripe to attempt the deed, had sought to compromise high adepts – once, notably, even an Inquisitor – to act as tools. A few avante-garde individuals

had even sought to sabotage the Golden Throne itself. All methods had to be attempted, no matter how esoteric or extreme. All defences had to be tested, unto destruction if necessary. There was no sense in the Custodians shying away from any line of attack when the enemies of the Emperor would not. And there was a reason that Calladayce Taurovalia Kesh had been chosen to run several Blood Games – she had a certain flair for the grandiose and unexpected.

Over the next hour, the bloated orb of the Throneworld swelled in the forward vid screens. Clearance codes were demanded from fortifications hanging in the void, but of course, the crew of the *Vigilant Flame* possessed all the necessary passwords. Moreover, though they were repeatedly questioned over their unscheduled departure from their patrol route, the cover story Kesh furnished them with held up. They were transporting an attaché of House Helmawr, come all the way from Necromunda at the summons of the Master of the Administratum. Said attaché wished to travel in this fashion to avoid both a recent threat of assassination by noble rivals, and also an acquaintance to whom he owed significant gambling debts. Perfect data-forgeries of the relevant authorisation crests set the seal to the lie. The *Vigilant Flame* pressed on.

Fields of void mines; miles-long, eagle-headed orbital cannons; flights of deep void gunship patrols flocking from the launch decks of prowling carriers; the *Vigilant Flame* passed them all. At each potential check, Kesh sensed a taut expectancy in the bridge crew, and in their shipmaster in particular.

Sweat beaded; near-imperceptible tremors ran through hands and voices; gazes darted evasively about the bridge. Faithful and dutiful as they were, Kesh suspected at least some of these men and women hoped with each fresh interrogation that they would be found out. They did not want to follow her orders, for on some level they suspected them to be madness even though they came from one of the Adeptus Custodes themselves.

They wanted to deny her, but were caught in a vice. They hoped that the choice would be taken out of their hands, that someone else would release them.

A half hour later, the crew's wish was granted.

Kesh was warned before anyone else aboard, sensing a sudden empyric energy spike coupled with the surge of overpressure and sharp temperature drop that presaged a teleport strike. Her guardian spear was levelled and armed before the first cry of alarm or howl of a klaxon rang through the bridge. Armoured shutters rattled down over exterior view ports, a futile gesture of warding against foes who had already boarded the very nerve centre of the ship. As the teleport flare faded and a quintet of hulking figures were revealed, Kesh found herself fixed firmly under the targeting reticules of several balistus grenade launchers. Despite staring down enough firepower to tear even her gene-smithed body apart, she could not resist a wintry smile.

'Shield-Captain Nicodaemius,' she said, by way of a greeting.

'Kesh, my friend,' replied the golden armoured, statuesque warrior who stood flanked by four enormous Allarus Custodians. His smile echoed Kesh's own. 'It has been too long.'

'Eight-hundred and seventy three days, sixteen hours and nine minutes since this Blood Game commenced,' said Kesh.

'But now it is ended. I have another team deployed upon your teleportarium, disarming the munition as we speak.' Nicodaemius shook his head. 'Throne, Kesh, an Exterminatus-grade warhead? Hardly subtle…'

'But it could have proved effective,' Kesh replied. The two of them sobered at the thought. 'What alerted you?'

Shield-Captain Nicodaemius swept his stern gaze across the quailing shipmaster to his ashen-faced crew.

'Officer of Vox Ewa Bhattoor, make yourself known,' he commanded. Unable to stop her traitorous body from shaking, jaw clenched tight, the officer with the ocular tether rose to her feet and gave an aquila salute.

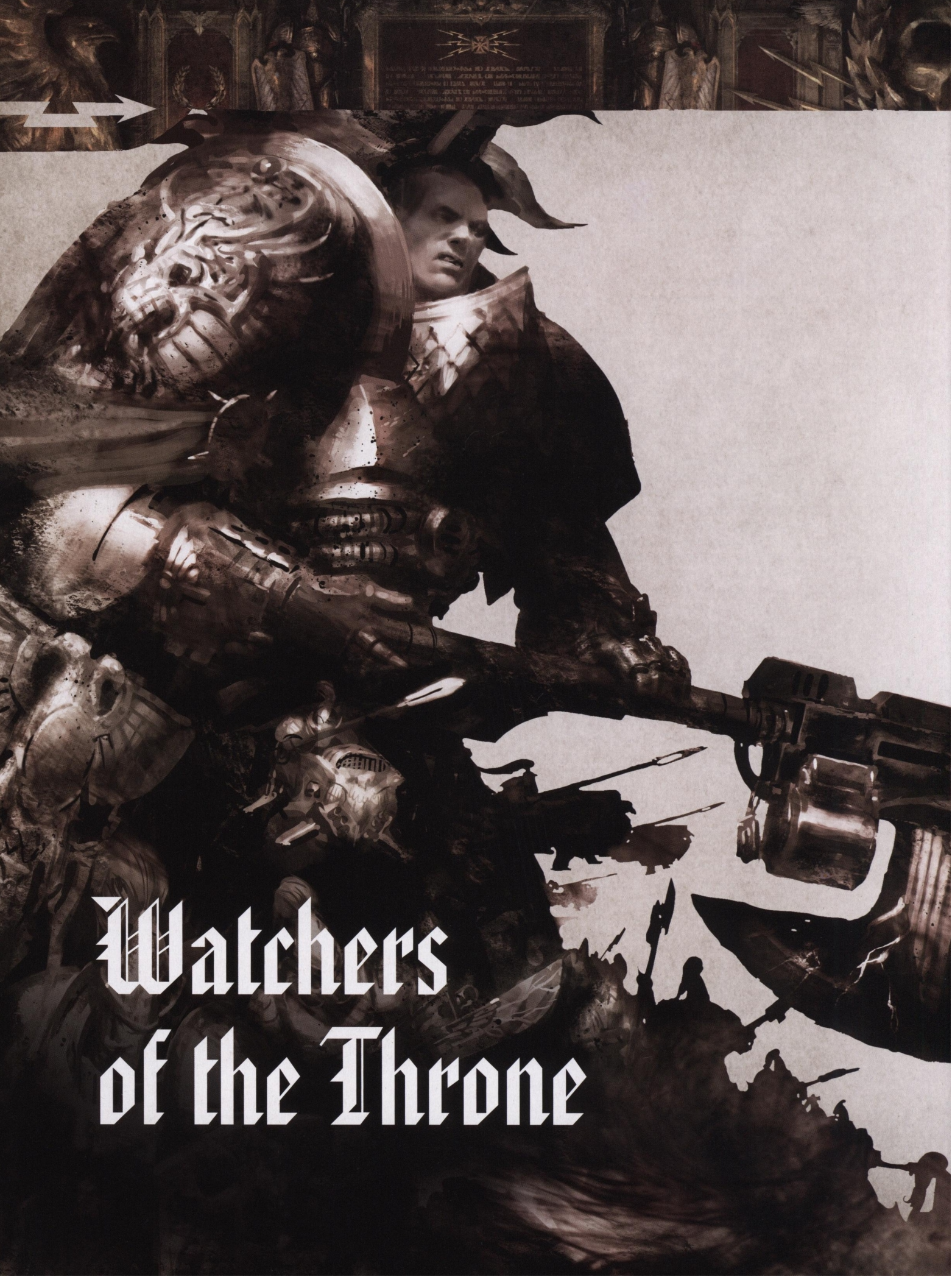
'Officer Bhattoor here believed it appropriate to ignore your request for absolute secrecy. She dispatched a coded distress call amidst her standard data-missives and we detected it.'

Shipmaster Lethwyck choked in outrage, but before he could berate his rebellious officer, the Shield-Captain pointed a finger at the man, menacing him to silence.

'There are those who would call such disobedience to a Custodian heresy,' said Kesh slowly. 'And yet in this instance, unthinking capitulation risked infinitely greater evil.'

'Recommendations?' asked Nicodaemius.

'This crew has been found wanting,' replied Kesh. 'A sword that turns willingly upon its master offers no protection. But examples can be instructive. We shall hand the shipmaster over to the Adeptus Mechanicus – let them make a servitor of him, if he wishes to serve so unthinkingly. Excoriation for the crew, then let them return with punitive status to their battlefleet, that they might spread the word of vigilance. As for officer Bhattoor, one hopes that she will captain this vessel in the future with the same courage and clarity of faith she has shown this day. The defence of the Golden Throne requires no less.'


Watchers
of the Throne

TALONS OF THE EMPEROR

The term Talons of the Emperor was coined to describe combined forces of Custodian Guard and Sisters of Silence. It is hardly a widely known moniker, many in the Imperium having only the vaguest understanding, if any at all, of the numinous golden beings who serve the God-Emperor on far away Terra. It is, however, an extremely apt description of the way such forces operate.

Dispatched only when needed to hunt the most dangerous prey, the talons strike with swift and terrible precision. Borne to battle aboard gilded gunships or venerable armoured transports, these hosts dismiss all except their chosen quarry. They have been known to sweep down upon roiling battlefields only to ignore the carnage erupting all around them. Small in number, incredibly elite and all-too-aware of their own irreplaceable value to the Golden Throne, these are nobody's saviours or reinforcements. Instead, they are the unsheathed talons of the Emperor's own judgement, and they will be neither distracted nor held back from their prey.

Upon deploying into combat, the Talons of the Emperor strike with a shocking ferocity that eclipses even the targeted strikes of the Space Marines. Custodians clad in Allarus Terminator plate or hefting mighty guardian spears lay down devastating fusillades of fire, annihilating lesser enemies that stand between them and their true target. Their armoured transports combine their efforts with the flashing guns of ancient-pattern Dreadnoughts and squads of Null Maidens wielding esoteric energy weapons to eliminate any war machine that might pose a threat.

More Sisters of Silence flit forward like amber-eyed ghosts, sometimes led by terrifying heroes and specialists such as Oblivion Knights and Shroudcasters. Flame and bolt leap from their guns. Their sizzling powered blades flash. Meanwhile their greatest weapon – the ability to cut even the most powerful psykers off from the tides of the empyrean – reaches out to smother the combat zone like a shroud.

Sometimes their prey – inevitably some arch-heretic or xenos warlord whose designs threaten the sanctity of Terra – will try to fight. On other occasions, wiser victims seek only to flee. Neither course offers any hope. To find oneself within the closing grip of the Talons of the Emperor is to be given, at best, a handful of moments to make peace with one's inevitable end.

Not since the Great Crusade have the Talons of the Emperor been so visibly active in the wider galaxy. Armed with some of the most devastating weaponry available to any branch of the Imperial military, they smite rogue psykers, purge mutant uprisings, stamp out rebellions and curtail the insidious schemes of alien and traitor alike in service of the Golden Throne.

E-I/41/917-O
TALONS UNSHEATHED

The worlds of Chyromada suffer relentless attacks by Aeldari of Craftworld Yme-Loc. Acting on warnings sent by one of the Eyes of the Emperor, the Gilded Chevaliers Shield Host and the Cobalt Reach Vigil strike as one. The Talons of the Emperor employ ancient esoterica to blind the aliens' powers of prophecy. Then, having secured the element of surprise, they attack even as the Aeldari press their own assault upon the macro-bastions of Jormungaard Heliosa. While the ancient war engines and masterful warriors of the Adeptus Custodes hold back the furious Engines of Vaul, the Sisters of Silence butcher the xenos psykers leading the invasion and end their threat.

MASTERWORK ARMOUR

The armour worn by each Custodian is unique to them, tailored to fit their precise dimensions. Each suit is fitted with highly sensitive proximity sensors that make it almost impossible for an enemy to catch the wearer by surprise, and powerful refractor field generators that render them impervious to harm. Their suits are made of auramite, an immensely tough substance with a golden colour that can be tinted on a molecular level.

The Vratine armour of the Silent Sisterhood, meanwhile, is similar in fashion to Space Marine power armour, combined with an ancient void mail of unknown origin. Such is the technology used to produce it, that it offers both incredible protection and gives the wearer complete freedom of movement.



VEXILLAS

The veteran Vexilus Praetors bear the Custodians' vexillas. These standards are topped with the aquila, blazing beacons that inspire Imperial forces while sapping the strength and resolve of their foes. It takes a century for the oath-sworn artisans of the Tower Aquilane to craft a single one of these magnificent standards. When one is completed, it is borne amidst processions of craft-thralls, Ministorum priests and heraldic servitors to the Auric Eyrie, a facility within the Imperial Palace where vexillas are held on stasis-podia until they are needed.

Many vexillas incorporate ancient martial technologies to support the Custodians in battle. The Vexilla Imperius, for instance, employs crypto-technological means to imbue the Emperor's Praetorians with incredible strength. The Vexilla Defensor, by comparison, is a pattern that generates a refractor field in a radius about the bearer. The terrifying Vexilla Magnifica, meanwhile, incorporates photophantasmic fluctuators and psycho-amplificator clarions. Its tightly focused effects burn out enemies' visual senses, shatter their thought patterns into fractal shards and reduce even veteran killers to mewling imbeciles overwhelmed by the Emperor's pitiless radiance.



MIGHT OF THE TEN THOUSAND

For ten millennia the Adeptus Custodes have maintained the security of the Sol System, the Throneworld and the Imperial Palace. When not actively pursuing threats, they are in a constant state of learning and training. Alongside their Blood Games, the Adeptus Custodes conduct fractal thought exercises, years-long strategic cogitations and elaborate hallucinarium mock conflicts, all in preparation for any danger that may present itself.

Even after the Emperor ascended to the Golden Throne, the Adeptus Custodes launched forays out into the galaxy where they deemed there to be threats grave enough. It was upon Guilliman's return, however, that they truly took up arms to go out into the galaxy in larger numbers, to stamp out threats to the Emperor far and wide.

The Custodians were designed to be the death of anything they might have to face in any context, and are tireless, vigilant and remorseless. When they strike, they can annihilate foes much greater in number and who have advantage of supply, fortification and geographic position. Nonetheless, the Adeptus Custodes are not an army per se, and are not expected to prosecute full-scale sweeping wars. Instead, their purpose is to utterly dominate any battlezone they fight in. They are a paramilitary force, not a strategic one, created to serve as bodyguards and eliminators of specific threats.

Thanks to the authority conveyed by the Magisterium Lex Ultima, the Adeptus Custodes can draw upon every facet of the Imperium's military, and it is this they use to command any vessel they require to traverse the stars. Some ships have served with the Custodians on so many occasions they have effectively become permanently attached to the Ten Thousand. Nonetheless, the Adeptus Custodes maintain some warships of their own – notably Falchion-class battleships. On occasion, they must respond so swiftly to a threat that there is no time to commandeer a vessel, and so maintaining their own battleships is essential to them. The Magisterium Lex Ultima also means that none can give the Adeptus Custodes orders besides the Emperor. Even Guilliman can only request their aid, and it is to the Imperium's great benefit that Captain-General Trajann Valoris, the current master of the Adeptus Custodes, agreed that his hosts should take a more active role in the galaxy. In fact, the Captain-General was more than willing, having already begun preparing his order for greater activity beyond the Sol System.

Nothing is spared to ensure that the Custodians have the very best wargear in the Imperium, in any volume they require. In acquiring their vast arsenal of weaponry, the Adeptus Custodes have no regard whatsoever for the amount of resources required, nor the rarity of the components necessary. They are armed deliberately to be able to deal with threats both within the realm of Mankind and without – being better equipped in every way imaginable is just one way in which the Adeptus Custodes assure their superiority.

Every Custodian's weapons are handcrafted especially for them by entire generations of hereditary artisans, whose families have only ever worked for the Custodians. These craftsmen themselves have been gene-forged to enhance traits of dexterity and extreme patience, which improve their skills even further. Every weapon and piece of wargear is an individual masterwork and a sublime example of craftsmanship. In addition to boasting incredible efficacy in battle, every weapon is a work of art, decorated with unique flourishes and designs. It is even possible that – in the very deep past – entire subcults of the old Mechanicum were cloistered within the Imperial Palace to produce some elements of the Adeptus Custodes' weaponry.

HOST OF HOSTS

Every Custodian is a small army unto themselves. Arrayed in the merciless might of all the martial gifts Terra's greatest artisans can bestow, each is the equal in battle of foes who consider themselves lords of slaughter. When the Custodians muster in number, nothing short of committing their greatest weapons and mightiest armies to the fight will help their foes resist them, and even such desperate measures as these – should the enemy be in any position to resort to them – are no guarantee of success.

Unlike the soldiers of other branches of the Imperial military, the warriors of the Adeptus Custodes commonly fight as individuals, rather than in cohesive units. The Custodians are more akin to a warrior aristocracy than a hierarchical fighting force like the Astra Militarum or Adeptus Astartes. Custodians operate within a system of meritocracy that sees success and ability afforded great honour, regardless of an individual's experience. This does not bring them disadvantage, however; in battle, it makes every squad – known to the Custodians as a sodality – a highly flexible unit that can be trusted to fulfil a role without overt command and control protocols being in place. Every Custodian, from the newly ascended to



'A wise man draws his swords when the time is right to wield them. A fool dies with blades still sheathed, fearing that there might yet come a time of greater need. For the sake of Emperor and Imperium both, we must take the fight to our enemies.'

- Trajann Valoris to Roboute Guilliman in the wake of the Lion's Gate Incursion

the Captain-General himself, is possessed of great tactical acumen. With their preternatural reaction speeds, wargear and physical strength combined, the Custodians have defeated enemies many times their own number.

Over the course of a Custodian's lifetime, they will accrue a number of honour-names and titles. These are based on glorious battlefield deeds, personal characteristics, life history and their current role. Many names are derived from those of tyrants and lords from Terran legend. All lend to a culture that harks back to a history deeper than any other Imperial organisation, which separates the Adeptus Custodes further from the rest of the Imperium and ties them closer to the timeless nature of the Emperor. These names are etched upon the inside of a Custodian's armour, or – in some cases – even microscopically onto their bones. The greatest amongst their ranks bear an incredible number of such names, their full titles spiralling up their auramite armour from boot to helm.

Hundreds of symbolic titles are used within the Adeptus Custodes, such as Aquila Commander, Justus Supreme or Emperor's Headsman. Some they keep for life, such as Shieldsmith, which is awarded to any Custodian who has successfully won a Blood Game. Conversely, a Custodian who has stood amongst the Companions will forever be known as Honoured Watchman.

ORGANISATION

The Adeptus Custodes' organisation is a deliberately contradictory construct. On the one hand, in actual, practical terms its command structure is both remarkably flat and extremely straightforward. For the most part, this is because every Custodian knows their duty and – more often than not – the best way to go about discharging it. Such singular beings require little in the way of strategic oversight and absolutely no coercing or commanding, unlike the all-too-fallible soldiery of merely Human armies. Nor do they operate on so grand a scale as to require much in the way of centralised command and control or the martial framework to disseminate massed strategies. It is unusual in the extreme for more than a few dozen Custodians to take to the field as one, and even should they be cut off from one another they will suffer only the most minor of operational degradation, so capable and decisive is every individual warrior. It is hardly a surprise that their organisation requires the most basic of hierarchies.

On the other hand, the face the Custodians present to the wider Imperium – when required to do so at all – has an intentionally labyrinthine aspect, the better to confound scrutiny or attempts at hostile intelligence gathering. Most of what appears archaic complexity, however, is in truth a melange of traditions with numerous overlapping orders and chambers that have more to do with shared culture and ceremony than martial structure.

The Adeptus Custodes are led by the Captain-General, who has absolute authority over the entire organisation and speaks with the voice of the Emperor. They are advised by the Custodian Tribunate, ten veteran warriors who are among the keenest minds after the Captain-General in the Ten Thousand. They must serve for at least ten years, though their membership is rotated periodically to prevent complacency and ensure fresh wisdom comes to the fore. To join the Tribunate, a Custodian must have earned ten names and won three great victories. During their time of service, no member of the Tribunate takes to the battlefield unless in the most extreme circumstances – their entire focus is supporting the Captain-General in strategic and diplomatic matters.

Most Custodians belong to one of five broad orders. Though not battle formations, they are ceremonial groupings that date back millennia. The Hykanatoi Order contains the main strength of the Adeptus Custodes, and does not typically display any obvious battlefield specialism. Allarus Custodians and other heavy units that – even by the already terrifying



standards of the Adeptus Custodes – can be classed as shock troops are often a part of the Tharanatoi Order.

A key function of the Adeptus Custodes has always been speed – they once had to be ready to accompany the Emperor wherever he went – and they must remain capable of responding to new threats with incredible fury. Reconnaissance and the ability to counterstrike are cornerstone skills of the Custodians, and the Kataphraktoi Order has been an instrumental part of that – Vertus Praetors mounted upon Dawneagle jetbikes often being among its members.

The Custodians have always behaved as a shadow force in the Imperium, the Ephoroi being exemplars of this. They have carried out missions of vital import to the Emperor's security for thousands of years, and their networks of spies and contacts are enormous. Many Custodians are involved in the process of carrying out covert missions on the Emperor's behalf, including countersurveillance and assassination.

The smallest order is the Moritoi, or the honoured dead who walked. These are the Adeptus Custodes' Dreadnoughts – combat walkers with fallen Custodians interred eternally within – and they have much experience and wisdom.

SHIELD-CAPTAINS

The Shield-Captains are the most visible Custodian leaders to those few who have ever fought beside the Ten Thousand. Warriors of supreme insight, tactical acumen and knowledge, they often take on the responsibility of leading fighting forces of Custodians or Talons of the Emperor into battle and are – in their turn – entrusted by their comrades to do so.

However, many Shield-Captains boast additional titles that they have been assigned or are linked to other duties they hold. One named Master Castellan, for instance, is considered the ritual Keeper of the Keys to the Eternity Gate within the Emperor's Palace. A Shield-Captain graced with the title of the Hand Unseen, by comparison, holds covert responsibility for approving the deployment of Ephoroi assets beyond Terra, while the one who bears the honorific of the Starspun Mantle is placed in charge of ensuring that the Custodians' dedicated void dock facilities in geostationary orbit above the Antipodaeic Clusters are guarded and defended correctly.

Regardless of their broader responsibilities and ritualistic epithets, when a Shield-Captain assumes command of a martial deployment they apply their entire focus to that task alone, setting aside all other considerations until the bloody work of battle is done.

VENERABLE MACHINES

The Adeptus Custodes – and to a lesser extent the Sisters of Silence – have access to ancient war engines that hail from the days of the Great Crusade itself. Venerable Contemptor Dreadnoughts, for instance, use technology the Imperium can no longer replicate, such as atomantic shields that dispel laser blasts and incoming artillery shells. Auto-repair protocols, motive shrines and auto-sanctified backup systems take the strain should the auramite-clad chassis come under severe trauma.

The Land Raiders of the Adeptus Custodes, meanwhile, are fighting vehicles even more ancient and powerful than most of those used by the Adeptus Astartes. Clad in hyperdurable adamantine armour, armed with fearsome weaponry and capable of transporting a full squad of warriors to battle, these Venerable Land Raiders are extremely rare. Among the most complex elements of their construction are their Magos-class machine spirits that, while noble, are bellicose and require time to tame. They are so powerful that they can fire the vehicle's weapons, operate its self-repair systems and even take over if the crew are slain. It is a testament to the Custodians' importance that their primary ground transport is this mighty vehicle – some of which have fought since the Great Crusade.

It is rumoured that the Talons of the Emperor have access to some war machines even rarer and more esoteric than Venerable Contemptor Dreadnoughts or Land Raiders. Stories persist of stranger patterns of mighty Dreadnought, of predatory and stealth-capable gunships, and of anti-gravitic fighting vehicles that employ technologies proscribed since Old Night.







SHIELD COMPANIES

A shield company is a temporary formation of Custodians brought together by a Shield-Captain, as and when a force is required. There appears to be no regulation as to what form a shield company takes, how many warriors may be a part of it or what orders or chambers they belong to – the Shield-Captain is granted the autonomy to draw upon whichever warriors and whatever assets they feel are best suited for the task. A Shield-Captain may draw upon significant numbers of Allarus Terminators if they believe they will have to fight in boarding actions, or Vertus Praetors if they expect to fight on vast open battlefields. They will also likely be joined by a number of senior warriors, such as Blade Champions who specialise in singling out and laying low the enemy's most powerful combatants, or Vexilus Praetors. These latter not only bear aloft the honour and glory of the Adeptus Custodes, but also their tall vexilla house complex data-transmitters or ancient technological shield generators to augment the might of nearby comrades. Such proven veterans act as the Shield-Captain's companions and can also lead forces in their own right. A Shield-Captain may name their shield company, such as the Gilded Talons led by Archturus Paliades, or the Auric Blade led by Boudikari Heliathon. Warriors may fight as a part of many shield companies during their lifetime, and a Shield-Captain may reform the same shield company on multiple occasions when they are assigned a suitable task by the Captain-General.

Alongside its Custodian complement, a shield company is joined by a number of supporting assets, known as its Imperatus Auxila. These may include warships, vehicles and Dreadnoughts, as well as non-combatant agents. Collectively, the task of the Imperatus Auxila is to help ensure that a shield company reaches battle precisely where and when they are needed, with all the necessary heavy firepower, armoured transportation and strategic intelligence required to strike hard and true.

SHIELD HOSTS

On occasion, a number of shield companies are brought together into what is known as a shield host – collectively, the auxiliary units attached to such a formation are known as the Maximus Auxila, though in practice each shield company fights with its own Imperatus Auxila.

A shield host is commanded by the Shield-Captains of all its shield companies. Just as a Shield-Captain will take counsel from any of their shield company, so such a gathering of warrior lords and ladies are quick to offer and accept martial wisdom without ego. It is common for one amongst their number to be deemed the commander. Yet in practice they go to battle as peers and it has been known, should the strategic situation shift towards a new area of martial expertise, for mastery of a shield host to pass from one Shield-Captain to another – or to an Oblivion Knight of the Sisters of Silence in the face of a dire psychic threat – as expediency requires.

Shield hosts are only formed in rare and dire circumstances. Like shield companies, they are created on a temporary basis, with the potential to be reformed if needed. The Solar Furies shield host, for example, was first assembled out of no fewer than five shield companies in M36 – when a Necron tomb world awakened perilously close to Terra – and has been reformed to answer similarly dire threats many times since. By comparison, the Whetted Blade Shield Host came together once, during the horrors of the Nova Terra Interregnum, their deeds never to be disclosed while the Imperium endures.

A shield host can comprise two or more shield companies, and due to the very loose regimentation that the Custodians' armies work by, it is perfectly possible for any given shield host to be smaller than a large shield company.

Whilst nominally shield hosts are temporary in nature, some have never been disbanded since their initial formation, the task for which they were founded having never concluded. Such permanent institutions include the Shadowkeepers, guarding the deepest vaults of the Imperial Palace; the Solar Watch, responsible for the borders of the Sol System; the Dread Host, who are the greatest bane of the Emperor's enemies; the Aquilan Shield, protecting some of the Imperium's most important heroes, and the Emperor's messengers known as the Emissaries Imperatus.

Others are charged with politically delicate duties; the Technologors Noctus Cognis, for example, garrison the Ferrum Raptoris star keep in orbit around Mars, watching over the Tech-Priests of the Red Planet and other forge worlds. The Miserine Delegates, meanwhile, are covert Custodians who slipped aboard the Imperial Fists fortress monastery *Phalanx* after its return to Terra. Those warriors remain aboard the vessel even though it has since relocated to the heart of the Fourth Tyrannic War. They conceal themselves by technological means or play the parts of gene-bulked labour ogres, watching for any hint that so mighty a vessel might be turned against the interests of the Golden Throne. The Imperial Fists, in their turn, are not fool enough to have entirely missed the presence of such potent beings. However, there is no better way to show their loyalty than to knowingly permit this continued vigilance.

CUSTODES DEPLOYMENTS

The Adeptus Custodes differ from the vast majority of Imperial military organisations in that their armies obey only the loosest regimentation. Those Custodians that lead each force are permitted vast autonomy in selecting whatever forces they believe they will require to complete their mission, with only the broadest organisational guidelines by which to abide.

COMMANDERS

A shield host is typically made up of multiple shield companies, each of which is commanded by a Shield-Captain.

SHIELD COMPANY | SHIELD COMPANY | SHIELD COMPANY | SHIELD COMPANY

SHIELD-CAPTAIN

Shield-Captains are supported by the wise counsel of several Vexilus Praetors, and often additional champions who act as their companions.

CUSTODIAN GUARD | CUSTODIAN GUARD | VEXILUS PRAETOR | ALLARUS TERMINATORS | VERTUS PRAETORS

IMPERATUS AUXILA

Supporting assets attached to shield companies are designated as Imperatus Auxila. These range from war engines and Dreadnoughts to seconded warships, and even non-combatant field agents.

MAXIMUS AUXILA

Shield hosts gather all the auxiliary assets of their shield companies under the single umbrella heading of Maximus Auxila. For practical purposes, however, these assets still fight with their parent shield companies.

No Custodian is formally or permanently attached to a single shield company or shield host, and many will fight for multiple such formations as and when needed. Nonetheless, shield companies can be reformed with many of the same Custodes for new missions.



TRAJANN VALORIS

CAPTAIN-GENERAL, CHIEF CUSTODIAN, FIRST OF THE TEN THOUSAND

Many claim Trajann Valoris is the greatest warrior to have ever held the title of Captain-General. He has stood amongst the ranks of the High Lords of Terra and leads great military campaigns of the Ten Thousand.

Trajann Valoris seems to have been marked for greatness from early on, having completed two Blood Games within the first ten years of his service. A superlative tactician and aggressive fighter, he was swiftly elevated to the Allarus Custodians. While there, he won many names for his heroic actions, which included breaking a systemwide network of Alpha Legion cult cells in Darjun, destroying the Ork Mega-Gargant factories of Big Mek 'Eavystomp and stamping out the early awakening of a Necron tomb on Zarthan VII.



Valoris later went on to serve twenty-two years amongst the Companions – the direct bodyguards of the Emperor – but was reassigned due to his clear desire to take the fight to the enemy and identify distant and inchoate threats. Shortly after he was promoted to Shield-Captain and spent centuries leading sorties from Terra. Recognising his aggression as a potential source of inefficiency, Valoris honed his temperament, deliberately matching his fierceness with comprehensive foreknowledge – which he did in part by cultivating networks of informants all over the Imperium. He became known for observing his enemies carefully, predicting their movements and launching a decisive blow, always attacking at the optimum time and place.

Valoris was declared Captain-General after the fall of his predecessor, Andros Launceddre, at the Battle of the Black Pyre. As tradition dictated, he took up the armour and weapons of his former lord along with Launceddre's mantle of power. These include the huge polearm known as the Watcher's Axe, which also incorporates a master-crafted bolt weapon known as the Eagle's Scream that fires armour piercing penetrator bolts at a ferocious rate. There is also the Castellan Plate – a suit of armour incorporating an auramite halo and a cloak made of woven adamantine thread, which flows like cloth but can turn aside blast and blade alike. In addition, Valoris carries the Moment Shackle, a relic from the Dark Age of Technology that lets him trap fragments of temporal energy, slow local time or even excise split seconds from history.

Under Valoris' leadership, the number of Blood Games has increased tenfold, defences of stable warp routes to Terra have been strengthened, the Custodes' spy network has expanded and countless threats – both on Terra and beyond – have been expunged. He even called back some of the Sisters of Silence in secret before Guilliman's return. It was almost as if he had foreseen the Primarch's return to the Imperium. The Adeptus Custodes have never been in a better position to take the fight to the stars than with Valoris at the helm. Some have suggested that the Moment Shackle gives Valoris some kind of rare insight into what the future holds, helping him to make the most timely and important decisions. Regardless of the truth, his incredible leadership, martial and decision making qualities make him an ideal leader for the Adeptus Custodes in the Era Indomitus.


The Silent
Sisterhood

NULL MAIDENS

Amongst all the strange mutations of the Human genome, one of the rarest is that of blanks – those who bear the mark of the Pariah. Such individuals have no contact with the warp and are thus both immune – and anathema – to warpcraft and those who wield it. This potent ability is powerfully harnessed in the warriors known as the Sisters of Silence though – like all afflicted by this strange curse – they have suffered for their powers.

The Sisters of Silence were formed to serve as the militant arm of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. Being blanks, they were the perfect warriors to accompany the Black Ships – those sinister vessels that ply the spaceways of the Imperium and claim tithes of psykers to serve Humanity or be fed to the mechanisms of the Golden Throne. This is a duty these warriors are said to have undertaken since the beginning of the Great Crusade, yet it is not their only purpose. Skilled warriors every bit as dedicated and loyal as the Custodians, they answered directly to the Emperor before his ascension to the Golden Throne and fought many battles in his name.

After the tragic conclusion of the Horus Heresy, many of the Sisters of Silence lay slain and even more were left purposeless and despairing. Possession of the Pariah gene protects one against the powers of warpcraft but it also has the terrible side effect of rendering its bearer's mere presence uncomfortable – sometimes unbearable – to the vast majority of Humanity. It is a grim irony that many who feel the skin-crawling effects of a blank's presence mistake it for the touch of the very uncanny powers that they are, in truth, the best defence against. Certainly this was so with the zealots of the rapidly spreading Imperial Creed, whose fear and persecution contributed to many surviving Silent Sisters departing the Sol System altogether. Though those who served aboard the Black Ships remained, the wider order of the Silent Sisterhood fragmented into countless groups and was lost amidst the immensity of the Imperium. Many still sought to hunt malefic witches, continuing to serve the Throneworld on their own terms. Others simply sought the solace of escape and isolation upon the fringes of Human society.

RENAISSANCE

This all changed with Primarch Roboute Guilliman's return. He remembered the Sisters' value and importance. After the Battle of Luna, where he fought alongside them, Guilliman declared the Dispensatus Anathema. Those Sisters who had stood beside him were to be dispatched to find others of their kind in neighbouring sectors. Many of those they discovered came to Terra, their collective sense of duty still strong.

Guilliman ordered the restoration of the Somnus Citadel on Luna – the Sisters' ancient fortress that had been abandoned during the Horus Heresy and had since fallen into ruin. He also appointed Sister Asurma – of the convent on the planet Yllax – as Sister-Commander of the entire Silent Sisterhood. She vowed to grow her ranks, as well as never let her Order's power be weakened by other Imperial bodies. There was much work to be done in this regard, as new prison-fortresses were built for the ever swelling numbers of psykers claimed by the Great Tithe, and old and abandoned keeps the Sisters once managed were restored. Even with Guilliman's support, resistance from the Ecclesiarchy and other such bodies was considerable.

THE ERA INDOMITUS

With new-found support, organisation and confidence, the Sisters of Silence have stepped up their activity in every regard – though in comparison to most other Imperial forces they remain vanishingly rare. Still, the Sisters are a relentless force who answer to none but the Golden Throne. They are coldly rational, possess great tactical discipline and are as adept at utilising stealth and counter-surveillance as they are at launching rapid, overlapping assaults of bolter, flamer and blade. The Silent Sisterhood knows the value of shock, awe and terror, capitalising on their horrific abilities to destroy mind-plagued soldiers, mutants, armed cults or psychically compelled puppets. Used to being outnumbered, they strike quickly to avoid being overwhelmed and specialise in close-quarters combat. Despite all the terrors they have witnessed, their conditioning and determination drive them again and again to confront the unspeakable horrors they face. Few can stand against them when the Sisters commit to action.

In addition to serving with the Indomitus Crusade Fleets, the Silent Sisterhood pursues its own agendas and fights its own wars. Some battle alongside the Inquisition and infamous hunter-squads of the Black Ships. Formations of Sisters have infiltrated the hyperspatial tunnels of the webway, neutralised spectral attacks in strategically vital war zones and raided daemon worlds revealed by the ebbing and flowing of the Great Rift.

There is a hint of feral barbarism in the manner and appearance of the Sisters of Silence, which they are careful to curate the better to strike fear into their prey. Their armour is ornate and knightly, inset with gems and with flourishes of

E-I/41/4593-U
DARK BOUNTY

Kindreds of the Kronus Hegemony strike at Black Ships moving through the Nydosh Sub-sector. They kill the vessels' defenders, butcher the most dangerous psykers, and steal the rest away. Relentless investigation by the Talons of the Emperor reveals not simple xenos piracy - as the attacks had been intended to look - but instead a conspiracy by a number of planetary governors. Struggling to pay the Imperial tithe amidst civil unrest and rampant corruption, they instead hired the Kin mercenaries to steal other worlds' psychic offerings to meet their own shortfall. Upon this revelation, the talons show mercy to neither the wayward governors nor their abhuman hirelings.



E-I/41/52359-/* <<<**
A TIME OF DREAD OMENS

The emergence upon the galactic stage first of the Arks of Omen and then, even worse, of the daemon world-engine of Wyrmwood, sees many Custodians set out into the stars. Some, such as the Companions of Hysoss or the Swords of the Void Shield Company, seek to eliminate Arks of Omen whose paths of destruction may bring them towards Terra. Others - most notably an alliance of sodalities from the Shadowkeepers, the Dread Host, the Emissaries Imperatus and the Guardians Stellar Shield Hosts - swear oaths to locate Wyrmwood itself and destroy this infernal device. These questing bands face foes, peril and unsettling mysteries stemming both from within the Imperium and without.

Imperial iconography, and they have topknots of long hair that they leave unshorn unless a sworn quarry has escaped them. Their cadres and subunits frequently adopt totemesque names referring to predatory animals. For all the cold rationale of the Silent Sisterhood, for all its precision and careful training and discipline, they are hunters. To hunt is to fulfil a primal Human urge, one that brings out the thrill of the chase and even bloodlust. The Sisters, though functionally soulless, are thus not totally above the ways of the Humanity into which they are born and fight for.

In the Era Indomitus, much of the Silent Sisterhood's more esoteric weaponry – that with which it prosecuted its missions during the Great Crusade – has long since been lost to time. The Sisters of Silence once had vast amounts of technology that was never even heard of, let alone used, outside of their ranks. Armoured skimmers of surpassingly esoteric design whose stealthy approach could not be detected by its luckless quarry; anti-psyker armaments whose manufacture is now lost to the Adeptus Mechanicus; energy blades so valuable that wars have been fought to possess even one such ancient and potent relic; devices supposedly crafted by the hand of the Emperor himself; such riches are lost to the Sisters of Silence in this ignorant modern age. The equipment the Sisters still have is, as it always was, extremely resource-intensive. The required materials are rare and obscure, and even harder to acquire in quantity since the emergence of the Great Rift. Nonetheless, such martial riches are never squandered – every armament wielded by the Sisters of Silence is a potent tool of war, rendered all the more perilous in their hands.



THOUGHTMARK

The Sisters of Silence take a vow of silence upon completing training, emphasised further by the portcullis-style armoured gorget most wear, which completely covers the lower portion of their face. Though these warriors' discipline is absolute, such measures symbolise their oaths never to speak of the terrible secrets they know, nor any word of clemency to their foes.

Though they do not speak, Sisters of Silence still need to be able to communicate. They use a ritualised form of sign language called Thoughtmark to speak with each other, which combines gestures and body language. When engaging with others outside of their order, this speech can be rendered audible by techno-linguis systems that allow sign forms to be machine-readable at great speed, or even output them as vox-signals if needed. Alternatively, they are translated by the Proloquors – acolytes of the order yet to take their vows.

The Sisters are fluent in other non-verbal means of communication, such as voidsys and graph-binarc, for conversing with other Imperial forces. In times past, they were fluent in the battle-signs of the Legiones Astartes, though over time much of this skill has been lost or rendered redundant. The Sisters have either not fought alongside the Space Marines, or the hundreds of Chapters' signs have diverged and adapted.

For all the Null Maidens' varied means of communication, the style most likely witnessed – if not understood – by other Imperial warriors upon the field of war is Battlemark. Far less subtle or nuanced than Thoughtmark, the gestures of this language are clear and unequivocal – they leave no room for mistaken meaning in the life-and-death arena of the battlefield. Silent Sisters will switch to Battlemark whenever danger threatens or swift action is required. They will also, on occasion, employ it to emphasise an especially menacing point during debate or negotiation.

SILENT VIGILS

After Roboute Guilliman declared the Dispensatus Anathema, the disparate Sisters of Silence scattered all over the Imperium were made a crucial element of its armed forces. One of the greatest changes of all was the re-establishment of the vigils – the way by which the Silent Sisters were united and organised.

Each band of Sisters that came to Terra had its own tactics, character and traditions formulated over ten thousand years of adapting in isolation. The various groups became cadres of the Vigil Indomitus. Many of the groups of Silent Sisters that answered Guilliman's summons were but representatives of larger organisations still engaged in self-imposed duties and crusades elsewhere in the Imperium. Most of the Vigil Indomitus' cadres adopted the gold and red of the Adeptus Custodes in honour of the respect afforded them by the Ten Thousand.

As the fleets of the Indomitus Crusade reached out into the galaxy, more and more enclaves of Silent Sisters were discovered. Some were not found for years after the crusade was launched, but all were formed into vigils and cadres, and given regions of jurisdiction. There was no uniformity to the range of a vigil's area of supervision – some watched over a single system, others an entire sector. Naturally, some of these groups were larger than others, and so commanded greater territory. Much of the real organisational work went into removing areas of overlap and ensuring every Imperial world was within the purview of one vigil or another. Though much of this was done amicably, disagreements arose as some vigils saw valuable recruiting grounds handed over to others, or felt that their resources would be greatly overstretched when given more territory. Other areas of difficulty were faced when small groups were expected to merge by Sister-Commander Asurma, in order to create a vigil of more effective size, or when especially remote enclaves of Sisters were redeployed where their talents could be put to greater use.

Each vigil has great autonomy, answering only to the High Lords of Terra themselves. They are named most frequently for the area of space they are responsible for, or the world they are based on, such as the vigil of Darius III, the Segritaes Nebula Vigil and the Reductus Sector Vigil. The martial strength of a vigil varies, with some comprising many thousands of Sisters. Each new vigil broke down its strength into cadres where it had the numbers to do so. Some cadres have adapted the colour scheme of their vigil – using the same colours in different combinations as they too develop their own identity and traditions. Most also are given unique designations. Many of these identities are totemic, even feral in their nature, such as the Bone Tigers of the Outer Solar Vigil and the Steel Drakes of the Reductus Sector Vigil. Cadres have access to all the resources of their vigil, and though most can and do perform all the duties of the Sisters of Silence, some become specialised in particular tasks – investigating non-compliance with the Great Tithe, hunting fleeing psykers or monitoring specific regions of space.

Most vigils operate out of a fortified keep known as a spire-convent. These differ in form and layout according to the size, history, needs and preferences of the vigil that uses them. The spire-convent of the Vigil of Orshan's Belt is built into the former mountain-lair of an Ork chieftain, slaughtered during the Horus Heresy. The Vigil of Hrav-Ulan have adapted a city-sized mining rig that roves across their home world on sets of tracks bigger than super-heavy tanks. The Stragithen XII Vigil's spire-convent is hidden beneath the ground, its corridors a cave network – the only sign of its presence is a ruined monastery sat atop a hillside, long forgotten by the barbaric native population.

RECRUITMENT

With their order restored to a place of importance in the Imperium, it has become much easier for the Sisters of Silence to recruit and expand their numbers. Virtually every vigil is growing. The Great Tithe is one source, as the people of many worlds cannot tell the difference between the powers of a blank and those of a psyker. Every Sister is expected by her superiors to be on the lookout for potential recruits when conducting missions and, in this era of growth, it is a duty gladly undertaken by many. Some Silent Sisters even seek out Pariahs who cannot join the Silent Sisterhood, for reasons such as ailment – such individuals are still dangerous in the hands of an enemy, and can serve instead as Culexus Assassins or Soul-guardians in the Emperor's Palace.

The Sisters of Silence receive many recruits from Inquisitors, and it is rumoured that the Sisterhood secretly guard certain bloodlines and are husbanding many more of these than ever before. Stories explain that the Silent Sisters are doing this to maintain a guaranteed source of recruits, independent of any other Imperial branch. Some even speak of selective breeding, to in some way maximise the likelihood of blanks of a certain level of potency being born – if such a thing is even possible. Any recruits to the Silent Sisterhood face enormously arduous training. They must master warrior skills, as well as learning how to project or suppress the auras of their abilities – many die in the process.



HUES OF THE VIGILS

Each vigil of Silent Sisters employs its own martial colour scheme, typically comprising several elements. The first is the colouration of their Vratine armour, which can be finished in a wide range of different metallic hues. The second is the colour of their cloak linings and loincloths, while the last is the shade – often vivid and striking – that the Silent Sisters dye their topknots. The Vigil Indomitus, for example, wear armour of rich golden colouration to echo that of the Custodians, accompanied by crimson cloth and hair. By comparison, the fleet-based Nachmund Vigil go to battle with their hair dyed blue-grey, their armour finished like dark brass, and purple cloaks and loincloths swirling in the winds of war. As they are not a formally militarised organisation in the manner of the Astra Militarum or Space Marine Chapters, the Sisters of Silence do not typically use numerals or icons to distinguish individual cadres. However, many cadres do choose to mark themselves out with adaptations of their vigil's colours, warrior tattoos of aquilas and the like, or shared warrior jewellery and trophies.



Novamarines Captain Ishmayn stood resolute as bolt rounds caromed from his Terminator plate. From his position in the entrance to the mountain's upper smeltworks, Ishmayn could see Alpha Legionnaires and chanting cultists pouring up the lower slopes of Mountain-plex Ajax. The mountain had long ago been hollowed out by the industrious miners of Catagyl, and its excavated shell had been packed with layer upon layer of industrial machinery and forges. Stony flanks that had once supported dense forests were now barren and cracked. Nests of pipes, thermo-vents and ferratomic processor shrines jutted out through the mountain's hide where the trees had once been. Between their metallic mass and the clouds of smoke and vapour that billowed from them, they provided the advancing heretics with ample cover.

'Numerous,' observed Sergeant Tolevyr over helm-vox. He and his Terminator squad stood alongside their Captain, forming a blockade across the doorway that led into Ajax's heart. Arrayed upon industrial gantries and behind ferrocrete barricades around them were the remaining battle-brothers of Strike Force Ishmayn. They exchanged fire with the onrushing foe. Chanting cultists erupted in welters of gore as bolt shells blew them apart. Maimed Heretic Astartes crashed back down the slopes, limbs melted away by plasma blasts, armoured torsos torn open by krak missiles.

'We have seen off worse,' replied Ishmayn. He sighted his targeting reticule over an Alpha Legionnaire wielding a plasma gun who had just stepped from behind a mass of pipes. A squeeze of the trigger; the dull sense of dampened recoil as his storm bolter thump-thumped in his fist; a brief spike of satisfaction as the traitor's helm detonated and his corpse toppled into one of the molten rivers of slag that crawled down channels in the mountain's flanks.

'True enough, Brother-Captain, but we never had to fight in the sight of…that…' said Tolevyr. The Sergeant did not need to point out what he was referring to – it was all too obvious. High above the war-torn range of forge-mountains, up beyond the raging electrical storms that lashed Catagyl's tortured skies, the firmament was dominated by the roiling mass of the Great Rift. This was not the first time that Ishmayn had been forced to look upon warp storms – the life of a Space Marine was bound to expose him to many such infernal sights – but there was something different here. There was not a world in all the systems designated part of the Sanctus Wall whose skies were not polluted by the unholy aurorae of the rift. So close to the mouth of the Nachmund Gauntlet, the repulsive empyric phenomena were inescapable. Their corruption beamed down day and night.

'There is a strange malevolence here that I cannot make sense of,' he said, part in reply to Sergeant Tolevyr, part thinking aloud. The experienced Captain knew his words made little sense – what was a warp storm but pure malevolence made manifest, after all? Why should these phenomena seem somehow worse to him than any other he had seen, and why could he – one of the Emperor's own Adeptus Astartes – not quantify the feeling?

Frustrated, he shook the thought off and focused on the strategic vox-net. Even as Ishmayn aimed, fired, and aimed again, he absorbed the tactical discourse between his battle-brothers and refreshed his view of their and their enemies' positions, strengths and weakpoints.

'…see them moving up on the right flank, about to round that exchanger fane. Fire on my mark…'

'…ammunition reserves at twenty-one percent, summoning armorium cherub for reloads…'

'…die in the Emperor's name, you…'

Ishmayn was as satisfied as he could be with the situation. The enemy's numbers had proven more than enough to shatter the light skirmishing companies of Geskan Astra Militarum charged with contesting the mountain-plex's lower passes. Yet the Captain was confident that his force could hold off heretic cultists toiling uphill into bolt fire for as long as their ammunition held out. The Alpha Legionnaires were a hateful and unwelcome surprise, but they appeared to be few in number. Ishmayn was more than happy to purge those duplicitous traitors from the Emperor's realm, even if their presence did shift the tactical dynamic.

The Captain blink-clicked a rune in his auto-senses' peripheral vision, setting his vox-bead to transmit, heavily encrypted, to the entire strike force.

'Brothers, we need only hold this position for another nine-point-two-five minutes,' he said. 'Strategic inload shows the honourable Knights of House Gryphonne circling in through Ajax's western foothills. They will strike the enemy in their flank even as we drive down upon them from above. We will shatter these heretics and secure the peak in the Emperor's name!'

Runes of affirmation and voxed oaths of vengeance came back to him from his embattled brothers. Captain Ishmayn felt stern pride in them. His warriors would not falter.

Barely had the thought formed in the Captain's mind when, two hundred yards downslope on the Novamarines' left flank, Intercessor Squad Staebor exploded. All eight Space Marines, brave and accomplished warriors with centuries of combat experience and dozens of martial glories between them, simply erupted in a shock wave of vapourised gore and spinning armour fragments.



So sudden and catastrophic was the squad's annihilation that, for an instant, Captain Ishmayn could not reconcile what he was seeing.

'By the Throne of Terra,' breathed Sergeant Tolevyr.

Already, shrieking masses of cultists were pouring over the position Squad Staebor had occupied. They screeched with ecstasy. Some skidded in the gory slick that had – until moments before – been a squad of Adeptus Astartes battle-brothers. Others stooped to snatch up macabre trophies. Ishmayn's transhuman visual acuity showed him the glint of blood-greased bone and torn metal held aloft in heretic fists.

'Squad Rohyaer, seal that breach,' ordered Ishmayn as three centuries of combat experience kicked his mind back into gear. 'Anyone, acquire visual, what in the name of Honourum did that?'

For long moments, no response was forthcoming. The Assault Intercessors of Squad Rohyaer bounded downslope, their jump packs propelling them like missiles into the mobbing cultists. Their chainswords painted more gore across the already macabre scene. Ishmayn and the Terminators kept sending bolt rounds downslope, mowing down heretics with each volley. Novamarines kept firing, scanning the smoke and mayhem of the battlefield for the enemy's super-weapon even as lasbolts, autogun rounds, rocket-propelled grenades and bolt shells whipped back at them.

It was Incursor Sergeant Hyrol who finally identified the threat.

'Target confirmed, Brother-Captain, alpha-diabolus-class threat. The Fiend is here!'

A tank round could not have struck Ishmayn with greater force than Hyrol's words. The Fiend, here, doubtless leading the attack in person.

The war for Catagyl had been blighted from the start by unfettered witchery. Beneath the poisonous glare of the Great Rift, more psyker mutants than ever emerged amidst loyalist and heretic forces alike. Some had even manifested newfound powers in the midst of battle. Yet no amount of untrained rogue psykers or deluded would-be-saints came close to causing the devastation wrought by the coven Imperial strategoes had named the Thirteenth Curse.

Ishmayn didn't know the provenance of the name itself, nor did he much care – certainly that detail hadn't been part of his strategic inloads. He did know, however, that this coven of Black Legion Sorcerers comprised five alpha-level psykers – codenamed the Fiend, the Harvest, the Eye, the Lament, and the Headsman – whose sorcerous abilities were little short of apocalyptic. He had briefly skimmed the data-addenda within which members of sector command argued over what had so augmented the supernatural abilities of these Sorcerers. Some claimed it was proximity to the Great Rift. Others blamed a heretofore unknown property of Catagyl itself. Several vocal priests claimed the tragic paucity of faith amongst the planet's populace was to blame.

Such fruitless debate was just so much hot air in the face of the Sorcerers' powers. It did not matter to warriors like Ishmayn why the Harvest possessed the psychic might to dismember a Warhound Titan during the fight for Hethker's Pass; what had given rise to the Lament's ability to whisper the garrison of an orbital defence platform to death through a single corrupted vox channel that could not be shut off; how it could be that the Eye had turned two hundred Imperial Guardsmen bodily inside out with a single gesture during the retreat from Casmis. All that mattered was that these dread psykers were present on Catagyl, and that their witchcraft turned every battle they joined into a devastating defeat for the loyalists.

And, thought Captain Ishmayn with a thrill of disquiet, the Fiend was here, now, seeking to do the same to his battle-brothers. That notion filled him with a fury as hot as any smelting engine labouring in the mountain at his back.

'Brothers, this heretic has the blood of countless loyalists on his hands. Now he has added that of the Novamarines, and that will not stand! Target priority alpha-maximus. All other threats secondary. End this honourless cur!'

The smoke downslope coiled unnaturally before Ishmayn's eyes then tattered away as though caught in a sudden gale. Revealed was a single figure, a black-armoured Sorcerer advancing uphill with an unhurried stride. A cloak of flayed skins draped his shoulders. In one hand he carried an onyx staff covered in thorny protrusions that danced with poisonous green corposant. The other hand was open, palm up, almost as though offering a gesture of peace. The Sorcerer went unhelmed, revealing a face that was little more than a skull with pallid skin stretched tight across it. Bubbling tubes and nests of wires threaded in and out of his scalp. His eyes were hollow black pits. His mouth was twisted into a leer of cruel amusement.

The Novamarines let fly as one, a handful of their number maintaining suppressing fire upon the enemy host even as the rest of the strike force unleashed their fury upon the Fiend. Ishmayn centred his reticule on the Sorcerer's grinning skull visage and added his own fire to that of his battle-brothers.

Not a single shot hit home. Bolt shells whipped high, or ploughed into the ground and detonated around the Fiend's feet. Plasma blasts and melta beams scoured the slopes to either side of him. Explosive warheads coiled away and detonated amidst the cultists where they should have struck true. Ishmayn's mind told him that what he had just witnessed



was impossible, and yet it had happened. The Fiend came on, expression unchanging. Then he clenched his open hand into a fist.

Unbelievable pain tore through Captain Ishmayn's body. It felt as though his very bones had caught fire within his flesh, as though strands of razorwire were crawling like worms along his veins. He convulsed, his armour servos whining as they sought to prevent the Captain's violent motion from dislocating his joints or tearing his enhanced muscles. Ishmayn snarled in agony, only his armour keeping him from dropping to his knees. The taste of copper flooded up his throat into his mouth. The storm bolter dropped from his nerveless grip. Warning runes flashed and chimes sounded in his helm as his black carapace cracked within his chest and something ruptured deep inside him.

'Witchery…' gasped Sergeant Tolevyr, his voice blood-wet and straining. Fury and pain warred within Ishmayn as he saw the life sign runes of his battle-brothers flickering and dying. Groans of agony, wet death rattles,and the unmistakable grinding and popping of bone filled the vox as one by one, the warriors of Strike Force Ishmayn had the life crushed from them by sheer psychic might.

Ishmayn couldn't draw breath. His chest hitched so violently that it sent hairline fractures racing through the fused bone of his ribcage. He was dying, the Captain knew. They all were. And they were powerless to stop it.

When the gilded gunship shot low overhead, Ishmayn barely registered it. His vision was flaring black and crimson around the edges, star bursts flashing before him. Yet when the vessel came about and dropped straight down into the midst of the battlefield he could hardly miss it. It was no pattern of Imperial aircraft that he knew, but even through his pain Ishmayn could not mistake this golden, hawk-shaped vessel for any manner of traitor craft.

Laser fire blitzed from the turrets set into the gunship's belly. Missiles rained down from its wings. The fusillade tore into the Chaos Cultists and drove them back from the paralysed Novamarines in disarray. At the same moment, the craft's belly-ramp whined down and squads of lithe armoured warriors leapt from it to the mountainside below.

The instant the first of them sprang from the ramp, the pressure on Captain Ishmayn's body vanished. He hauled in a breath, the air tasting so sweet that he barely even felt the pain in his cracked ribcage as his lungs expanded. Ishmayn's vision cleared. His limbs were his own to move again. Mind reeling, he bent clumsily in his bulky armour, snatched up his storm bolter, then trained it on the scene downslope.

Thirty warriors had dropped from the gunship, which was now circling, weapons blazing, traitor rockets and energy blasts splashing from some manner of force field that enfolded its hull. Yet the aircraft was not what captured Ishmayn's attention. He recognised the new arrivals at last, with his thoughts clearing. Ishmayn had heard of them amidst the countless rumours that circulated through the task forces of Indomitus Fleet Secundus. He had wondered then whether they were fact or fiction. Now he saw the truth, and felt relief at their arrival even as the unreasoning repulsion of their presence washed over him like ice water.

The Sisters of Silence had formed a thin golden cordon around the Fiend. Half their number were firing into the heretics around them, raking the foe with bolt shells and jets of leaping flame. The other half had unsheathed gleaming longswords and were even now closing upon the heretic Sorcerer from all sides. Ishmayn saw to his immense satisfaction that the Fiend's self-satisfied leer had twisted into a mask of pain and horror. He was dragging in agonised breaths, as though being smothered by some invisible death shroud, and his limbs shuddered as though he were in the grip of some terrible ague. The Sorcerer snatched a bolt pistol from a holster at his waist and let fly, but his hand was shaking so badly that the shells flew wide.

Somehow, the Fiend managed to parry the first sword cut with his staff. The second came in low and sheared through his right knee. As the Sorcerer faltered, and his acolytes all across the mountainside wailed and hurled themselves at the Sisters of Silence, another blade flashed. Lightning exploded overhead. Black blood jetted. The severed head of a psyker whose powers had slain armies thumped to the ground and rolled downslope, now just a lump of meat, bone, and sparking wires.

Captain Ishmayn was at last recovering from the psychic onslaught, at least as much as he would this side of the Apothecarion. A glance told him that a little less than half his battle-brothers still lived. It would have to be enough.

He could not shake off the instinctive disquiet that radiated from these gilded hunters, yet neither would he abandon servants of the Emperor who had aided his warriors in their hour of need. The Sisters were fighting hard, but the death of the Fiend had driven the cultist hordes into paroxysms of dismayed fury and now saw them redouble the ferocity of their onslaught.

'The Sisters of Silence shall not stand alone, brothers,' Ishmayn commanded. 'For the glory of Honourum, they came to our aid and now we shall go to theirs! The Knights are four-point-three minutes out – drive the heretics back, form a battle line with the Sisters of Silence, and prepare to smash the foe between us and the Knights of House Gryphonne!'

As the smeltworks thundered on at his back, and the headless carcass of the Fiend bled its last onto the mountain's flanks, Captain Ishmayn and his warriors advanced.



THE SHADOWKEEPERS

WARDERS OF THE DARK CELLS

There are terrible secrets locked away beneath the Emperor's Palace. The duty of standing guard over them unto the end of time falls to the shield host known as the Shadowkeepers.

The Shadowkeepers hold the keys to the rune-locked portals hidden deep beneath the Imperial Palace. They alone know the ways by which the runic locks may be disengaged, the wards unbound and the sanctic circles breached. They alone know also that these things must never happen, for the Dark Cells hold such horrors that neither Mankind's sanity nor its empire would survive their release. The Shadowkeepers are devoted to this grim responsibility, patrolling the dark and silent corridors and vigilantly watching over the last terrors of Old Night.

It is a task that would soon drive most people mad, for though neither sight nor sound can escape the forbidden cells, the air of those corridors is charged with dread. A perpetual menace thickens the shadows and makes them crawl. Even the superhumans of the Adeptus Custodes are forever on edge in those dark oubliettes, for the sense of unspeakable threat never wanes.

It is a testament to the discipline and spiritual fortitude of the Shadowkeepers that they stand their guard unflinching, sometimes for decades at a time. If a Custodian leaves the Shadowkeepers, those who knew them before they undertook such onerous duties can immediately see how the experience has affected them. They are more watchful, more ruthless and less trusting. Few speak of what they have seen, heard or done, keeping the secrets of their sinister duty even after leaving the shadows of the cells far behind them.

The ranks of this shield host include many Custodian Wardens – the endlessly patient sentinels whose oaths of protection help them to focus upon the task at hand, to the exclusion of all else. The leaders of these forbidding sentries carry ancient weapons of mysterious provenance, their use intended as a last resort should anything ever break free from the Dark Cells.

For ten thousand years the Shadowkeepers have performed their duty, yet the coming of the Great Rift changed everything. With the power of Chaos spilling raw and seething into the spaces between the stars, new abominations have come to light. Worse still are the cells that stand suddenly empty – the entities and artefacts once contained within spirited away by some unholy force to curse the galaxy.

Fearing the consequences of this, the Shadowkeepers have sent more warriors than ever before out into the galaxy. These gaolers must trammel that which should not be, slaughtering all who seek to impede them, before returning their foul prizes to the cells where they belong.

THE LOCKWARDEN

The Shield-Captain who leads the Shadowkeepers is known as the Lockwarden, a title that is borne in perpetuity and garners respect from every other member of the Ten Thousand. The Lockwarden must be the sternest of all guardians and the most unrelenting and alert gaoler on Terra. Moreover, should any creature or relic escape the Dark Cells and need recapturing – or a new threat arise of such infernal malevolence that it must be imprisoned therein – it is their duty to personally oversee the operation.

The current incumbent of this position is Shield-Captain Borsa Thursk, who has been Lockwarden for a century and a half. He is a grim and frighteningly intense warrior, whose utter fearlessness and steely vigilance make him ideal for his role. It speaks volumes about the dire condition of the galaxy that Thursk only left Terra twice before the Cicatrix Maledictum emerged, yet he has barely set foot on the Throneworld since it yawned wide.

He has vowed to never leave the Shadowkeepers until every lost artefact and dark power has been recovered, and under his leadership the shield host has grown in number.

THE AQUILAN SHIELD

THE GILDED GUARDIANS

Certain servants of the Emperor bear great responsibilities deemed directly relevant to the safety of Terra. Such esteemed figures are afforded the protection of the Aquilan Shield, at least until their usefulness is thought to be at its end.

As the doomscryers of the Imperial Palace sift the empyrean for warnings of disaster, they also take note of those who – through example, thought or deed – are likely to avert such catastrophes before they threaten the Golden Throne. These fated individuals are honoured with the protection of the Aquilan Shield.

The Aquilan Shield are an informal organisation laced through the ranks of the Adeptus Custodes. They typically operate in small warrior bands, journeying across the stars to stand watch over their charges wherever they may be. No warning is given, nor permission asked – the warriors of the Aquilan Shield appear as if from nowhere, avatars of the Emperor's will who declare their ward to be under the protection of the Master of Mankind. Such an honour is beyond compare, and is rarely, if ever, refused.

Custodians who have once served amongst the Companions – those who personally protect the Golden Throne itself – commonly lend their talents to the grim bodyguards of the Aquilan Shield. Such Custodians have protected the lives of the greatest and most august personages in the Imperium – most notably the High Lords of Terra themselves. From the Master of the Navigators' Guild and the High Logisticar of the Adeptus Administratum, to the Lord Militant of the Imperium and the shadowed Master of the Officio Assassinorum, former Companions have acted as guardians for them all. To the Ten Thousand, such duties are simply an extension of their vows to protect the Emperor – in this case by safeguarding those assets most important to the successful running of his Imperium. Still, it is a role that has earned the Adeptus Custodes much favour in the eyes of Terra's noble elite.

The Aquilan Shield have also acted as bodyguards to Sororitas Canonesses, Lord Inquisitors, Astra Militarum generals, Space Marine Captains and even two crusade leaders bearing the title of Warmaster, staunchly ignoring the historic associations with he who first held that rank – the traitor Primarch, Horus. The Custodes of the Aquilan Shield have appeared amidst flares of golden light to watch over firebrand front line preachers, bewildered militia leaders and others of apparently little import and anonymous, lowly origin. The only unifying factor amongst them is that, while attending their duties beneath the gimlet gaze of the Emperor's own guards, these individuals are expected to achieve incredible things in the defence of the Throneworld – though they themselves rarely have any idea of the true significance of their actions. The Aquilan Shield fight to ensure such a future comes to pass, guarding their charges from harm until the exact moment the usefulness of the person under their protection is deemed spent. At that point, they depart without a word, leaving those they guarded to look to their own defence. Tragedy often follows, but this is of no concern to the Aquilan Shield – providing it does not jeopardise the safety of the Golden Throne.

One such action of the Aquilan Shield was the protection of Lieutenant Nathasian of the Cadian 86th. Slated for execution, he was spared when the grim-faced Custodians stepped from a teleport flare and cut down his commissariat would-be executioners. Nathasian was then free to exercise his flair for unconventional tactics, which soon saw his promotion to Warmaster of an entire Imperial crusade. The Shuddering Stars were swept clear of Ork tribes, stopping Waaagh! Dakskrag in its tracks before it could descend upon the Sol System. In the wake of Nathasian's triumph, the Adeptus Custodes departed as suddenly as they had arrived, and the commissariat saw Warmaster Nathasian dead before the day was out.

The Aquilan Shield will not always act in small groups. On occasion, the Custodians of this shield host must gather in greater numbers. Should the individual they seek to protect be surrounded by foes, they might have to fight their way to them. If the doomscryers detect a future protector of Terra early enough, they might not even have been born. If their future birth world is under threat from xenos invasion or controlled by heretics, then the Aquilan Shield will deploy to eliminate the danger so that the one they need to protect will actually come into existence. It is quite possible that these individuals will receive close protection from an Aquilan Shield sodality later in life also.





THE DREAD HOST

INSTRUMENT OF THE EMPEROR'S WRATH

Fear is a familiar weapon to the Imperium, used to deter enemies and keep seething populations in line. Yet there is no terror as pure and absolute as that invoked when the Emperor's own fury is unleashed to punish his foes.

The Dread Host represents a breathtaking concentration of military might. It numbers hundreds of Custodians, organised into multiple shield hosts and transported aboard a trio of pre-Heresy warships – the *Aetropas*, the *Clotis* and the *Lakesis* – collectively known as the *Moiraides*. The nature of this army is simple: it is the deliverer of the Emperor's judgement, his anger and his punishment made manifest.

Not for them the pinpoint rapid strike, the hidden war or the measured defensive action. Instead, the assembled Shield-Captains of the Dread Host identify the most visible and dramatic threats to the Segmentum Solar, and unleash upon them such overwhelming annihilation that it sends shock waves rolling through the warp itself.

Sometimes, one warship is sent, sometimes two; only a handful of times in the Imperium's history have all three of the *Moiraides* loosed their passengers against a single foe. Yet always the effect is the same. Spearheaded by dozens of Allarus Custodians, the Dread Host falls upon their victims with unstoppable force.

They slaughter the enemy's warriors and reduce their war engines to wreckage. They cast down false idols and set them aflame. They topple their foe's cities, sunder their strongholds, butcher their allies and decimate their followers. The Dread Host makes grisly examples of those who would dare lead such a challenge to the Emperor's dominion, accepting no surrender and foiling all bids at flight. By the time the Dread Host is finished, nothing remains of their luckless victims but the gruesome tales of their inevitable demise at the Emperor's hand.

The Dread Host have smashed unruly Ork Waaagh!s, obliterated rebellious star systems and crushed defiant traitor crusades. They have fought against enemies thousands of times their number and humbled them through strategy, speed and strength. With every campaign they spread the terror of the Emperor's wrath; the breathtaking bloodshed and absolute destruction they leave in their wake has dissuaded hundreds of uprisings and invasions before they could even begin.

It was this shield host that boarded and destroyed the Ark of Omen *Malignity's Shadow* after it launched an attack upon the planet of Uhldria. That mighty fortress world watched over one of the vital warp routes along which Imperial reinforcements were rushing into the Fourth Tyrannic War. It could not be allowed to be endangered, and so the Dread Host struck. With their combined might, the Custodians not only slew the Ark's heretical masters down to the last infernal warrior, but they also shattered its attendant Balefleet so utterly that it could never be reformed.

THE SANCTUM OF A THOUSAND EYES

The stronghold of the Dread Host rises to dominate an entire district of the Imperial Palace. This armoured bastion is lit with electro-braziers and arc-lumens of immense size, all angled to under-light the five hundred enormous eagle statues that line the Sanctum's upper battlements – alongside impressive arrays of anti-orbital ordnance, missile batteries, and esoteric energy cannon seen nowhere else on Terra.

Each as large as a super-heavy tank, these ominous sculptures are posed in vigilant stances, many staring up into the stellar gulf while the remainder peer down upon the thronging processionals below. Superstition runs rife that the eagles of the Sanctum of a Thousand Eyes can perceive disloyalty no matter where it lies, and the Emperor looks through their avian eyes to see the darkness in men's hearts.

To some extent this is true; each eagle contains a complex array of long-range augurs, servitor cogitation banks and multi-spectral listening devices that feed floods of information down into the Sanctum's data-shrines. This information is then sifted by expert Custodians and heavily augmetic data-analysts and used by the Dread Host to isolate and annihilate threats to the Golden Throne.

THE SOLAR WATCH

CASTELLANS OF THE BLESSED WORLDS

The Sol System is amongst the most heavily fortified of Mankind's stellar holdings. The Adeptus Custodes consider its worlds, star forts and space lanes to be extensions of their master's palace, and ensure that they are guarded accordingly.

From the vast orbital fortresses of Luna to the cloud-keeps of Jupiter and the deep-space star forts of the Halo Belt, Humanity maintains hundreds of strongholds throughout the Sol System. Billions of weapons point menacingly into the dark gulfs of space, ready to unleash spectacular devastation upon any foolish enough to threaten Mankind's seat of power. Armoured towers and gargoyle-festooned bastions loom over every approach, sanctified against the foul machinations of the Emperor's many foes. Entire fleets of Imperial Navy ships prowl the space lanes, vigilant for the slightest threat. Yet perhaps the most formidable of all Terra's outer defensive measures are the Custodians of the Solar Watch.

Consisting of several shield companies, the Solar Watch swear binding oaths to keep guard over the outer bastions of the Throneworld. They see themselves as the first true line of defence for the Imperial Palace, and it is their duty to ensure that no external threat ever makes it as far as Terra. To this end, they constantly patrol routes between the worlds and void-borne structures of the Sol System, ever vigilant for danger. Since the Battle of the Lion's Gate, the Solar Watch have stepped up their activities. They have brought hundreds more agents working at augur stations and pilgrim sancti-vetting docks into their employ. They have also added seven more stages to the process of gaining approval to approach Terra, extending it by years. The most significant change is their increased remit, which now extends to ensuring the security of the warp routes into Terra. This they do by monitoring and defending nearby systems with Mandeville points that link directly to the Sol System.

Though they typically travel via naval craft and interstellar trade ships, the Solar Watch maintain a formidable concentration of Venerable Land Raiders, and are typically able to deploy forces that are predominately – if not entirely – mechanised. This allows them to respond swiftly and with overwhelming force to any potentially threatening situation that may develop. While such dangers are not common within the Sol System, they are certainly not unheard of; the Solar Watch have been instrumental in bringing an end to daemon-worshipping cults, Inquisitorial coups and subtle xenos incursions on every world bar Mars. While their authority technically extends to the Red Planet, the Adeptus Custodes are wise enough to maintain cordial relations with the servants of the Omnissiah, and so travel to that world only occasionally. They keep their distance, expecting the Tech-Priests of Mars to censure their own deviants. Nevertheless, the Custodians know that Mars failed the test of loyalty once before, and may do so again – Archmagos Belisarius Cawl's work on the Primaris technology was greater indication than any of what can be hidden away on the Red Planet.

TALON SORTIES

The more aggressive of the Captain-Generals have traditionally charged the Solar Watch with performing sporadic talon sorties. These involve the watch gathering shield-company-strength forces, embarking them aboard squadrons of powerful voidships, then launching strikes against threats in the systems closest to Terra.

The Solar Watch do not waste their resources in war zones already heavily invested in by Imperial forces. Rather, they sally out to destroy developing threats or to eliminate enemies that have broken existing Imperial lines, typically acting upon intelligence gathered by trusted agents whose intel is verified by secret code-phrases. Deploying aboard their Venerable Land Raiders, and supported by Custodians astride Dawneagle jetbikes or piloting lightning-fast fighter craft, they slam into their enemies in fast-moving armoured spearheads. Prioritising the slaughter of supreme command elements and heavy combat assets, the Solar Watch cripple their enemies' capacity to function as an army of conquest before abruptly withdrawing, leaving lesser Imperial forces to mop up what remains.

After all, the duty of guarding the Sol System is a vital one, and the Solar Watch cannot leave their posts for long.



EMISSARIES IMPERATUS

HERALDS OF THE GOLDEN THRONE

In the days of the Great Crusade, the Emperor often entrusted crucial messages or artefacts to be borne by his Custodians. It is a duty they still fulfil now, speaking with the authority of the Master of Mankind himself.

Though the Emperor has long been confined to the Golden Throne, there are those amongst the Ten Thousand who claim to hear their master's voice during their meditations, and to feel his hand guiding them. To their comrades there is no implication of divine intervention in such manifestations. None amongst the Custodians has ever viewed the Emperor as a god. They merely see their liege's indomitable will at work, reaching out from his shattered frame to direct his praetorians as he did when he could still walk amongst them.

Those who feel the Emperor's guidance the keenest become Emissaries Imperatus. They band together in like-minded groups and, through discussion and meditation, interpret what it is that the Master of Mankind wishes them to do. With the tacit approval of the Captain-General, they bear the Emperor's words across the Imperium to commanders who must hear them. At other times they may unlock some ancient device from the palace vaults and bequeath it to whichever champion can wield it best.

While the emissaries themselves do not view their deeds – nor the inspiration for them – as possessing divine provenance, such is not the case with those who receive visitations from them. Such individuals almost inevitably believe themselves to be blessed beyond imagining. Their responses are accordingly zealous. So it is that the words of the Emissaries Imperatus have redirected – or even launched – sectorwide crusades, and seen threats intercepted and archeotech riches won that might otherwise have passed the Emperor's servants by.

The Emissaries Imperatus typically travel in lone sodalities – more than enough mighty warriors to bear a vital message or act as honour guard to some priceless artefact of war. However, there have been times when they deploy at shield company, or even shield host, strengths. Sometimes, such as was the case during the Onyx Stair Crusade or amidst the murder factories on Tallowgore, those they seek are known to be embattled by foes through which the Custodians must cut a path. On other occasions – most notably when their shield companies joined the torchbearer fleets of the Indomitus Crusade –the Custodians intend their mission to be but part of a wider campaign. In this instance, each shield company first bore Primaris gene-tech to the far-scattered Space Marine Chapters due to receive it. Once this mission had been accomplished, however, the Emissaries Imperatus fought on, acting as the speartip to many Indomitus battle groups.

BAYEZARA'S CONSTELLATION

Belonging solely to the Kataphraktoi Order, this shield company of Emissaries Imperatus screams into battle aboard a fleet of anti-gravitic attack vehicles. The vast majority of their number ride Dawneagle jetbikes, with Shield-Captain Bayezara Aggonades leading from astride her own armoured steed, *Harbinger's Wing*.

The shield company's aerial mobility has led them to employ a unique tactic which was, in turn, the inspiration for their name. Rather than deploy to a planet's surface in conventional fashion, Bayezara and her warriors instead mount their jetbikes as their voidship airbrakes across the target world's atmosphere. The moment drop-velocity is achieved, the constellation streak from the vessel's launch decks and plunge through the atmosphere like falling stars. Incautious foes may even be awed by the spectacle, at least until Bayezara's warriors descend upon them.

The constellation have bestowed no less than three relics of Terra's might upon worthy bearers since the Era Indomitus began, including the Spear of Retribution. It was they, also, who brought a message of hope to General Ichos on Mashena III and so turned the fate of an entire crusade that would otherwise have faltered to the ruin of the Sol System.

RAIMENT OF GLORY

The majority of the Adeptus Custodes go about their duties clad in auramite armour the colour of burnished gold, offset by flowing crimson robes. However, some shield companies or shield hosts adopt alternative colour schemes, either as a mark of honour or to represent some esoteric aspect of their place within the wider organisation and orders of the Adeptus Custodes.



The Shadowkeepers Shield Host wear armour whose auramite has – in large part – been tinted a velvet black to blend with the darkness of the corridors and cells they guard. It is offset by crimson that represents the blood of their sacrifices in duty's name.



Like most amongst the ranks of the Adeptus Custodes, the warriors of the Aquilan Shield are clad predominately in armour of golden hue. Their robes, meanwhile, are a regal purple fitting for such Terran warrior aristocracy.



The sable shoulder guards and white pteruges of the Dread Host are known – and feared – through the Sol System and beyond. Those who fight amongst its ranks have ensured this be the case, for their enemies' terror of them is amongst their most potent weapons.



The Solar Watch are unusual amongst the Adeptus Custodes for their bone-white armour. Its hue is intended to highlight the golden lightning bolts of Terra's might, that also signify the golden wrath of Sol itself.



A great many Custodians bear the ancient and traditional livery of gold and crimson that has been the hallmark of their order since its inception. Most of the more temporary shield hosts maintain these colours.



The Emissaries Imperatus bestride the galaxy in gilded auramite and the grey-white robes associated with messengers during the earliest days of the Unification Wars. Their shoulder guards, by contrast, are a rich blood red.

THE EYES OF THE EMPEROR

TARNISHED GOLD

The Adeptus Custodes are few in the grand scheme of the galaxy. Yet their vigilance must be absolute, their eyes everywhere. To this end, they employ sprawling networks of mortal agents, spies and informants, who in turn form webs around the ancient warriors known as the Eyes of the Emperor.

Though functionally immortal, even the warriors of the Adeptus Custodes eventually tire. Some suffer physical hurts that impact upon their ability to perform their duties, with lost limbs, artificial eyes or augmetic organs – even those of the very finest workmanship – unable to match the supernatural potency of the flesh and blood they replace. Others find their mental faculties beginning to erode, however slightly. Such Custodians are forced to acknowledge that their reaction times or mnemic awareness are not quite what they once were. For the vast majority of warriors, a tenth-of-a-second reduction in the speed at which blows are struck or parried might be considered negligible. For a Custodian, it is error enough to necessitate that their watch come to an end.

When a Custodian judges themselves no longer fit for duty they vanish into the void of the galaxy clad in hooded black robes. Some surrender their arms and armour to the Hall of Armaments before departure. Others retain their wargear with the Captain-General's blessing as a mark of particular honour. Such noble exiles still serve the Emperor. Wherever they travel, they observe. Some work alone, dark and ominous figures slipping through the shadows of the Emperor's realm. Others cultivate networks of informants and agents. Such spymasters use fear and intimidation to secure compliance where loyalty and honour will not suffice. Such a Custodian may not consider themselves mighty enough to stand watch any more, but their physical presence, fearsome intellect and devastating martial ability are enough to completely overawe anyone foolish enough to refuse their commands.

Should they bear witness to a situation developing that they believe threatens Terra or the Emperor, these watchers use secret channels to communicate a warning to the Captain-General. So do response forces of the Adeptus Custodes launch punitive and pre-emptive strikes throughout the Imperium, forewarned of danger by the Eyes of the Emperor.

THE SPEAR STILL SHARP

It is not in the nature of a Custodian to sit and watch while danger threatens the Throne. Those who have chosen exile as Eyes of the Emperor may have relinquished their right to guard the palace itself, but they have not opted for a life of peace. They may feel the developing peril needs to be managed until such time as a proper response arrives from Terra, whether by assassination, misinformation or raiding and sabotage. At other times, they may be uncertain whether a response will arrive at all – the galaxy is as anarchic and turbulent as it has ever been, and even the most reliable and hardened means of communication may fail in such days. For all these reasons, the Eyes of the Emperor have many ways of waging their own wars against threats to the Throne once their messages have been sent.

Some prefer to do their work remotely, with networks of agents ready to act on their behalf. Activating their most effective assets, they unleash kill teams of mercenaries, religious zealots or specialist agents. Some of these warriors may not know who they truly serve, more than one Eye of the Emperor having set up a false persona as an Inquisitor, high adept or even a cult demagogue, while never risking shattering the illusion by meeting their agents in person. Others may be all too aware that they fight on behalf of a former Custodian and thus strive all the harder in their service.

Other Eyes of the Emperor take a more direct approach. The martial skillset with which they were inculcated provides them with a remarkable array of options in this regard. Former Custodians are expert marksmen, lethal at close quarters with any weapon they wield, masters of esoteric martial arts, talented combat pilots, blade-tongued politickers, and – at need – forceful generals and fiery rabble rousers. All these talents are further honed by centuries – sometimes millennia – of experience. Storied Custodians such as once-Lockwarden Protagathene Xuul, former Blade Champion Zenobari Mehtmaxus, or the great martial philosopher Chaledda Xi Nzingria all became Eyes of the Emperor; each has since proven a terrifying nemesis to those who would threaten the Golden Throne.

Since the emergence of the Great Rift, the Eyes of the Emperor have been forced into a more proactive role. Many of their number – having wandered far from Terra in search of threats – found themselves cut off amidst the horrors of the Imperium Nihilus. Some have since become the protectors of isolated Imperial colonies, or even unseated corrupt planetary governors and taken their place as feudal lords of necessity. Meanwhile, throughout the storm-lashed worlds of the Kybraxis Reach, rumours persist of a warband of huge and seemingly superhuman warriors clad in golden armour and black robes who have driven off a score of heretic incursions and call themselves the Eyes Unblinded.



She had a name, but out here she set it aside as the Watcher demanded. Out here, she was Seven. Out here she rode her landrunner bike ever further into the Blastwastes. Groves of spineweeds and crumbling ruins flashed past to either side of the transitway. She saw shanty hovels, there and gone as she passed. Cambda Hab-plex now lay many miles behind.

Seven's clearance triptych had gotten her past its Enforcer blockades without question. As ever, a traitorous part of herself had hoped to be turned back to the comparative safety of the habs, but as she always did, she pushed such thoughts aside.

More miles under the gunmetal sky and the last of the ruins, shanties and undergrowth ran out, replaced by the emptiness of the Blastwastes proper. Seven kept a wary eye on the bike's fuel gauge. She also checked the rad-counter on her vambrace, obsessively, as she did every time she came out here.

This was her fourth time reporting to the Watcher, and it never got any less exhilarating or terrifying. Faith and a sense of duty kept her heading true. Miles slid away beneath the bike's rugged tyres. Day faded to drab twilight. A faint line on the horizon thickened, became craggy hills. She reminded herself that she would never know a more privileged or important duty than that which she did now.

'Worth risking dying out here,' Seven muttered to herself. 'Worth never seeing the hab-stack again. Even worth…'

But no, she told herself. Like her name, she wouldn't think of them, not now. She stood a better chance of getting back to them if she did what had to be done with a clear mind and undiluted sense of purpose. And that sense of purpose was strong today, because Seven knew something she was sure the Watcher would find interesting.

Full dark had fallen by the time she reached the foothills, and the old mine entrance. She chanced no lumen. The Watcher had taught her better. Instead she had donned the archeotech mask he had given her, with its incomprehensible – to Seven at least – suite of sensors and its photovisor. This last rendered her night vision in hard blacks and glimmering silver.

Banishing fears of predatory beasts and supernatural terrors, Seven dismounted outside the mine's hollow maw. She found the cameleoline tarp rolled tightly and hidden under a rock where she had left it last time. Concealing the bike beneath the tarp, Seven squared her shoulders and walked into the mine. She crept along, nerves tingling. Something about this place filled Seven with dread.

Three times, as she worked her way deeper into the maze of bored-out tunnels, rusting pipes, skeletonised Servitors and shattered lumens, she halted when crimson runes flashed on the mask's visual overlay. Each time, she whistled a few bars from a different hymnal, mnemonically instilled by the Watcher when he recruited her. The melodies quietened the machine spirits of lethal traps he had set to protect his lair.

Seven saw no change except that the runes floating before her eyes turned golden to indicate she could proceed. As she pressed on, she couldn't help imagining flashing blades, searing lasers and pulverising masses of falling stone.

The tunnel finally brought her to the lip of a deep pit. Rusting machinery around its edge suggested this had been a lift shaft. Now it was a void, or so it appeared. Another rune guided her hand to an outcropping of rock, to which she pressed her thumb. The sting of a concealed sampler needle pricked her skin.

Darkness and silence pressed in around Seven. She felt the familiar, absurd dread that – even though she was meant to be here and had done nothing but her duty – the sensor would declare her an imposter, a threat, and death would come for her. Instead, a suspensor platform thrummed up from the pit to bob on its grav-cushion at her feet. Seven stepped carefully onto it and was borne down into shadow.

At the bottom of the pit lay a chamber in whose walls yawned four equally forbidding tunnel mouths. A golden rune was superimposed over one, and she followed it. After several minutes' picking her way through the dark, flickering light swelled from around a sharp bend ahead. The wash of harsh silver upon her vision caused Seven to thumb a rune on her mask and deactivate her photovisor. Voices carried to her from around the corner as she approached.

'…intelligence chain is sound, Lord Watcher,' came one. The accent was heavily inflected with the flattened vowels and lengthened sibilants of a Northport Up-hiver. 'According to intercepted reports, her name is Ricutaera DeKorr. She is amongst the highest ranking nobles of what they term an Infernal household.'

The voice that responded was so deep, Seven felt it behind her ribs.

'I am aware of House DeKorr, Three. What threat do you report?'

Seven rounded the corner and entered the Watcher's cave. It was lit by candle flame, a space hewn from the living rock and containing only the most austere trappings. A meditation mat was laid out at one edge, next to several compact and archaic machines whose purposes Seven could only guess at. Metal brackets had been driven into the wall to hold a long bladed polearm and a gun whose elegant ornamentation did nothing to detract from its brutal bulk.

Four people already occupied the chamber. It would have felt uncomfortably close, even without the immense presence of the Watcher. Clad in an armoured bodyglove and a hooded black cloak, he loomed over his informants like a mountain. Those informants, like Seven, were masked and clad in survival suits. They looked small and flimsy compared to the Watcher.

'Intelligence suggests DeKorr has sworn a fresh vow with every victory she has achieved in the Pythora Sub-sector,' said Three. 'Every vow has concerned marching upon Holy Terra and slaying the God-Emperor. The heretic makes no secret of her ambitions, and it appears her forces grow with every conquest.'

The Watcher nodded thoughtfully before replying.

'You are right to bring this to me, Three, but put it from your mind. The very visibility of such a threat all but guarantees conventional military intervention. This is not our concern.'

Three bowed and stepped back to the chamber's edge. The Watcher turned to the next of his informants.

'One, what do you have for me?'

This informant spoke with a clipped precision that made Seven think of the Imperial Guard, or maybe the Navis Imperialis. An officer, perhaps.

'Possible threat behind a threat,' said One, handing a dataslate to the Watcher. 'Full interrogation transcript is on there.'

'In summary?' asked the Watcher.

'Ultari System patrol snagged a light Aeldari vessel out on the fringes. Took some captives. After excruciation, one of the xenos claimed they had a message for an Inquisitor Orechiel warning of nothing less than – and I quote here m'lord so please excuse these words – one of the Emperor's loyal sons bringing about his final demise. Stemmed from prophetic readings by one of their seers, apparently.'

'And your concern is this warning might bear some validity?' asked the Watcher.

'No, m'lord, xenos twaddle,' replied One, sounding mildly affronted at the question. 'I suspect some manner of psy-ops. Spreading confusion and paranoia, possibly aiming to undermine longer-term security.'

The Watcher nodded again, then slid the dataslate into his robe.

'I will review it. Nine?'

One bowed and stepped back in turn. Nine cleared her throat before speaking.

'Lord Watcher, many now have brought me the same warning. Jastary Downhive is awash with whispers of the Bladed Chorus, who—'

'An irrelevance,' the Watcher cut her off. 'A cult who believe they can kill the Emperor from afar with hostile prayer. It is a matter for the Enforcers. Do better, Nine.'

His tone was calm but still Nine flinched at the dismissal before bowing back to the very edge of the chamber. Seven's palms grew damp, and she silently prayed to the God-Emperor that her report would not meet the same reception. The Watcher turned his gaze on her and, battered by the full force of his regard, she found herself momentarily struck dumb.

'Seven?' he prompted. Snatching in a steadying breath, she forced herself to speak.

'My lord, you know my place of work, the reports and manifests I have access to. I believe I have uncovered a smuggling ring headed by one of the sub-sector's leading priests.'

She handed her own dataslate to the Watcher, before continuing.

'I have a name – Cardinal Geltz. The problem is this new drug. They're calling it spark in the downhives. There's medicae reports on that slate corroborating claims that it can trigger spontaneous psychic mutation in some users. Throne alone knows the specifics, I don't understand them myself, but the implications and the dangers—'

'Seven,' he said. She realised that in her nervousness and exhilaration, she had begun to gabble.

'Sorry, lord,' she said. 'The point is, Cardinal Geltz is powerful enough that his name alone is smoothing the passage for consignments of the stuff off world, and right out of the system.'

'And these consignments are destined for Terra,' said the Watcher.

'So the manifests suggest, Lord,' Seven replied. 'And with clearance like that, I don't see anyone stopping them.'

The Watcher opened her dataslate and began to read its contents. He read and reread for so long that Seven and the other informants began to shuffle and cast nervous glances at one another. At last, he stirred to life again.

'Well done, Seven,' said the Watcher, and she felt a thrill at the simple words. 'Now, leave, all of you. Return to your duties. I have my own to attend to.'

As Seven left the cave, her last glimpse back showed her the Watcher bending to one of the ancient machines on the floor of his cell. She didn't know precisely what would happen now, but she suspected that Cardinal Geltz's efforts to smuggle psy-active drugs onto Terra were about to come to an abrupt and bloody end.



Showcase

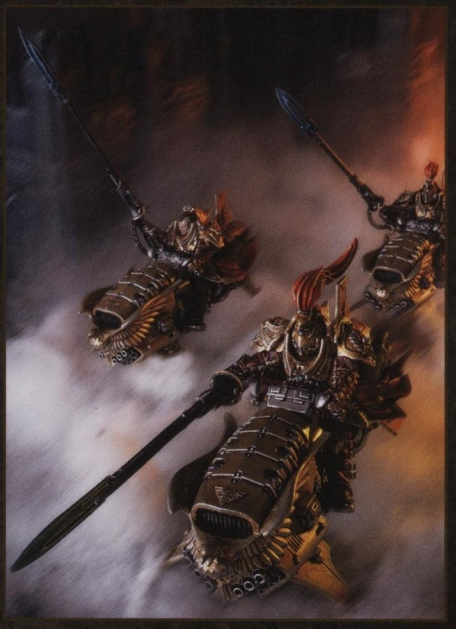
MAJESTY OF THE AURIC MORTALIS

EVERY CUSTODIAN AND SILENT SISTER IS A MAGNIFICENTLY APPOINTED WARRIOR WHOSE ASPECT RADIATES THE GLORY OF THE THRONEWORLD. WHEN GATHERED FOR BATTLE BENEATH GLEAMING VEXILLAS, WITH ROBES AND CLOAKS FLUTTERING IN THE WINDS OF WAR, THEY MAKE FOR A GLORIOUS AND TERRIFYING SPECTACLE INDEED. WHILE THESE HOSTS BEAR LITTLE IN THE WAY OF FORMALISED MILITARY MARKINGS, THEIR UNITY IS SIGNIFIED IN SOME CASES BY SHIELD HOST HONOUR COLOURS, AND IN ALL BY THE AQUILA EMBLAZONED UPON THEIR WARGEAR.









1 Deep within the bowels of Mercury's Decima-Caldus mining platform, the Talons of the Emperor strike with sudden fury. Their quarry – an emergent Genestealer Cult brood-nest whose tendrils have only recently begun their insidious spread through the platform's underdecks. Wasting no time, the combined host of Custodians and Silent Sisters cut a bloody path to the seat of the cult's grotesque Patriarch and there put the abomination to the sword.



Custodian Guard of the Solar Watch

Custodian Warden of the Aquilan Shield

Custodian Guard of the Shadowkeepers





Custodian Guard



Valerian



Aleya



2



3





2 When the moon of Theldra II – one of only three known planetoids in the galaxy capable of yielding up theldrite for Imperial craftsmen – suffered a massed Necron invasion, it seemed a vital resource would be lost. Disaster was averted, however, when a force of Custodians led by streaking spearheads of Vertus Praetors responded with swift and overwhelming force to smash the xenos legions.

3 As fighting raged upon Natoori VI, the perfidious warbands of the Word Bearers overthrew the world's defenders and sacrificed all those they could not convert. Yet their greatest blood offering to the Dark Gods was denied them. Upon the very steps of the planet's Astropathic Sanctum, the sudden intercession of a shield company of Custodians saw the Heretic Astartes halted in their tracks. There, the tide of the war turned in a sudden storm of fire and blood.





Vertus Praetor

Allarus Custodian

Vexilus Praetor
in Allarus Terminator armour



Knight-Centura of the Nachmund Vigil



Vigilator of the Nachmund Vigil



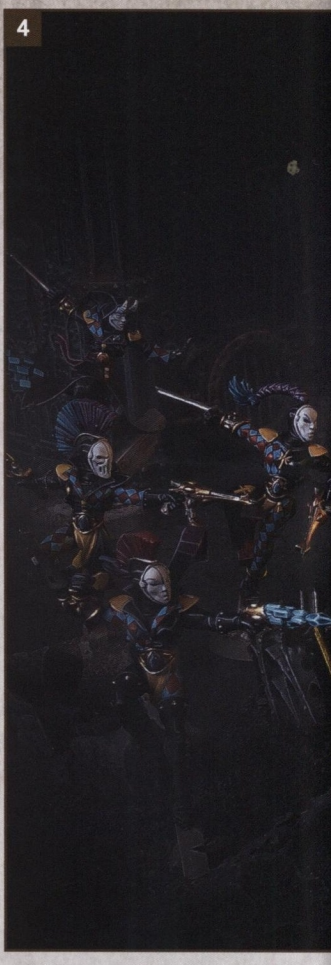
Witchseeker of the Nachmund Vigil



Prosecutor of the Nachmund Vigil

4 Amidst the war-torn ruins of Gnostima Hive, an Aeldari Shadowseer leads a Harlequin masque upon a secretive mission of eldritch import. The machinations of the perfidious xenos are brought to a sudden and violent halt as Null Maidens of the Vigil Indomitus burst from the shadows to run the devious Aeldari psyker to ground. Shorn of her illusory powers and surrounded by golden-armoured killers, the Shadowseer's future is now measured in moments.

5 Borne to battle aboard psy-shielded and stealth-capable gunships, the Sisters of Silence launch a shock raid deep within Magnus the Red's Kingdom of the Sorcerers. Upon a shattered world broken by infernal magicks, the Null Maidens move swift and silent to strike a killing blow against a cabal of powerful Thousand Sons Sorcerers. Their sword-stroke comes not a moment too soon. At the crucial instant, the Sisters of Silence disrupt a ritual of fate-weaving that would have laid a curse of misfortune upon the Sol System and perhaps – given time – poisoned its very life-giving star.





6 When the Ark of Omen *Shadow of Oblivion* tears from the warp into the fringes of the Sol System, the military response to its presence is immediate and enormous. Yet it is a host of the Ten Thousand under Shield-Captain Themistoka that pierce to the very heart of the infernal vessel. There, even as battle rages through the outer decks of the Ark, Themistoka himself meets the nightmarish Bloodthirster Gorhaggorath blade to blade…

7 Amidst the Howling Spires of Clavigoris, Trajann Valoris leads a strike from his Solblade in response to a vermilion-class Imperial distress beacon. Instead of crucial Imperial assets in need of rescue, he instead finds a cunningly laid Drukhari snare. After all, how many greater trophies could the sadistic xenos claim from Humanity than the skin of the Captain-General himself? For all their murderous speed and inhuman martial skill, however, the Drukhari are about to discover that they have overreached themselves with fatal consequences…







Captain-General Trajann Valoris

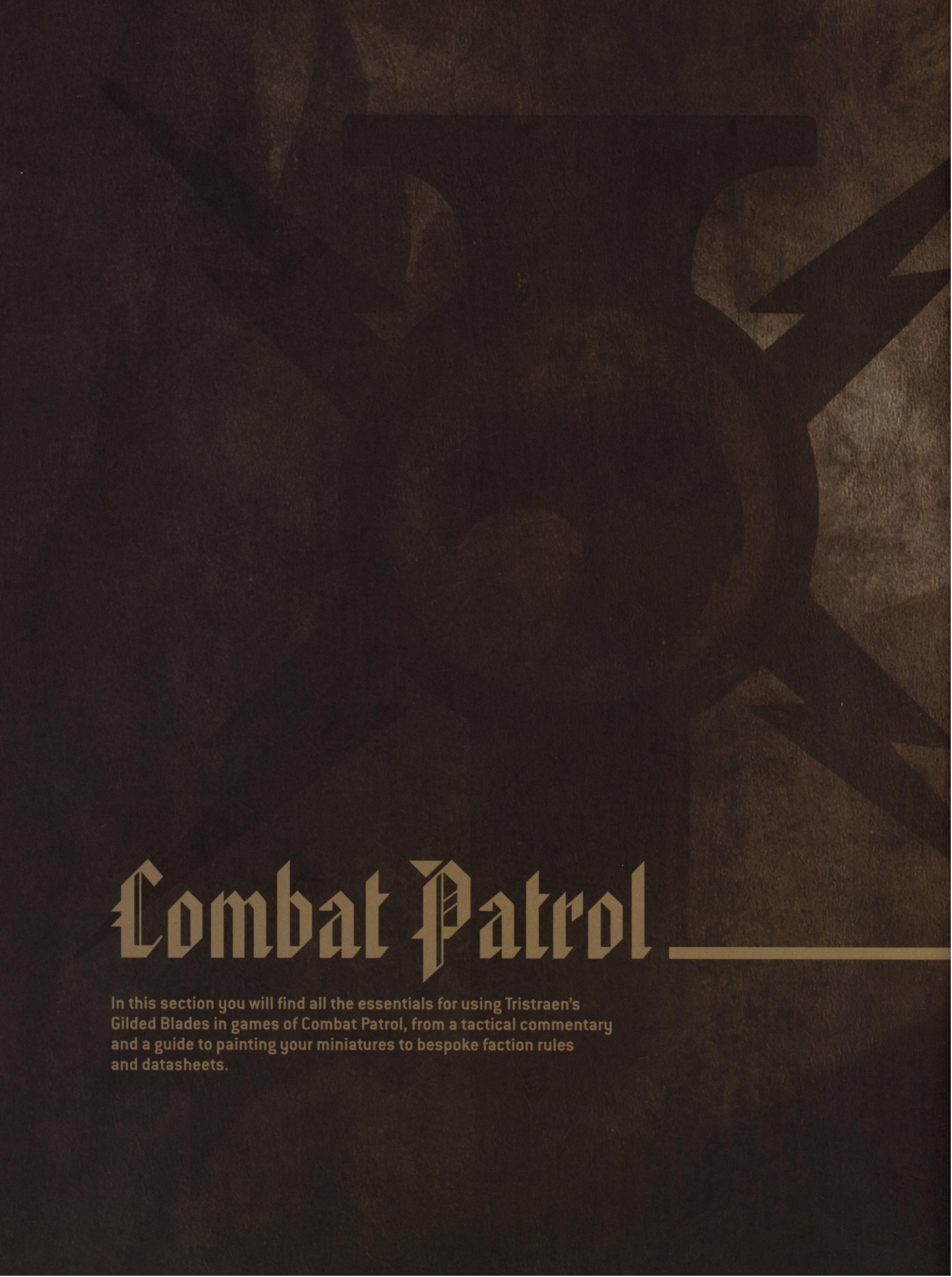
Shield-Captain

Blade Champion









Combat Patrol

In this section you will find all the essentials for using Tristraen's Gilded Blades in games of Combat Patrol, from a tactical commentary and a guide to painting your miniatures to bespoke faction rules and datasheets.



TRISTRAEN'S GILDED BLADES

This Combat Patrol includes the units shown below. Before the battle, in the Select Combat Patrol and Enhancement step, you must select either the Custodian Wardens unit or the Allarus Custodians unit to include in your Combat Patrol for the battle.

CUSTODIAN WARDENS (3 MODELS)

- **1 model is equipped with:** castellan axe.
- **2 models are equipped with:** guardian spear.

When selecting your army for a battle, you will have to choose between this unit and the Allarus Custodians. What the Wardens bring to the table is a higher model count and a greater ability to control and contest objective markers. This does come at the expense of a reduced ranged damage output, however, so which is best will depend on a combination of your objectives and your opponent's army.

Where they particularly shine is against a more elite enemy force, perhaps one containing a monster or vehicle, where the high damage output of their castellan axe will prove a very powerful tool.

TRISTRAEN (1 MODEL)

- **This model is equipped with:** vaultswords.

The Blade Champion is a whirlwind of death when it comes to melee combat. Thanks to the vaultswords' three different profiles he is able to tailor his attacks perfectly to whatever foe he is facing. It is also important to remember that through the Martial Ka'tah ability, all of those potent weapon profiles can be further augmented, making him a deadly adversary for any opponent.

Tristraen does not have a Bodyguard unit, however, so make sure to use terrain to your advantage and watch out for enemy sharpshooters.

CUSTODIAN GUARD (3 MODELS)

- **Every model is equipped with:** sentinel blade; praesidium shield.

The Custodian Guard represent a solid, durable unit thanks to their praesidium shields taking them up to a whopping four wounds each. While they might deal less damage than the other units at your disposal, they have the durability they need to hold on to objectives reliably and still go toe to toe with the enemy's elite units.

They will win most battles of attrition they find themselves in, so you can afford to play more aggressively against most foes.

ALLARUS CUSTODIANS (2 MODELS)

- **Every model is equipped with:** balistus grenade launcher; guardian spear.

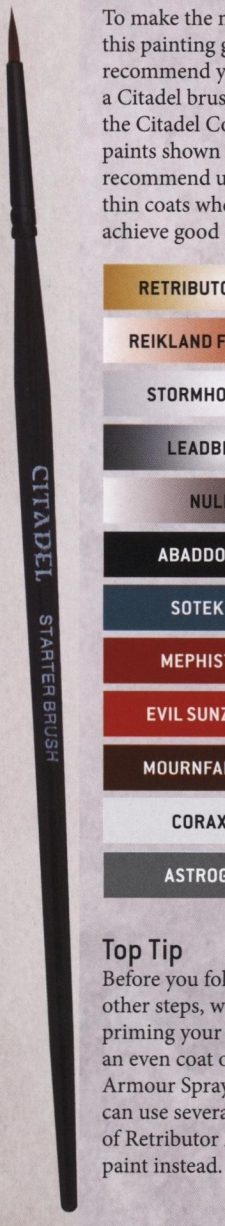
What the Allarus Custodians bring to the table is sheer walking durability with a massive Toughness 7, making them some of the most survivable infantry in the game. Thanks to the Blast ability, their balistus grenade launchers are excellent tools against large units of enemy models. You will have one fewer model if chosen, so weigh your options carefully.

Regardless of which unit you choose, it is essential to properly support the Custodian Guard with them. An Adeptus Custodes army works best when used as a focused blade to dismantle one part of your foe's force at a time. If you try to fight on too wide a battlefront, you may find yourself quickly overwhelmed.



PAINTING YOUR COMBAT PATROL

On the following pages you will find a painting guide to help you to bring your Adeptus Custodes Combat Patrol to life. By following the steps set out here you will be able top paint your models in the colours of the Adeptus Custodes to a Battle Ready standard, and also learn useful techniques that you can apply to your collection as it grows.



You Will Need

To make the most of this painting guide, we recommend you use a Citadel brush and the Citadel Colour paints shown here. We recommend using multiple thin coats where needed to achieve good coverage.

- RETRIBUTOR ARMOUR
- REIKLAND FLESHSHADE
- STORMHOST SILVER
- LEADBELCHER
- NULN OIL
- ABADDON BLACK
- SOTEK GREEN
- MEPHISTON RED
- EVIL SUNZ SCARLET
- MOURNFANG BROWN
- CORAX WHITE
- ASTROGRANITE

Top Tip

Before you follow any other steps, we suggest priming your models with an even coat of Retributor Armour Spray paint. You can use several thin coats of Retributor Armour Base paint instead.



Energised Blades



1 Mix Sotek Green equally with Corax White to achieve a highlight colour for the edges of your blades. This can also be used to apply a lightning effect.



Basing



1 Apply a neat later of Astrogranite, being careful near the edges. 2 Once the layer of Astrogranite is completely dry, apply a shade of Nuln Oil to the entire base. 3 Drybrush the base gently with Corax White, then apply multiple thin coats of Abaddon Black to the base edge to finish.

Auramite Armour



1 Before you follow any other steps, we suggest priming your models with an even coat of Retributor Armour Spray paint. You can use multiple thin coats of Retributor Armour Base paint instead. 2 Apply a shade of Reikland Fleshshade to all the auramite armour areas of the model. 3 Once your wash is completely dry, apply a gentle drybrush of Stormhost Silver to your auramite armour.

Black Basecoat



1 Basecoat the gun casings, gems and armour ribbing with Abaddon Black.

Metal Pipes, Cables and Chains



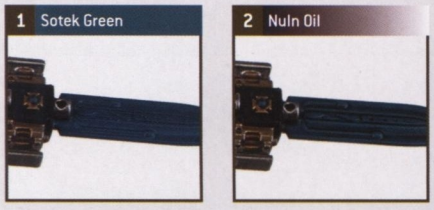
1 Basecoat these areas of non-auramite metal with Leadbelcher. 2 Once the basecoat on these metal areas is entirely dry, carefully apply a shade of Nuln Oil to them, being careful not to let this run onto the auramite armour. 3 When the Nuln Oil has dried, apply a highlight to these areas with Stormhost Silver. This can be done at the same time as the auramite armour highlight above.

Skin



1 After a basecoat of Corax White then apply a wash of Reikland Fleshshade.

Blades and Gems



1 Paint the gems and blades on your models with multiple thin layers of Sotek Green. 2 Once the Sotek Green layer is dry, apply a shade of Nuln Oil.

Robes and Plumes



1 Apply a basecoat of Mephiston Red to these areas, applying multiple thin coats to achieve good coverage. 2 Apply a wash of Nuln Oil, being careful not to let it pool anywhere. 3 Once the Nuln Oil is completely dry, highlight the robes and plumes with thinned Evil Sunz Scarlet.

Leather



1 Apply a basecoat of Mournfang Brown, using multiple thinned coats. 2 Shade the leather areas carefully with Nuln Oil.

Tassels



1 To avoid a chalky texture, basecoat the tassels with multiple coats of thinned Corax White. 2 Apply a shade of Nuln Oil to the tassels, being careful not to use too much.

COMBAT PATROL
TRISTRAEN'S GILDED BLADES

ABILITIES

The datasheets required to use Tristraen's Gilded Blades can be found on the following pages, and are designed exclusively for Combat Patrol games. A unit's datasheet will list all the abilities it has. This will include a Faction ability – Martial Ka'tah – which is described below.

MARTIAL KA'TAH

Specialised disciplines mastered by Custodians over decades if not centuries, each ka'tah equips its practitioner to overmaster any foe in a particular discipline or philosophy. Martial ka'tahs allow the warriors of the Adeptus Custodes to deploy stances, movements, war philosophies and lethal skills that enhance their already terrifying martial prowess and focus it against particular threats.

Each time a unit from your army with this ability is selected to fight, select one of the Ka'tah Stances below. Until that unit has finished making its attacks, the selected Stance is active for it and it gains the relevant ability:

Dacatarai Stance

Those Custodians skilled in the Dacatarai Ka'tah are able to turn their enemies' numerical advantage against them. Reserved for when the Custodians must battle seething hordes of foes, this stance sees them reap a terrible tally.

Melee weapons equipped by models in this unit have the **[SUSTAINED HITS 1]** ability.

Rendax Stance

Masters of Rendax are superlative monster and war machine hunters. They have studied every aspect of how to do battle with a foe far larger than themselves, how to evade its powerful attacks, exploit its blind spots and lay it low.

Melee weapons equipped by models in this unit have the **[LETHAL HITS]** ability.

ENHANCEMENTS

Your **BLADE CHAMPION** model is your **WARLORD** and has the Watchman of Terra Enhancement. You can replace this with Warrior Exemplar.

DEFAULT ENHANCEMENT

WATCHMAN OF TERRA

A sentinel and guardian without equal, this determined warrior is indomitable in defence. No foe escapes their notice, and at the enemy's onset they only fight all the harder.

While the bearer is within Engagement Range of one or more enemy units, it has an Objective Control characteristic of 4.

OR

OPTIONAL ENHANCEMENT

WARRIOR EXEMPLAR

This master of battle draws inspiration from the annihilation of those who would threaten the Golden Throne.

Each time the bearer destroys an enemy unit, roll one D6: on a 3+, you gain 1CP.



SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

You will use the Raise the Vexillas secondary objective. You can replace this with Victory's Price.

DEFAULT SECONDARY OBJECTIVE

RAISE THE VEXILLAS

The Custodians have a crucial task to complete within this theatre, and it will be easier to achieve once total strategic control has been secured. Crush those who oppose you and plant your gleaming vexillas that they might proclaim the Emperor's mastery of this place.

From the third battle round onwards, at the end of your turn, you score 3VP if you control the objective marker closest to your opponent's battlefield edge and you also control the objective marker closest to your battlefield edge.

OR

OPTIONAL SECONDARY OBJECTIVE

VICTORY'S PRICE

Where the enemies of the Emperor are legion, the Ten Thousand are all too few. Employ their martial might to slaughter the foe, but ensure that you do not lose too many of your irreplaceable warriors or your seeming victory may be rendered hollow indeed.

- Each time an enemy unit is destroyed, you score 3VP.
- Each time an **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** model from your army is destroyed, you lose 1VP (to a minimum of 0VP).

STRATAGEMS

You can use the following Stratagems:

THE GILDED SPEAR

TRISTRAEN'S GILDED BLADES – BATTLE TACTIC STRATAGEM

1CP

Lunging with irresistible fury and speed, the Custodians pierce the enemy battle line and drive deep to deliver the killing thrust.

WHEN: Fight phase.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit from your army that has not been selected to fight this phase.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, each time a model in your unit makes a Pile-in move, it can move up to 6" instead of up to 3".

INESCAPABLE VENGEANCE

TRISTRAEN'S GILDED BLADES – STRATEGIC PLOY STRATAGEM

1CP

The Emperor's wrath made manifest, the Adeptus Custodes bestride the battlefield, advancing on their foes with deadly and relentless purpose.

WHEN: Your Movement phase.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit from your army that has not been selected to move this phase.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, add 2 to Advance rolls made for your unit.

OVERAWING MAGNIFICENCE

TRISTRAEN'S GILDED BLADES – BATTLE TACTIC STRATAGEM

1CP

So terrifying is the golden martial majesty of the Adeptus Custodes, that even the most frenzied and hate-fuelled foes may falter at the prospect of engaging them in battle.

WHEN: Your opponent's Charge phase, just after an enemy unit declares a charge.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit that was selected as a target of that charge.

EFFECT: That enemy unit must take a Leadership test. If that test is failed, until the end of the phase, subtract 2 from Charge rolls made for that enemy unit.

TRISTRAEN

Combat Patrol Datasheet

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	6	2+	6	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



Blade Champion Arulon Tristraen has locked blades with more than a score of traitor and alien warlords, and emerged victorious every time. Wielding his archeotech vaultswords in combination with a trio of specialised fighting styles, there is no threat nor enemy that Tristraen is unable to cut down in short order.

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Vaultswords – Behemor [PRECISION]	Melee	6	2+	7	-2	2
Vaultswords – Hurricanis [SUSTAINED HITS 1]	Melee	9	2+	5	-1	1
Vaultswords – Victus [DEVASTATING WOUNDS]	Melee	5	2+	6	-3	3

ABILITIES

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Before selecting targets for this weapon, select one of its profiles to make attacks with.

KEYWORDS: **Infantry, Character, Imperium, Blade Champion, Tristraen**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **Adeptus Custodes**

CUSTODIAN GUARD

Combat Patrol Datasheet

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	6	2+	3	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



These warriors form the backbone of the shield companies, and every one is a terrifying force of destruction equal to the strongest of the foe. Whether armed with guardian spear or sentinel blade, their shots are perfectly placed, and every cut, thrust and parry is a masterclass in bladesmanship.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Sentinel blade [ASSAULT, PISTOL]	12"	2	2+	4	-1	2

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Sentinel blade	Melee	5	2+	6	-2	1

ABILITIES

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

WARGEAR ABILITIES

Praesidium Shield: Add 1 to the bearer's Wounds characteristic.

KEYWORDS: **Infantry, Imperium, Custodian Guard**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **Adeptus Custodes**

CUSTODIAN WARDENS

Combat Patrol Datasheet

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	6	2+	3	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



Veterans with centuries of service, Custodian Wardens are level-headed warriors who have sworn to fight as living fortresses no foe shall breach. With frightening intensity and wills of iron, these warriors cleave their foes in two with immense sweeps that are driven by their prodigious physical strength.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Castellan axe [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	4	-1	2
Guardian spear [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	4	-1	2

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Castellan axe	Melee	4	2+	9	-1	3
Guardian spear	Melee	5	2+	7	-2	2

ABILITIES

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

KEYWORDS: **Infantry, Imperium, Custodian Wardens**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **Adeptus Custodes**

ALLARUS CUSTODIANS

Combat Patrol Datasheet

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
5"	7	2+	4	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



Even amongst the Adeptus Custodes, Allarus Custodians are renowned. Teleporting into the most dangerous enemy strongholds, they rely upon the indomitable resilience of their Terminator plate to protect them as they hunt down demagogues and generals. Fighting as individual heroes, they swiftly tear the heart from their foe's defence.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Balistus grenade launcher [BLAST]	18"	D6	2+	4	-1	1
Guardian spear [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	4	-1	2

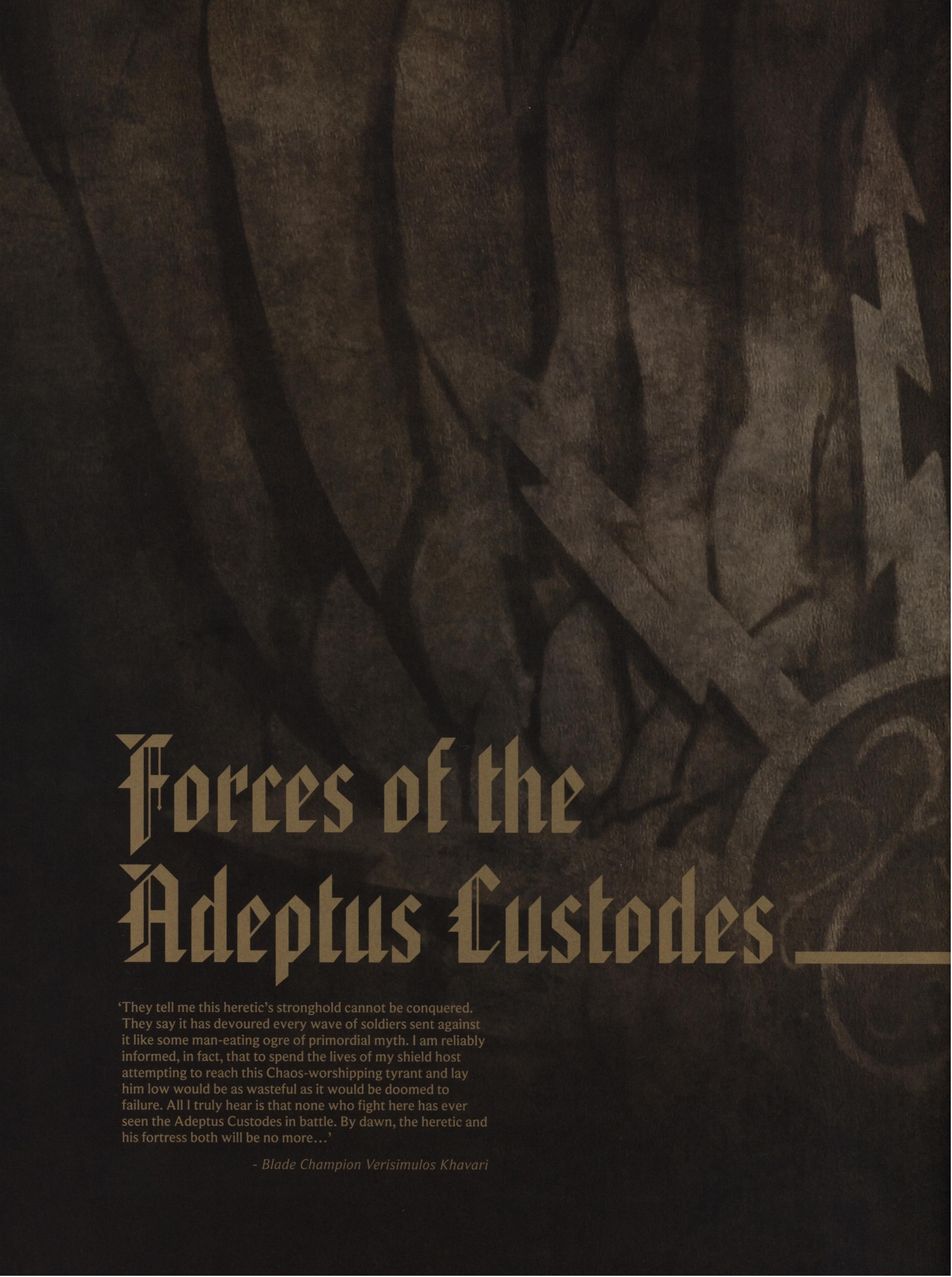
MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Guardian spear	Melee	5	2+	7	-2	2

ABILITIES

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

KEYWORDS: **Infantry, Terminator, Imperium, Allarus Custodians**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **Adeptus Custodes**



Forces of the Adeptus Custodes

'They tell me this heretic's stronghold cannot be conquered. They say it has devoured every wave of soldiers sent against it like some man-eating ogre of primordial myth. I am reliably informed, in fact, that to spend the lives of my shield host attempting to reach this Chaos-worshipping tyrant and lay him low would be as wasteful as it would be doomed to failure. All I truly hear is that none who fight here has ever seen the Adeptus Custodes in battle. By dawn, the heretic and his fortress both will be no more...'

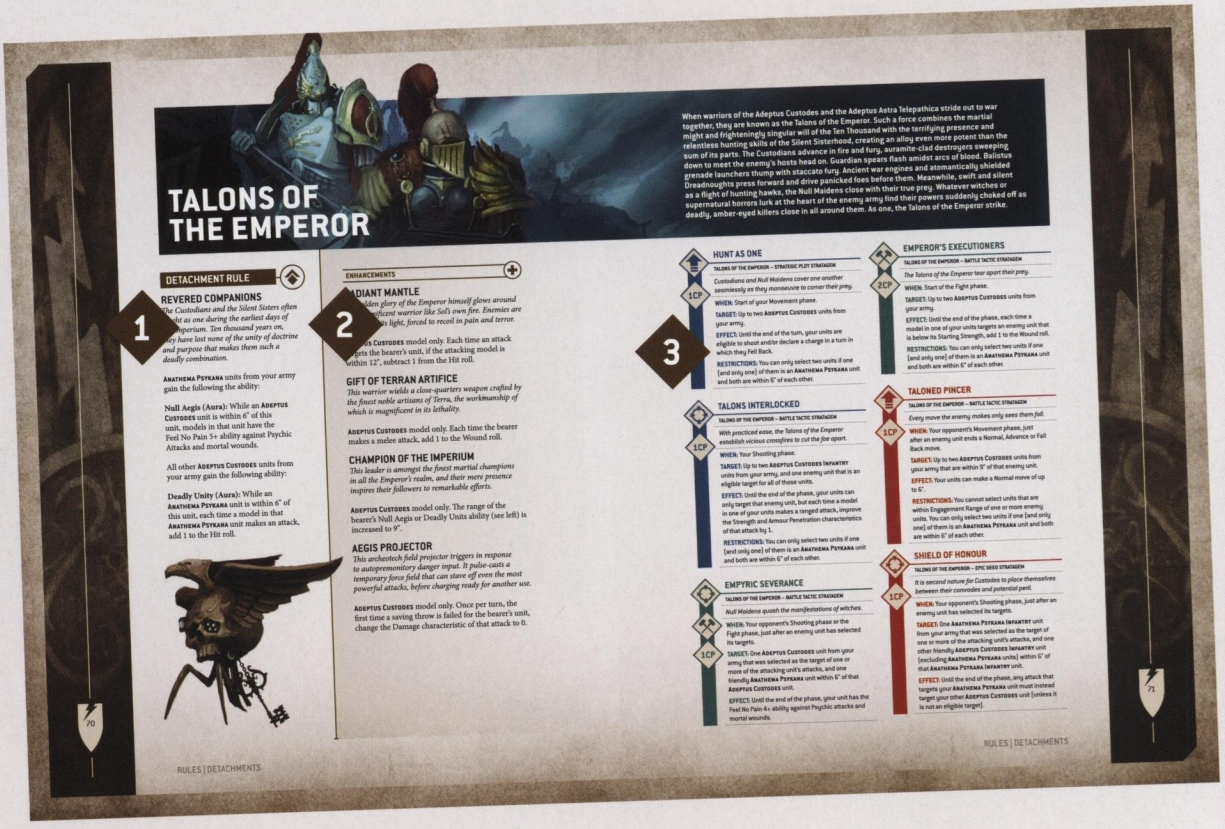
- Blade Champion Verisimulos Khavari



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the rules section of *Codex: Adeptus Custodes*. Whether forging your own tales of glory and infamy with narrative play or pitting yourself against your opponents in nail-biting matched play contests, the following pages present all the rules you will need to bring your Adeptus Custodes collection to life on the tabletop.

These include Detachment rules that Adeptus Custodes armies can use, along with the Adeptus Custodes army rule – Martial Ka'tah – which is common to many of your units. This section also includes datasheets for Adeptus Custodes units; you can find out more about how to use datasheets on pages 37-38 of the Core Rules.



On the following pages you will find several **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** Detachments you can select from, as described in the Core Rules (see the Select Detachment Rules step, page 56). If you are playing a Crusade battle, see the equivalent step in the Mustering a Crusade Army section of the main Crusade rules. Each Detachment is a themed fighting force that focuses on one particular combat style employed by the Adeptus Custodes – the rules they include are as follows:

1 DETACHMENT RULE

The Detachment rule listed here will apply to either your whole army or to particular units within it. If any additional restrictions or benefits apply to a Detachment, they'll be listed here. This can include units your army either must include or cannot include, as well as additional keywords some of your units may gain.

2 ENHANCEMENTS

When mustering your army, your chosen Detachment enables you to upgrade **CHARACTERS** using the Enhancements listed here, as described in the Core Rules (see the Select Units step, page 56).

If you are playing a Crusade battle, you can instead use the Renowned Heroes Requisition to give your **CHARACTERS** Enhancements, as described in the main Crusade rules.

3 STRATAGEMS

Your chosen Detachment gives you access to the Stratagems listed here in addition to the Core Stratagems listed in the Core Rules. During the battle, you can spend Command points (CP) to use these Stratagems. You can find out more about how to use Stratagems on pages 41-42 of the Core Rules.

ARMY RULE

MARTIAL KA'TAH

Specialised disciplines mastered by Custodians over decades if not centuries, each ka'tah equips its practitioner to overmaster any foe in a particular discipline or philosophy. Martial ka'tahs allow the warriors of the Adeptus Custodes to deploy stances, movements, war philosophies and lethal skills that enhance their already terrifying martial prowess and focus it against particular threats.

Each time a unit from your army with this ability is selected to fight, select one of the Ka'tah Stances below. Until that unit has finished making its attacks, the selected Stance is active for it and it gains the relevant ability:

Dacatarai Stance

Those Custodians skilled in the Dacatarai Ka'tah are able to turn their enemies' numerical advantage against them. Reserved for when the Custodians must battle seething hordes of foes, this stance sees them reap a terrible tally.

Melee weapons equipped by models in this unit have the **[SUSTAINED HITS 1]** ability.

Rendax Stance

Masters of Rendax are superlative monster and war machine hunters. They have studied every aspect of how to do battle with a foe far larger than themselves, how to evade its powerful attacks, exploit its blind spots and lay it low.

Melee weapons equipped by models in this unit have the **[LETHAL HITS]** ability.





TALONS OF THE EMPEROR

DETACHMENT RULE

REVERED COMPANIONS

The Custodians and the Silent Sisters often fought as one during the earliest days of the Imperium. Ten thousand years on, they have lost none of the unity of doctrine and purpose that makes them such a deadly combination.

ANATHEMA PSYKANA units from your army gain the following the ability:

Null Aegis (Aura): While an **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit is within 6" of this unit, models in that unit have the Feel No Pain 5+ ability against Psychic Attacks and mortal wounds.

All other **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** units from your army gain the following ability:

Deadly Unity (Aura): While an **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit is within 6" of this unit, each time a model in that **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit makes an attack, add 1 to the Hit roll.



ENHANCEMENTS

RADIANT MANTLE

The golden glory of the Emperor himself glows around this magnificent warrior like Sol's own fire. Enemies are blinded by its light, forced to recoil in pain and terror.

ADEPTUS CUSTODES model only. Each time an attack targets the bearer's unit, if the attacking model is within 12", subtract 1 from the Hit roll.

GIFT OF TERRAN ARTIFICE

This warrior wields a close-quarters weapon crafted by the finest noble artisans of Terra, the workmanship of which is magnificent in its lethality.

ADEPTUS CUSTODES model only. Each time the bearer makes a melee attack, add 1 to the Wound roll.

CHAMPION OF THE IMPERIUM

This leader is amongst the finest martial champions in all the Emperor's realm, and their mere presence inspires their followers to remarkable efforts.

ADEPTUS CUSTODES model only. The range of the bearer's Null Aegis or Deadly Units ability (see left) is increased to 9".

AEGIS PROJECTOR

This archeotech field projector triggers in response to autopremonitory danger input. It pulse-casts a temporary force field that can stave off even the most powerful attacks, before charging ready for another use.

ADEPTUS CUSTODES model only. Once per turn, the first time a saving throw is failed for the bearer's unit, change the Damage characteristic of that attack to 0.

When warriors of the Adeptus Custodes and the Adeptus Astra Telepathica stride out to war together, they are known as the Talons of the Emperor. Such a force combines the martial might and frighteningly singular will of the Ten Thousand with the terrifying presence and relentless hunting skills of the Silent Sisterhood, creating an alloy even more potent than the sum of its parts. The Custodians advance in fire and fury, auramite-clad destroyers sweeping down to meet the enemy's hosts head on. Guardian spears flash amidst arcs of blood. Balistus grenade launchers thump with staccato fury. Ancient war engines and atomantically shielded Dreadnoughts press forward and drive panicked foes before them. Meanwhile, swift and silent as a flight of hunting hawks, the Null Maidens close with their true prey. Whatever witches or supernatural horrors lurk at the heart of the enemy army find their powers suddenly choked off as deadly, amber-eyed killers close in all around them. As one, the Talons of the Emperor strike.

HUNT AS ONE

TALONS OF THE EMPEROR – STRATEGIC PLOY STRATAGEM

1CP

Custodians and Null Maidens cover one another seamlessly as they manoeuvre to corner their prey.

WHEN: Start of your Movement phase.

TARGET: Up to two **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** units from your army.

EFFECT: Until the end of the turn, your units are eligible to shoot and/or declare a charge in a turn in which they Fell Back.

RESTRICTIONS: You can only select two units if one (and only one) of them is an **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit and both are within 6" of each other.

TALONS INTERLOCKED

TALONS OF THE EMPEROR – BATTLE TACTIC STRATAGEM

1CP

With practiced ease, the Talons of the Emperor establish vicious crossfires to cut the foe apart.

WHEN: Your Shooting phase.

TARGET: Up to two **ADEPTUS CUSTODES INFANTRY** units from your army, and one enemy unit that is an eligible target for all of those units.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, your units can only target that enemy unit, but each time a model in one of your units makes a ranged attack, improve the Strength and Armour Penetration characteristics of that attack by 1.

RESTRICTIONS: You can only select two units if one (and only one) of them is an **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit and both are within 6" of each other.

EMPYRIC SEVERANCE

TALONS OF THE EMPEROR – BATTLE TACTIC STRATAGEM

1CP

Null Maidens quash the manifestations of witches.

WHEN: Your opponent's Shooting phase or the Fight phase, just after an enemy unit has selected its targets.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit from your army that was selected as the target of one or more of the attacking unit's attacks, and one friendly **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit within 6" of that **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, your unit has the Feel No Pain 4+ ability against Psychic attacks and mortal wounds.

EMPEROR'S EXECUTIONERS

TALONS OF THE EMPEROR – BATTLE TACTIC STRATAGEM

2CP

The Talons of the Emperor tear apart their prey.

WHEN: Start of the Fight phase.

TARGET: Up to two **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** units from your army.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, each time a model in one of your units targets an enemy unit that is below its Starting Strength, add 1 to the Wound roll.

RESTRICTIONS: You can only select two units if one (and only one) of them is an **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit and both are within 6" of each other.

TALONED PINCER

TALONS OF THE EMPEROR – BATTLE TACTIC STRATAGEM

1CP

Every move the enemy makes only sees them fall.

WHEN: Your opponent's Movement phase, just after an enemy unit ends a Normal, Advance or Fall Back move.

TARGET: Up to two **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** units from your army that are within 9" of that enemy unit.

EFFECT: Your units can make a Normal move of up to 6".

RESTRICTIONS: You cannot select units that are within Engagement Range of one or more enemy units. You can only select two units if one (and only one) of them is an **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit and both are within 6" of each other.

SHIELD OF HONOUR

TALONS OF THE EMPEROR – EPIC DEED STRATAGEM

1CP

It is second nature for Custodes to place themselves between their comrades and potential peril.

WHEN: Your opponent's Shooting phase, just after an enemy unit has selected its targets.

TARGET: One **ANATHEMA PSYKANA INFANTRY** unit from your army that was selected as the target of one or more of the attacking unit's attacks, and one other friendly **ADEPTUS CUSTODES INFANTRY** unit (excluding **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** units) within 6" of that **ANATHEMA PSYKANA INFANTRY** unit.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, any attack that targets your **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit must instead target your other **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit (unless it is not an eligible target).



SHIELD HOST

DETACHMENT RULE

MARTIAL MASTERY

The Custodians have perfected countless ways of making war, be it on a personal, tactical or strategic scale.

Once per battle, at the start of the battle round, you can use Martial Mastery. If you do, until the start of the next battle round:

- Each time an **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** model from your army with the Martial Ka'tah ability makes a melee attack, a succesful unmodifed Hit roll of 5+ scores a Critical Hit.
- Improve the Armour Penetration characteristic of melee weapons equipped by **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** models from your army with the Martial Ka'tah ability by 1.

ENHANCEMENTS

FROM THE HALL OF ARMOURIES

The racks of the Adeptus Custodes' armouries yield up some of the most finely crafted close-quarters weaponry borne by any soldiers of the Imperium.

SHIELD-CAPTAIN model only. Add 1 to the Strength and Damage characteristics of the bearer's melee weapons.

CASTELLAN'S MARK

This finely worked pauldron is awarded to whichever living Custodian currently holds the greatest tally of victories in the Blood Games. The one who bears the Castellan's Mark is guaranteed to be a superlative strategic genius.

SHIELD-CAPTAIN model only. After both players have deployed their armies and determined who has the first turn, you can select up to two **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** units from your army (excluding **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** units) and redeploy all of those units. When doing so, any of those units can be placed into Strategic Reserves, regardless of how many units are already in Strategic Reserves.

AURIC MANTLE

This auramite weave garment is draped about its wearer's shoulders before they don their battle armour. It forms a final, incredibly resilient layer of protection for them should all their other defences fail.

SHIELD-CAPTAIN or **BLADE CHAMPION** model only. Add 2 to the bearer's Wounds characteristic.

PANOPTISPEX

This incredibly advanced precursor to Imperial auspicators is able to see through solid objects and into esoteric spectra, meaning no malcontent against the Throne can ever hide from its bearer's gaze.

SHIELD-CAPTAIN or **BLADE CHAMPION** model only. While the bearer is leading a unit, ranged weapons equipped by models in that unit have the **[IGNORES COVER]** ability.

When enough sodalities of Custodians gather beneath the auspices of their order's storied war leaders, this magnificent gathering of might is known as a Shield Host. Typically assembled to complete a singular mission – be it eliminating a threat to the Throneworld or bringing the Emperor's vengeance to a suitably nightmarish foe – Shield Hosts employ every weapon at their disposal to see their duty done. Some of their sodalities may roar into battle aboard slab-sided Land Raiders or mounted on streaking Dawneagle jetbikes. Others attack from amidst roiling teleport flares, bands of Allarus Custodians cutting an unstoppable swathe through their enemies' rear lines. While the tempered sentinels of the Custodian Wardens seize vital strategic sites and drive off all who challenge them, the Vexilus Praetors raise their aquilae high above a battlefield soon destined to belong to the Custodians alone. Such victory is virtually a foregone conclusion, for who can stand against the might of the Ten Thousand when it is unleashed in such a fashion?

ARCANE GENETIC ALCHEMY

SHIELD HOST – BATTLE TACTIC STRATAGEM

The Adeptus Custodes are individually engineered on a molecular level using secrets of genetic alchemy that render them almost supernaturally resilient.

1CP

WHEN: Any phase, just after a mortal wound has been allocated to an **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** model from your army (excluding **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** models).

TARGET: That **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** model's unit.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, models in your unit have the Feel No Pain 4+ ability against mortal wounds.

AVENGE THE FALLEN

SHIELD HOST – STRATEGIC PLOY STRATAGEM

The loss of a single Custodian is commemorated by the tolling of the Bell of Lost Souls on Terra, and by their comrades' bloody vengeance on the battlefield.

1CP

WHEN: Start of the Fight phase.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit from your army (excluding **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** units) that is below its Starting Strength.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, add 1 to the Attacks characteristic of melee weapons equipped by models in your unit. If your unit is Below Half-strength, until the end of the phase, add 2 to the Attacks characteristic of those melee weapons instead.

UNWAVERING SENTINELS

SHIELD HOST – STRATEGIC PLOY STRATAGEM

Once the Custodians have laid claim to a location, they defend it with incredible tenacity and skill.

1CP

WHEN: Fight phase, just after an enemy unit has selected its targets.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES INFANTRY** unit from your army (excluding **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** units) that is within range of an objective marker you control and that was selected as the target of one or more of the attacking unit's attacks.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, each time a melee attack targets your unit, subtract 1 from the Hit roll.

MULTIPOTENTIALITY

SHIELD HOST – STRATEGIC PLOY STRATAGEM

So widely skilled and studied are the Custodians that, whatever situation they find themselves in, they have the martial wisdom to prevail.

1CP

WHEN: Your Movement phase.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit from your army that Fell Back this phase.

EFFECT: Until the end of your turn, that unit is eligible to shoot and declare a charge in a turn in which it Fell Back.

VIGILANCE ETERNAL

SHIELD HOST – STRATEGIC PLOY STRATAGEM

Simply because the Adeptus Custodes do not stand sentinel over a strategic location or asset, does not mean that it – or any who would threaten it – escapes their gaze.

1CP

WHEN: Your Movement phase.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES BATTLELINE** unit from your army (excluding **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** units) within range of an objective marker you control.

EFFECT: That objective marker remains under your control, even if you have no models within range of it, until your opponent controls it at the start or end of any turn.

ARCHEOTECH MUNITIONS

SHIELD HOST – WARGEAR STRATAGEM

The Shield Hosts have access to stockpiles of ancient and incredibly rare weaponry and ammunition.

1CP

WHEN: Your Shooting phase.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit from your army (excluding **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** units) that has not been selected to shoot this phase.

EFFECT: Select either the **[LETHAL HITS]** or **[SUSTAINED HITS 1]** ability. Until the end of the phase, ranged weapons equipped by models in your unit have the selected ability.



NULL MAIDEN VIGIL

DETACHMENT RULE

CREEPING DREAD (AURA)

The instinctive fear caused by the Pariah gene spreads like a terrible pall before the cadres of the Silent Sisterhood.

In the Battle-shock step of your opponent's Command phase, if an enemy unit that is either a **PSYKER** unit or below its Starting Strength is within 12" of one or more **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** models from your army, that enemy unit must take a Battle-shock test. If that unit is Below Half-strength, it must subtract 1 from its Battle-shock test this phase instead.

Designer's Note: *This means that all enemy* **PSYKER** *units within range of this Aura ability and all enemy units within range of this Aura ability that have lost one or more models must take a Battle-shock test in your opponent's Command phase, not just those that are Below Half-strength.*

KEYWORDS

If you select this Detachment, **PROSECUTORS** units from your army have the **BATTLELINE** keyword.

ENHANCEMENTS

RAPTOR BLADE

The Raptor Blade is an ancient relic of the Null Maidens, as razor sharp now as it was on the day of its forging and ever the bane of witches.

ANATHEMA PSYKANA model only. Add 1 to the Attacks, Strength and Damage characteristics of the bearer's melee weapons. While the bearer is within Engagement Range of one or more enemy **PSYKER** units that are Battle-shocked, add 2 to the Attacks, Strength and Damage characteristics of the bearer's melee weapons instead.

ENHANCED VOIDSHEEN CLOAK

Now rare, enhanced voidsheen cloaks were worn by commanders of the Sisters of Silence during the Great Crusade. They are made from micro-vitrious mesh designed to diffract and absorb attacks, and include inbuilt refractor fields.

ANATHEMA PSYKANA model only. Each time an attack is allocated to the bearer, subtract 1 from the Damage characteristic of that attack. If that attack was made by a **PSYKER** or Battle-shocked model, change the Damage characteristic of that attack to 1 instead.

HUNTRESS' EYE

This ancient bionic acts like a miniature animus speculum, focusing the bearer's null abilities into a stare that can literally terrify foes to death.

ANATHEMA PSYKANA model only. In your Command phase, select one enemy unit within 12" of the bearer. That unit must take a Battle-shock test.

OBLIVION KNIGHT

Oblivion Knights are among the most powerful and experienced of the Sisters of Silence. When one leads their sisters in the field, witches must truly beware.

ANATHEMA PSYKANA model only. While the bearer is leading a unit, each time a model in that unit makes an attack, add 1 to the Hit roll. If that attack targeted an enemy **PSYKER** unit, add 1 to the Wound roll as well.

When a truly malevolent psychic threat must be neutralised, cadres drawn from the vigils of the Silent Sisterhood are sent to see the deed done. While bands of Prosecutors lay down thundering volleys of bolt fire to cover their advance, squads of their fellow Null Maidens close rapidly with their prey. Once in range, the Witchseekers unleash the fury of their sanctified flamers to turn mutants, cultists, foul xenos and unclean witches into shrieking columns of flame. Meanwhile, executioner greatblades flashing in the firelight, the Vigilators close in to strike down the reviled alpha psykers that are their ultimate quarry. The Silent Sisters are thinly spread across the Emperor's realm and, while their skills are unique and incredibly potent, they can be overwhelmed by armoured battle tanks or hordes of lesser foes. It is thus common for cadres to be supported in the field by elements of the Adeptus Custodes. In this capacity, the Custodians guard the Null Maidens and fight in support of them, expediting their crucial witch hunt.

DESPERATION'S PRICE

NULL MAIDEN VIGIL – STRATEGIC PLOY STRATAGEM

1CP

To overcome the Null Maidens' aura, enemy psykers overstretch themselves with horrible consequences.

WHEN: Any phase, just after an enemy **PSYKER** unit has either finished using a Psychic ability that targets a unit, or finished making Psychic Attacks.

TARGET: One **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit from your army within 18" of that enemy **PSYKER** unit.

EFFECT: That enemy **PSYKER** unit must take a Leadership test. If the test is passed, that **PSYKER** unit is Battle-shocked; if the test is failed that **PSYKER** unit suffers 3 mortal wounds and is Battle-shocked.

WITCH HUNTERS

NULL MAIDEN VIGIL – BATTLE TACTIC STRATAGEM

1CP

Null Maidens train to slay psykers with swift martial efficiency, for they know their prey have many weapons beyond just their powers and must not be allowed time or opportunity to employ them.

WHEN: Your Shooting phase or the Fight phase.

TARGET: One **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit from your army that has not been selected to shoot or fight this phase.

EFFECT: Select either the **[LETHAL HITS]** or **[SUSTAINED HITS 1]** ability. Until the end of the phase, weapons equipped by models in your unit have the selected ability, but models in your unit can only target **PSYKER** units with their attacks.

ANATHEMA BLADEMASTERY

NULL MAIDEN VIGIL – BATTLE TACTIC STRATAGEM

1CP

The Vigilators train tirelessly in the art of the swift, beheading strike, with a particular emphasis on the swift elimination of enemy witches.

WHEN: Fight phase.

TARGET: One **VIGILATORS** unit from your army that has not been selected to fight this phase.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, each time a model in your unit makes a melee attack, you can re-roll the Hit roll. If the target of that attack is Battle-shocked or a **PSYKER**, you can re-roll the Wound roll as well.

PSY-CHAFF VOLLEY

NULL MAIDEN VIGIL – STRATEGIC PLOY STRATAGEM

1CP

Prosecutors can fire psy-chaff bolts whose esoteric emissions weaken those targets not slain outright.

WHEN: Your Shooting phase.

TARGET: One **PROSECUTORS** unit from your army that has just shot.

EFFECT: Select one enemy unit hit by one or more of those attacks. Until the start of your next turn, while your unit is on the battlefield, that enemy unit is prosecuted. While a unit is prosecuted, each time an **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** model makes an attack against that unit, improve the Armour Penetration characteristic of that attack by 1. While a **PSYKER** or Battle-shocked unit is prosecuted, each time a model in that unit makes an attack, subtract 1 from the Hit roll.

PURGATION SWEEP

NULL MAIDEN VIGIL – BATTLE TACTIC STRATAGEM

1CP

Witchseekers know their role in combat is to spread indiscriminate carnage through the foe's ranks.

WHEN: Your Shooting phase.

TARGET: One **WITCHSEEKERS** unit from your army that has not been selected to shoot this phase.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, add 1 to the Attacks characteristic of Torrent weapons equipped by models in your unit. If such a weapon targets a **PSYKER** or Battle-shocked unit this phase, add 2 to its Attacks characteristic instead.

PSYCHIC ABOMINATIONS

NULL MAIDEN VIGIL – STRATEGIC PLOY STRATAGEM

1CP

Enemies must overcome disorienting waves of revulsion in order to even focus upon Null Maidens.

WHEN: Your opponent's Shooting phase, just after an enemy unit has selected its targets.

TARGET: One **ANATHEMA PSYKANA INFANTRY** unit from your army that was selected as the target of one or more of the attacking unit's attacks.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, your unit has the Stealth ability, and Battle-shocked and **PSYKER** models can only select your unit as a target of a ranged attack if they are within 12".



AURIC CHAMPIONS

DETACHMENT RULE

ASSEMBLAGE OF MIGHT

When such exceptional warriors as these gather to quest in the Emperor's name, even the most dreadful foes of Humanity are right to fear for their lives.

At the start of your Command phase, select one unit from your opponent's army. Until the start of your next Command phase, each time an **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** model from your army makes an attack that targets that enemy unit, add 1 to the Wound roll.



ENHANCEMENTS

BLADE IMPERATOR

This warrior is the Emperor's own wrath made manifest, the living weapon of the Master of Mankind.

ADEPTUS CUSTODES model only. Each time the bearer's unit ends a Charge move, select one enemy unit within Engagement Range of the bearer and roll one D6: on a 4+, that enemy unit suffers D3 mortal wounds. Once per battle, after the bearer's unit ends a Charge move, all enemy units within 6" of the bearer must take a Battle-shock test.

INSPIRATIONAL EXEMPLAR

Here is a singular being even the mighty Custodians can look up to and be inspired by.

ADEPTUS CUSTODES model only. The bearer has a Leadership characteristic of 5+. Once per battle, at the start of any phase, you can select one friendly **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit that is Battle-shocked and within 12" of the bearer; that unit is no longer Battle-shocked.

VEILED BLADE

Said to have been fashioned for dark deeds during the Horus Heresy, this blade is an icon of vengeance.

ADEPTUS CUSTODES model only. Add 2 to the Attacks characteristic of the bearer's melee weapons. Once per battle, at the start of any Command phase, triple the bearer's Objective Control characteristic until the end of the turn.

MARTIAL PHILOSOPHER

Few in the history of the Imperium have been so skilled in reading – and directing– the ebb and flow of battle.

ADEPTUS CUSTODES model only. The bearer's unit is eligible to shoot and/or declare a charge in a turn in which it Fell Back. Once per battle, when an enemy unit ends a Normal, Advance or Fall Back move within 9" of the bearer, if the bearer's unit is not within Engagement Range of one or more enemy units, it can make a Normal move of up to 6".

Even amongst the storied ranks of the Adeptus Custodes there are those individuals whose deeds and abilities raise them head and shoulders above their peers. These are the greatest warriors, generals, diplomats, spies, assassins, pilots and guardians amongst the Ten Thousand. Their deeds are celebrated across the Throneworld and beyond, each one of them an echo of Constantin Valdor come again to fight for the Emperor of Mankind. It is almost inevitable that these individuals rise to ranks such as Shield-Captain or Blade Champion. They can most often be found leading shield companies, if not entire hosts, to war. However, there have been occasions throughout the history of the Imperium where bands of mighty Custodians – each with dozens of names to their tally – have gathered as the Auric Champions of their order. At such times new legends are forged, for even a handful of such individuals can, between them, slay the most terrible of monsters, lay low entire armies of heretics and complete incredible quests in the name of the Golden Throne.

SLAYER OF CHAMPIONS

AURIC CHAMPIONS – EPIC DEED STRATAGEM

1CP

What foe can withstand a warrior who has so tested the defences of the Throneworld itself?

WHEN: Any phase.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** unit from your army that has just destroyed the unit you selected at the start of your Command phase as the target of your Assemblage of Might ability.

EFFECT: Select one enemy unit on the battlefield. Until the start of your next Command phase, each time an **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** model from your army makes an attack that target that enemy unit, add 1 to the Wound roll. In addition, if the destroyed unit was a **CHARACTER** unit, gain 1CP.

SUPERHUMAN RESERVES

AURIC CHAMPIONS – EPIC DEED STRATAGEM

2CP

The greatest of the Custodians bring incredible reserves of stamina and ability to bear.

WHEN: Any phase, just after an **ADEPTUS CUSTODES WARLORD** model from your army has used an ability on its datasheet or from an Enhancement that says it can only be used 'Once per battle'.

TARGET: That **ADEPTUS CUSTODES WARLORD** model.

EFFECT: Your model can use its 'Once per battle' ability one additional time during this battle (but not in the same phase).

RESTRICTIONS: You cannot use this Stratagem more than once per battle.

THE EMPEROR'S AUSPICE

AURIC CHAMPIONS – EPIC DEED STRATAGEM

1CP

In an age plagued by monsters, when primordial horrors from the darkest void circle Humanity's dying light, still the Adeptus Custodes stand strong.

WHEN: Your opponent's Shooting phase or the Fight phase, just after an enemy unit has selected its targets.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** unit from your army that was selected as the target of one or more of the attacking unit's attacks.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, **CHARACTER** models in your unit have the Feel No Pain 4+ ability.

EARNING OF A NAME

AURIC CHAMPIONS – EPIC DEED STRATAGEM

1CP

To lay low the greatest and most terrible monsters and heretics is to earn new names for a Custodian's mighty tally.

WHEN: Fight phase.

TARGET: Up to two **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** units from your army that have not been selected to fight this phase.

EFFECT: Until the end of the phase, each time a **CHARACTER** model in either of your units makes an attack that targets a **MONSTER** or **VEHICLE** unit, you can re-roll the Hit roll and you can re-roll the Wound roll.

VIGIL UNENDING

AURIC CHAMPIONS – EPIC DEED STRATAGEM

2CP

The Custodes do not yield while their duty remains unfulfilled.

WHEN: Fight phase.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** model from your army that was just destroyed and has not fought this phase. You can use this Stratagem on that unit even though it was just destroyed.

EFFECT: Do not remove your destroyed model from play. The destroyed model can fight after the attacking unit has finished making attacks, and is then removed from play.

SHOULDER THE MANTLE

AURIC CHAMPIONS – EPIC DEED STRATAGEM

1CP

The greatest Custodians know when it is both their duty and their right to command their comrades.

WHEN: End of your Movement phase.

TARGET: One **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** model from your army that is within 2" horizontally and 5" vertically of a friendly unit that it could lead (as described on the Leader section of its datasheet).

EFFECT: That **CHARACTER** model attaches to that unit to form an Attached unit. Change the unit's Starting Strength accordingly.

RESTRICTIONS: Your **CHARACTER** model cannot attach to a unit that is already an Attached unit.

EXAMPLE ARMIES

There are many ways to collect an Adeptus Custodes army, whether you use an existing paint scheme and shield host background, or invent your own. Here you will find examples to inspire your collecting journey.

1 Jason's Adeptus Custodes wear the mourning black they donned after the end of the Horus Heresy. This is because – in Jason's back story for his army – they were amongst the vengeful forces who set out from Terra to pursue the traitors during the Scouring. These Custodians became lost in the warp, only to be spat out far in their future by the emergence of the Great Rift.

2 Collecting a force from the Shadowkeepers Shield Host, Toby chose to focus it around Custodian Guard and Allarus Terminators, reasoning they would include many such warriors to watch over the Dark Cells. He also decided to challenge himself and achieve a unique look using the non-metallic metals painting technique.

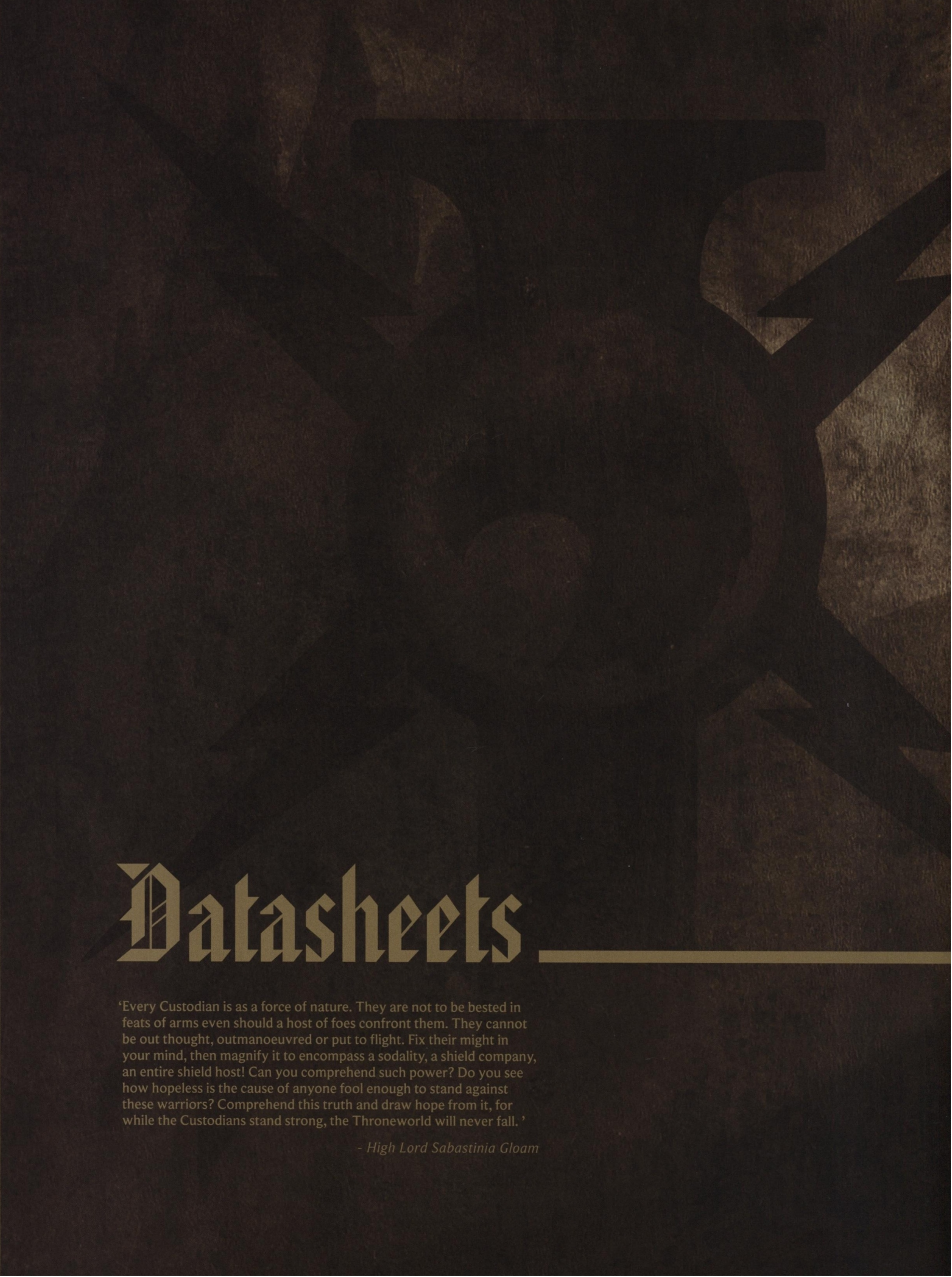
3 Ben has chosen to collect a force of the Talons of the Emperor, painted in the classic colours of the Ten Thousand. Leaning into the ornate and arcane materiel available to such hosts, he has included the HQ Command Tanks from Warhammer World to really make his armoured elements stand out.






3





Datasheets

'Every Custodian is as a force of nature. They are not to be bested in feats of arms even should a host of foes confront them. They cannot be out thought, outmanoeuvred or put to flight. Fix their might in your mind, then magnify it to encompass a sodality, a shield company, an entire shield host! Can you comprehend such power? Do you see how hopeless is the cause of anyone fool enough to stand against these warriors? Comprehend this truth and draw hope from it, for while the Custodians stand strong, the Throneworld will never fall.'

- High Lord Sabastinia Gloam





TRAJANN VALORIS

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	6	2+	7	5+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE

Trajann Valoris' warrior prowess approaches that of the Primarchs of old. With the Watcher's Axe he can bisect the sarcophagus of a Chaos Helbrute in a single swing, or use its built-in bolt weapon – known as Eagle's Scream – to cut down enemy infantry with salvoes of adamantine-tipped penetrator bolts.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Eagle's Scream [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	5	-2	3

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Watcher's Axe	Melee	6	2+	10	-2	3

LEADER

This model can be attached to the following units: **Custodian Guard, Custodian Wardens**

SUPREME COMMANDER

If this model is in your army, it must be your **Warlord**.

ABILITIES

CORE: **Deep Strike, Feel No Pain 5+, Leader**

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Captain-General: While this model is leading a unit, each time a model in this unit makes an attack, you can ignore any or all modifiers to that attack's Ballistic skill or Weapon skill characteristics and/or all modifiers to the Hit roll.

Moment Shackle: Once per battle, at the start of the Fight phase, you can select one of the following to take effect until the end of the phase:

- This model's Watcher's Axe melee weapon has an Attacks characteristic of 12.
- This model has a 2+ invulnerable save.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Trajann Valoris – Epic Hero**

This model is equipped with: Eagle's Scream; Watcher's Axe.

KEYWORDS: **Infantry, Character, Epic Hero, Imperium, Trajann Valoris**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **Adeptus Custodes**





SHIELD-CAPTAIN

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	6	2+	6	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE

Shield-Captains are among the greatest warriors in the Imperium. No matter which weapons they wield, they display absolute mastery of them. Their tactical and strategic abilities are superlative, and they read the ebb and flow of a war at a glance before directing their forces accordingly.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Castellan axe [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	4	-1	2
Guardian spear [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	4	-1	2
Pyrithite spear [MELTA 2]	12"	1	2+	9	-4	D6
Sentinel blade [ASSAULT, PISTOL]	12"	2	2+	4	-1	2

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Castellan axe	Melee	6	2+	9	-1	3
Guardian spear	Melee	7	2+	7	-2	2
Pyrithite spear	Melee	7	2+	7	-2	2
Sentinel blade	Melee	7	2+	6	-2	1

WARGEAR OPTIONS

- This model's guardian spear can be replaced with one of the following:
  - 1 castellan axe
  - 1 sentinel blade
  - 1 sentinel blade and 1 praesidium shield
  - 1 pyrithite spear and 1 praesidium shield

LEADER

This model can be attached to the following units: **CUSTODIAN GUARD, CUSTODIAN WARDENS**

ABILITIES

CORE: **Deep Strike, Leader**

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Master of the Stances: Once per battle, when this model's unit is selected to fight, it can use this ability. If it does, until that fight is resolved, both Ka'tah Stances are active for that unit, instead of only one.

Strategic Mastery: Once per battle round, you can select one model from your army with this ability. You can target that model's unit with a Stratagem for 0CP, and can do so even if you have already targeted a different unit with that Stratagem this phase.

WARGEAR ABILITIES

Praesidium Shield: Add 1 to the bearer's Wounds characteristic.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Shield-Captain**

This model is equipped with: guardian spear.

KEYWORDS: **INFANTRY, CHARACTER, IMPERIUM, SHIELD-CAPTAIN**

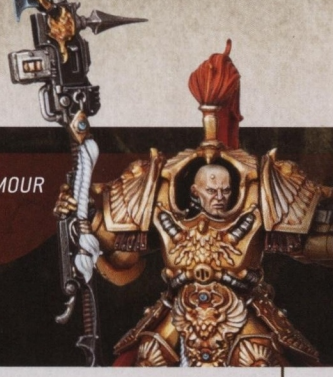
FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**



SHIELD-CAPTAIN *IN ALLARUS TERMINATOR ARMOUR*

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
5"	7	2+	7	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



A Shield-Captain is already one of the most formidable combatants and superlative strategists in the Imperium. When clad in a nigh-on impenetrable suit of auramite Terminator armour, they become more powerful still – a walking fortress of Imperial might able to shrug off even the most dolorous blows.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Balistus grenade launcher [BLAST]	18"	D6	2+	4	-1	1
Castellan axe [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	4	-1	2
Guardian spear [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	4	-1	2

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Castellan axe	Melee	6	2+	9	-1	3
Guardian spear	Melee	7	2+	7	-2	2

WARGEAR OPTIONS

- This model's guardian spear can be replaced with 1 castellan axe.

LEADER

This model can be attached to the following unit: **ALLARUS CUSTODIANS**

ABILITIES

CORE: **Deep Strike, Leader**

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Auramite and Adamantine: Once per battle, at the start of any phase, this model can use this ability. If it does, until the end of the phase, each time an attack is allocated to this model, change the Damage characteristic of that attack to 1.

Strategic Mastery: Once per battle round, you can select one model from your army with this ability. You can target that model's unit with a Stratagem for 0CP, and can do so even if you have already targeted a different unit with that Stratagem this phase.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Shield-Captain in Allarus Terminator Armour**

This model is equipped with: balistus grenade launcher; guardian spear.

KEYWORDS: **INFANTRY, CHARACTER, TERMINATOR, IMPERIUM, SHIELD-CAPTAIN**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**

SHIELD-CAPTAIN *ON DAWNEAGLE JETBIKE*

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
12"	6	2+	7	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



All Shield-Captains are decisive warriors who suffer no impediment to their mission, but those swiftest in thought and action soar into battle on Dawneagle jetbikes. They plunge into the heart of the enemy lines to reap a tally with their interceptor lances before arcing away on screaming grav-engines to strike again elsewhere.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Vertus hurricane bolter [RAPID FIRE 3, TWIN-LINKED]	18"	3	2+	4	0	1
Salvo launcher	24"	1	2+	9	-2	3

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Interceptor lance [LANCE]	Melee	6	2+	7	-2	2

WARGEAR OPTIONS

- This model's salvo launcher can be replaced with 1 Vertus hurricane bolter.

LEADER

This model can be attached to the following unit: **VERTUS PRAETORS**

ABILITIES

CORE: **Leader**

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Sweeping Advance: Once per battle, at the end of the Fight phase, if this model's unit has fought this phase, if it is within Engagement Range of one or more enemy units, it can make a Fall Back move or, if it is not within Engagement Range of one or more enemy units, it can make a Normal move.

Strategic Mastery: Once per battle round, you can select one model from your army with this ability. You can target that model's unit with a Stratagem for 0CP, and can do so even if you have already targeted a different unit with that Stratagem this phase.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Shield-Captain on Dawneagle Jetbike**

This model is equipped with: salvo launcher; interceptor lance.

KEYWORDS: **MOUNTED, CHARACTER, FLY, IMPERIUM, DAWNEAGLE JETBIKE, SHIELD-CAPTAIN**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**

BLADE CHAMPION

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	6	2+	6	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



A Blade Champion's role is to identify the greatest battlefield threat then ensure its swift destruction. They are well-equipped for the task, wielding crackling archeotech blades in a variety of combat styles – Behemor, Hurricanis and Victus – each perfect for dealing with a different kind of foe.

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Vaultswords – Behemor [PRECISION]	Melee	6	2+	7	-2	2
Vaultswords – Hurricanis [SUSTAINED HITS 1]	Melee	9	2+	5	-1	1
Vaultswords – Victus [DEVASTATING WOUNDS]	Melee	5	2+	6	-3	3

LEADER

This model can be attached to the following units: **CUSTODIAN GUARD, CUSTODIAN WARDENS**

ABILITIES

CORE: **Deep Strike, Leader**

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Swift Onslaught: While this model is leading a unit, you can re-roll Charge rolls made for that unit.

Martial Inspiration: Once per battle, in your Charge phase, this model's unit it eligible to declare a charge in a turn in which it Advanced.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Blade Champion**

This model is equipped with: vaultswords.

Before selecting targets for this weapon, select one of its profiles to make attacks with.

KEYWORDS: **INFANTRY, CHARACTER, IMPERIUM, BLADE CHAMPION**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**

VALERIAN

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	6	2+	6	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



A headstrong warrior, Valerian is relatively new to the Adeptus Custodes, but is already marked for greatness. His urge to bring death to the foes of the Emperor beyond Terra is much valued in these dark times, and countless enemies have fallen to his guardian spear, Gnosis.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Gnosis [ASSAULT]	24"	3	2+	4	-1	2

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Gnosis	Melee	7	2+	8	-3	2

LEADER

This model can be attached to the following units: **CUSTODIAN GUARD, CUSTODIAN WARDENS**

ABILITIES

CORE: **Feel No Pain 6+, Leader**

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Golden Laurels: While this model is leading a unit, each time a melee attack targets that unit, worsen the Armour Penetration characteristic of that attack by 1.

Hero of Lion's Gate: Once per battle, after making a Hit roll, Wound roll or saving throw for this model, you can change the result of that roll to an unmodified 6.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Valerian – EPIC HERO**

This model is equipped with: Gnosis.

KEYWORDS: **INFANTRY, CHARACTER, EPIC HERO, IMPERIUM, SHIELD-CAPTAIN, VALERIAN**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**

KNIGHT-CENTURA

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	3	3+	4	6+	1

5+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



Knight-Centuras are the leaders of Sisters of Silence cadres and the guardians of their traditions. They have earned the respect of their Sisters through their years of service, impeccable fighting skills, prowess and control as Nulls and encyclopaedic knowledge of how best to hunt the witch and the sorcerer.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Master-crafted boltgun [RAPID FIRE 1]	24"	1	2+	4	0	2
Witchseeker flamer [IGNORES COVER, TORRENT]	12"	D6	N/A	4	0	1

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Close combat weapon	Melee	3	2+	3	0	1
Executioner greatblade [ANTI-PSYKER 5+, DEVASTATING WOUNDS]	Melee	3	2+	5	-2	2

WARGEAR OPTIONS

- This model's executioner greatblade can be replaced with one of the following:
  - 1 master-crafted boltgun and 1 close combat weapon
  - 1 Witchseeker flamer and 1 close combat weapon

LEADER

This model can be attached to the following units: **PROSECUTORS, VIGILATORS, WITCHSEEKERS**

ABILITIES

CORE: **Leader, Scouts 6"**

Seeker's Instincts: While this model is leading a unit, add 2" to the Move characteristic of models in that unit and add 2 to Advance and Charge rolls made for that unit.

Daughter of the Abyss: This model has the Feel No Pain 3+ ability against Psychic Attacks and mortal wounds.

Corner the Quarry: Each time an enemy unit (excluding **MONSTERS** and **VEHICLES**) that is within Engagement Range of this model's unit Falls Back, all models in that enemy unit must take a Desperate Escape test. When doing so, if that enemy unit is Battle-shocked, subtract 1 from each of those tests.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Knight-Centura**

This model is equipped with: executioner greatblade.

KEYWORDS: **INFANTRY, CHARACTER, IMPERIUM, ANATHEMA PSYKANA, KNIGHT-CENTURA**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**

ALEYA

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	3	3+	4	6+	1

5+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



Aleya is a veteran of her order and is a ferocious and dedicated hunter of witches and sorcerers. Over many years she has developed incredible tactical perception, as well as a deep knowledge of her quarry. She employs these skills to seek out rogue psykers, cutting them down with sweeps of her blade, Somnus.

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Somnus [ANTI-PSYKER 5+, DEVASTATING WOUNDS]	Melee	4	2+	6	-3	3

LEADER

This model can be attached to the following units: **PROSECUTORS, VIGILATORS, WITCHSEEKERS**

ABILITIES

CORE: **Feel No Pain 5+, Leader, Scouts 6"**

Tactical Perception: While this model is leading a unit, models in that unit have the Fights First ability.

Tenacious Spirit: While this model is leading a unit, each time a model in that unit makes an attack, add 1 to the Hit roll if that unit is below its Starting Strength, and add 1 to the Wound roll as well if that unit is Below Half-strength.

Daughter of the Abyss: This model has the Feel No Pain 3+ ability against Psychic Attacks and mortal wounds.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Aleya – EPIC HERO**

This model is equipped with: Somnus.

KEYWORDS: **INFANTRY, CHARACTER, EPIC HERO, IMPERIUM, ANATHEMA PSYKANA, ALEYA**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**

CUSTODIAN GUARD

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	6	2+	3	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



These warriors form the backbone of the shield companies, and every one is a terrifying force of destruction equal to the strongest of the foe. Whether armed with guardian spear or sentinel blade, their shots are perfectly placed, and every cut, thrust and parry is a masterclass in bladesmanship.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Guardian spear [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	4	-1	2
Sentinel blade [ASSAULT, PISTOL]	12"	2	2+	4	-1	2

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Guardian spear	Melee	5	2+	7	-2	2
Misericordia	Melee	5	2+	5	-2	1
Sentinel blade	Melee	5	2+	6	-2	1

WARGEAR OPTIONS

- Any number of models can each have their guardian spear replaced with 1 sentinel blade and 1 praesidium shield.
- 1 model's guardian spear can be replaced with 1 vexilla, 1 misericordia and 1 praesidium shield.

ABILITIES

CORE: **Deep Strike**

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Stand Vigil: Each time a model in this unit makes an attack, re-roll a Wound roll of 1. While this unit is within range of an objective marker you control, you can re-roll the Wound roll instead.

Sentinel Storm: Once per battle, in your Shooting phase, after this unit has shot, it can shoot again.

WARGEAR ABILITIES

Praesidium Shield: Add 1 to the bearer's Wounds characteristic.

Vexilla: Add 1 to the Objective Control characteristic of models in the bearer's unit.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **4-5 Custodian Guard**

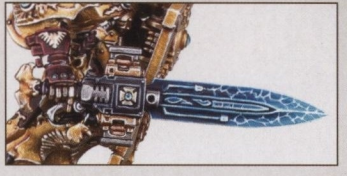
Every model is equipped with: guardian spear.

KEYWORDS: **INFANTRY, BATTLELINE, IMPERIUM, CUSTODIAN GUARD**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**



Guardian spear



Sentinel blade



Misericordia



Custodian Guard with vexilla and praesidium shield



Custodian Guard with guardian spear



Custodian Guard with sentinel blade and praesidium shield

CUSTODIAN WARDENS

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	6	2+	3	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



Veterans with centuries of service, Custodian Wardens are level-headed warriors who have sworn to fight as living fortresses no foe shall breach. With frightening intensity and wills of iron, these warriors cleave their foes in two with immense sweeps of their energised spear and axe blades.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Castellan axe [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	4	-1	2
Guardian spear [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	4	-1	2

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Castellan axe	Melee	4	2+	9	-1	3
Guardian spear	Melee	5	2+	7	-2	2

WARGEAR OPTIONS

- Any number of models can each have their guardian spear replaced with 1 castellan axe.
- 1 model can be equipped with 1 vexilla.

ABILITIES

CORE: **Deep Strike**

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Resolute Will: While a **CHARACTER** model is leading this unit, each time an attack targets this unit, if the Strength characteristic of that attack is greater than the Toughness characteristic of this unit, subtract 1 from the Wound roll.

Living Fortress: Once per battle, at the start of any phase, this unit can use this ability. If it does, until the end of the phase, models in this unit have the Feel No Pain 4+ ability.

WARGEAR ABILITIES

Vexilla: Add 1 to the Objective Control characteristic of models in the bearer's unit.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **4-5 Custodian Wardens**

Every model is equipped with: guardian spear.

KEYWORDS: **INFANTRY, IMPERIUM, CUSTODIAN WARDENS**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**



ALLARUS CUSTODIANS

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
5"	7	2+	4	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



Even amongst the Adeptus Custodes, Allarus Custodians are renowned for their deeds. Teleporting into the most dangerous enemy strongholds, they rely upon the indomitable resilience of their Terminator plate to protect them as they hunt down demagogues and generals. Striking wherever they will cause the most damage, they swiftly tear the heart from their foe's defence.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Balistus grenade launcher [BLAST]	18"	D6	2+	4	-1	1
Castellan axe [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	4	-1	2
Guardian spear [ASSAULT]	24"	2	2+	4	-1	2

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Castellan axe	Melee	4	2+	9	-1	3
Guardian spear	Melee	5	2+	7	-2	2
Misericordia	Melee	5	2+	5	-2	1

WARGEAR OPTIONS

- Any number of models can each have their guardian spear replaced with 1 castellan axe.
- 1 model's guardian spear can be replaced with 1 vexilla and 1 misericordia.

ABILITIES

CORE: **Deep Strike**

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Slayers of Tyrants: Each time a model in this unit makes an attack that targets a **CHARACTER**, **MONSTER** or **VEHICLE** unit, you can re-roll the Wound roll.

From Golden Light: Once per battle, at the end of your opponent's turn, if this unit is not within Engagement Range of one or more enemy units, you can remove it from the battlefield and place it into Strategic Reserves.

WARGEAR ABILITIES

Vexilla: Add 1 to the Objective Control characteristic of models in the bearer's unit.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **2-6 Allarus Custodians**

Every model is equipped with: balistus grenade launcher; guardian spear.

KEYWORDS: **INFANTRY, TERMINATOR, IMPERIUM, ALLARUS CUSTODIANS**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**



Castellan axe



Misericordia



Balistus grenade launcher



Allarus Custodian with balistus grenade launcher and guardian spear

Allarus Custodian with balistus grenade launcher and vexilla

Allarus Custodian with balistus grenade launcher and guardian spear

VERTUS PRAETORS

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
12"	6	2+	4	6+	2

4+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



Veteran warriors who have seen battle on a hundred worlds, these Custodians know that the value of speed is in directing their might precisely where and when it is needed most. Master combatants and marksmen both, they can place piercing strikes and deadly salvoes with precision even when travelling at immense speeds.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Salvo launcher	24"	1	2+	9	-2	3
Vertus hurricane bolter [RAPID FIRE 3, TWIN-LINKED]	18"	3	2+	4	0	1

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Interceptor lance [LANCE]	Melee	5	2+	7	-2	2

WARGEAR OPTIONS

- Any number of models can each have their salvo launcher replaced with 1 Vertus hurricane bolter.

ABILITIES

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Turbo-boost: Each time this unit Advances, do not make an Advance roll. Instead, until the end of the phase, add 6" to the Move characteristic of models in this unit.

Quicksilver Execution: Once per battle, after this unit ends an Advance move, you can select one enemy unit (excluding **MONSTERS** and **VEHICLES**) that it moved over during that move, then roll one D6 for each model in this unit: for each 2+, that enemy unit suffers 2 mortal wounds.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **2-3 Vertus Praetors**

Every model is equipped with: salvo launcher; interceptor lance.

KEYWORDS: **MOUNTED, FLY, IMPERIUM, VERTUS PRAETORS**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**

VENERABLE CONTEMPTOR DREADNOUGHT

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	9	2+	10	6+	3

5+ INVULNERABLE SAVE



These towering combat walkers are piloted by centuries-old fallen heroes kept alive by irreplaceable technologies. Equipped with weapons that can melt armour and tear apart infantry, Venerable Contemptor Dreadnoughts inflict terrible damage, all while protected by atomantic shields and auto-repair protocols.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Combi-bolter [RAPID FIRE 2]	24"	2	2+	4	0	1
Kheres-pattern assault cannon [DEVASTATING WOUNDS]	24"	6	2+	7	-1	1
Multi-melta [MELTA 2]	18"	2	2+	9	-4	D6

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Contemptor combat weapon	Melee	5	2+	12	-2	3

WARGEAR OPTIONS

- This model's multi-melta can be replaced with 1 Kheres-pattern assault cannon.

ABILITIES

CORE: **Deadly Demise 1**

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Unyielding Ancient: The first time this model is destroyed, remove it from play without resolving its Deadly Demise ability. Then, at the end of the phase, roll one D6: on a 2+, set this model back up on the battlefield as close as possible to where it was destroyed and not within Engagement Range of any enemy units, with D6 wounds remaining.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Venerable Contemptor Dreadnought**

This model is equipped with: combi-bolter; multi-melta; Contemptor combat weapon.

KEYWORDS: **VEHICLE, WALKER, IMPERIUM, VENERABLE CONTEMPTOR DREADNOUGHT**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**

VENERABLE LAND RAIDER

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
10"	12	2+	16	6+	5



Land Raiders are heavily armed mobile fortresses. Possessed of hyper-durable adamantine armour and a fearsome array of weapons, they and their cargo of Custodian warriors can turn the tide of war in a single salvo, and their machine spirits are so potent they can fight on even if the crew are slain.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Godhammer lascannon	48"	2	2+	12	-3	D6+1
Hunter-killer missile [ONE SHOT]	48"	1	2+	14	-3	D6
One Shot: The bearer can only shoot with this weapon once per battle.						
Storm bolter [RAPID FIRE 2]	24"	2	2+	4	0	1
Twin heavy bolter [SUSTAINED HITS 1, TWIN-LINKED]	36"	3	2+	5	-1	2

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Armoured tracks	Melee	6	4+	8	0	1

WARGEAR OPTIONS

- This model can be equipped with 1 hunter-killer missile.
- This model can be equipped with 1 storm bolter.

TRANSPORT

This model has a transport capacity of 6 **ADEPTUS CUSTODES INFANTRY** models.

ABILITIES

CORE: **Deadly Demise D6**

FACTION: **Martial Ka'tah**

Assault Ramp: Each time a unit disembarks from this model after it has made a Normal move, that unit is still eligible to declare a charge this turn.

DAMAGED: 1-5 WOUNDS REMAINING

While this model has 1-5 wounds remaining, each time this model makes an attack, subtract 1 from the Hit roll.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Venerable Land Raider**

This model is equipped with: 2 godhammer lascannons; twin heavy bolter; armoured tracks.

KEYWORDS: **VEHICLE, IMPERIUM, TRANSPORT, SMOKE, VENERABLE LAND RAIDER**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**



PROSECUTORS

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	3	3+	1	6+	2



Protected from the malevolence of witches by their rare anti-psychic mutation, and shielded from the bullets and blades of the foe by their finely crafted power armour, Prosecutors advance unflinching into the heart of battle. Their bolters thunder ceaselessly, each explosive shell ending another heretic life.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Boltgun [RAPID FIRE 1]	24"	1	3+	4	0	1

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Close combat weapon	Melee	2	3+	3	0	1

ABILITIES

Daughters of the Abyss: Models in this unit have the Feel No Pain 3+ ability against Psychic Attacks and mortal wounds.

Purity of Execution: Each time a model in this unit makes a ranged attack that targets a **PSYKER** unit, that attack has the **[PRECISION]** and **[DEVASTATING WOUNDS]** abilities.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Prosecutor Sister Superior**
- **3-9 Prosecutors**

Every model is equipped with: boltgun; close combat weapon.

KEYWORDS: **INFANTRY, IMPERIUM, ANATHEMA PSYKANA, PROSECUTORS**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**

VIGILATORS

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	3	3+	1	6+	1



The surest way to bring an end to a witch's malefic rampage is to strike their head from their body. Such is the doctrine of the Vigilators, who ghost across the battlefield before charging headlong into battle, their double-handed power blades singing a keening song of death.

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Executioner greatblade [ANTI-PSYKER 5+, DEVASTATING WOUNDS]	Melee	2	3+	5	-2	2

ABILITIES

Daughters of the Abyss: Models in this unit have the Feel No Pain 3+ ability against Psychic Attacks and mortal wounds.

Deft Parry: Each time a melee attack targets this unit, subtract 1 from the Hit roll.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Vigilator Sister Superior**
- **3-9 Vigilators**

Every model is equipped with: executioner greatblade.

KEYWORDS: **INFANTRY, IMPERIUM, ANATHEMA PSYKANA, VIGILATORS**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**

WITCHSEEKERS

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
6"	3	3+	1	6+	1



Witchseekers wield sanctified flamers as they hunt witches through tangled corridors and muddy trenchworks alike. Closing with their heretical quarry, they unleash a roaring conflagration to immolate the foe as effectively as would any witch-burning pyre. Those not immediately incinerated are instead sent fleeing in abject terror.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Witchseeker flamer [IGNORES COVER, TORRENT]	12"	D6	N/A	4	0	1

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Close combat weapon	Melee	2	3+	3	0	1

ABILITIES

CORE: **Scouts 6"**

Daughters of the Abyss: Models in this unit have the Feel No Pain 3+ ability against Psychic Attacks and mortal wounds.

Sanctified Flames: In your Shooting phase, after this unit has shot, select one enemy unit hit by one or more of those attacks. That enemy unit must take a Battle-shock test.

UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Witchseeker Sister Superior**
- **3-9 Witchseekers**

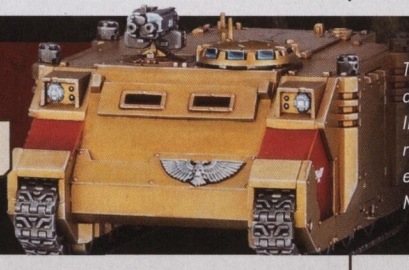
Every model is equipped with: Witchseeker flamer; close combat weapon.

KEYWORDS: **Infantry, Imperium, Anathema Psykana, Witchseekers**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **Adeptus Custodes**

ANATHEMA PSYKANA RHINO

M	T	SV	W	LD	OC
12"	9	3+	10	6+	2



The Rhinos of the Silent Sisterhood are more than just armoured personnel carriers. Many have served the Imperium for hundreds, if not thousands of years. Highly rugged vehicles, their spacious capacity and powerful engines help them to safely carry their deadly cargo of Null Maidens into the fiercest of battles.

RANGED WEAPONS	RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
Hunter-killer missile [ONE SHOT]	48"	1	2+	14	-3	D6
One Shot: The bearer can only shoot with this weapon once per battle.						
Storm bolter [RAPID FIRE 2]	24"	2	3+	4	0	1

MELEE WEAPONS	RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Armoured tracks	Melee	3	4+	6	0	1

WARGEAR OPTIONS

- This model can be equipped with 1 hunter-killer missile.

TRANSPORT

This model has a transport capacity of 12 **Anathema Psykana Infantry** models.

ABILITIES

CORE: **Deadly Demise D3; Firing Deck 2**

Daughters of the Abyss: This model has the Feel No Pain 3+ ability against Psychic Attacks and mortal wounds.

Self Repair: At the start of your Command phase, this model regains 1 lost wound.

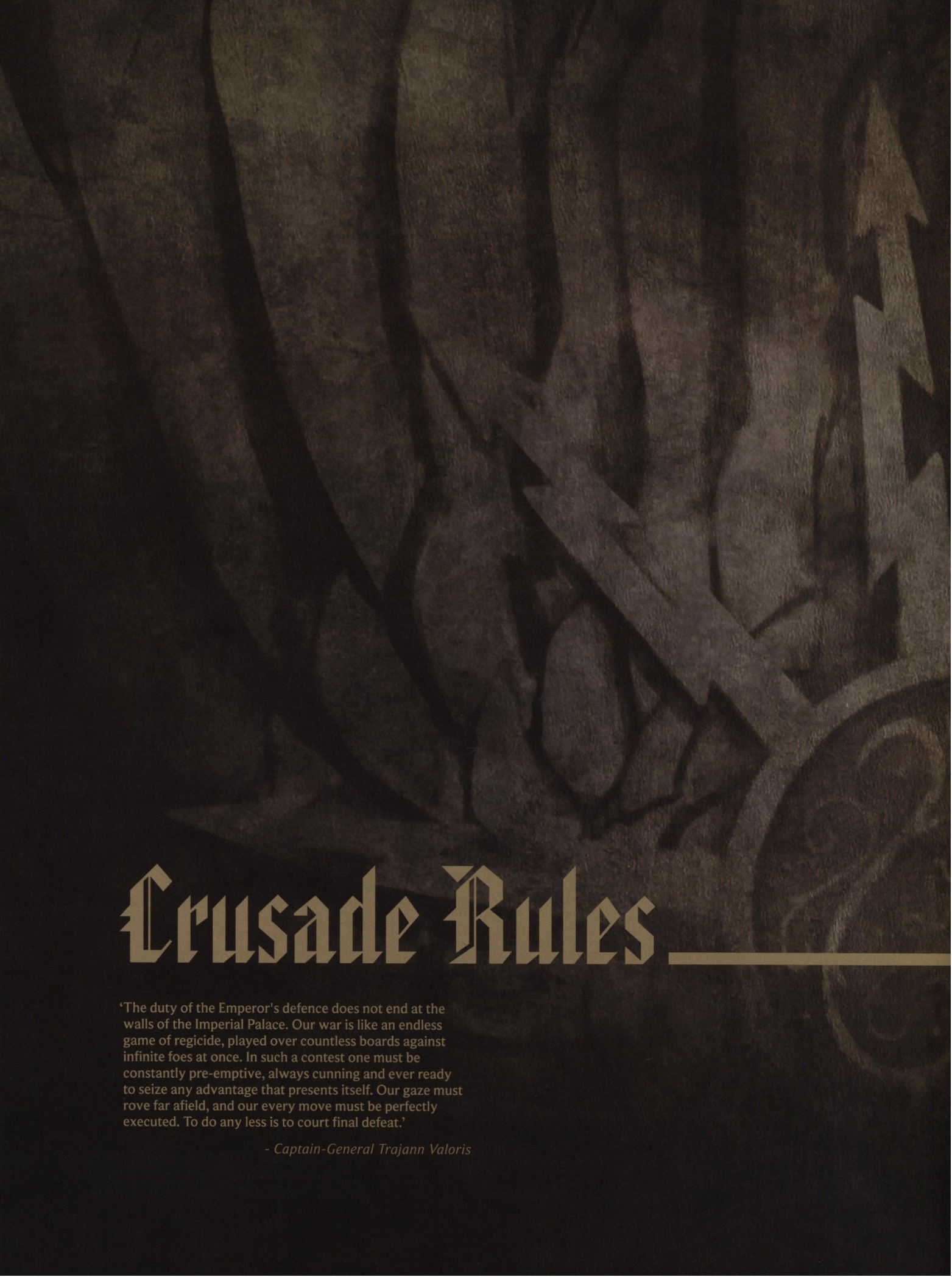
UNIT COMPOSITION

- **1 Anathema Psykana Rhino**

This model is equipped with: storm bolter; armoured tracks.

KEYWORDS: **Vehicle, Transport, Dedicated Transport, Smoke, Imperium, Anathema Psykana, Rhino**

FACTION KEYWORDS: **Adeptus Custodes**



Crusade Rules

'The duty of the Emperor's defence does not end at the walls of the Imperial Palace. Our war is like an endless game of regicide, played over countless boards against infinite foes at once. In such a contest one must be constantly pre-emptive, always cunning and ever ready to seize any advantage that presents itself. Our gaze must rove far afield, and our every move must be perfectly executed. To do any less is to court final defeat.'

- Captain-General Trajann Valoris



INTRODUCTION

In this section you'll find additional rules for playing Crusade battles that are bespoke to ADEPTUS CUSTODES units.

This section contains the following additional rules:

MAGISTERIUM LEX ULTIMA

Your **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** Crusade force will set out on key Imperatives in the name of the Emperor, accomplishing amazing feats swiftly for unique rewards. But if they fail to complete these tasks, they will suffer consequences in the form of Dishonour.

BATTLE SCARS

Themed to the unique nature of **ADEPTUS CUSTODES**, these Battle Scars represent long-lasting effects units from your Crusade force may come to carry.

AGENDAS

ADEPTUS CUSTODES armies can attempt to achieve unique Agendas in addition to those found in other publications. These represent the faction's unique goals and their particular methods of waging war.

REQUISITIONS

ADEPTUS CUSTODES armies have access to a number of bespoke Requisitions in addition to those found in other publications.

BATTLE TRAITS

As they gain experience and prowess, **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** units in your Crusade force can be given one of the Battle Traits in this section instead of one presented elsewhere.

CRUSADE RELICS

In addition to the Crusade Relics presented in other publications, **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** models can claim one of the Crusade Relics found here.

ARTEFACTS OF THE VAULTS

As well as their Crusade Relics, **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** can borrow unique Artefacts of the Vaults to assist in completing the Magisterium Lex Ultima.

CRUSADE BADGES

Here you will find three Crusade Badges representing goals you can set yourself when campaigning with your Crusade force. Once one is achieved, you could set yourself a new goal, or take the opportunity to start a new Crusade force.



MAGISTERIUM LEX ULTIMA

As far back as records exist of the Adeptus Custodes, they have held the Magisterium Lex Ultima, making them answerable to only one – the Emperor. Such a mark of office holds them above all law and command save for the direct authority of the Master of Mankind, and affords them the incontestable jurisdiction to pursue Imperative Endeavours as they feel is appropriate.

If your Crusade force includes **TRAJANN VALORIS** or any other **SHIELD-CAPTAIN** units and you are not currently on an Endeavour, you can claim the Magisterium Lex Ultima before a battle. If you do, you must commence an Endeavour for your Crusade force. This entails a collection of objectives (known as Imperatives) that you must attempt to complete in sequence over a series of battles. Doing so will earn you Endeavour Rewards, but failure will bring about Dishonour.

When you commence an Endeavour, you must determine its three Imperatives from the Imperative tables. To do this, roll one D6 to decide which Imperative table to use, then another D6 to determine an Imperative from that Imperative table. You cannot determine the same Imperative for each Endeavour more than once (roll again until a new Imperative is determined). Once you have determined all three of your Imperatives, make a note of them, and the order in which they were generated, in your Order of Battle. Your Endeavour has now commenced and you must complete its Imperatives one at a time, starting with the first Imperative you determined – this is known as the active Imperative.

At the end of a battle, if you have completed the active Imperative, mark that Imperative as completed in your Order of Battle. The next Imperative you determined is now active for subsequent battles. Once you have completed all of your Endeavour's Imperatives, you can claim an Endeavour Reward, and can then claim the Magisterium Lex Ultima once more.

You can abandon an Endeavour at the end of a battle. If you do, and you have completed two out of three Imperatives, you can randomly select an Endeavour Reward from the two you have completed, and the other Endeavour Reward is lost.

In addition, if you have not completed all of your Endeavour's Imperatives within nine battles of beginning that Endeavour, then it is abandoned.

When an Endeavour is abandoned, you must select a Dishonour, and can then start a new Endeavour before the next battle.



ENDEAVOUR IMPERATIVES

IMPERATIVE (D6 1-3) D6

EMPEROR'S DOMAIN
Some crucial heartland territories must be kept free of foes at any cost.

Complete two battles where, at the end of the battle, you have more friendly units wholly within your deployment zone than enemy units (excluding **AIRCRAFT**).

WRATH OF THE EMPEROR
You must embody the Emperor's fury in your wholesale destruction of the foe.

Complete two battles in which you have destroyed four or more units by the start of the third battle round.

MAKE AN EXAMPLE
So absolute must your victory be that it sends a message to any who threaten Terra.

Win a battle by more than 10 Victory points.

VITAL TARGETS
Priority threats to the Throne must be eliminated.

Complete two battles in which you destroy the three units from your opponent's army with the highest points values (if one or more units are tied in this way, then the destruction of any of them counts towards this Imperative).

SHADOWED DIRECTIVE
Sometimes the Custodians must work secretly and to hidden agendas.

Complete two battles in which you earned XP from an **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** Agenda.

ABSOLUTE MASTERY
You must display excellence in every theatre of strategy and tactics.

Complete two battles in which you earned XP from non-**ADEPTUS CUSTODES** Agendas (such as those found in the main Crusade rules).

IMPERATIVE (D6 4-6) D6

SHADOW OF THE THRONE
Those territories claimed by the Emperor must be irrefutably uncontested.

At the end of the battle, both of the following are satisfied:

- You control three or more objective markers.
- You control at least double the number of objective markers that your opponent does.

MARTIAL SUPREMACY
The blood-price of defying Terra must be rendered insupportable.

At the end of a battle, at least twice as many enemy units were destroyed in that battle than units from your Crusade army.

ALPHA THREAT CONFIRMED
Augury suggests this fiend is a direct threat to the Throne and must be destroyed!

At the end of the battle, the enemy **WARLORD** is destroyed.

ANNIHILATION
Shatter this danger before it can develop.

At the end of a battle, every enemy unit is destroyed, or is Below Half-strength.

EMPEROR'S WILL BE DONE
Sweep the enemy aside and reclaim that which is the Emperor's.

Complete two battles where, at the end of the battle, you have more friendly units wholly within your opponent's deployment zone than enemy units (excluding **AIRCRAFT**).

INSPIRATIONAL EXAMPLE
Fight as the Emperor's true champions.

At the end of the battle, two or more enemy units were destroyed by melee attacks made by an **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** model from your Crusade army.

ENDEAVOUR REWARDS

If your Crusade force is on an Endeavour, once you have completed all of your Endeavour's Imperatives you can claim an Endeavour Reward. If you have completed all three Imperatives, you may choose which reward you would like to claim from those three. If you abandon your Imperatives after only completing two, you can randomly claim one reward of the two completed Imperatives.

Some Endeavour Rewards are labelled 'Instant' – apply the effects of such Endeavour Rewards immediately. Other Endeavour Rewards are labelled 'Persistent' – make a note of such Endeavour Rewards in your Order of Battle. Before each battle, when mustering your Crusade army, you can select one of your Persistent Endeavour Rewards to be active for that battle. If you do, add 1 to your Crusade army's total Crusade points for that battle.

IMPERATIVE (D6 1-3)	ENDEAVOUR REWARD
EMPEROR'S DOMAIN	**Instant** – Gain 3RP.
WRATH OF THE EMPEROR	**Instant** – You can select two additional units to be Marked for Greatness after the battle in which you completed your final Imperative.
MAKE AN EXAMPLE	**Instant** – Every unit from your Crusade force gains 1XP.
VITAL TARGETS	**Instant** – Gain 1RP. The unit from your Crusade army that earned the most XP from an Agenda in the battle in which you completed your final Imperative gains 5XP.
SHADOWED DIRECTIVE	**Instant** – Every unit in your Crusade force gains 1XP. If that unit earned XP from an Agenda in the battle in which you completed your final Imperative, it gains 2XP.
ABSOLUTE MASTERY	**Instant** – Your **WARLORD** from the battle in which you completed your final Imperative gains 5XP.
IMPERATIVE (D6 4-6)	**ENDEAVOUR REWARD**
SHADOW OF THE THRONE	**Persistent** – Once per battle, you can target a friendly unit with an **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** Stratagem for 0CP.
MARTIAL SUPREMACY	**Persistent** – Once per battle, you can target a friendly unit with the Fire Overwatch Stratagem or the Heroic Intervention Stratagem for 0CP.
ALPHA THREAT CONFIRMED	**Instant** – If the enemy **WARLORD** was destroyed in the battle in which you completed your final Imperative, the friendly unit that destroyed it gains a Battle Honour. If no friendly unit achieved this, claim the Endeavour reward from Wrath of the Emperor Imperative instead.
ANNIHILATION	**Persistent** – Once per battle, you can target a friendly unit with the Counter-offensive Stratagem or the Epic Challenge Stratagem for 0CP.
EMPEROR'S WILL BE DONE	**Persistent** – Once per battle, you can target a friendly unit with the Command Re-roll Stratagem or the Rapid Ingress Stratagem for 0CP.
INSPIRATIONAL EXAMPLE	**Instant** – The **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** that completed this Imperative gains a Battle Honour.

DISHONOUR

Each time your Crusade force abandons an Endeavour, you must determine a Dishonour from the table (see right). You can either select the Dishonour that you feel is most appropriate or randomly determine one by rolling one D6 and applying the corresponding result.

DISHONOUR	D6

COMMAND IN QUESTION

Failing to uphold the trust of their comrades and their Emperor is a black mark indeed for a Shield-Captain.

Select one **SHIELD-CAPTAIN** unit from your Crusade force. That unit gains the Disgraced Battle Scar and the Mark of Shame Battle Scar from the main Crusade rules. If your Crusade force does not contain any **SHIELD-CAPTAIN** units, re-roll this result.

DAMAGE LIMITATION

Progress must for now be set aside in favour of repairing the damage already done by recent failures.

Halve the XP (rounding down) that units in your Crusade force earn for a number of battles equivalent to the number of your Endeavour's Imperatives that were not completed (the previous battle counts as the first of such battles).

PETITION THE TOWER OF HEGEMON

It is no easy thing for the Adeptus Custodes to admit they are unequal to a task, but in this instance reinforcements have been requested and the Custodians must make do until they arrive.

Reduce your Requisition points to 0. You cannot gain Requisition points for a number of battles equivalent to the number of Imperatives of your Endeavour that were not completed (the previous battles counts as the first of such battles).



BATTLE SCARS

When an ADEPTUS CUSTODES unit gains a Battle Scar, you can use the table presented here to determine which Battle Scar that unit has gained.

BATTLE SCARS D6

IMMEDIATE THREATS

Knowing the myriad threats facing the Golden Throne, some sodalities of Custodians have been known to develop a shortened focus on the foes directly within their blades' reach.

- In your Charge phase, each time this unit declares a charge, you can only select the closest enemy unit as the target of that charge.
- Each time a model in this unit makes a melee attack, you can re-roll a Wound roll of 1.

LIONS, NOT WOLVES

Sometimes, the Custodians' tendency to fight as individuals becomes so pronounced that it can detract from their wider strategic vision.

- This unit loses its Martial Ka'tah ability.
- Each time a model in this unit makes a melee attack, you can re-roll a Hit roll of 1 and you can re-roll a Wound roll of 1.

SENSE OF INSUFFICIENCY

It has been known for Custodians, faced by the rarely seen spectre of failure, to throw themselves into studying the ka'tahs to the exclusion of all else, determined not to be found wanting again.

INFANTRY *unit only.*

- Change the Objective Control characteristic of models in this unit to 0. It cannot be increased by any means.
- Each time this unit is selected to fight, both Ka'tah Stances are active for this unit, instead of only one.

'Rare is the battle where the Emperor's Custodians outnumber our foes. We are ever beset, surrounded upon all sides by heresy and foulness just as is Terra itself. Yet like the Throneworld we stand resolute, indefatigable, indomitable. Let the enemy come, let them darken the horizon with their numbers. Still we will prevail.'

- Allarus Custodian Selenia Bastoris



AGENDAS

If your Crusade army includes any ADEPTUS CUSTODES units, you can select Agendas from those presented here.

PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

The Custodians know that no matter how honed their skills or focused their thoughts, the defence of the Golden Throne always demands more and better.

At the end of the battle, the **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit from your Crusade army with the lowest XP (if two or more are tied, select one of them) gains 1XP for each of the following that are satisfied:

- That unit is not destroyed.
- That unit is within range of an objective marker outside your deployment zone that you control.
- That unit destroyed one or more enemy units during the battle.
- That unit destroyed three or more enemy units during the battle.

JUDGEMENT DELIVERED

A devastating victory is a great deterrent to potential foes, sending ripples of dismay through those who might otherwise have thought to threaten the Throneworld.

At the end of the battle, if there are no models from your opponent's Crusade army remaining on the battlefield, each **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit from your Crusade army that is on the battlefield gains 2XP.

GREAT TITHE

The work of harvesting powerful psykers to feed the Golden Throne is never-ending. The same is true of the quest to purge the galaxy of those witches deemed powerful enough to present a threat to the Emperor or his realm.

Each time an enemy **PSYKER** unit is destroyed, if that enemy unit was destroyed by an **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit from your Crusade army, that **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit gains 2XP. Otherwise, the **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** unit from your Crusade army that was closest to that enemy unit when it was destroyed gains 1XP.

UNTO THE DARK CELLS

More than one dread entity or forbidden artefact has slipped away from the cells beneath the Emperor's Palace since the emergence of the Great Rift. Seizing and recovering these is a rewarding priority for many Custodians.

At the end of the battle, if you control more objective markers in No Man's Land than your opponent, you can select up to three **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** units within range of objective markers in No Man's Land that you control. Each selected unit gains 2XP.



REQUISITIONS

If your Crusade army includes any ADEPTUS CUSTODES units, you can spend Requisition points (RP) on any of the following Requisitions.

ARTEFACTS OF THE VAULTS — 1RP

There are ancient devices and weapons within the vaults of the Emperor's Palace that only the Custodians are entrusted with their use.

Purchase this Requisition before a battle. Select one **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** model from your Crusade army (excluding **EPIC HERO** models), then select one of the following for that model:

- You can only select this option if your Crusade force is on an Endeavour. Select one Artefact of the Vaults (pg 107). That model gains that Artefact of the Vaults until your Crusade force completes its active Imperative or abandons its Endeavour. Your Crusade force can only have one Artefact of the Vaults at any time.
- Remove one Enhancement from that model and replace it with another that it is eligible to have.

EARNING OF A NAME — 1RP

The Custodians earn new names for their tallies in honour of especially mighty deeds.

Purchase this Requisition after a battle in which the enemy **WARLORD** was destroyed by an **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** model (excluding **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** and **EPIC HERO** models) from your Crusade army. Generate an additional Honour-Name for that **CHARACTER** model (this has no rules purpose) then gain the following ability:

Earned Name: Each time this model's unit is selected to fight, both Ka'tah Stances are active for that unit, instead of only one.

SUPERHUMAN FOCUS — 1RP

The Adeptus Custodes are masters at seizing control of rapidly developing situations and applying their talents to alter the strategic parameters in their favour.

Purchase this Requisition after you have rolled to determine your Imperatives. Select one of those Imperatives, then select a different Imperative to replace it (this must be unique to the other Imperatives you have rolled and you can only use this Requisition once per Endeavour).

PROVEN METTLE — 1RP

Amongst the meritocratic structures of the Adeptus Custodes, warriors may prove themselves worthy of command in many ways.

Purchase this Requisition when an **ADEPTUS CUSTODES INFANTRY** or **MOUNTED** unit from your Crusade force (excluding **CHARACTER** and **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** units) reaches 30XP or more. Add one **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** unit to your Order of Battle (excluding **EPIC HERO** units). You cannot purchase this Requisition if doing so would cause your total Points Limit to exceed your Crusade force's Supply Limit. That **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** starts with 30XP and gains the appropriate number of Battle Honours for its rank. Then, change the XP of the **ADEPTUS CUSTODES** unit that reached 30XP or more to 6XP, remove any Battle Honours it has until it has no more than one, and update its Crusade card accordingly.



BATTLE TRAITS

When an ADEPTUS CUSTODES unit gains a Battle Trait, you can use one of the tables presented here to determine which Battle Trait that unit has gained.



ADEPTUS CUSTODES INFANTRY UNITS — D6

Excluding **ANATHEMA PSYKANA** units

CELERITOUS SENTRIES

Even while standing statue-still upon their endless watch, these Custodians are ready to spring instantly into violent action.

Once per battle, you can target this unit with the Counter-offensive Stratagem for 0CP.

NOT A SHELL WASTED

These warriors place every shot to fell the maximum number of victims with the most murderous efficiency.

Each time a model within this unit makes a ranged attack that targets a unit that contains 10 or more models, that attack has the [**SUSTAINED HITS 1**] ability.

COMPANION'S WATCH

Having stood guard over the very throne room of the Emperor himself, these Custodians are no strangers to staging the most resolute defence.

While this unit is within range of an objective marker, it has the Feel No Pain 6+ ability.

FLAWLESS BLADEWORK

Even by the exceptional standards of the Adeptus Custodes, these warriors' skills in close-quarters combat are breathtaking.

Each time a model in this unit makes a melee attack, re-roll a Hit roll of 1.

WILL OF AURAMITE

There is no circumstance this side of the grave that can truly shake the composure of the Custodians.

You can target this unit with Stratagems even while it is Battle-shocked.

GENALCHEMIC WARDING

The genetic alchemy that saturates these warriors' physiologies has been tempered by many perils to resist more strongly than ever the corrupting touch of the warp .

Each time a Psychic Attack targets this unit, subtract 1 from the Hit roll.

ADEPTUS CUSTODES MOUNTED UNITS D6

ON GILDED WINGS

These warriors become veritable streaks of golden light as they sweep down upon their foes.

This unit has the Stealth ability. Each time this unit Remains Stationary, it loses this ability until the start of your next Movement phase.

TIP OF THE TALON

Fighting at the forefront of the battle, these Custodians hit their victims with perfectly timed volleys the instant before they tear into their ranks.

Each time a model in this unit makes a ranged attack that targets an enemy unit within 6", add 1 to the Strength characteristic of that attack.

HERALDS OF THE HOST

These Custodians push their mounts to the limit, the better to capitalise upon the element of surprise.

Each time this unit Advances, add 2" to its Move characteristic (this is cumulative with the Turbo-boost ability).

ANATHEMA PSYKANA INFANTRY UNITS D6

HUNTERS' STRIKE

The Sisters of Silence know that witches are best struck down before they have a chance for trickery .

Each time this unit is selected to fight, if this unit made a Charge move this turn, until the end of the phase, add 1 to the Attacks characteristic of melee weapons equipped by models in this unit.

RELENTLESS PURSUIT

Once on the trail of their quarry, these Null Maidens run them down with merciless determination.

You can re-roll Advance and Charge rolls made for this unit.

RAPID PROSECUTION

These Sisters of Silence are ruthless and dogged in their pursuit of the enemy.

This unit is eligible to either shoot or declare a charge (but not both) in a turn in which it Advanced.

THE VOYAGE OF THE NEMESIS

It was in the first days of the Era Indomitus, with the darkness of the Noctis Aeterna barely lifted, that the void ship *Nemesis* set forth from Terra. Aboard voyaged a company of Custodians. Talmacharus there was, and Levinitie'Hael, and Armatan the Strong, and Khiviqaria and Diometran, and many more besides. A full three-score of the Ten Thousand took ship into the stars aboard the *Nemesis* and with them went the Null Maidens of the Mercurian Vigil, led by Shield-Captain Dmytrosian and Knight-Centura Threnica Eskh.

Their quest was a dark and uncertain thing. Upon the very eve of the great calamity a prophecy had been told by the Oracle of High Asiatica, that a witch-lord would rise amidst the Gulfs of Edhali to threaten the Golden Throne. This was the being the host of the *Nemesis* vowed to seek and to slay.

It was a realm of countless perils they set out into, and battle found them long before they had even left the Sol System. High above pale Luna, the *Nemesis* was beset by pirates of the void and boarded. Faced by Armatan the Strong and his Allarus companions, those incautious reavers found no reward for their boldness but blood. At Vigilum Station, the host found at first only silence, then within that deep-void watchtower they met entities of malevolence and horror. There fell great Stateriel beneath a tide of unclean fiends, though she slew the Beast of the Hollow Places before she fell. There, too, did Khiviqaria, and Ruvasta Paledes, and swift Leihng earn new names for their tallies.

Onward swept the *Nemesis*, out upon the turbulent tides of the warp, into the darkness far beyond Sol's light. At Ustakar its host defeated the Tormentor of Multitudes. Beneath the surface of Dhol'chkae they reclaimed the Onyx Key for Humanity. At the Battle of Topaz Heights, Threnica Eskh laid low the dreaded Mind-Thief.

Still the voyage of the *Nemesis* continues, for the goal of its host remains yet before them. Far into shadow and storm have they sailed. Yet always the light of the Master of Mankind guides them onward, towards duty, towards destiny, and towards final triumph.

CRUSADE RELICS

When an ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER model gains a Crusade Relic, you can select one of the Crusade Relics presented here.

ARTIFICER RELICS

AURULENT WARDING

Auramite can be etched with protective wards. Few have the skills or knowledge to amend the Custodes' armour in such a way, and the process takes many months to complete.

Once per turn, you can re-roll one saving throw made for the bearer.

EMPEROR'S LIGHT

Said to have been crafted from a crystallised shard of the Emperor's glorious light, this misericordia has been borne into battle by three separate Captain-Generals. It is reputed to flood the heart of its victim with searing radiance.

ADEPTUS CUSTODES INFANTRY model only. The bearer is equipped with the following melee weapon in addition to its other weapons:

RANGE	A	WS	S	AP	D
Melee	3	2+	5	-2	1

[DEVASTATING WOUNDS, EXTRA ATTACKS]

ANTIQUITY RELICS

VERACITY, THE SWORD OF OBLIVION

This blade is the pattern upon which all executioner greatblades were built. Its substance is capable of cutting any material without the need of a power field or disruption generator.

KNIGHT-CENTURA model equipped with an executioner greatblade only. The bearer's melee weapons gain the **[LANCE]** and **[SUSTAINED HITS 1]** abilities.

LEGENDARY RELICS

LUCENT AUREOLE

This gleaming halo is an ancient artefact fitted with a powerful conversion field that offers heightened protection to the wearer.

The bearer has a 3+ invulnerable save.

APOLLONIAN SPEAR

The Apollonian Spear was wielded by Constantin Valdor, the first Captain-General of the Custodes. After his disappearance, the spear was placed in the vaults of Terra. Only rarely now, in the most terrible of circumstances, is it brought from there and wielded by the mightiest of the Custodians.

SHIELD-CAPTAIN model only. Once per battle, at the start of the Fight phase, the bearer can use this ability. If it does, add 3 to the Strength and Attacks characteristics of the bearer's melee weapons until the end of that phase.

'The hotter the forge, the finer the blade, or so they say. The forge of war in which we now find ourselves blazes hotter than anything the Imperium has seen in ten millennia. We of the Adeptus Custodes were built to endure these fires. They will not be our end. Instead, we will be honed to the finest cutting edge, that we may be the bane of even the foulest heretics.'

- Captain-General Trajann Valoris



ARTEFACTS OF THE VAULTS

Artefacts of the Vaults are rare Crusade Relics from ages past, kept in stasis deep within the vaults of the Imperial Palace. They cannot be selected as normal. Instead, if your Crusade force is on an Endeavour, they can be temporarily used by **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTERS** to turn the tide of key battles by using the Artefacts of the Vaults Requisition.

Each time a model gains an Artefact of the Vaults, make a note on its Crusade card and increase its Crusade points total by 1. Artefacts of the Vaults can be removed before or after a battle, and are also removed when your Crusade force completes its active Imperative or abandons its Endeavour. Each time a model loses an Artefact of the Vaults, reduce its Crusade points total by 1.

ARAE-SHRIKE

A counter-intelligence device that twists and distorts electromagnetic signals, arae-shrikes are considered blasphemous in principle and arcane function by the Adeptus Mechanicus.

Enemy units that are set up on the battlefield as Reinforcements cannot be set up within 12" of this unit.

MORTIS GYRE

The Mortis Gyre is an orb of energy that, when activated, seeks out its victim and rapidly embeds itself into their consciousness. The victim is shown a horrifying vision of their impending doom and a killing blow is delivered to send them to that fate.

Once per battle, when the bearer is selected to fight, it can activate the Mortis Gyre. If it does, until that fight is resolved, melee attacks made by this model that target an **INFANTRY** unit have the **[DEVASTATING WOUNDS]** ability.

TWILIGHT PALLIUM

What appears to be a cloak of office can be activated to envelop the bearer in the very fabric of its surrounding reality, allowing them to traverse atomically with a thought and re-emerge with a blink.

Once per battle, at the end of any of your phases, the bearer can use the Twilight Pallium. If it does, remove the bearer's unit from the battlefield and set it up again anywhere on the battlefield more than 3" horizontally away from all enemy units. The bearer's unit is not eligible to charge in a turn in which it was set up in this manner unless it is more than 9" horizontally away from all enemy units.

ANATHEMATIC DIADEM

A circlet of spiritual darkness believed to hail from the earliest eras of Mankind, this sinister artefact focuses null energies in a vortex around its wearer.

The bearer gains the following ability:

Anathematic Diadem (Aura): When an enemy model within 12" of this model makes an attack with a Psychic weapon, subtract 1 from the Wound roll.

PARELDOR'S CADUCATRIX

This immeasurably ancient auto-medicae device stems from an age of learnings now long lost. It meshes seamlessly with any suit of battle armour and exudes filament probes through the bearer's body, there to dispense remarkable panaceaic elixirs should it detect severe physical or mental trauma.

Once per battle, in your Command phase, the bearer can regain up to D6 lost wounds.

AURIFEROUS ORB

The Auriferous Orb appears to be a sphere of solid gold, but its simple beauty belies its dangers. When it detonates, it unleashes beams of such pure, radiating light that it kills those enemies of the Emperor it does not blind.

The bearer is equipped with the following ranged weapon in addition to its other weapons:

RANGE	A	BS	S	AP	D
8"	D3	2+	1	0	1
[ANTI-INFANTRY 4+, BLAST, BLINDING LIGHT, DEVASTATING WOUNDS]					

Blinding Light: Each time a unit is hit by this weapon, it is blinded until the start of your next turn. While a unit is blinded, each time a model in that units makes an attack, subtract 1 from the Hit roll.

EPOCH AUSPICE

The Epoch Auspice resembles an unremarkable book – with its battered cover and worn pages – but this appearance hides the strange technologies bound within that allow the bearer to create a temporal bubble around themselves and nearby allies.

Once per battle, at the start of the battle round, the bearer can deploy the Epoch Auspice. If it does, until the end of the battle round, each time an attack targets the bearer's unit, subtract 1 from the Wound roll.

CRUSADE BADGES

When your Crusade force accomplishes specific long-term goals, you can earn the Crusade badges shown below, representing your warriors' successes over many battles.



TRUSTED SENTINEL

Your victories have earned the approbation of your peers within the Ten Thousand. They have also seen you awarded with several new names to add to your tally, and opened new opportunities for you to advance within the esoteric subsocieties of your order. All of this is as it should be, for with every plaudit or advancement your ability to serve the Emperor and defend the Golden Throne increases. Yet there are myriad threats still to be met. There are countless challenges for you to rise to, and your duties remain endless. Continue your watch with honour…

- You have completed three Imperatives or more and earned one Endeavour Reward.
- You have won two or more battles.



CHAMPION OF THE THRONE

The tale of your names winds across the inner surfaces of your armour, an indisputable record of your valiant and merciless deeds. Many amongst the ranks of the Adeptus Custodes know of you. Your reputation as an exemplary warrior, battlefield commander and living implement of the Emperor's vengeance grows with every victory.

- You have completed nine Imperatives and earned three Endeavour Rewards.
- You have won six or more battles.
- You have used the Artefacts of the Vaults Requisition at least once, and won one or more battles while a model from your Crusade army has an Artefact of the Vaults.



AURIC EXEMPLAR

Your name has become a byword for terror amongst the enemies of the Emperor, while across the Throneworld you are celebrated in statue, tapestry and song.

- You have completed 15 Imperatives and earned five Endeavour Rewards.
- You have won ten or more battles.
- You have used the Artefacts of the Vaults Requisition at least three times, and won three or more battles while a model from your Crusade army has an Artefact of the Vaults.
- An **ADEPTUS CUSTODES CHARACTER** model has reached the Legendary rank.

ADEPTUS CUSTODES NAME GENERATOR



If you wish to create a name for one of your Custodian Guard or Sisters of Silence, you can use the tables below, picking your preferred components or rolling a D66 to determine a name – or even a string of them. To roll a D66, roll two D6, one after the other – the first represents tens and the second represents digits, giving you a result between 11 and 66.

CUSTODIAN GUARD

CHOSEN NAME	D66
Tybalus	11
Aetheus	12
Parysatia	13
Kariyan	14
Boudicari	15
Tristraen	16
Erasmian	21
Heracal	22
Tauramacchis	23
Athenari	24
Cassandrya	25
Surath	26
Nathadian	31
Marphisakh	32
Harkhas	33
Constantin	34
Athemia	35
Archimallus	36
Lilyana	41
Khataryna	42
Lencilius	43
Wu'la	44
Lytanus	45
Theyodara	46
Leotydus	51
Parradon	52
Borsa	53
Suikorya	54
Yortar	55
Sanash	56
Olgatria	61
Manastus	62
Jaeharl	63
Heraclast	64
Lyzbek	65
Tybaris	66

HONOUR-NAME	D66
Drund	11
Koumadra	12
Calaxor	13
Uremedes	14
Desh	15
Cassabar	16
D'essa	21
Ganorth	22
Valorian	23
Bastoris	24
Daryth	25
Ganyth	26
Gallimadean	31
Ossian	32
Urdanesh	33
Vadrian	34
Helsates	35
Maxin	36
Constor	41
Valdus	42
Tasolian	43
Steale	44
Thursk	45
Loque	46
Feldorus	51
Tychor	52
Ganestus	53
Desmondages	54
Talorn	55
Launceddre	56
Calligus	61
Cheim	62
Lychansis	63
Dat-Hastael	64
Ghau	65
Uriaxes	66

SISTERS OF SILENCE

FORENAME	D66
Amandera	11
Terena	12
Alyssah	13
Verynech	14
Lyssora	15
Eryvane	16
Charaleys	21
Sibella	22
Phoenica	23
Myrella	24
Charleth	25
Siavorna	26
Morgwenna	31
Zenna	32
Trinness	33
Elevor	34
Argweth	35
Jalyani	36
Kasheyka	41
Myrelle	42
Verenika	43
Elyze	44
Sophea	45
Mariatte	46
Bethemone	51
Persephyka	52
Kariadh	53
Rosale	54
Lorettian	55
Channia	56
Eryka	61
Brenadh	62
Maurih	63
Wynetta	64
Tasmasin	65
Leandra	66

SURNAME	D66
Dakkin	11
Kybus	12
Van Loricha	13
Respus	14
Farrondal	15
Vydorin	16
Lespus	21
Thrent	22
Syrennik	23
Kyre	24
Tasmus	25
Ghorvash	26
Shayde	31
Opaline	32
Maskus	33
Krenn	34
Skayde	35
Tastrok	36
Klayne	41
Masren	42
Vastys	43
Vydal	44
Ultorian	45
Weskyn	46
Ulmachu	51
Nastorus	52
Tallobere	53
Klorica	54
Cheynne	55
Dostobreyl	56
Lengh	61
Kendal	62
Stryke	63
Raskus	64
Endrycca	65
Gaspuss	66

POINTS VALUES

You can use this section to determine the points (pts) value of each unit from your army. Each entry lists the unit's size (which may include a lower and upper limit) and the associated points value for that size. You can learn more about using points to muster your army on pages 55-56 of the Core Rules.

Aleya	
1 model	80 pts

Allarus Custodians	
2 models	140 pts
3 models	210 pts
5 models	350 pts
6 models	420 pts

Anathema Psykana Rhino	
1 model	80 pts

Blade Champion	
1 model	120 pts

Custodian Guard	
4 models	225 pts
5 models	280 pts

Custodian Wardens	
4 models	260 pts
5 models	325 pts

Knight-Centura	
1 model	75 pts

Prosecutors	
4 models	45 pts
5 models	55 pts
9 models	100 pts
10 models	110 pts

Shield-Captain	
1 model	160 pts

Shield-Captain in Allarus Terminator Armour	
1 model	160 pts

Shield-Captain on Dawneagle Jetbike	
1 model	180 pts

Trajann Valoris	
1 model	180 pts

Valerian	
1 model	140 pts

Venerable Contemptor Dreadnought	
1 model	185 pts

Venerable Land Raider	
1 model	260 pts

Vertus Praetors	
2 models	200 pts
3 models	300 pts

Vigilators	
4 models	70 pts
5 models	85 pts
9 models	155 pts
10 models	170 pts

Witchseekers	
4 models	55 pts
5 models	65 pts
9 models	120 pts
10 models	130 pts

In addition to the points values printed here – which you can always use in agreement with your opponent – this Codex is supported with live online points values so that you can enjoy the most balanced and exciting games of Warhammer 40,000. To see the latest points values for your army, scan this QR code or check the Warhammer 40,000 app.



DETACHMENT ENHANCEMENTS

Talons of the Emperor

Radiant Mantle	30 pts
Gift of Terran Artifice	15 pts
Champion of the Imperium	25 pts
Aegis Projector	20 pts

Shield Host

From the Hall of Armouries	25 pts
Castellan's Mark	30 pts
Auric Mantle	15 pts
Panoptispex	5 pts

Null Maiden Vigil

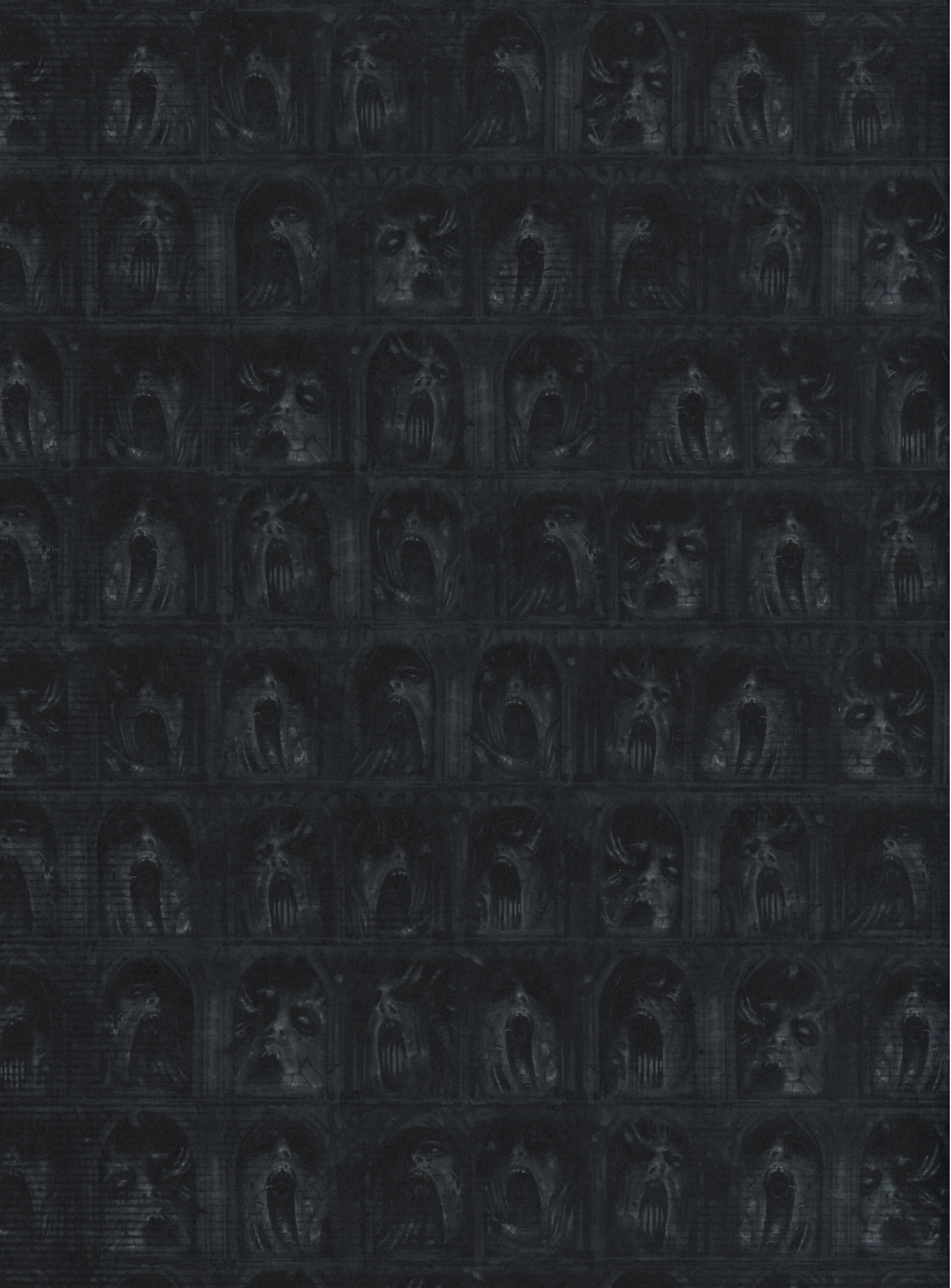
Raptor Blade	5 pts
Enhanced Voidsheen Cloak	10 pts
Huntress' Eye	15 pts
Oblivion Knight	25 pts

Auric Champions

Blade Imperator	25 pts
Inspirational Exemplar	10 pts
Veiled Blade	25 pts
Martial Philosopher	30 pts









Towering champions clad in gleaming auramite, the Adeptus Custodes are amongst the mightiest warriors in the Imperium. With bodies and minds honed through ancient secrets of gene-alchemy and wielding individually crafted weapons of incredible potency, even a small band of these terrifying exemplars can carve a bloody path through hordes of foes. They bear artefacts of technology from the deepest vaults of Terra, so perilous that they are forbidden to all others. They fight side by side upon the battlefield with the cold-eyed witch seekers of the Sisters of Silence. It must be this way, for the duty of the Adeptus Custodes is no less than to serve as the personal bodyguards of the Emperor, the protectors of Terra and the Golden Throne. Theirs is a war eternal, for the threats to the Master of Mankind are manifold and spread across the stars, but it is one they wage with breathtaking skill and ferocity, for to falter is to doom all of Humanity.

INSIDE YOU WILL FIND:

- The history of the Custodians from the earliest unification of Terra to the Era Indomitus and the many wars they have fought in the Emperor's name.
- All the rules you will need to assemble your collection of Adeptus Custodes Citadel miniatures into an ultra-elite tabletop army ready to engage in Combat Patrol, Crusade or matched play games of Warhammer 40,000.
- An evocative showcase of beautifully painted Citadel miniatures that displays the Adeptus Custodes and Sisters of Silence in gilded glory.

ISBN 978-1-80457-336-5

9 781804 573365 >

DESIGNED IN THE UK

PRINTED IN CHINA

60 03 01 08 019

WARHAMMER.COM

Manufactured by:
Games Workshop Limited.
Willow Road, Nottingham,
NG7 2WS, UK

European address:
Games Workshop Limited - Irish Branch
Unit 3, Lower Liffey Street,
Dublin 1, D01 K199, Ireland