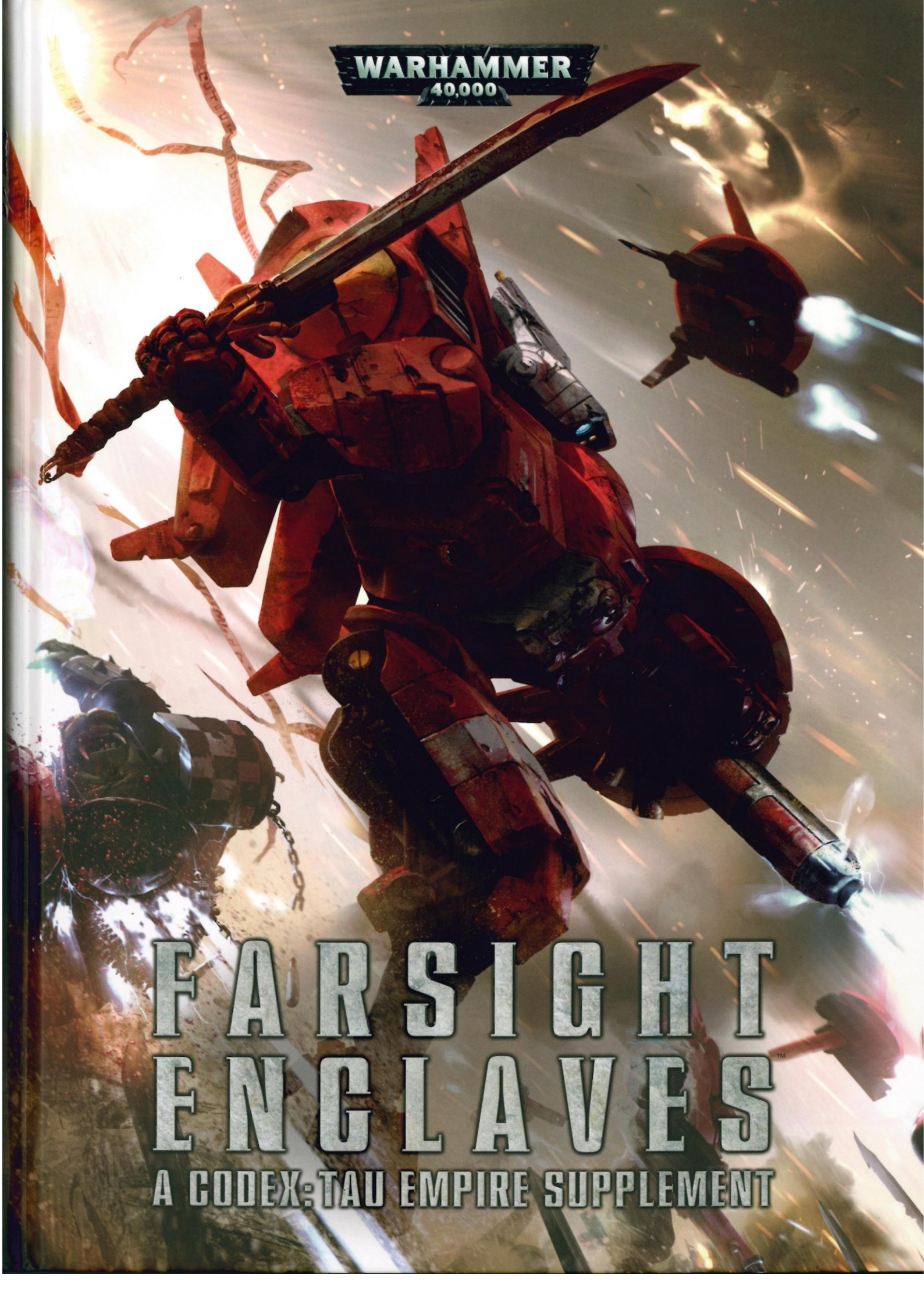

WARHAMMER
40,000
FARSIGHT
ENCLAVES
A CODEX: TAU EMPIRE SUPPLEMENT

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## PRODUCED BY THE GAMES WORKSHOP DESIGN STUDIO

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# INTRODUCTION

**The Tau are a new force in the galaxy, optimistic and bright. Yet even they have their dark secrets. When the warrior hero Farsight conquered the worlds of the Damocles Gulf, he learned forbidden truths that would divide the Tau Empire forever.**

The Tau Empire is bound fast by an unwavering belief in the Greater Good; the concept that the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few. It is a system rigidly enforced by the mysterious Ethereal Caste, governor-priests so influential that they could order their people to commit suicide and be obeyed on the spot. There has only ever been one Tau who has challenged their rule and lived to tell of it. That individual is O'Shovah, the infamous Commander Farsight, and despite the best efforts of the Ethereals to erase him from history, his exploits are legend.

## THE FARSIGHT ENCLAVES

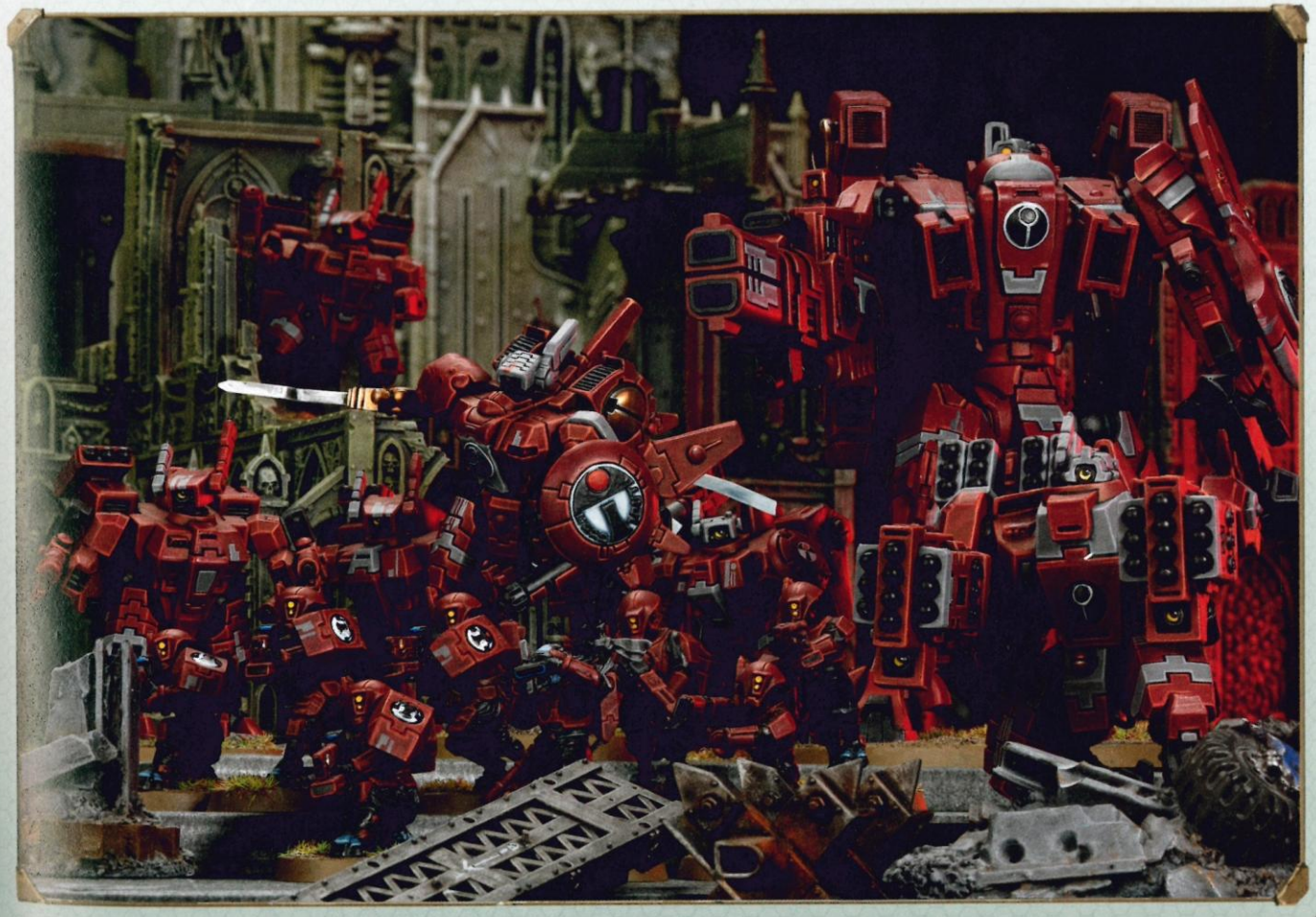
The region of space known to the Tau as the Forbidden Zone holds within it the Farsight Enclaves, each world a triumph of science and artistry blended into a perfect meritocracy. To understand their origin, one must learn the story of Commander Farsight himself; warrior lord, hero, exiled rebel and cursed fiend alike. His battlesuit-clad armies are lethal in the extreme, but it is the independent mind of O'Shovah that is the Tau Empire's greatest weapon and the one weakness that threatens its unity.

## WARHAMMER 40,000

*If you are reading this codex supplement, then you have already taken your first steps into the Warhammer 40,000 hobby. The* Warhammer 40,000 *rulebook contains all the rules you need to fight battles with your Citadel miniatures, and every army has its own codex that acts as a definitive guide to collecting and unleashing it upon the tabletop battlefields of the Warhammer 40,000 universe. This codex supplement allows you to turn your collection of Tau into the warrior elite of the Farsight Enclaves.*

## HOW THIS SUPPLEMENT WORKS

*Codex: Tau Empire* contains everything you need to field a force of Tau in your games of Warhammer 40,000, and this volume allows you to tailor that force into an army from the Farsight Enclaves, armed to the teeth and ready for battle. Within these pages, you will find the history of the Farsight Enclaves, from O'Shovah's first conflicts to the brink of their destruction. You'll also find a showcase of beautifully painted miniatures and the heroes of Commander O'Shovah's enclaves. Finally, you'll discover new missions that recreate Farsight's most famous battles, as well as additional rules to customise your games of Cities of Death and Planetstrike.





# A Warrior Born

**O'Shovah's journey into the stars began upon the sept world of Vior'la. Amongst a people with a reputation for being hot-tempered, the young warrior had a fire inside him that would one day set the Tau Empire aflame.**

O'Shovah's meteoric rise through the ranks of the Fire caste began in the training domes of Mont'yr. As was protocol for a young member of the warrior caste, he was enrolled in the planet's junior academies as soon as he could walk. In his studies there, he quickly established himself as a serious and dedicated aspirant with a voracious appetite for information. His peers were gifted too, but the young Shovah had a spark of brilliance that stood out from every other Tau of his generation. Within days, it became obvious to his tutors that they had more than a simple Fire Warrior on their hands.

Even in his youth, Shovah was fiercely independent. Within his first tau'cyr of basic tutelage, the young student had mounted several 'fact-finding' raids into the enrolment centres of the Mont'yr training academies. When the young warrior and his training-mates were finally cornered by the facility's guards, he puffed out his chest and demanded that the tutors teach him the Code of Fire. The first three times this occurred, the youngster was punished severely for his infractions. On the fourth, the weary tutors of the academies relented, and he was taken into the battle dome program.

Shovah was accepted for training a full three years before standard enrolment was due. With this act, the warrior who would become O'Shovah had set foot on the path that would bring several bitter and costly wars to the Tau race and almost destroy the Greater Good once and for all.

## Battle Dome Mont'yr

Even before he was known as Shovah, the young Vior'lan's martial temperament was the subject of much discussion amongst the academy masters. His physical skills were well above average for his age – the masters had been told by High Command to expect as much, for accidents of birth are rare indeed in Tau society – but what proved truly remarkable was his ability to retain tremendous amounts of data from each situation he encountered.

The aspiring Fire Warrior absorbed and memorised every facet of the training academies he witnessed, whether it concerned the academy's texts, his environment, his rivals, the weapons with which they fought, the Mont'yr Battle Dome's war zone simulations, or the rules that governed them. He could recite every volume of the sacred Code of Fire from end to end, and he took a quiet delight in violently demonstrating its physical principles to any of his fellow students who challenged him. He even deciphered the combat codes and signals used by his superiors, taking advantage of this knowledge to monitor their secret communiqués whenever they were careless enough to employ these ciphers in his presence. His ability to use the knowledge he gained from every experience to assess and predict the actions of those around him was unnerving, and earned him the nickname Shoh, which means 'inner light' in the Tau tongue.

Despite being several years younger than most other Tau in the battle dome, Shoh's eidetic memory and fierce determination earned him a string of perfect scores in the academy's simulations. Training sessions became the highlight of the young warrior's daily life. Whenever he was thrust into the complex warscapes engineered by his tutors, Shoh would find cover, spend a few seconds assessing his environment and available resources, and then lead his team in performing the exact set of manoeuvres necessary to complete his allotted task in as efficient a fashion as possible. His team's casualty count was so low as to be unprecedented, and Shoh escaped being tagged by hostile sim-ghosts every time he entered a combat exercise, even in the infamous Jungle of a Thousand Eyes.

At the time of Shoh's graduation to the Fire caste, the legendary Commander Puretide was still making a point of personally initiating as many new recruits into the ranks as possible. The famous commander was on military business in Vior'la when Shoh's generation of warriors were inducted, and to the great pleasure of Mont'yr's warriors, he agreed to be present for the ceremony. Amidst much bowing and scraping, the Mont'yr academy's tutors told Puretide of the student they called Shoh, the first warrior to have been enrolled into the academy at such a young age.



As Commander Puretide bestowed the rank of shas'la upon the Tau prodigy, he asked Shoh how he could consistently second-guess even the most devious of traps and scenarios set by his tutors. The young Tau politely explained that he usually thought of what plans he would set in place if he were a tutor trying to test a team of students, and then worked to disable those plans as best he could. Meaningful glances were exchanged between the assembled dignitaries, but nothing more was said on the matter at the time.

Two rotaa later, the tutors who had overseen Shoh's generation of students had been relieved of their duties and sent back to the front line of the Tau war effort. Shoh and his fellow novitiates were sent to the same war zone, fully inducted into the ranks of the Fire caste and eager to take the field against the Arachen incursions of the Western Veil.

Behind closed doors, Commander Puretide and his aides discussed the fact that Shoh's military acumen and prowess were as promising as they had hoped. Yet the true tests – those of the spirit, not the mind – were yet to come.

## THE ROAD TO COMMAND

Shas'la Shoh made a great impact upon the military spirit of the Vior'lan Fire caste stationed in the Veil. As was standard procedure, the young Tau served the first four years of his career as a member of a Fire Warrior team in a Hunter Cadre. However, Shoh's former tutors had old allies amongst the command structure, warriors from their own generation. One in particular, the fierce Sha'kan'thas, had not taken kindly to the young aspirant making his exercises look foolish. He ensured that his former pupil was posted to the fiercest war zones of each engagement, and that Shoh was always right on the front line. If the warrior prodigy was truly born for glory, he would rise to the challenge and prevail in the name of the Greater Good. If he fell, so be it – the whole Mont'yr issue would become a distant memory before too long.

The young Tau proved more than capable during the Fire caste's ongoing purges of the Arachen race. En route to the war zone, Shoh memorised every fact the Water caste had been able to glean in their dealings with the female Oestromystics of that many-legged race; information the diplomats had carefully hoarded and then sent to the Fire caste on the same day that the Arachen had formally refused to join the Greater Good. Before his team had fired a single shot from their pulse rifles, Shoh had thoroughly analysed the battle doctrine of the Arachen's blade-legged male gender and come to understand their strange martial abilities nearly as thoroughly as he did that of his own caste.

During the four years of war he spent as a shas'la trooper, Shoh became known to every warrior in his cadre. His ability to wield a pulse rifle at extreme close range saw him drive back several Arachen surprise attacks, and he was always quick to push home any advantage he could gain. He quickly earned the trust of his senior officer, Shas'ui Mon'oka, and later his respect. This turned to eternal gratitude at the Battle of the Great Web, where Shoh shot the shas'ui free of a tangleclutch trap, saving him from the egg-sacs of the Oestromystics and the horrific death that would otherwise have followed.

By the end of his tenure as a Fire Warrior, it was Shoh's 'suggestions' that formed the vast majority of his unit's battle plans. A firm believer in the Greater Good, Shas'ui Mon'oka recommended his charges for their first Trial by Fire at the earliest opportunity. His superior, the Cadre Fireblade, was only too happy to approve. Before long, the young Tau warrior and his team were shipped back to Vior'la for potential promotion.

The Trial by Fire was a traumatic experience. A high level of adversity is the norm for the warrior caste's coming-of-age tests, but there were those at the training academy that remembered Shoh's inadvertent hand in the fall of their old colleagues, and wished to test him all the more harshly for it. Shoh was thrust into a pitch-black, live-fire war dome where he and his team were assailed by numerous nameless horrors that defied classification or understanding. Even Shoh's quick wits were of limited use, and in the end, it was the fire in his soul that secured his fate. When a tentacled maw-thing came whirring down to chew his shas'ui apart, Shoh threw himself headlong into its path, and was cut to ribbons in the process.

The Tau warrior died that day, and not for the last time. When Shoh was brought back from his simulacoma, his tutors informed him that only those of his team who had 'died' in the ordeal had passed their trials, and that his new rank was that of shas'ui. When Shoh asked after those who did not pass their trial, however, his question was met only with stony silence. Though a hidden part of Shoh's soul railed at this, his gladness at being alive and the fulfilment of his most fervent desire temporarily drowned out any more questions he had. After all, with the rank of shas'ui came the honour that Shoh had always dreamed of – the right to pilot a battlesuit.



## THE HERO'S MANTLE

Though he returned to the Western Veil in order to garner experience as the shas'ui of a Fire Warrior squad, it was less than a full cycle before Shoh was inducted into the armoured elite of the Tau armies. His masters were as curious as he was as to whether his exceptional tactical acumen and military flair would translate into the art of battlesuit command. They were not disappointed. Unfortunately, the same could not be said for Shoh.

Whilst analysing drone-captured footage of his time as a Fire Warrior, Shoh's Vior'lan masters had noted a marked affinity – even a desire – for close action in the young Tau's tactics. The Fire caste commanders who had monitored his progress wanted to teach Shoh the self-control and perspective of a support role. On the day the young prodigy reported for duty to *Shas'ar'tol* High Command, he was immediately assigned to the specialist pilots of the Broadside teams. It was under the auspices of the veteran rifleman Shas'vre Ob'lotai that Shoh learnt the basics of battlesuit command, and in the process, a measure of restraint.

At first, Shoh was privately crestfallen at his reassignment to the back ranks of the Arachen war. He had always dreamed of piloting a Crisis battlesuit, though he hid it well. Yet in his heart, he knew the war effort was greater than his own personal desires. He applied every part of his exceptional mind to mastering the systems of his XV88 Broadside, drinking in specification data and after-action reports with every waking hour he spent outside the suit's piloting matrix. Within a single training cycle, Shoh was getting more range and accuracy out of his battlesuit's heavy rail rifle than Shas'vre Ob'lotai himself.

As soon as the correct training programs had been observed, Ob'lotai's Support Cadre was dispatched to the Veil with all haste. There, as his team blew apart one huge-bellied Oestromystic after another, Shoh earned himself a new epithet – the Young Executioner. Though only his mentor Ob'lotai picked up on it, the four years fighting at the rear of the Hunter Cadre's efforts were the most trying times of Shoh's life so far. To be armed and armoured in the height of offensive technology, and yet to have to rely on younger, more lightly-armoured warriors to fight in his stead – it was a kind of torture that Shoh never wanted to repeat.

Four years and one vertiginous Trial by Fire later, Shoh earned his wish. Because he had served long enough and with enough distinction to earn the rank of Shas'vre, he was entrusted the command of a cutting edge XV8 Crisis battlesuit. He was expected to master its weapon systems quickly, for Commander Dawnstone herself was about to lead the warriors of Vior'la in the final actions of the Veil War, and she needed the best troops the planet could provide at her side.

A period of exceptionally bloody battle soon unfolded across the Western Veil, scarring Shoh both physically and mentally. He lost most of his left leg to a skitterling swarm that got inside a damaged part of his Crisis armour, and saw many trusted comrades meet spectacularly visceral ends, their battlesuits physically ripped apart by giant Arachen Grandfathers. However, Shoh's agility and skill at the helm of the XV8 suit quickly became famous amongst Dawnstone's command. He was promoted to *saz'nami*, taking his place alongside one of his old tutors as a close protection officer for his commander.

Shoh repaid the faith placed in him tenfold during the engagement with the much-feared Arachen Trinity at the heart of the war effort. Having unwound the maze-like logic patterns with which the Arachen made their nests, Shoh led his commander to the silken heart of the Arachen cocoon-ship. There, he and Commander Dawnstone launched the Mont'ka strike that killed all three of the Trinity and expelled the Arachen from the Western Veil once and for all.

En route back to Vior'la, tragedy struck. Whilst docked with the cocoon-ship, Commander Dawnstone's flagship had been infested with Arachen skitterlings that poured out of the vents and conduits to swarm through its blue-lit corridors. Perhaps intended as a last spiteful gesture of defiance, the infestation fell upon the Fire Warrior command council whilst they were engaged in debate, catching them unarmed and dressed only in their fatigues. Shoh held the swarm back, using his body to block the doorway to the chamber as best he could whilst his Commander and her aides made their escape. Shoh stood firm even as agony coursed through him, the venom-tusks of the skitterlings piercing his skin again and again until his tortured frame shook its last.



Shoh awoke in a med-bay with the familiar surrounds of Battle Dome Mont'yr visible outside. His body was covered in psychosomatic welts, but no permanent harm had been done. Dawnstone herself was waiting by his bedside to inform him that the skitterling attack had in fact been a Trial by Fire – the whole event was a simulation. Just as she had hoped, Shoh had excelled in his role as bodyguard, even without his battlesuit to rely on. In light of this success, he had been promoted to shas'el – a commander-in-training. Better yet, Shoh had succeeded in his duties with such flying colours that the venerable Commander Puretide himself had agreed to train him in the arts of war.

## STUDENTS OF THE MASTER

Shoh was transported to Daly'th Prime, where he made his way to the peak of Mount Kanji, seat of Puretide's tutelage. With only his wits and tenacity to call upon, the journey up the sheer mountainside was a gruelling test by itself. Yet by using a system of improvised pulleys and the dead weight of a Kanjian snow lynx he had killed with a makeshift slingshot, Shoh made the journey up the perilous face of the mountain, mile by painstaking mile.

Soon after he reached the topmost peak, Shoh found Commander Puretide deep in meditation. The hermit was cross-legged in a simple hover throne. His ancient frame had atrophied, but an unyielding dignity shone through nonetheless. Shoh had heard that the sage had been crippled by a spinal injury he had sustained whilst inspecting the colonies on the other side of the Damocles Gulf, but was polite enough not to ask – he was there for wisdom, not for a sparring partner. However, the team-mates Shoh was to compete with atop Mount Kanji would shape his fate for many years into to future.

Seated in focused meditation in front of Puretide were two young Tau warriors – one who later introduced herself as Shaserra, a fellow aspirant to the command ranks of the Fire Caste, and the other a taciturn but gifted young warrior known as Kais. Through the hardships that were to follow, the three aspirants became as close as ta'lissera bond-mates – albeit ones engaged in a bitter rivalry for the approval of their elderly master.

Each of Puretide's students had a different style of war and a separate philosophy to go with it. Shoh's simmering passion and desire to plunge into the fires of battle saw him gravitate towards the Mont'ka, or 'killing blow', strategies, whilst Shaserra was a careful and meticulous practitioner of the 'patient hunter', Kauyon. Kais, a withdrawn and strange individual, was unusual in that he sought mastery of the monat's way of war. His goal was to become the perfect lone warrior, an army of one that could triumph in any situation with only the materials to hand. Though Shoh regularly scored the highest in the training simulations, his peers were not far behind. The competition between them saw each strive for success just as hard as in any true war zone, and in the process, earn the respect of their fellow students.

Commander Puretide had long ago mastered every one of the Tau's martial disciplines, and more besides. Over the years he honed his students' abilities to near superhuman levels, all the while striving to make them appreciate the alternative strategies available to the wise. When each was asked to fight in the manner of one of their peers, they did well enough, but in truth, they were only going through the motions, purely to ensure their master's approval. Each student had followed his or her own path, and was loath to stray far from it.

One by one, the Tau warriors left Puretide's side, their studies as complete as time would afford. They took their new names and titles from the peak of Mount Kanji – Commander O'Shoh, Commander O'Shaserra, and Monat Commander O'Kais. Though they would go on to fight in different war zones across the Tau Empire, the three disciples of Puretide were all to make their mark on history.

# THE ARKUNASHA WAR

**O'Shovah's first true command saw him reinforce the Tau population of Arkunasha as they faced the greenskin menace for the first time. With the Fire caste committed in force, it was not long before the planet's oxide dunes ran with rivers of blood.**

## THE RUST PLANET

The planet of Arkunasha was settled during the Second Sphere Expansion. Despite the aridity of the oxide deserts that made up the world's surface, the Tau had settled the red planet with a sizeable population. This they had achieved through the tireless work of the Earth caste's scientists and engineers. By their efforts, the Tau Empire had girded the planet with two necklace-like strings of bio-domes that ran around the most temperate latitudes, each a mirror distance from the equator. From orbit, the world appeared as a blood red globe adrift in the ocean of space, banded with two rows of bioluminescent lights that pulsed bluish white like the flanks of some deep-sea organism.

In their preliminary investigations, during the earliest expeditions to Arkunasha's surface, the Earth caste had made a disturbing discovery. Whilst determining the source of the oxide deserts that covered the world, they found a great variance in the metallic composition and even origin of the various particulates. It was as if the world had been entirely covered in metal structures at some time in the distant past, which had long since been utterly ground to dust. Given the depth of the oxide residue, that ancient civilization must have included several artificial cities the size of mountain ranges. Theories abounded throughout the Earth caste about the planet-wide catastrophe that had torn everything upon the planet's surface apart. Though the Tau had no idea what might have caused Arkunasha's spectacular death, or who the inhabitants might have been, they had taken their first glimpse of the world-destroying power of the Imperium of Mankind.

## WAAAGH! DOK

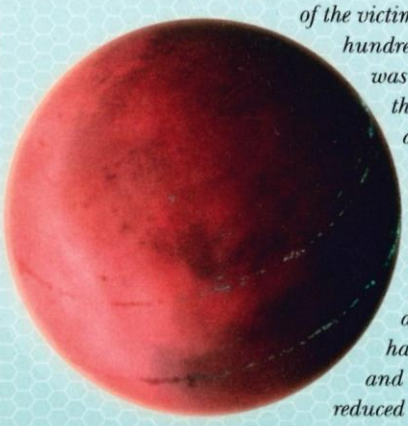
The Ork crusade of violence known as Waaagh! Dok appeared in the vicinity of Arkunasha without warning or reason. The void east of the planet had been empty for years. One equinox, a strange solar storm erupted that appeared to make odd symbols in the sky. When it had subsided, the Earth caste sighted something that defied all logic. They checked and recalibrated their instruments over and over again, only to receive the same result. The eastern void was now dotted with hundreds of energy signatures, each burning off so much radiation they could not possibly be Tau in origin. More disturbing still, every one of them was heading on a collision course with Arkunasha.

Weeks later, the planet was in the throes of a full-scale war. An Ork invasion of vast size had descended, slamming giant asteroid fortresses into the planet's dunes with a series of tectonic thumps. The crudeness of the Ork assault had been its saving grace. The Earth caste's firing solutions could depressurise or destroy a conventional fleet before it reached orbit, but there was nothing conventional about the greenskin armada. Even the heavy railcannons that bristled from the Tau bio-domes had proven next to useless against the porous balls of rock and junk hurtling in their direction.

More and more Ork craft hurtled out of the sky and crunched into the dunes in a jaw-dropping planetfall the Tau took to calling the *ghoro'kha*, or death hail. Hunter and Defender cadres were scrambled to each crash site, but greenskins seethed out of the impact crater around each fallen asteroid like water overflowing a boiling cauldron.

### ARKUNASHA

*The oxide planet of Arkunasha has little in the way of native life – not in the conventional sense, at least. The Tau who settled there soon found a twist in the planet's ecosystem that defied rational explanation: the red deserts were haunted by rust storms of terrible force. Any individual caught in their whirling embrace would disappear completely, though in some cases, the desiccated corpse of the victim would turn up some hundreds of miles distant. Such was the force of these storms that even battlesuits and skimmers were vulnerable. Engines would gum up and malfunction, anti-grav transports would be smashed into the dunes as if by invisible hands, sensors would fail and weapon accuracy was reduced to almost point-blank range. What was most puzzling about these great storms was that the tornados that prowled the edges of them would frequently move in direct contravention to the natural meteorology of the area, especially if a living being passed nearby – it was almost as if the storms were alive, and thirsting.*



*Within days of these storms assailing the first Arkunashan settlers, the Ethereals of the settlement enclaves had forbidden the use of the terms 'ghost storm' and 'rust devil'. The atmospheric conditions of Arkunasha were indeed strange to them, they admitted, but this was purely because they had an imperfect understanding of the planet's ecosystem. This was a problem that was soon to be rectified by the Earth caste. There was no cause for alarm; the notion that the desert was haunted by the ghosts of its former populace was barbaric and unbecoming of a sophisticated race such as the Tau.*

*The settlers learned how to avoid the rust storms before too long, and all talk of ghosts died out altogether. Yet the adversity these storms provided was to foster a spirit of stubborn determination in Arkunasha's people, a dogged refusal to give up that saw them fight to the last against the Orks of Waaagh! Dok.*

## THE PEOPLE OF THE DOMES

By the time Commander Shoh and his fleet reached Arkunasha's orbit, the planet had been all but overrun. With the exception of a few highly mobile strike forces abroad in the desert, the Tau military presence planetside had been destroyed in a series of disastrously one-sided engagements. The rest of the populace was holed up in the transparent bio-domes that ringed the planet – though the Orks had destroyed most of the connecting structures in short order, they had not yet worked out a way to pierce the metres-thick carapaces of the habitats themselves. Each was an island in a sea of invaders, surrounded by barbaric hordes that hammered and hollered on the thick transplastics separating them from their prey. The Tau inside got a good chance to study their persecutors up close, but the habitats' resources were dwindling, and their military forces were pitifully inadequate for the task of repelling the Orks. Without each bio-dome's dew farms bringing in the regular water they relied upon, the life expectancy of Arkunasha's people could be measured in weeks, at best.

To O'Shoh's great surprise, his counter-invasion fleet made it to Arkunasha's surface entirely unmolested. The cumbersome Ork asteroid-vessels had all made planetfall, without exception, and no picket of battleships or even monitor stations had been left in their wake. It looked as if the invaders were far too busy preying on the Tau populace to worry about such trifling matters as enemy reinforcements. O'Shoh shook his head in bewilderment at his foe's presumption. Though he would come to know the Ork mindset all too well, he had yet to understand that even if the Orks could have prevented his fleet's counter-invasion, they would not have done so.

Commander Shoh had been extensively briefed on the situation by the Tau trapped in Arkunasha's bio-domes, so he could formulate an appropriate plan of attack for the coming fight. The planet's dust storms could be avoided with careful monitoring of the Earth caste's sub-orbital drone network; provided that he gave the storm fronts a wide berth, there was no reason they should claim any lives. The Orks were another matter altogether. According to the Air caste's aerial observations, there appeared to be even more of the violent alien warbands roaming the desert than in the first few weeks of the invasion. Stranger still, drone scans had confirmed something that the Ethereals had originally put down to fearful rumour-mongering – the individual Orks testing the defences of each bio-dome were slowly getting bigger. Thus far, the bestial aliens had resisted or ignored all attempts to communicate or broker terms, and the Water caste were at a loss how to proceed. All the greenskinned beasts seemed to want to do was fight.

In his pre-battle meditations upon the subject, O'Shoh found that he could relate to that concept. He had been practicing the art of war in simulations or languishing in the limbo of interstellar travel for far too long. In his heart, he relished the thought of once more risking his life in the name of the Greater Good. The spectacle of war called to him; the noise, the light – even the letting of blood, if he was honest with himself. These reflections were his first step towards understanding the psyche of the Ork, and in achieving that understanding, turning the tide of the Arkunasha war.



### DA PAINBOSS

*The Warboss at the heart of Waaagh! Dok had once been a Painboy in the retinue of the Ork tyrant Drogbag. Over the years, Drogbag had failed to notice that every time he woke up from an operation on the Dok's slab, the Painboy would grow a little more bulky and the Warboss a little less. By the time a mistreated Gretchin orderly tipped Drogbag off that Toofjaw was 'taking a little off the top' each time, it was too late. Painboy Toofjaw literally took the Warboss apart in the ensuing leadership challenge, carving him to pieces with his twin killsaws and claiming rulership of the tribe in the process.*

*Thus began a very unusual Waaagh! indeed. In every clan or tribe that Toofjaw recruited to his cause, Painboys were treated like royalty. Every Ork was made to undergo at least a small amount of cybernetic modification, and in the process, both teeth and weapons would unaccountably go missing. With their apron-wearing Killa Kan orderlies to back them up should a patient get uppity, Painboss Toofjaw's Dok Mob slowly came to control almost all of the wealth and wargear of their warband.*

*The Painboss' influence spread across the system, and it was not long until Waaagh! Dok had set sail into the sea of stars. Boarding captured asteroids hastily converted into crude warships, the Orks headed for the sprawling stellar stain they called Da Big Swirly Fing, hoping to invade and destroy whatever lay behind it. Through the Warp rift lay Arkunasha, and a war that was to test their battlelust to the limit.*

Though the Tau had engaged whole alien civilisations before and emerged triumphant, in almost all of those invasions, the Fire caste had held the upper hand. This was one of the few times the Tau war machine would be tested in such desperately unfavourable conditions. Training simulations always included modules where the Tau were outnumbered by their enemies, sometimes as many as ten times over. Here, the foe teemed across the dunes in their billions. Orbital snapshots gained on entry into the atmosphere indicated that the Orks outnumbered the Fire caste counter-invasion by nearly four hundred to one.

When the Air caste's final observations were relayed to the commander during his descent, he nodded in solemn acknowledgement. His contingent's cadres would have to use the weapons of the mind rather than the gauntlet, he said – against the savage beast, such a strategy was inevitable. When asked to clarify his intent, O'Shoh drew one of the ornamental swords from the wall above and stabbed it through the arm of the command throne before snapping its blade in half. It was a metaphor that was to become famous amongst the Fire caste in the ensuing months.



## THE WAY OF THE BROKEN SWORD

The initial engagements against the Orks were intended to re-establish supply routes and test the greenskins' defences and capabilities in the meantime. So individualistic were the Orks that there were no uniforms or markings of military structure, and O'Shoh was forced to probe further into the Ork mindset before proceeding. He kept his Hunter Cadres skimming the surface of the world in Devilfish transports and flight-capable battlesuits, avoiding the killer storms wherever they drew close. In every corner of the world, he killed enough Orks from long range to ensure their scattered mobs were on the brink of panic. Almost without exception, it was the largest Ork in each group that restored order. The simplicity of their military structure was such that it had at first been overlooked – in the Ork psyche, might made right, and nothing more.

Another observation O'Shoh made was that whenever his troops struck the milling Ork armies and faded away, almost immediately, fighting would erupt even if no foe was left to engage. Stealth drones sent overhead confirmed his suspicions. The Orks would take any excuse to attack each other. Leadership challenges, theft of property, even careless remarks would flare up into brawls. Recordings were taken and sent back to the mobile headquarters O'Shoh had established, a disc-shaped command centre that constantly prowled the dunes on a cushion of anti-gravitic energy.

Next came a year-long period known as the Great Thinning. Farsight ordered forward stealth contingents and battlesuit teams to patrol the dunes, locating and destroying the largest Orks in each mob with pinpoint fire before disappearing without a trace. This inevitably sent the rest of the Orks into a frenzy of violence as they cast around for their persecutors before turning on each other. Blood would fly after each kill as the Orks fought over who was to take command, and the body count climbed steadily higher.

As more and more monitor drones reported back to High Command, O'Shoh watched every recording with cold fascination. Before long, he had deciphered not only the crude system of glyphs the Orks used as a writing tool, but also the guttural Ork tongue. Soon, he was telling his aides what would happen next in each recorded event before it had unfolded. His officers joked that he must have seen the recordings already, but they knew full well that their commander had simply come to understand his foe well. His command staff were soon referring to him by a new moniker, Shovah, or 'far-sighted'.

The knowledge gleaned from these intercepted messages slowly filtered into the Fire caste's military doctrine. Wherever the Ork glyphs for 'Boss', 'Mek' or 'Dok' appeared on an Ork vehicle, the Hunter Cadres would prioritise their destruction with concentrated Hammerhead fire and Broadside support, slowing Ork response times to a crawl. Though the Tau could not form the syllables of Ork speech, O'Shoh's Earth caste allies cut audio snippets of Orkish challenges and insults into the comms networks that the invaders had looted from fallen Tau; delivering the right Orkish insults at the right time, O'Shoh drove a wedge of dissent between every clan and tribe roaming the desert, sparking a series of minor wars in the process. Within a year, the greenskinned beast that had invaded Arkunasha was chewing on its own tail. O'Shoh's tactics had distracted the Orks to such an extent that Tau forces were able to get food and water to the people trapped within the bio-domes and free the remains of the Arkunashan Fire caste, further bolstering their ranks.



## THE BEAST REARS TO STRIKE

Though many of Tau central command quietly congratulated each other on a war well prosecuted, most of the Ork invaders yet lived. Throughout both the populous of Arkunasha and the counter-invasion force, the Tau now universally knew their leader as O'Shovah, or Commander Farsight. Despite this honour, he was not satisfied with their progress, and knew the fight was far from over.

The more organized of the tribes had begun systematically looting the comms networks, guns and armour of the fallen Tau that lay scattered amongst the rust dunes. Wherever a burning hulk that had once been a Tau skimmer hung suspended above the desert on still-functioning repulsors, the Orks would extinguish the flames with buckets of rust-particulate and repurpose it, fitting it with smoke-spewing engines and solid shot weapons. Monitor drone recordings showed that the Ork caste known as Meks were having their slave races dig deep into the oxide dunes to unearth scrap metal. The Tau would never stoop to use this raw material, but the Orks found it useful in the extreme. As more and

more Ork vehicles became armoured in, or even wholly constructed from, oxidised metal, the hordes blended with the desert itself with a form of accidental camouflage.

Worse still, surprise attacks from Ork hordes were becoming more and more frequent. The Air caste soon uncovered why: those veteran Orks that had been fighting upon Arkunasha since the first invasion had grown skin that was thick and gnarled enough to protect them from the abrasive effects of the rust storms. Each time these bands allowed a storm to overtake them, a handful of greenskins were snatched up and killed by the red tornadoes, but the rest marched in relative safety in the eye of the storm, protected from the Tau hunter cadres that roamed the desert. When the storm broke upon a Tau base, these wandering packs of elite Orks would appear from the swirling clouds with a vicious anger worthy of an enraged Knarloc.

Commander Farsight had expected the Orks to be resourceful, but he had not come to fully appreciate the advantages afforded by their uncanny physiology. The number of Orks on Arkunasha was actually increasing rather than being slowly whittled down. O'Shovah and his Ethereal masters were forced to consider the matter of Ork reproduction, a train of thought no civilised species should have to follow. Farsight's most trusted Earth caste advisor, the young genius O'Vesa, believed that the Orks had a fungal component to their genetic make-up. He maintained that the spores that they continually shed were flourishing in the oxide deserts. If his theories were to be believed, every morning, the rust dunes, dank with a film of dew, would shiver and collapse to reveal a clutch of immature Dune Orks, low in tech-level but spoiling for a fight.

When word got out that the Orks' numbers were actually increasing, it hit morale like a megaton bomb. The Ethereals present in the expedition insisted that it was impossible to channel more resources to Arkunasha; the Tau stationed there would have to overcome this foe on their own. Yet how could the Fire caste prevail against an enemy army who outclassed the Tau at close quarters and actually increased in number even whilst at war?

Farsight was forced to abandon his program of assassinations and turn his attention to his own camp. Morale was on the brink of crumbling, and with it, any chance the Tau had of claiming back the planet.

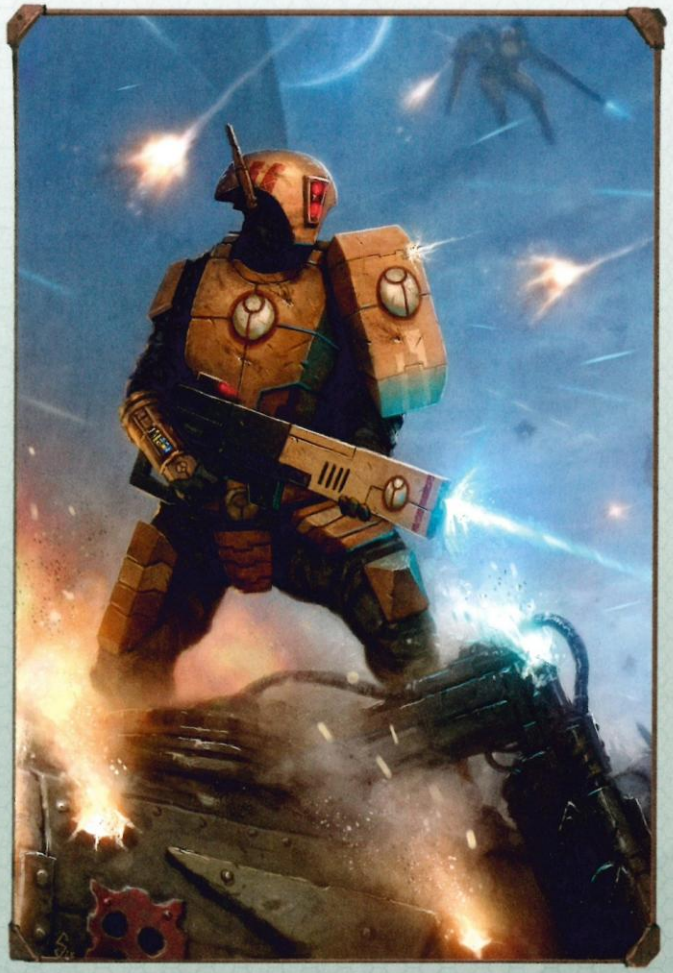
## THE TRIUMPH OF THE SPIRIT

Since his arrival at Arkunasha, Farsight had led a number of strike teams to the front line. His Crisis suit's pulse rifle had claimed more of the Orks' ruling caste than any other. The senior Water caste envoy that accompanied his expedition, Por'O'Kais, had made a great play of Farsight's victories. Positive propaganda was circulated throughout every bio-dome and mobile base, but still Tau spirits were sinking. If the Ork numbers could not be whittled down over time by the Tau's superior arms and stratagems, what hope did they have for reconquest?

In deep talks with Por'O'Kais, Commander Farsight came to the conclusion that one of the Ork race's primary weapons was its warlike spirit. The Orks spent little to none of their energies on angst or paranoia, instead channelling everything they had into seeking and fighting battles. The greenskin armies would expend a great number of lives in pursuing the mobile Tau wherever they were sighted, even if it meant sustaining over ninety percent casualties in the process – yet that last ten percent would run roughshod over a Hunter Cadre if they caught them. Critically, the close-quarters ability of the Fire caste was no match for the strength and brutality of the Ork hordes.



As the war ground on and the progress graphs in Tau central command took an ever more downward trend, Farsight finished what was to be his definitive work on the greenskin mindset. The Book of the Beast, as O'Shovah called it, was circulated to every Cadre Fireblade, battlesuit shas'ui and Kroot Shaper left on the planet. The tactical acumen in its pages was astounding. It taught the Fire caste how to think like an Ork, to understand their language, even to fight with the fury of an Ork in battle if necessary. Above all, it taught them that their commander understood the enemy well, and that the Tau could still win.



The next few years saw a transformation in the Tau approach to the war for Arkunasha. No longer did the Fire caste dance out of reach, engaging the greenskin menace at close quarters only when absolutely necessary. Instead, the Tau military machine reversed its tactics, driving teams of Fire Warriors and battlesuits close to blast apart the Orks wherever Farsight's dune-stalking Pathfinder Teams uncovered them. When the Orks mounted one of their fearsome charges, the Tau would hold their ground at the ambush point, kneeling in the rust and laying down a fearsome network of supporting fire that overlapped whenever the Orks came close. Should any greenskin make it through the deadly lattice, they would be charging into a storm of blazing light from the Fire caste's time-delayed photon grenades. If necessary, the surviving greenskins would then be shot at point-blank range or even clubbed to death with the barrels of pulse rifles while they reeled from the photon blasts, unable to defend themselves from the vengeful Tau.

It was a dangerous tactic, perhaps needlessly so. Yet new life had been breathed into the Fire caste fighting upon Arkunasha. Many of O'Shovah's pupils took to the new tactic with particular zeal, the combatative Commander Brightsword most of all. Ambassador Por'O'Kais ensured that footage of Brightsword and his cadre overcoming an Ork charge at close quarters was seen far and wide. Up until that point, the Tau had done little more than defend their bio-domes. Now they were relishing the strategy of all-out attack. O'Shovah had put flame in the bellies of his warriors, and it was there to stay.



All across the planet, battle broke out with a renewed fervour. In the maze-like canyon networks of the Arkunashan equator, O'Shovah lured columns of rust-plated Ork vehicles into ever narrower channels until, with a simple vehicle kill at each end of the armoured column, the Orks were trapped in place and slaughtered like herdbeasts in an abattoir. Scant miles away, nimble Piranhas led Ork Dakkajets and Deffkoptas on a merry dance through drone-mapped canyons until one by one, the clumsy Ork pilots collided with the rock faces in blossoms of flame.

Farsight's Kroot mercenaries feasted on a daily diet of Dune Ork flesh, adapting to the environment until their skin was tough enough to withstand even a red storm. They roamed the sands with their Knarloc pack-beasts, stoically weathering the losses from rust tornados as they plunged into the tempests to ambush the Ork Nobs inside. The vicious greenskin scouts that ranged ahead of each tribe were spied upon and slain in their turn by optimised Stealth Teams, leaving the bulk of each Ork army wandering directionless under the harsh desert sun until they turned upon each other in frustration. Everywhere, the teachings of Farsight's Book of the Beast took their toll. As the Hunter Cadres mastered its methods, O'Shovah led his armies against greenskin hordes that outnumbered them hundreds to one and emerged triumphant. Slowly but surely, the progress graphs in central command began to change.

## MASSACRE AT GHOUL'S GORGE

During this unprecedented period of success for the Tau upon Arkunasha, the people of the bio-domes were extracted and moved to the natural fortresses of the highlands, away from comforts of home but safe enough to survive whilst the war raged below. The Hunter Cadres continued to thin out and then eradicate the Ork armies milling across the dunes in a series of Mont'ka strikes that were pitilessly efficient. Then came an innovation from the Ork ranks that changed the face of the war once again.

Though the Waaagh! had by now been reduced to less than a quarter of its former size, the deserts were still infested. Dune Orks pushed their way out of the red sands with every dawn, and the Doks at the head of the Waaagh! had an almost necromantic talent for stitching fallen warriors back together. The tenacity of the Ork army was incredible. Yet it was the Orks' Earth caste equivalent, the individuals known as Meks, that robbed the Tau of their greatest strength.

Ghoul's Gorge, named for cannibalistic atrocity that had taken place there between two rival Kroot kindreds, was a vast open canyon that howled with fierce desert winds. Battle erupted when a vast horde of Orks sought to push through the gorge and fall upon the bio-domes beyond. In their midst was a giant drill-armed walker designed to breach the transplastic shells of the domes, as much a pagan idol as a weapon of war. Farsight had no inclination to see if it would work. He drove his teams in close, harrying the Ork column from above whilst they were still bottle-necked in the gorge. As plasma fire rained down, shimmering domes flickered into existence above each mob, lit by the energies cascading across their bubble-like surfaces. Even the drill-titan was protected by a force dome, the heavy rail rifle rounds of Farsight's Broadside teams simply disintegrated on impact.

The ensuing battle was tortuous for Farsight's Tau. They could not abandon their charges in the bio-domes, and yet their firepower was all but useless against the flashing bubble fields of the Orks. The impetuous young Commander Brightsword mounted a close-range battlesuit attack on the rearmost Ork mob; he and his team quickly established that the only way to circumvent the bubble fields was to get inside them – placing the Tau just where the Orks wanted them to be.

So began the Massacre at Ghoul's Gorge, the most disastrous battle yet to have taken place during the entire Arkunasha war. Every time the Tau penetrated a bubble field in order to strike at the greenskins within, the Orks would charge headlong into their foes, guns blazing. Close combats erupted along the length of the gorge as the cramped conditions the Tau had engineered for the battle prevented them from using hit-and-run tactics. Though Farsight himself used a daring vertical strike to immobilise the clanking, fat-bellied driller at the heart of the Ork horde, he was forced to order his cadres to withdraw before their losses became untenable. The commander reluctantly retreated to his mobile headquarters to reconsider his strategy.

## THE GREAT DECREE

In consultation with his Ethereal advisors, Farsight once more respectfully requested reinforcement from Vior'la. The war hung in the balance, he claimed; a determined assault on key Ork positions could see the course of the entire campaign end in favour of the Tau. There was a lengthy silence before the Ethereals replied that a Tau ship from Vior'la was indeed inbound. They would say no more on the matter.

When the lone Orca dropship descended upon Arkunasha, Farsight and his closest advisors met it in person atop a massive natural plateau in the Argap highlands. The silhouette of the dropship bisected the planet's pink sun for a moment before touching down in a cloud of rust, settling like an undersea ray on the ocean floor. Hydraulics whispered as a large ramp opened at the Orca's fore, and the promised reinforcements stepped out – two ceremonial honour guards and a single Ethereal.

Farsight did well to choke down the surprise and frustration that rose in his chest. A single Ethereal – their presence was good for morale, to be sure, but they could hardly be counted a concrete asset, and certainly not the auxiliary Hunter Cadres that O'Shovah had been hoping for. He turned to his own Ethereal advisors in dismay, but held his tongue. It was well that he did, for his actions were being monitored very closely indeed.

The newcomer introduced himself as Aun'Shi of Vior'la. He was a veteran of scores of battles – his many scars attested to that – and he carried himself with the surety of a warrior lord. O'Shovah bowed low when Aun'Shi approached him, observing the formalities customary when welcoming one of the Ethereal caste, but there was a stiffness to his motions that made Aun'Shi pause. He carefully and patiently explained to O'Shovah that the Etheral High Council upon T'au, guided by the wisdom of Aun'Va himself, had need of the commander's remarkable talents elsewhere.

The Ethereal calmly explained that over the next few years, the Fire caste were to withdraw entirely from Arkunasha, taking as many of the planet's colonists with them as they could. He would oversee the extraction personally. There would be no more attacks, no more killing blows – only defence. The plateau upon which they stood would be their fortress, and they would protect it with every iota of their being until every living Tau had left the planet. This they would do for the Greater Good, effective immediately.

Farsight nodded curtly at the news and bowed low in obeisance. In a secret part of his soul, however, he felt a great disquiet stir. How could the Tau abandon the planet just when victory was finally in their grasp? Nevertheless, a senior Ethereal had spoken. A simple commander could not hope to appreciate the full scale of the High Council's plans.

Over the course of the next year, Farsight enacted the Ethereal council's plans to the letter. Consolidating the civilian Tau into a series of hastily-constructed bio-domes atop the Argap Plateau, he defended the natural fortress with every weapon and strategy at his disposal. Though he lost thousands of good soldiers in the process, he further whittled down the numbers of the Waaagh! that had by now converged upon his position. In the process, he continued to attack their command structure, prioritising the deaths of mechanics, medics, and warrior-leaders until there were no more left amongst them. In their haste to make war, the Orks that had encircled the plateau relentlessly ground themselves into its defences until the valleys below were choked with corpses. Not one of them had the vision or perspective to retreat, and Farsight pitilessly exterminated any who broke through his cordons.

Many of Commander Farsight's pupils, Brightsword most strident amongst them, called for revenge for the fallen. They proposed a final push to exterminate the aliens once and for all before extraction. O'Shovah sombrely shook his head. The law of the Ethereals must be observed, he replied, regardless of circumstance or opinion. The words felt like ashes in his mouth, but he meant every one.

So it was that the Tau colonists were evacuated from Arkunasha, and the Fire caste along with them. As his flagship departed the system, Farsight stared into space from the viewdome of his quarters, the planet thousands of his warriors had fought and died for receded until it was but a small dot amongst thousands of uncaring stars.

The Fire caste returned to Arkunasha the next year. With the exhaustive cartographic information harnessed by Farsight's warscaper drones, and with the Book of the Beast to guide them, they made short work of the Orks left there. The Waaagh! had effectively already been broken at Argap Plateau, reduced to less than a hundredth of the size it had been when it first reached the planet's red sands.

The Tau's Hunter Cadres cleansed and reclaimed the planet in the space of less than a year, reinstalling the colonists dome by dome as the Earth caste brought the conurbations back to a functional state. Soon, the planet glittered like a jewel amongst the stars once more, but Commander Farsight was not there to witness it; his destiny lay elsewhere. The Tau had been assailed by a new foe – the Imperium of Man.

# THE DAMOCLES CRUSADE

**The Tau's first encounters with the Imperium were based on subtle infiltration, though when the masters of Humanity learned of their subversion, a storm of violence followed. The resultant war crossed the Damocles Gulf and broke upon the heartlands of the Tau Empire. Without the actions of Commander Farsight, the sept worlds might well have been wiped out.**

Ethereal Aun'Va, the Master of the Undying Spirit, was undoubtedly an inspiration to all who heard him speak. Second only to Aun'Wei of the Whispering Wisdom himself, Aun'Va's steely passion for the accelerated progress of the Tau Empire's conquests had seen them claim world after world during the Second Sphere Expansion. Whether in times of war or peace, Aun'Va's political acumen bordered on the supernatural. It was said by many of his supporters that any feat that the Fire caste could achieve with force, the Master could achieve with words alone.

This claim was initially borne out when the Tau ventured to the other side of the yawning stellar anomaly known as the Damocles Gulf. Situated coreward of the Tau Empire, the Gulf was a region that had long spelled little more than confusion and death for the Tau. Unknown forces roiled within it like oceanic currents that could not be predicted or even monitored by conventional science. However, the Earth caste's invention of the ZFR Horizon Accelerator Engine revolutionised the way the Tau crossed the sea of stars. The device allowed them to travel at near light speeds, thereby circumventing the worst of the Gulf's malevolent attentions.

## THE SILKEN CONQUESTS

Within years of the ZFR engine's invention, the Tau had successfully crossed the Damocles Gulf and begun to explore the cluster of worlds on the other side. Instead of conquering them with a costly series of wars, Aun'Va masterminded a long and subtle campaign of integration. Though it took decades, the Tau inveigled themselves into the human civilisations that dwelt there. With trade, diplomacy and, above all, patience as their weapons, they effectively converted the human worlds into extensions of the Tau Empire without firing a single shot.

The interstellar behemoth that is the Imperium of Man is cumbersome indeed, but it is also mighty and vengeful beyond reason. Word eventually filtered back to the High Lords of Terra that the worlds they had controlled in the Timbra Sub-sector, on the Eastern Fringe, were no longer paying tithes and – worse still – that their Planetary Governors were in thrall to a xenos race. This they would not allow to go unpunished, and so the Imperium responded with slow but unstoppable force.

The promising Damocles expansion ended in a series of harrowing wars that saw the Tau driven back from their newly acquired planets to the sept worlds of the First Sphere. Even worse, the Imperial fleets had not been content merely to let the Tau flee. The cathedral-ships of the human military crossed the Damocles Gulf using some arcane science that defied description, opening portals in the fabric of space, and soon the warriors they carried were falling upon the heartlands of the alien civilisation that had dared encroach on their sovereign empire.

The first planetary target that the Imperium had identified was Dal'yth Sept, a prosperous and highly cultured system with its origins in the First Sphere Expansion. The defences of the outlying colony worlds of Hydass, Sy'l'kell and Viss'el collapsed, one after another. The Imperium's ram-beaked starships blasted their way across sept space, the battleships of the Space Marines at their fore. Humanity's grandiose armada was like nothing the Tau had ever encountered. Colossal in scale and with barely a nod to grace, it was as if a graveyard of marble-encrusted tombs had been torn from some forbidden undersea church and spewed out into the Tau homelands.

The sudden appearance of the Imperial fleet caught the Tau completely unprepared. Even though the Tau navy scrambled what ships it could from Dal'yth, Pray'en and Dal'yr, the throng of floating colossi in their midst outweighed them massively. The Imperium's giant warships were like armoured whales next to the brightly-coloured shoals of Air caste fighters that ripped and tore at their flanks to little effect.

A strange battle commenced as each fleet's admirals took the measure of their foes and were left confounded. Against the sheer power of the largest Imperial battleships, even Manta missile destroyers, Custodians and Startide-class interceptors were outclassed. In turn, the unparalleled mobility of the Tau craft allowed them to evade every Imperial gun and boarding torpedo that was pointed in their direction. Until the Tau armada could respond in force by scrambling battle-cruiser fleets from the kor'vattra navy docks on the system's edge, Dal'yth Sept was on its own.

A period of unprecedented mayhem and confusion erupted as the Imperial fleet fought its way through the orbital defences of Pra'yen and barged straight on to Dal'yth Sept, intending to make planetfall upon the Tau home worlds no matter the cost. Commander Farsight was briefed on the situation and told that his forces would join those of his old training rival O'Shaserra in repelling the Imperium from Dal'yth. O'Shovah swore he would either cleanse the planet of human scum or die in magnificence. There would be no retreat this time – only victory, or death.

## FIRE IN THE SKIES

The Air caste of Dal'yth knew their efforts would be pivotal in the war that was about to consume their planet. They meditated serenely as the Imperial fleet approached, but each pilot had a spark of anticipation in his heart. That spark was fanned into a flame by Commander Farsight's historic speech at Zephyrpeak, an address that played to the Air caste's pride, patriotism and skill in equal measure. Under the direction of Farsight's trusted Air caste ally, Admiral Kor'O'Li'Mau'Teng, the pilots of the sept worlds would counter-attack in force.



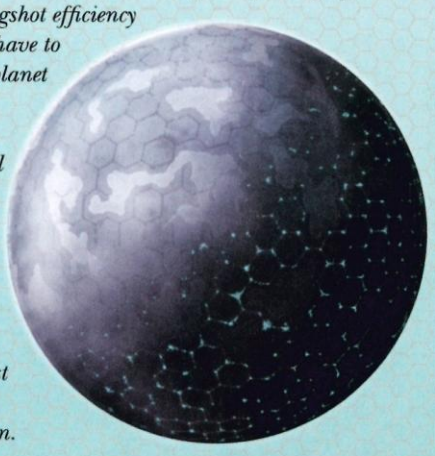
The Imperium descended upon Dal'yth with such murderous violence that the skies turned black with carbon within the first week of engagement. Grotesquely large drop ships painted in the drab olive tones of the Imperial Guard were first to descend. They approached Dal'yth in a two-stage vector that saw them first act as aircraft carriers then, after landing, as mechanised transports that deployed troops and tanks alike on a massive scale. The skies above Dal'yth's hexodomes were soon buzzing and roaring with the engines of crude Imperial fighters and transports.

War scarred the skies long before a single shot was fired on the purple-grassed plains below. With the Imperial forces committed, squadron after squadron of Barracudas, Razorsharks, Tiger Sharks and Sun Shark Bombers lifted out of the uppermost panels of hexodomes across the planet, linking their sensor suites into a lattice of supporting data. They met up in mid-air to form staggered picket lines, each supported by clouds of networked drones that buzzed in their wake like obedient insects. Any enemy aircraft that was caught by their net would be shot down in short order.

Above the cityscapes of the largest domes, Imperial Thunderbolts zigzagged to escape the deadly matrix the Tau were drawing across the planet's skies. Almost every Imperial craft that ran the gauntlet was caught in crisscrossing interceptor fire and sent hurtling down in flames. Ponderous Marauder Bombers were overtaken by the bow wave of the Air caste's sky lattice, their rudimentary wings burnt from their bodies and blunt fuselages carved into chunks that spiralled burning onto the plains below.

## DAL'YTH

*Before the coming of the Tau, the indigo planet of Dal'yth was a wild ecosystem of deep blue foliage and slithering, segmented beasts. It was tamed long ago, during the First Sphere Expansion, and has been brought into compliance with prime-level colony standards ever since. Because of the high proportion of Water caste members upon its surface, Dal'yth has enjoyed extremely beneficial trade agreements, and has recently been counted as one of the Nineteen Wonders of the Tau Empire. Much of the planet's surface is covered with a tessellating hexagonal net of cities and sub-cities, each connected to the nearest conurbations by a splaying and perfectly regular network of transit tubeways. Clean white magnorail trains whisk the populace to and fro, detaching and picking up carriages with slingshot efficiency so that they never have to stop. Though the planet has landscaped hills and even gigantic hexagonal reservoirs dotted across it, from orbit, it looks as if the Tau have settled it with the precision of an Earth caste scientist modelling a new atomic phenomenon.*





Valkyries, Vendettas, and a dozen other types of craft besides were hunted by darting Razorshark Fighters, the fat frames of the Imperial fliers punctured by salvoes of pinpoint ion rifle fire. Prowling far below, Farsight's earthbound interceptor cadres sent Sky Ray seeker missiles winging up to take out those few aircraft that still trespassed above.

Before the Air caste could ensure total aerial supremacy, the eagle-prowed strike craft in low orbit began to mete out their revenge. Punishing barrages hammered the Tau ground forces and strike cruisers launched their deadly cargo vertically downward towards Gel'bryn, the largest of the hexodomes below. Armoured pods hammered out of the skies in tight groups, their downward passage piercing the aerial explosions and drawing columns of flame downward to their impact point. Farsight had to admit he was impressed; the directness and bravery of such a deployment vector was commendable. He decided to take his own insurgency force of Crisis teams to the site of this new attack.

The Air caste's sky-trawling tactics had been extremely effective against the crude craft of the Imperial Guard, but they were found wanting when the crenellated strike cruisers above sent their own squadrons into the fight. Huge warrior-craft emblazoned in bright heraldic colours triggered their afterburners to hurtle in an almost vertical approach, stub-winged escort craft to either side. Monitor drone scans picked out the icons emblazoned on the flanks of each vehicle. These were Space Marine craft, their blunt hulls somehow reminiscent of flying fists and launched with much the same intent.

The Space Marine gunship squadrons roared toward the Air caste trawler-net with terrific speed, guns blasting as they came. Incredibly, the heavily-armoured steersmen of each craft seemed to be seeking out mid-air collisions, roaring at a tight downward angle straight into the ordered matrix of Tau fighter craft. The Air caste pilots were forced to break formation, wheeling away in curling evasive manoeuvres. How could their foes be so reckless, so suicidal? Was their faith in whatever primitive deity they worshipped so strong they believed they were immortal?

## FARSIGHT STRIKES

With his battlesuit teams leaping out from graceful Manta missile destroyers and his ground forces transported en masse by the planet's magnorail networks, O'Shovah was able to react to the vertical incursions of the Space Marines with impressive speed. Targeting data acquired on the far side of the Damocles Gulf had shown the Imperial shock troops to be extremely heavily armoured, and so Farsight had taken the precaution of having every Crisis suit under his command equipped with dual plasma rifles.

It proved to be the right decision. The mass-reactive shells fired by the Space Marine squads deploying from each insertion pod were fierce indeed, but few penetrated the armoured shells of the battlesuits that arced down out of the skies. Under Farsight's strict instruction, wherever one Crisis battlesuit was hit it would peel back to be replaced by a fully operational replacement. Wave by wave, the Crisis Teams descended, their numbers such that, from a distance, they

looked like a Vior'lan seedstorm floating to earth. Hundreds of plasma rifles spat bursts of burning fire down into the ranks of the Space Marines, melting through ceramite and searing through flesh to scorch the ground beneath. The Imperial warriors were not so much shot as cored, the sizzling holes in their torsos exposing innards to the air.

Incredibly, many of the fallen Space Marines still fought on, firing powerful sidearms from the ground and shouting their defiance even as their vital fluids drained away. It was an amazing display of fortitude and determination in the face of devastating firepower, and it impressed Farsight deeply – as did the courage of the white-armoured medics administering to their fallen brothers. Yet courage would not be enough to save them. By the time the Fire Warrior Support Cadres had arrived, all that remained of the Space Marine insertion within Gel'bryn was smoking ruin.

## THE MARCH ON GEL'BRYN

As all-out war unfolded in the skies above, the monstrous tracked transports of the Imperial Guard and the giant walkers that stomped in their vanguard simply ignored the best efforts of the Air caste. Their crackling shields and thick hides were all but impenetrable to anything short of railgun fire, and they knew it. The vast metal transports settled in great wallowing clouds of steam before unfurling their ramps like broad, flat tongues, disgorging regiment after regiment of soldiers from their gullets.

Strike forces of Tau moved to intercept, but wherever they hove into view, the immense Imperial walkers that flanked each deployment ramp would unleash firepower so intense that the Hunter Cadres were forced to take evasive action of their own. The massive machines were demigods of battle; each was an avatar of destruction given form on a scale undreamt of, even by the most ambitious of the Earth caste's battlesuit designers. Here was Mankind's warlike deity made manifest, just as the effigy-walkers of the primitive Orks represented their own belligerent gods.

Under the protection of these god-machines, endless ranks of Imperial soldiery marched, appearing as insects next to their looming custodians. Elsewhere, thousands of ponderous Imperial tanks churned the planet's indigo grass into thick mud as they rumbled into attack formations. Farsight's Hunter Cadres were ready to engage, but even the most veteran Fireblade was forced to admit that the sheer scale of the task was bewildering. In the space of a single day, the Imperium had bulldozed a series of beachheads onto Dal'yth with little more than faith and brute force. Despite sustaining heavy losses to long-range suppression fire, they were slowly converging on the capital hexodomes central to the planet's eastern hab-states.

As night began to fall, Commander Farsight called an emergency conclave of those commanders not yet involved in the battle. The Space Marines that had dared to assault the city of Gel'bryn directly had been neutralised, but the vast bulk of the Imperial armies were yet to engage. Their advance had been stalled by staggered missile strikes from the hills around Gel'bryn, and their outriders had been slain by optimised Stealth Teams, but the solid core remained. The battle for Dal'yth had only just begun.

## WARBRETHREN

As Commander Farsight was bringing his emergency conclave to a consensus of all-out attack, an athletic Tau female swept into the room. Her self-possession and cold beauty demanded attention as she strode to the command bridge with her head high. She moved in front of Farsight, blocking him from view as she calmly outlined her plan. The Fire caste reserve would join her Hunter Cadres in a series of stealth attacks using the darkness and drawing the enemy to overextend themselves in pursuit. Only then would the true counter-attacks be launched. She issued specific orders to those commanders not belonging to Farsight's Contingent, and one by one, they bowed their heads. When Commander Shadowsun strode back out, without a word to Farsight, a full half of the emergency conclave went with her.

*The Hammers of Dorn had always followed the Codex Astartes to the letter, but in this case, conventional planetfall tactics had turned out to be ill-advised. This was a massacre, nothing less.*

*Apothecary Antaloch edged over to a fallen battle-brother. The dying warrior had a hole in his chest that Antaloch could fit his fist through. Releasing the armour's cuirass, he plunged his reductor deep into his comrade's neck. A thick churning sound grumbled under the roar of battle as Antaloch extracted the progenoid glands and stowed them with the dozens of others he had flasked thus far. The Apothecary was intoning the last rites when there was a crack of impact; a xenos warsuit thumped down in front of Antaloch and pressed the muzzle of its energy rifle to his helmet. The Apothecary froze. The alien assassin filled his vision, statuesque and lethal. The figure would have dwarfed a Terminator.*

*'It is unclear,' stated the giant in stilted Imperial Gothic, its hidden speakers uncannily like a real voice. 'You must know this one does not live, ministrator-medic-equivalent.'*

*'Aye,' growled Antaloch, 'and yet his due must be given.'*

*'Despite the likelihood of sustaining lethal damage yourself.'*

*'Just so,' said the Apothecary. He fought the urge to cover the precious geneseed flasks. A moment of stillness passed.*

*'Your stance is defensive, yet not indicative of self-preservation,' stated the warsuit. Before he could reply, bolter shells detonated between the giant's jump engines. Its shoulder-mounted blaster whirred around, obliterating the Space Marine running in behind it. Its energy rifle never moved from Antaloch's helm.*

*'A theory. During the death ritual, you recover a substance and/or information code that your warrior caste deems vital.'*

*Antaloch stared up at the towering figure, but said nothing.*

*'Interesting,' said the xenos giant. 'Proceed then, by all means.' Raising its rifle in a brief salute, the battlesuit boosted up into the skies on twin tongues of flame.*

*Blinking in disbelief, the Apothecary voxed, 'Captain Rumann? When this is over, we need to talk.'*

Farsight's grip on his sword hilt tightened, but he held his peace. He recalled the words of Master Puretide, reminding himself that though he and his fellow commander were very different, they strove for the same goals. That evening, he contented himself with observing and analysing the data they had harnessed so far concerning the Imperial invasion. There was much to be learned.

Scant hours later, there came reports of a series of devastating attacks that had been made under cover of darkness. The tactics employed were O'Shaserra's, no doubt; Commander Farsight would recognise them anywhere. The Imperium's immense phalanxes were flailing blindly, lashing out in all directions as their outlying vehicles were destroyed one after another by point blank fusion fire. As soon as their primitive vision-sensors had been opened wide to scry the Dal'ythan night, O'Shaserra had released bursts of multi-spectral light that blinded her prey even more effectively than the pitch darkness of the plains.

Confusion reigned around the perimeter of each Imperial column as carefully-placed tank kills hemmed in the great mass of each vehicle company. Spearheads of trundling battle tanks and super-heavy ordnance split off from the main mass wherever they could, blasting a path through the magnorail tunnels that blocked them in order to pursue the signal ghosts of this new threat. Farsight smiled to himself. Knowing O'Shaserra, they would be lucky if they tagged a single battlesuit.

The war that unfolded over the next few months saw the differing styles of Puretide's students writ large. Their strategies were painted in blood upon the canvas of Dal'yth's battlefields. Wherever O'Shaserra's infiltration and misdirection tactics blinded the military behemoth of the Imperial Guard, Space Marine strike forces raced to intercept, their rugged technology and genetically engineered strength overmatching the Stealth Teams and forcing them to withdraw. As soon as the Space Marines had committed themselves, O'Shovah and his battlesuit spearheads would fall upon them from above, crippling their transports with Broadside fire and meeting the stranded survivors in a series of deadly close-quarter battles.

In the sky war above, Kor'O'Li'Mau'Teng's Air caste pilots took a heavy toll – even the Admiral himself joined the fight in his personalised Barracuda, hunting Space Marine gunships like a great golden raptor harrying a pack of corvids. A young progeny of the original Commander Brightsword excelled himself in a series of close quarter battlesuit actions at the Battle of Var'isar Gate, even managing to stamp a skull-masked warrior-leader into a broken mass of ceramite and pulped flesh in one assault. Farsight commissioned his ingenious Earth caste ally O'Vesa to devise new weapons capable of dealing with the thickly-armoured tanks of the Imperium's armies, and the scientist's teams worked night and day, distributing them as and when they could via the messenger-warriors of the Air caste.

However, the Space Marines struck back hard, eventually assailing Gel'bryn city with an insertion pod assault so ferocious that it shattered the hexodome roof and blew out the atmosphere inside. Even Farsight had to pull back when the Imperials teleported their own warsuited warriors into the central plaza. Tau blood flowed through the streets, as armoured companies ringed the city, cutting off any escape from the Space Marines ravaging through the outer districts. It was a story repeated in five more cities before the war was over, for a company of Space Marines was committed to each conquest – every one a force that even the finest of Farsight's Fire caste cadres was hard-pressed to match.

'THE GUE'RON'SHA WERE THERE IN GREAT NUMBER, I RECALL. FLASHES OF SCARLET AND OCHRE AMONGST THE GREEN. I AND MY KIN WERE FLEEING. A TANK-SUIT BLASTED ITS WAY THROUGH THE TREES AND LEVELLED ITS CANNON-ARM AT US. SUDDENLY, THE GREAT COMMANDER FARSIGHT WAS THERE, DIVING DOWN TO A CROUCH, AND RAISING HIS SHIELD GENERATOR TO INTERCEPT. HIS DOME-SHIELD GLOWED WHITE AMONGST A STORM OF SOUND AND LIGHT. A SIDELONG SHOT FROM HIS BLASTER CUT THE TANK-SUIT IN HALF AT THE WAIST. IT TOPPLED, AND WE MADE OUR ESCAPE. HE WAS GONE BEFORE WE HAD A CHANCE TO CONVEY OUR ETERNAL THANKS. ONE DAY I HOPE TO MEET HIM. ALL PROSPERITY TO COMMANDER FARSIGHT!'

*- Grandmentor Por'O'Te'Fau'Mach, after Dal'yth*

## ADAPT AND DESTROY

The bitter war upon Dal'yth was characterised not by martial prowess alone, but by a hectic race for information. The two stellar empires fought not only to defeat their foes but to understand their weaknesses. The Imperium changed its tactics after the Battle of Via'mesh'la, where outgunned Imperial Guard regiments successfully charged a Tau gunline and, despite sustaining heavy casualties, won a bloody victory purely with bayonets and boots. Since that day, the Imperial invaders drove in to engage the Tau at close quarters wherever they could.

For his part, O'Shovah studied the Imperium's forces relentlessly. He endlessly adapted stratagies, counterstrategies and target priorities, distributing drone-borne guider programs to all of his commanders. The Imperium took its own tactical manual, the Codex Astartes, and applied its principles to whatever the Tau threw at them. The Hammers of Dorn were especially efficient at codifying Tau threats and responding in force, for they lived every word of the Codex and never deviated from its teachings, no matter the cost. Farsight took a great interest in the patterns that emerged during the Imperial war effort, making extensive notes and even refining prototype simulations as the war unfolded.

'THE FULLY ARMOURED HUMANS FIRST; THEN THE HERALDIC VEHICLES, THEN THE COMMON TANKS. THEN, AND ONLY THEN, MAY YOU ENGAGE THE COMMON INFANTRY.'

*- Commander Farsight's firing protocol for the Battle for Via'Mesh'La Gate*

The Imperial armies appeared to value armour above all else – their vehicles were so heavy that even Hammerhead gunships struggled to reap the casualties expected of them. In direct response, Farsight pioneered the deadly Sunforge pattern of battlesuit armament. This allowed Crisis Teams to drop down from Manta destroyers onto their vehicular prey, cripple them at close range with blasts from their dual fusion blasters, and then boost off into the skies once more to be picked up by the Mantas on the return run.

Meanwhile, O'Shaserra took her Stealth Cadres to the dark side of Dal'yth, constantly moving in rotation with the system's sun so that every raid she performed was under cover of darkness. Farsight monitored her progress not through open communication, but by the trail of smoking wrecks she left in her wake.

When the warrior master of the Scar Lords Chapter carved a red path through the magnorail tunnels of Dal'yth's government district, Farsight gave permission to the lone Monat pilot Sha'ko'vash to intercept. The Monat blasted his way to the heart of the Scar Lords strike force, only to be brought to his knees by the warsuited bodyguards of the Imperial warlord. Sha'ko'vash boosted forwards with one last charge, triggering an experimental stasis fail-safe at the exact moment the Scar Lord raised his blade to strike and freezing the two warriors in place at the crux of the conflict. Hundreds of years later, the two mighty warriors are still trapped in the resultant sphere of timelessness, raised up outside the rebuilt core assembly house of Dal'yth as a centrepiece monument to the Greater Good.



## THE FISTS OF DAL'RYU

*Farsight's commissioning of the Earth caste's weapon laboratories came into its own at the battle of Blackthunder Mesa. Dal'ryu, a city the Water caste considered vital to morale because of its many youth training centres, had been plagued by long-range artillery bombardments for days. Though Dal'yth High Command was loath to admit it, the city was on the brink of crumbling. Commander Bravestorm's Retaliation Cadres had sallied forth a number of times against the armoured companies that had crawled to the lip of Blackthunder Mesa, but they were becoming so low on ammunition that their efforts were proving to be in vain. O'Shaserra, in her merciless pragmatism, had already written off the city's defenders as a spent force.*

*It was then that a pod, no larger than a single Crisis suit, arrived in Dal'ryu via magnorail. Marked with the very highest of security clearances, it was transported to the Fire caste's command centre and immediately delivered to Commander Bravestorm. Inside were twelve giant gauntlets, each shivering with an immense payload of potential energy.*

*Bravestorm, and his most trusted shas'vres, each donned one of the Earth caste's creations, supercharging their battlesuits for one last great assault. They set forth once more to Blackthunder Mesa, dropping down from transport ships into the midst of the armoured regiments. As battle cannon shells detonated all around them, Bravestorm and his Crisis Teams used the powered gauntlets to punch into the flanks of the Imperial tanks and physically tear out their power cores. In the case of the Doomhammer super-heavy tank* Terra's Knife, *the fearless warrior Sha'rell used his gauntlet to rip open the rear of the tank and manually detonate its ammunition supplies, destroying both himself and the tank in a split second of destruction which also crippled several other tanks nearby. By using the wreckage of the vehicles they had already destroyed, constantly changing their location and staying low, Bravestorm's Crisis Team took a great toll on the armoured companies whilst sustaining relatively few casualties in return.*

*That was to change when two massive god-machines strode into view, strafing turbo-laser fire into the massed tanks with callous abandon. Dozens of Imperial tanker crews were sacrificed in the resultant chaos, but the Titans' barrage had the desired effect. Every one of Bravestorm's team was blasted apart by the apocalyptic firepower, their Crisis suits scattered amongst the scorched wreckage of the tank company.*

*The giant walker-engines were finally driven off in their turn when Admiral Kor'O'Li'Mau'Teng sent his Manta missile destroyers in to ensure Bravestorm's sacrifice was not in vain. Recovery teams filtered through the smoking wrecks dotting the mesa, horrified at the sheer violence of the spectacle the Imperium had unleashed. Only Bravestorm still clung to life, his suit critically damaged and its once-vibrant shell as black as coal. Incredibly, he still fights in Farsight's forces to this day, though his body is a burnt and twisted mess; the replacement battlesuit he received after the Battle of Blackthunder Mesa is as much a life support machine as it is an instrument of death.*

## THE SWORDS OF PURETIDE

Despite their best efforts, the forces Farsight and O'Shaserra had at their command could not be everywhere at once. The Imperium was a powerful foe indeed, and unlike the barbarous Ork race, it appeared to have a strategy worked out for every combat environment and tactic the Tau could engineer. In defiance of the Fire caste's spirited defence, the Imperium had gradually, but irresistibly, overtaken several of the planet's cities, slaughtering any Tau within and fortifying the war-torn structures. The Ethereals in overall command of the war effort could not countenance such losses. Ever more extreme measures were taken to stall the Imperial advance whilst reinforcements were brought in from the other worlds in the sept, and beyond, yet on the field of battle, far more drastic measures were being taken.

To Farsight's quiet horror, experimental neurochip prototypes containing the recorded strategies of Commander Puretide were surgically installed in the minds of Cadre Fireblades and battlesuit commanders, allowing them to function as military leaders that thought alike and could adapt to any situation. That was the theory, at least – though the so-called Swords of Puretide enjoyed great success against the rank and file, when the forces of the Imperium brought forth strange, gaunt shamans who reduced battlesuits to ruin with gestures of their wizened hands, the implanted leaders had none of their own previous learnings to draw upon and faltered badly; the confusion cost hundreds of lives as the minds of their leaders struggled to respond to this new threat.



## CRISIS/COUNTERCRISIS

As the war effort looked about to unravel, Kroot mercenaries were dispatched by the thousand through the magnorail networks, rushed to wherever the Imperium forced a breach in the network of tunnels crisscrossing Dal'yth and spilling out like blood from an opened artery to fall upon the Imperial troops nearby. Zipping through the sky above them would come hundred-strong networks of Gun Drones, their pulse rifle fire taking a butcher's toll as they hovered out of reach of shell and blade. In this way, the Imperial forces were pinned in place long enough for Farsight or O'Shaserra's cadres to scramble to the breach and avenge the Kroot that had given their lives in the Empire's defence.

Farsight took this tactic one step further at the Siege of Rala'tas, a dome city famous for its sculptures of living light. With the Tau's most capable commanders engaged on the other side of the planet, an Imperial drop ship landed only a few miles from the city gates. Within hours, Rala'tas was surrounded by Imperial tanks, including several super-heavy squadrons powerful enough to blast breaches in the city walls. With the exception of the Kroot kindreds that made their homes in the dome's sprawling arboreal districts, the city had only a small garrison of Fire Warriors to defend it – certainly nothing that could deal with over a thousand battle tanks. Shas'gra, a Cadre Fireblade in charge of the garrison, patched through an urgent message to Farsight, requesting help. O'Shovah could give him none, but said he would think on it. Less than a minute later, a reply reached Shas'gra and he spread the word to the Earth caste artisans abroad in the city. Just as the Imperials breached the walls and began to barge their way into Rala'tas' perimeter, the city went completely dark.

Suddenly, a massive electromagnetic pulse boomed outward as every one of the city's light sculptures, fusion arrays and code generators hurled their potential energy in a devastating wave. The EMP tidal wave scrambled the cogitators of every Imperial tank and walker within a mile of the city walls, stopping them in their tracks. It was then that massed Kroot Carnivore squads poured out of every breach, bounding and leaping towards the foe. Kroot hounds ran down those who tried to flee whilst Krootoxen ripped open the hatches and doors of the silenced tanks, allowing their ferocious kin to climb inside. The grisly feast that followed has never been broadcast on open Tau channels, though it is said that O'Shovah watched it several times.

'BY THE GREATER GOOD,
THESE GUE'LA HAVE A LOT OF TANKS...'

*- Shas'gra, the Siege of Rala'tas*

## DAL'YTH AFLAME

Though the Imperium had taken a great toll, and half of Dal'yth had been abandoned or reduced to smoking rubble, their attacks were slowly losing momentum. The Tau used everything they had learnt in the war thus far to great effect, using the EMP tactics that saved Rala'tas to divide the Imperial armies into disparate chunks and then take them

apart piece by piece. In the process, they had bought enough time for the other sept worlds to contribute reinforcements. A steady stream of Fire caste cadres made planetfall with every new day, and the Imperial navy was forced to retreat in the face of overwhelming numbers. As for the Space Marines, their dogmatic adherence to certain set-piece strategies and tactics eventually became their undoing. In conjunction with O'Shaserra, Commander Farsight masterminded several large-scale assaults that saw his fellow commander draw the Space Marines into the open, only for O'Shovah to fall upon them with all the speed and fury he had become famous for.

As the weeks ground on, the masters of the Imperial crusade were forced to admit that they had spread their forces too thin. Now that their supply lines had been established, the Tau had an almost limitless supply of war materiel, and astropathic messages transmitted across the Damocles Gulf spoke of a new alien threat assailing the Imperium. Regiment by regiment, company by company, the Imperial presence upon Dal'yth began to withdraw.

'NO DOUBT THEY TAKE OUR WITHDRAWAL FOR DEFEAT. HA! THEY SHOULD ENJOY THIS REPRIEVE WHILST IT LASTS. WE WILL RETURN AND CRUSH THEIR PETTY EMPIRE UNTIL NOTHING BUT DUST REMAINS.'

*- Commissar Van der Ghast, seconded to the Viridian XVIth*

## THE MERCY OF THE ETHEREALS

Farsight and his acolytes were already preparing to encircle and destroy the retreating Imperial armies when a contingent of Water caste diplomats made an official visit. As a trio of Ethereals walked through the doors of the High Command behind them, O'Shovah felt something strange rise in his mind: a sense of future paths forking, of destiny.

After the Water caste observed the appropriate etiquette, the Ethereals delivered their message. The Imperial troops were to be allowed to flee unhindered. A communiqué had been received from one Captain Sevalliac of the Hammers of Dorn, accepting the truce the Water caste had offered on the Tau Empire's behalf. By his manner of speech, the Ethereals said, it was obvious that such a gesture was extremely rare for Humanity's warrior caste. The captain had taken pains to stress that without the honourable conduct the Tau had exhibited in the early stages of the war and the pressing concerns of invasion in the north, this eventuality would never have come to pass.

The Water caste ambassadors had decided not to challenge the human's proclamations, for they knew that the Imperium had expended the merest fraction of its might against them. Nonetheless, though the Tau's confidence in their own supremacy had been severely shaken, they had triumphed in the final reckoning and learned much about the Imperium.

Not only did the Imperium withdraw its forces from Dal'yth Sept, but from Tau space altogether, retreating across the Damocles Gulf in as strange a manner as they had come. They left behind a swathe of broken and abandoned technology, every last piece of which was recovered by the Earth caste and studied in painstaking detail. The vast majority of the Imperial war-tech was declared inferior and of no use to the Greater Good, though O'Vesa made some astonishing discoveries in the depths of his labs about the esoteric technologies used by the humans' fleets.

As for the commanders dubbed the Swords of Puretide, all of the engrams that had been surgically inserted in Dal'yth's warrior leaders were forcibly removed. These invasive procedures left those who had been operated upon as drooling and pliant simpletons, a sad loss to the Empire. Yet, as the Water caste patiently explained, such was the sometimes painful cost of victory.

When Aun'Va and his honour guard came to collect Farsight's old team-mate, Commander Sha'vastos, for his scheduled engram removal, the veteran warrior was absent from his quarters. When questioned about his disappearance, O'Shovah mournfully informed them that Sha'vastos had in fact fallen in the last engagement of the war, and his body had been burnt to an unrecognizable crisp. Such was the cost of victory, explained O'Shovah, dipping his head in sorrow. Aun'Va met Farsight's gaze for a long time before turning on his heel and heading back the way he came, his ceremonial escort trailing in his wake.

'FAITH IS A POWERFUL FORCE INDEED, IT IS TRUE. WE HAVE OUR OWN FAITH – NOT IN ONE OF OUR NUMBER RAISED TO GODHOOD, BUT IN A MUTUAL DESTINY THAT CANNOT BE DENIED.'

*- Commander Farsight*

### STASIS BURN

*A few years after the Damocles Crusade, the triumph of Dal'yth became tinged with tragedy. Commander Puretide was rapidly declining in health, and such was his wisdom that no conventional engram nor student could encompass his teachings entirely. Ethereal Master Aun'Va decreed that for the Greater Good to become manifest, Commander Puretide must live on in as many fashions as possible. Whilst in public, Aun'Va joined in the mourning of Puretide's death, behind closed doors, he had the commander's corpse subjected to extensive brain scans and his dissected mind rebuilt into a complex artificial intelligence that was installed in a holo-throne at the peak of Mount Kanji.*

*Just in case his plan to hold onto Puretide's wisdom via technological means was not sufficient, Aun'Va issued an edict for his most prominent pupils to be placed into semi-permanent stasis. These masters of war were only to be awoken when the Tau Empire had need of them most. O'Shaserra and O'Kais were amongst those frozen in time in this manner. The Ethereal Council had other plans for O'Shovah; plans that were to raise him up to the height of glory and ultimately, in doing so, to dash him into disgrace.*

# THE FARSIGHT EXPEDITION

**The Imperial war machine had withdrawn from Tau space to face a new galactic threat – the Tyranids of Hive Fleet Behemoth. In the process, they had left the worlds of the Damocles Gulf lightly garrisoned. O'Shovah was tasked with their reclamation, though unexpected complications were to change the course of his life forever.**

## THE TIME OF QUESTIONING

The Tau Empire had faced off against an insanely strong opponent and emerged victorious, but the cost of that victory had been high indeed. Every one of the worlds settled on the other side of the Damocles Gulf had been left to the Imperium in the early stages of its crusade, and one of the prime sept worlds of the Empire had been badly mauled. The notion of the Tau's natural supremacy in the universe had been shaken to its core.

Ethereal Master Aun'Va believed that this time of doubt could have profound consequences. He reported to the High Council that the Fire caste had experienced their first ever large-scale defeats, and the prospect of the Imperium having committed only a small portion of its might was severely daunting. Not only that, but he had reason to believe that the Tau people's faith in their destiny to rule the galaxy was showing cracks. This could not be allowed. Without ambition and faith, the Tau'va would falter and die.

Aun'Va believed that preventing this meant not only reclaiming the lost worlds on the other side of the Damocles Gulf, but also establishing more bases and orbital stations than ever before. Only then would the Tau be reassured that the war with the Imperium was only a setback, and not the first sign of an inevitable doom. Aun'Va implored Ethereal Supreme Aun'Wei, whose days were by this point drawing to a close, for the right to launch a reconquest of the Damocles Gulf and he saw the wisdom in Aun'Va's words. After much deliberation, Aun'Wei acquiesced not only to Aun'Va's plans for reconquest, but also to the proposal that O'Shovah should lead it. The Tau would head back out into the stars, their optimism and self-belief rekindled by the finest military mind of their time. The might and support of every caste, including the Ethereals, would be behind him.

## HERO OF THE EMPIRE

News of Farsight's incredible ability and aptitude for war had spread throughout the Empire. Since the reconquest of Arkunasha and the successful repulsion of the Imperium from Dal'yth, Commander O'Shovah was saluted by all ranks of the Fire caste whenever he passed them, and his council was taken by every caste other than the Ethereals.

Aun'Va's decision for Farsight to lead the reconquest was not taken lightly, but when the matter was settled, it had the full power of the master behind it. The first few weeks saw O'Shovah elevated from the status of hero to that of vaunted saviour. With the persuasive arts of the Water caste as his tools, Aun'Va began a propaganda campaign that saw O'Shovah's military successes become oft-told legends. Statues to Farsight's greatness were erected in every major battle dome, pod complex and naval harbour across the worlds of the First Sphere. Fire Warriors of every rank had images or holo-cuts of Farsight somewhere in their possession, sometimes even displayed alongside those of Aun'Wei and Aun'Va themselves. For O'Shovah, the attentions were bewildering and unwelcome. The commander was greeted with the hunter's salute so many times each day that he feared he would wear out his arm joints before the crusade even started. Yet he bore it all stoically, understanding that, the empire needed its heroes.

## THE GREAT RECLAMATION

In the councils of the Ethereals, there were concerns that O'Shovah would not live up to the propaganda. The Damocles Gulf would not fall twice to the wiles of Tau diplomats; this time, the Fire caste would have to lead the charge on every world. If Dal'yth was any indication of the Imperium's threat, blood would be spilt in great measure, and these worlds had no little access to reinforcements. Aun'Va smiled knowingly and brushed their concerns aside.

The final result of all the effort saw the mobilisation of greatest fleet the Tau Empire had yet seen. The sheer number of Tau battleships, navy vessels, escorts, colony ships, warspheres, gravpulse tugs, dropships and outrider patrols assembled for the coalition defied belief. Once the prearations were complete, Aun'Wei gave one of his final speeches and the fleet of the Great Reclamation was launched into the Damocles Gulf amongst grand celebration. Something in Farsight's gut felt strange, but he was the model of a noble commander nonetheless. If the Empire needed a conqueror, a conqueror he would be.

## THE CODEX CRACKED

During the hours of the journey across the Gulf when he was not in stasis, Farsight gathered every action report and drone-capture snippet he could lay his hands on from the war for Dal'yth. With the help of Commander Brightsword and his old ally O'Vesa, O'Shovah gradually built up a comprehensive picture of Imperial war doctrine. Day and night, he pored over how the armies of Humanity acted and reacted in different situations and theatres of war; how they made planetfall, what it took to provoke them, and what it took to break them. There were elements of the Imperium's armies, notably the Hammers of Dorn, whose adherence to a set methodology was almost fanatical. Such was the diligence and precision with which they observed their military doctrine that, in studying them, Commander Farsight was able to write down their tactical imperatives as a set of commandments. By the time his coalition had crossed the Damocles Gulf, O'Shovah had pieced together much of what he and his lieutenants referred to as the 'human war schematic', a code that he believed the Imperium's troops observed at all times. In doing so, he learned a good deal about the blind spots in the Tau's traditional military doctrine, and began to adjust his repertoire of strategies to compensate for these oversights.

As the Tau arrived once more on the far side of the Gulf, Farsight used his newfound knowledge about the Imperium to dramatic effect. With the bulk of the their military in the sector pulled away to engage Hive Fleet Behemoth, Commander O'Shovah found himself waging a series of campaigns in which he held the advantage from the start.

The Planetary Defence Forces left to garrison the worlds of the Timbra Sector, though over a hundred million strong on planets such as Vespertine and Matinsong, were lured into a series of 'mock wars' by vanguard Tau forces. Time after time, modest raids would lure out defenders hoping to secure a front only they considered relevant. Once they had committed themselves, the remainder of Farsight's force would fall from the skies and deliver a killing blow of such efficacy it would have impressed Puretide himself.

Over and over again, O'Shovah's foresight paid off, and the Tau Empire rejoiced with every new conquest. Through a combination of military acumen, hard work and verve, Commander Farsight had lived up to the inflated claims the Ethereals had made in his name. World by world, battle by battle, the Damocles Gulf was brought back into the fold.

The reconquests of the four principal worlds on the distant side of the Gulf were bloody in the extreme. Farsight's incredible ability to second-guess his foes made for a string of impressive victories, but as the anarchy of battle rolled out across the sector, the Imperium dealt the expedition a great many wounds of its own. By the time the fleet had reached the last system of the previously colonised region, there were fewer than half the original ships remaining. O'Shovah felt every loss keenly, not merely as a military setback, but as an emotional and spiritual wound. His Ethereal advisors had made it plain that there would be no more reinforcements, not this far from the Empire.

The Tau were not the only ones to have taken advantage of the Imperium's armies being withdrawn. By the time the coalition arrived, the asteroid belt to the east of the enclaves was infested with Orks. The Tau fleet mounted a series of swift raids to repel the Ork raiders from their recaptured territory, each one successful and efficient. However, as space-capable drones made their flyby scans, the horrible truth became clear; almost every asteroid large enough to hold them was teeming with Orks, and if the fleet's readings were correct, the asteroid belt was but the tip of an empire that stretched all the way into the next star system.

Farsight's expedition was on the brink of total victory, but the Ork presence disturbed him greatly. He meditated upon the new information for many hours, and upon returning to his ship's command bridge, he gave an order that would shake the Tau Empire to its core. He announced that the destruction of the Orks was a higher priority than concluding the reconquest; he would expend every effort to exterminate them, targeting every planet they had infected, in this system and the next. It was the first time a Tau of any rank had disobeyed a direct order from the Ethereal Council. O'Shovah's decision was an unthinkable breach of the chain of command. For the newly claimed Farsight Enclaves, it was only the beginning.

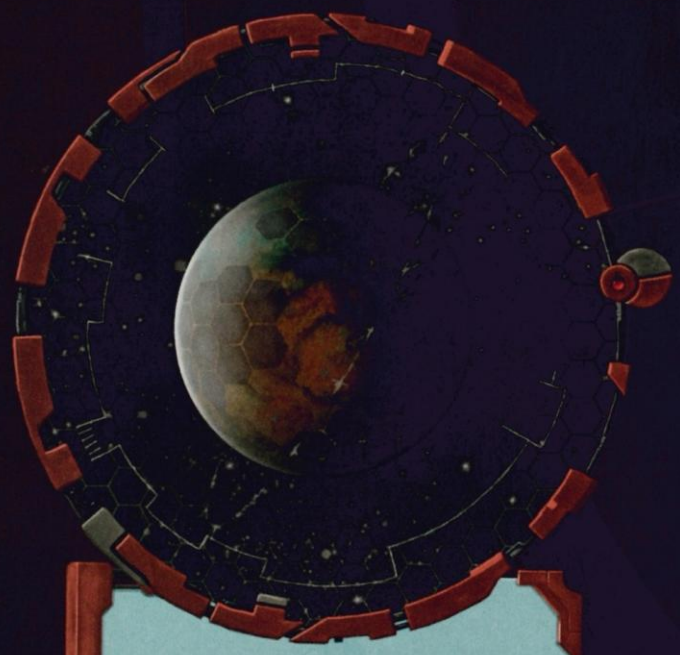


*The Tau Empire's Second Sphere Expansion saw several budding Tau worlds founded across the far side of the Damocles Gulf amidst the civilisations of an adaptable race of bipeds that called themselves humans. Then, the gradual encroachment of Imperial space saw the juggernaut of Humanity's armies drive the Tau back to the sept worlds of the First Sphere.*

*When Commander O'Shovah reconquered the territories lost during the Time of Questioning, he drove the Imperials back in turn. He retook the worlds beyond the Damocles Gulf and gave them new life in the name of the Greater Good. Since that time, the worlds have been transformed into a demesne separate from the rest of the Tau Empire, an autonomous collective known as the Farsight Enclaves.*

*Each of the principal worlds of the Farsight Enclaves has a democracy overseen by one of Commander O'Shovah's old allies. These worlds are in close communication, and work together as a team to moderate and supply the scion worlds that pass on similar orbits nearby.*

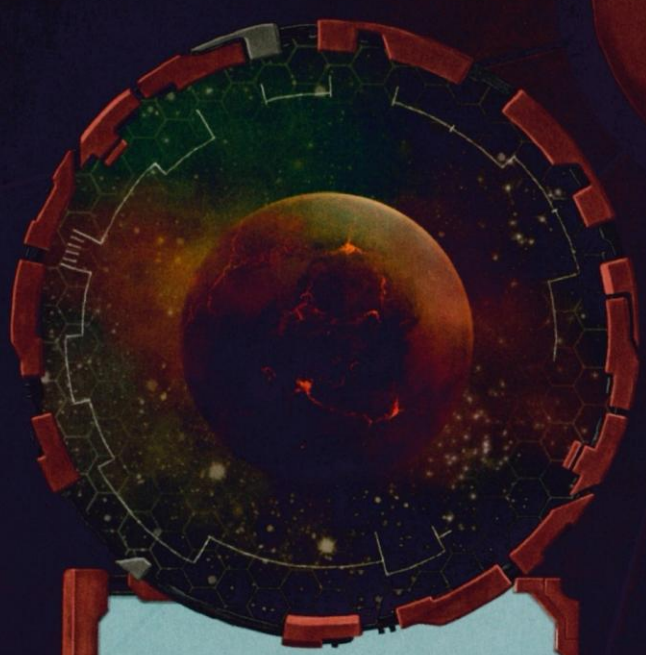
*Though each harbours members of the Earth, Air and Water castes alongside a substantial Fire Warrior presence, Commander Farsight has seen fit to encourage each of the different castes to claim the world that is most suitable to its needs for their own homes. The exception is, of course, the Ethereal caste. The aged wonder, Aun'Shi, is the sole Ethereal welcome anywhere in the Farsight Enclaves.*



## LUB'GRAHL

### MEMORIAL WORLD

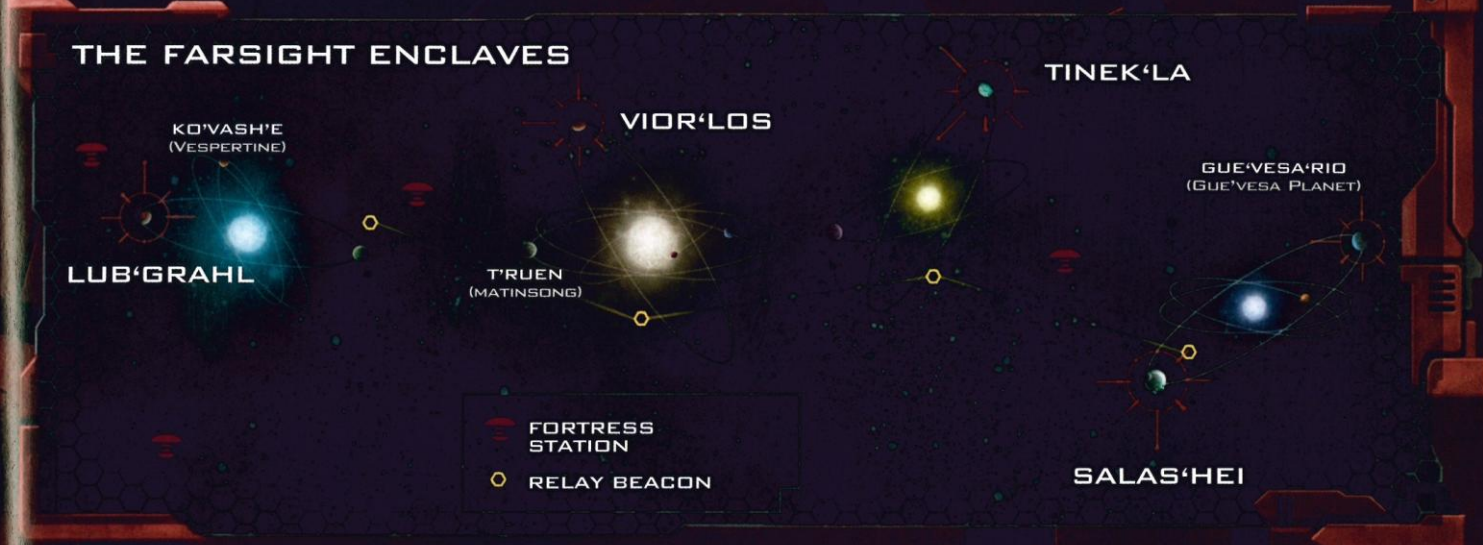
*Lub'grahl is a world of drab earthen spires, whose interior is woven with countless miles of shining white and silver tunnels laced with cutting edge technology. The Earth caste are most numerous upon Lub'grahl, and they never, ever, stop building. Not a cycle goes by in which they don't add to the facilities filling its honeycomb tunnels with observatories, research centres, weapons testing vaults, mag-trains, quartermaster nodes and prototype development labs. On Lub'grahl's surface, however, the polar caps are punctuated only by hundreds of thousands of clean white ovals, each a memorial to one of the warriors lost under Farsight's command. None shall be forgotten, for O'Shovah sees martyrdom as the ultimate expression of the Greater Good, and strives to recognise such sacrifice wherever it occurs.*



## VIOR'LOS

### GEOTHERMIC WORLD

*The warriors of the Fire caste like to say that the planet of Vior'los has a raging core to rival Farsight's own. The amount of geothermic energy that the Earth caste has managed to harness from Vior'los' capped volcano chains makes it the most potent of all the Farsight Enclaves' strategic assets. It has been speculated that the planet's innate power is what drew O'Shovah to make his home there. Though Vior'los boasts a warm saline ocean teeming with life, the planet's contiguous landmass is both its principal training ground and its most stunning natural resource. The many tectonic borders are dotted with volcano chains, each of which harbours a training academy. It is said in the enclaves that Vior'los, whose name loosely translates as 'Son of Vior'la', can boast just as many warriors as its parent planet, if not more.*








## TINEK'LA

### CRYSTALLINE WORLD

*The planet-sized crystal polygon known as Tinek'la is especially pleasing to the aesthetically minded Air caste who live in the floating hab-pods and orbital stations above it. The planet is a giant mineral structure so close to true transparency it seems to glow with lambent starlight. Unable to resist the challenge, Lub'grahl's Earth caste used planar sonics to shear the thin, meteor-cracked crust of Tinek'la away, leaving behind only a geometrically perfect surface. In doing so, they have transformed it from a shattered maze of crystal into a shimmering polygonal testament to the power of the Tau Empire. The world's orbital stations are fashioned in shapes sympathetic to Tinek'la itself, revolving around their beautiful core world like electrons around some titanic nucleus.*

## SALASH'HEI

### OCEANIC CLOUD

*Salash'hei is not so much a planet as a collection of giant, viscous globes of liquid, each the size of a small moon. These massive spheroids orbit the nearby sun, Emon'hai, as a group. Each time a meteor or asteroid passes into one of the spheres, the liquid parts with stately slowness into smaller groups of globes; each time the forces of the void throw one or more globes together, they meld with a burst of meniscus that sets the skies dancing with multicoloured lights. Within Salash'hei, the Water caste of O'Shovah's great collective meditate on what the fluid nature of the oceanic cloud can teach them about the universe and the other races within it. They are only too pleased to elaborate on the topic whenever the opportunity arises, for they love nothing more than to educate and enlighten those they deem to be further from the truth.*

# THE BEAST ASCENDANT

**With only a single world left to reconquer in order to complete his mission, Farsight left the enclaves of the Damocles Gulf to pursue his old enemies, the Orks. In doing so, he initiated a system-spanning war that spiralled out of all control, sealing his status as a renegade and almost destroying everything he had achieved as a leader.**

As the other castes of the Farsight Expedition began repopulating the enclaves, O'Shovah's fleet was readying for war. Leaving only a small garrison to defend the colonies, Farsight set out for the Vorac asteroid belt to clear it of Orks. His plan was for the Tau navy to use their superior range to pick the Orks apart without risking a single life. Though the concept was sound, Farsight's plan soon faltered.

Long-range scans betrayed an incredible truth – the asteroids were not hiding the Ork fleet, they actually were the Ork fleet. Gigantic clumps of debris had been sheathed with scrap metal and weapons, with crude engines the size of bio-domes attached at the rear. Farsight wasted no time cross-referencing the symbols carved into the asteroid ships with those of the Ork invasions that had plagued the sept worlds in the past. Sure enough, these greenskins had been encountered many years before, preying upon the space lanes of Dal'yth. After a short war, the threat had been declared neutralised. Not nearly neutralised enough, Farsight realised; the Orks had evidently fled to the fringes of the Tau Empire, hoping to prey upon the newly-established colonies, much as a savannah hunter seeks the youngest and most infirm prey.



Extremely vexed by this revelation, Farsight formulated a meticulous plan to exterminate all the Ork asteroid ships. With Admiral Kor'O'Li'Mau'Teng's finest pilots at the tip of each spearhead, the Tau fell upon the clumsy Ork fleet with dizzying speed. Each asteroid could barely turn its guns toward the Tau before its engines were blown apart by the Air caste. This spectacle was repeated for weeks, and Farsight's progress could be followed by the string of burning lights he was stitching across the stars.

The sheer number of the Ork bases was their only real defence, though the now-accepted tactic of killing the Ork leader and throwing his followers into anarchy was next to impossible to enact. Furthermore, whilst Farsight was methodically smashing base after base on the fringe of the Vorac Belt, hundreds of the furthest asteroid ships were accelerating towards the worlds of the next system.

Once most of the Ork asteroid ships had been destroyed or driven off, Farsight reported to his trio of ethereal advisors that the greenskin menace was greatly reduced and he could despatch a full half of the fleet to return to the enclaves. They nodded sagely, but as Farsight was about to leave in triumph, they had something to reveal: Admiral Kor'O'Li'Mau'Teng had been killed by a hidden missile base whilst overseeing an extermination order. Farsight's eyes narrowed for a moment, but he bowed low, asking for leave to go and meditate in his quarters. When he emerged, his resolve had hardened once more. The fleet would not be returning, not yet. The Orks would be pursued and every last one put to the torch.

## A WARRIOR'S PRIDE

Unbeknownst to O'Shovah, his strike into the Vorac Belt had initiated war against a foe who had not only fought against the Tau before, and survived, but who had come to understand the Fire caste in turn. Grog Ironteef, Warchief of Alsanta, had learned the hard way that the Tau could out-range the Orks in space, so he planned to draw them away from the enclaves and engage them at close range on the most rugged and congested planets he could find, with plenty of cover and lots of hiding places from which to start what he thought of as 'a proper fight'.

The remaining asteroid ships of the Vorac Belt spread out into two fleets as they neared the Magi System on the fringes of the Damocles Gulf. Farsight's armada monitored them as best they could. One cluster plunged towards the deserted world of Arthas Moloch, the other towards the Tau-held planet of Atari Vo. A large dagger-shaped asteroid flew at the heart of the latter fleet, and after meditating on the anomaly, Farsight concluded that a flagship shaped like a weapon would appeal to an Ork leader. He gave the order to head for Atari Vo, and his assumption was correct; the dagger asteroid was indeed his quarry's flagship.

## THE DESCENT OF GROG

Signalling the Tau who had settled on Atari Vo in the Second Sphere Expansion, Farsight prepared to make planetfall and join with the planet's Fire caste against the imminent Ork invasion. The Atarian Tau, and their Dal'ythan reinforcements, were still scrambling their own fleet to engage the asteroids when they received the chilling message from Farsight's fleet: the asteroids would not be slowing upon entry. The Orks intended to smash them into the planet with as much force as possible. It was the same as at Arkunasha, only this time the target was world of cities and gardens instead of a planet-sized desert.

At first, the Tau were confused by Farsight's presence on this side of the Damocles Gulf and refuted his claim, but as the asteroids hurtled down, the truth became horribly clear. They slammed into the planet's main continent, Vo'hai, each one snuffing out millions of lives with its impact. The dagger-shaped flagship at the heart of the fleet drove itself deep into the capital city, Tau'rota'sha, jewel of Atari Vo's white-walled cities. It was reduced to a blasted crater in the space of a few seconds.

The surviving Tau hoped that the Orks had died executing their insane tactics, but they were horribly disappointed. Protected by powerful shieldcores in each warship, the Orks seethed out of the wreckage in a storm of aggression. Wherever the Tau engaged them, the Orks returned fire with crackling energy beams and salvaged Tau weaponry. The volume of fire pouring out of the Ork ranks was unlike anything the Tau had encountered before, and the craters made by their planetfall provided cover enough to weather the firing solutions of the Fire caste.

Farsight's armies docked in the planet's skystations and joined the battle unfolding on the planet below, but it was soon clear that they were fighting a very different breed of Ork from the primitives they had encountered on Arkunasha. Hulking leaders in glyph-covered greatcoats unleashed blasts of blinding green fire from their multibarrelled guns, each powerful enough to punch clean through a battlesuit. Captured Hammerheads and Sky Rays lurched from the rocks, plasma fire splashing from their steel-fanged hulls as they ploughed into the ranks of their former owners. Whirring Ork copter-craft spat hails of fire, forcing the Tau into cover as yet more Orks spilled from the breach. At dozens of impact sites, the battle intensified again and again until Tau blood mingled with the blackish ooze of the Ork fallen amongst the rubble.

Salvation was finally delivered, not by the Fire caste, but by their Air caste brethren. Whole shoals of Barracudas and Tiger Sharks were dispatched, their advance preceded by waves of Piranhas mowing down mob after mob of skulking Orks with their burst cannons. The Manta missile destroyer *Or'es Por'kauyon* slaughtered those Orks nearest the wrecked dagger-ship with a storm of railgun fire, and the Sun Shark bombers soaring down from low orbit washed the ruins clean with chains of plasma bombs. As yet more pilots joined the fight, the Orks fled into the ruins of their impact craters. With his foes on the run, Farsight pressed the advantage, leading a cadre of his own warriors over the lip of the dagger-ship's impact crater and falling upon the Orks below. Only then did the true cunning of Grog become clear.

Thousands of Orks spilled into the crater and fell upon Farsight's force like the jaws of a vice. The Tau could not fire in every direction at once, and they were swamped within a few minutes of the trap being sprung. The last stand became a massacre as a hulking, ostentatiously-dressed Warboss flung himself into the fight. His mind churning with emotion, Farsight ordered his battlesuit teams to boost out of the melee with their jet packs. They fired into the Orks below as they soared away, felling a great many with their parting gesture, but the fact remained they had charged headlong into a trap.

Those Tau who had escaped reconvened in the skystations, conceding the battle zones around each asteroid and laying plans for a planet-wide counter-attack. Humbled by his defeat at the crater, Farsight acted only as an advisor as the ensuing war unfolded. He risked his life over and over again to atone for leading so many to their deaths, but the stain on his honour remained.

The planet's military isolated and eventually destroyed the Ork invaders over the course of a difficult and costly campaign. When victory had been assured beyond all doubt, Farsight left Atari Vo, swearing not to make the same mistakes. Yet in his introspection, he had underestimated the cunning of Warchief Grog once more…

## WAR IN THE FARSIGHT ENCLAVES

When O'Shovah's fleet emerged again from the Damocles Gulf, he was shocked to find the enclaves in a state of full-scale war. Panic rising within him, Farsight ordered his fleet to close with Vior'los, most populous of the worlds, and long-range communications confirmed O'Shovah's worst suspicions; those scattered asteroid ships that were not destroyed had fallen from the skies upon the vulnerable enclave planets. Much like before, the asteroid ships had been used as weapons, the night skies now empty where the necklace of asteroids had glinted before. With the majority of their military on campaign, the garrisons defending each world were locked in a desperate battle for survival.

Farsight met with his commanders at the new Fire caste headquarters, a giant disc-city hovering in relative safety above Vior'los' ocean. The situation was much the same on the neighbouring worlds of Lub'grahl and Tinek'la; even the ocean world of Salash'hei was prowled by iron-hulled Ork battleships. The greenskins were running riot throughout the enclaves, and the Fire caste had already made plans to withdraw the survivors into evacuation zones.

His voice level and controlled, O'Shovah asked how they could have let events get to this point. They reported that the war had hung in the balance until a great Ork potentate appeared and united their armies. Since then, they had lost territory fast. Farsight clenched his fists in realisation: the warlord he had hunted all the way to Atari Vo had escaped, only to double back and strike at the vulnerable enclave worlds whilst their commander was busy elsewhere.

Ordering his lieutenants to remain behind and fight on in his stead, Farsight strode quickly out of the Fire caste's high command, climbed into the command cradle of his Crisis battlesuit, and took off toward the horizon.

Months passed, and the war for the enclaves ground on. Though O'Shovah's armies were led capably by his lieutenants, without their leader, it was all they could do to hold the seething hordes of Orks back from total victory. Murmurs of dissent, and even anger, began to spark in the corners of the enclaves. How could their leader desert them in the hour of their greatest need? Where was the hero of Arkunasha? Would the great mind who had seen the Orks defeated upon Atari Vo truly abandon his own?

## MEDITATION AND VENGEANCE

Appalled by his own failings, Farsight resolved to think long on the events that had led him to this point. There was no victory in fighting a traditional war of mobility and patience; the Orks were on the brink of bringing the enclaves to total ruin and so intoxicated by the scent of imminent victory that even killing their warlord would not stop them.

Farsight sought insight into how he could bring the planets themselves to their aid as he had done on Arkunasha. Yet this time, the scale of the war was much greater. In his search for wisdom, he skimmed low across the saline ocean of Vior'los and then plunged into the water, diving down to the darkness of the ocean bed. There, he settled into a trance, sitting cross-legged in the hero's mantle for seven long cycles. Nightsharks and bulbous glowfish circled in the bubbles that bled up from oceanic fissures around him as he sought inspiration from the cold truths of water.

Once his undersea meditations were complete, Farsight blasted from the ocean into the skies, the shadow of his battlesuit flitting across the waves towards the great volcanos at the centre of Vior'los' landmass. With his battlesuit jets equalising against the winds around him, O'Shovah opened his suit's command cradle above the peak of the dormant volcano O'res, closing his eyes and feeling the air rush around him until he had come to understand its secrets.

Once his trance state had ended, he travelled again, plunging deep into a canyon at the heart of the mountain range. He ventured into the sulphurous tunnels that honeycombed the underside of the planet's crust, and with poisonous fumes and trickles of lava snaking around him, he lay on his back and communed with the elements of earth, teaching himself to think like the slow-burning but impossibly strong anger of the planet's core.

Lastly, O'Shovah flew to the infernos that swept across the tinder-dry forests of Vior'los, ignited by the war that raged across its surface. He descended into the blazing sheets of flame, his battlesuit's hazard protocols flaring red as its outer layers heated up to critical levels. He could feel his flesh begin to burn, the smell of roasting meat slowly filling his command cradle. His skin started to sear from the tanned grey of a Vior'lan native to a rich, deep black, but he did not cry out. When O'Shovah finally left the wildfire, his Crisis suit flew across the skies like an ember in the night.

Over the next few weeks, there came a series of dramatic turns in the tide of the war for the Farsight Enclaves. Above the crystal plains of Tinek'la, elegant Tau fighters had duelled for weeks with thousands of snub-nosed Ork aircraft. Commander Farsight suddenly joined them out of nowhere, ordering every Air caste pilot in the skies to override their consoles and release their propellant gases, forming a wall of volatile emissions shaped to his specific instructions. Then he ignited it with blasts from his plasma rifle. A great gale of flame roiled across the planet. As they burnt the last of their fuel to escape, the Tau aircraft were buoyed by the resultant thermals and rode the thunderhead of the titanic fireball whilst the clumsy Ork aircraft were consumed behind them. In the process, the surface was simultaneously scoured clean of both the greenskins and their corrupting spores.

On the watery world of Salash'hei, Commander Farsight dove once more to the bottom of the ocean and carefully planted the gifts he had requested from the Earth caste. His old friend, O'Vesa, had not let him down; the dull thumps of the disc-shaped seismic fibrillator nodes awoke the wrath of the world's oceanic vents. Soon, the seas above were riven by such extreme tsunamis that the Ork battleships prowling its waters were all capsized. The razorwhales of the oceans ate well that night, but Farsight had already moved on.

The earthen landscape of Lub'grahl was next. The Earth caste had built hundreds of oval living nodes upon the planet's surface, each nestled safely between the planet's towering spires of rock. The Orks roamed Lub'grahl in their billions, besieging every last node, and the Tau were beginning to starve. Farsight ordered the entire fleet of Tinek'la to enter extreme low orbit and mag-lift the nodes to safety. Then, O'Shovah dropped a clutch of O'Vesa's seismic fibrillators into B'oghal, the Great Abyss. Before the hour was out, the planet shuddered in protest, and every one of the delicate rock spires collapsed, burying the Ork hordes in forty metres of solid rock. The mag-lifted living nodes were lowered back down to sit atop the world's new crust; they were restored to full productivity within the week.

Lastly, Farsight's returned to his adopted world of Vior'los, and his first act was to conduct a mass ta'lissera bonding ritual, revitalising the frayed morale of his warriors. With the other enclave worlds freed from invaders and the castes united behind him once more, O'Shovah enacted a mercilessly efficient military strategy that culled the Orks from one district after another. He then used powerful artificial firestorms to sterilise the environment. Very few indigenous species survived the extermination Farsight unleashed on the planet, but no Tau were lost to the flames.

As his chillingly effective methods burned the Orks from his enclaves, O'Shovah's one concession to his own desires was the isolation of the Orks' leader, Grog Ironteef. He finally located the warchief in the eye of a firestorm, attacking his own followers in an attempt to restore order. It is said that Farsight bested the beast in single combat, though none were there to witness it. All that remains of Grog is a sparkling globe filled with ash, the names of each of the enclave's worlds engraved upon its surface.

Though Farsight had won a series of great victories and restored himself as the hero of the newly-fortified colony worlds, the greenskin threat was still not ended. Where the Orks of the galaxy hear word of a good fight, their tribes and clans travel to the site purely to start the fighting all over again. The Farsight Enclaves would battle the Ork menace time and time again, most notably at Arthas Moloch.

# The Molochite Tragedy

**Ten years of punishment followed the reclamation of the enclaves as O'Shovah's cadres hunted down and exterminated the Ork menace wherever it was found. Farsight's red-armoured warriors put one Ork-infested planet after another to the torch. One such world was Arthas Moloch, yet it was not just Orks that Farsight found amongst the ruins...**

During Farsight's pursuit of a fleet of Ork asteroid-ships to the world of Atari Vo, a number of the strange vessels had split off for distant Arthas Moloch. Sure enough, as O'Shovah's expedition neared that ancient world, he picked up telltale signs of Ork infestation within the planet's built-up zones. On closer inspection by Air caste patrols, there was little to no activity upon the planet's surface. The greenskins had either conquered the indigenous life forms already, or invaded a world that was already dead. On the bridge of his flagship, O'Shovah's lips peeled back into a grim smile. The Orks would not lack for company much longer.

Arthas Moloch was the latest in a long string of worlds to feel Farsight's wrath. Divided, and frequently leaderless, the greenskins were slowly but efficiently taken apart by O'Shovah's Ork-killer Cadres. However, a strange phenomenon occurred at an eight-pillared temple dubbed the Great Star Dais by the Air caste; wherever an Ork fell to the dusty stone, a bizarre explosion of light spilled out. Farsight himself oversaw this part of the purge, and had killed dozens of the Orks with his own rifle. He watched in fascination as, eventually, a blazing disc of multicoloured light began to form above the dais, the shadows of the milling Orks beneath it dancing with a life of their own.

A sudden gout of energy poured out of the disc like blood bursting from a dying man's lips. When its glow faded, the star-carved stone was covered with horned crimson aliens the like of which Farsight had never seen. The long-limbed figures cut into the Orks with swords so black they seemed to O'Shovah like holes in space, their unintelligible warcries forcing his battlesuit's audio cutout to engage.

More gobbets of energy spilled out of the blazing disc, and dozens of bright pink figures cartwheeled and capered out from wherever they touched. Raising their comically long arms to the skies, they sent blazing streams of multicoloured fire into the Tau observers above. Farsight's eyes widened as the flames splashed onto the prow of a passing Piranha, turning its canopy to shards of kaleidoscopic glass and sending it ploughing down into the melee below. More flames gushed out, turning Tau to stone, to water, to statues of screaming bone.

Farsight ordered the retreat, commanding his forces to fall back into the skies as quickly as they could. They acted without hesitation, leaving the surreal nightmare of the Great Star Dais behind without a second thought. O'Shovah himself was the only one to look back. As he gazed down into the crackling disc that whirled above the dais, the portal gazed back, though he knew that to be impossible, growing larger and larger until it filled his vision completely. It seemed to him that some titanic void, a rip in the fabric of reality of mind-boggling scale, had torn the heart out of the galaxy. Within it writhed a trillion terrible deaths, each calling out to him by name.

In that moment, O'Shovah was changed forever. He had beheld a danger far greater than that posed by the races of Arachen, Orks or humans. This disc of light was a gateway to another dimension, and that dimension was desperate to break through. As blood began to trickle from the shio'he between his eyes, O'Shovah lost consciousness. His battlesuit spiralled down to crash headlong into a cobwebbed tomb, its automated systems providing just enough intermittent support to prevent him lapsing into a coma.

## THE BATTLE OF THE GREAT STAR DAIS

When O'Shovah came to, he found that his unconscious form had been retrieved to the med-bay of his flagship. The situation on Arthas Moloch had gone critical, his advisors reported. Though there were Tau still planetside, they were preparing to evacuate. Drawn by the lure of battle, the Orks were rushing in their thousands to the site of the Great Star Dais. Fortunately, the Orks were throwing themselves into the fight with the mysterious red-skinned aliens that had appeared there, and driving themselves ever closer to extinction in the process.



### ARTHAS MOLOCH

*The artefact world of Arthas Moloch is as grey and desolate as a tomb. Its surface is jumbled with thousands of tumbledown shrines and strange, faceless statues that predate any of the worlds of the Imperium. The world's surface is cracked and broken, giving the sense that the planet itself died long ago – an impression that is reinforced by the fact that not a single green shoot or patch of moss can be found anywhere on its surface. Not a single living soul makes a home there, though the plaster walls of the planet's tombs bear the dark brown smears of bloodshed, and ghostly shadows have been burnt into the walls wherever the ruins cluster close together. Though the world is barren as bone, if one possessed of psychic abilities were to behold it with the second sight, it would shine like a gold mine in firelight. The shrine-hold is peppered with artefacts of ancient and mysterious origin, each a priceless wonder left discarded in the dust.*

Though his head felt like it was splitting apart, and every joint and muscle in his aged body was experiencing stabbing pain, Farsight countermanded the orders given in his absence. The Tau would not evacuate, he said; they had somehow caused this strange nightmare to awaken, and it was their duty to end it. The Ethereals attached to the council nodded their approval, insisting that they must personally monitor the new threat they had uncovered. Their instructions given, the Fire caste girded itself to return to the Great Star Dais in force.

Squadron after squadron of Orca dropships descended into the shattered amphitheatres and mausoleums ranged around Arthas Moloch's great temple as Mantas dropped Hunter Cadres into the Ork-infested necropoli of the hinterlands. A large detachment of Tau had been tasked with monitoring the strange creatures spilling from the rift, whilst two other major detachments eradicated the remaining Orks at as extreme a range as possible.

The seething melee that had started upon the Great Star Dais was heaving back and forth as more and more Orks joined the fight. As Farsight and the Ethereals that had been seconded to his expedition came within scanner range, a pair of massive red-winged creatures twice the size of Farsight's battlesuit burst out from the disc in a blaze of red light, hurtling through the skies directly towards them. Behind them came more winged beasts, some feathered in the manner of Vior'lan rocs, some with bat-like wings that drizzled gore on the combatants beneath.



These airborne terrors split off into two groups that headed out into the wilderness. As they winged through the skies, they roared and shrieked in a language that O'Shovah could not even bear to hear, let alone translate. His Broadside teams were the first to open fire at the winged monstrosities swooping towards them. Heavy rail rifle fire slammed into the ornate brass armour of the leading monstrosity, tearing off a wing and sending it wheeling to the ground. Seeker missiles and plasma bolts were added to the fusillade, and the second beast quickly diverted around an ancient temple, lost from sight.

Suddenly, a third winged creature burst through a crumbling façade to fall upon the Fire Warriors hiding behind it, the giant alien's brass axe cutting several Tau in half with every swipe. This time, Farsight understood the creature's booming war cry – it was an archaic form of the warrior language used by the Imperium's Space Marines. Its rumbling voice resounded from the shattered statues and temples of the haunted world. 'Blood!' it screamed as it splashed gore across the alabaster walls, 'Blood for the Blood God!'

The second of the giant beasts dropped down from above, its clawed feet kicking Farsight backwards into the ruins of an ancient statue. A shot from O'Shovah's plasma rifle caught it under the chin, sending it reeling backwards for a moment before its curling whip lashed out and ripped the arm from his Crisis suit. The battlesuit's directional scans picked up a weapon-shape behind him; the sword clutched by the statue his fall had toppled.

Farsight darted behind the statue's rubble a split second before the beast's axe smashed the marble figure to powder. The statue's curved blade fell free. Rolling sideways, Farsight snatched the sword up in a smooth motion and swung it hard at the beast's midsection. The creature easily evaded the blow, launching itself up into the air and bounding past his position. As Farsight pursued the beast, he saw it bring its axe down into a nearby fountain with an overhead blow of such power that O'Shovah could hear the sharp crack of the flagstones beneath. A moment before Farsight caught up with it, the beast bounded into the skies and swooped off into the distance.

Fighting the urge to continue his pursuit, Commander O'Shovah sent the command out for all remaining forces to rally at his position and re-establish a battle line. Many of his Fire Warriors were dead, slain by the capering beasts that had spilled from the portal, but his troops had died nobly, fighting to the last, and the battle was still raging. It was the gruesome sight that greeted him at the site of the beast's last attack that made Farsight's throat tighten in panic. Ethereal Aun'Los had been cut in two from crown to groin, gore spurting into the fountain around him as the limp halves of his frail body twitched their last.

A great keening cry went up from the Tau establishing the battle line as the news of the Ethereal's death spread through the ranks. Farsight fought to restore order, issuing a series of clipped commands to hastily reform teams into fighting strength as he sought to make sense of the jumbled and confused transmissions interrupting broadcasts across his comms web.

A great number of the brightly-coloured creatures had driven the second battle group back with their strange spectral flames, but for some reason, they gave a wide berth to one of the worn-down statues east of the Dais. The Tau took the opportunity to regroup under its shadow. Meanwhile, the Ethereal that had joined the third battle group, Aun'Diemn, had been gored to death in an attack by a giant vulture-like creature. Farsight's warriors were in disarray, trapped with Orks on one side and the unidentified alien creatures on the other. The Fire Warriors were on the brink of panic, for the more they shot the creatures down, the more of them appeared – it was almost as if each kill caused two more beasts to replace those that fell.

Tapping into the visual feeds of the battlesuits in the second group, Farsight examined their environment. In the cadre's midst was a great robed statue, a strange hexagrammatic medallion brandished in its grip. Something struck Farsight as odd about that symbol; for one thing, when he looked at it, the pain that had flared in his head seemed to subside. Acting on instinct, Farsight ordered his warriors to retrieve the hexagram from the ancient statue and carry it forwards against the flame-beasts. A few tense seconds passed before the breathless report came that the multicoloured aliens were falling back before it. Aun'Diemn's leaderless cadre adopted the same tactic after finding a medallion of a similar nature at their own rally point.

O'Shovah's mind whirled. It seemed as though it would take more esoteric means to defeat this new and inexplicable foe. He took a moment to think on the words that Puretide had taught him upon the peak of Mount Kanji all those years ago: 'To secure victory, the wise must adapt.'

Ordering all three battle groups to converge on his position, Farsight rearranged his battle plan in an instant. The Fire Warriors and their support teams would engage the Orks, forming a periphery around the Great Star Dais that could not be breached under any circumstances. The Crisis Teams would alone engage these new foes at the crackling disc itself, and the hexagrammatic medallions would be brought to Farsight wherever they were found. Above all, he ordered, no blood must be spilt on the dais – if a battlesuit pilot was hit, he must withdraw immediately.

Farsight's warriors were perplexed by their orders, but they carried them out to the letter nonetheless. O'Shovah and his Battlesuit Cadre stormed the Great Star Dais as his Fire Warriors kept a defensive perimeter so that no more Orks could reach the fight. Flamer-armed Crisis Teams burned the remaining greenskins that still fought upon the Dais to a crisp, darting out of the reach of the crimson-skinned aliens whenever they came close.

As clouds of fire washed across the ground, the blood that covered the flagstones dried and clotted to a crusted film. A howl of dismay sounded from the strange crimson-skinned creatures, reaffirming what Farsight had suspected; the beasts needed blood to survive. A warning echoed across the dais from the brave monat who was the latest to claim the title of Commander Brightsword. He had spotted a trio of the massive, winged beasts plunging out of the skies. They each had their axes raised as they dove with reckless momentum straight for O'Shovah himself.

### THE DAWN BLADE

*The mysterious artefact that O'Shovah took up on Arthas Moloch is even older than the Imperium of Man. Fashioned aeons ago by the strange race that once inhabited that haunted world, the Dawn Blade has been forged from materials that even the finest of Earth caste minds cannot fathom. Its blade is sharp enough to cut through rock, and since taking it up on Arthas Moloch, and modifying it for use in battle, it has been O'Shovah's weapon of choice for close engagements.*

*Unbeknownst to Farsight, the ancient sword has a dark secret. Its blade is made from chronophagic alloys – whenever its wielder cuts a life short with it, the natural span that he stole from his victim is added to the wielder's own. This has allowed O'Shovah to live for almost three centuries. Though he has his suspicions that it is the Dawn Blade that has prolonged his lifespan to such a degree, if Farsight ever found out the horrible truth, he would likely end his own life in ritual suicide then and there.*



Commander Farsight raised his captured blade high in salute before flicking it outward, and the hexagrammatic medallions that hung loosely around it sailed in a lazy arc towards the crackling disc in the centre of the dais. A moment before the winged beasts fell upon O'Shovah, the medallions passed into the blazing energies; a tremendous backblast boomed out of the portal, knocking every Fire Warrior and Crisis battlesuit into the dust. As they gradually helped each other up out of the rubble, they saw that the skies were clear and every single one of the rift-creatures had disappeared without trace.

In the wake of the strange battle, Farsight and his warriors purged the ruins of the remaining greenskins. No victory shouts were heard; no warrior vows rang out. Instead of celebrating their double victory against the creatures infesting Arthas Moloch, the Tau returned to their fleet in silence. The last of the Ethereals had been found, headless, surrounded by his unconscious bodyguards. All three Ethereals were gone, leaving the Tau bereft of guidance.

The enclaves had lost all of their spiritual leaders in a single tragic battle. O'Shovah could not shake the feeling that this had been no accident, that some infeasible force had conspired against his people by killing the Ethereals. Though all of his training and formidable intellect railed against it, the visions he had seen in that crackling portal stayed with him night and day, infecting his thoughts with ever more dangerous conclusions; there was more to the universe than progress, unity, and destiny. Something lurked behind the material world; something foul, hungry, and immeasurably evil.

# THE TENDRILS OF DOUBT

**The disastrous revelations of Arthas Moloch shook the Farsight Enclaves to their core. O'Shovah retreated from office, exiling himself so that the dangerous truths he had learned could not harm his people. Yet the fates had another cruel twist to play. Even as Farsight struggled with his own spiritual battles, a Tyranid splinter fleet curled ever closer to his realm...**

Upon the return of Farsight's expedition, the tragedy that had unfolded on Arthas Moloch rippled throughout the enclaves. Though the Tau had known doubt before, the death of all three of the expedition's Ethereals cast billions of souls into confusion and angst. How could Farsight have allowed this to happen? Without the guidance of the Ethereals, how could they prevail?

Word had spread of the strange entities that Farsight's cadres had fought on the artefact world, but in the minds of the Tau citizenry, the 'Molochites' were a dangerous new race of aliens and little else. O'Shovah, for his part, held suspicions closer to the truth – that the grotesque creatures were not of the physical dimension at all.

For there to be another reality that ran parallel to the material universe explained so many things; the rift-creatures appearing and disappearing in the blink of an eye on Arthas Moloch, the blazing storms of light that had spat out the human fleet during the Damocles Crusade, the strange deities of humans and Orks and the seemingly sentient rust-devils of Arkunasha. Furthermore, if it were possible to somehow travel in this alternate realm, an empire need not know the limitations of time or space. With the benefit of hindsight, it was clear that the expedition's Ethereals already knew something of the existence of such things. Yet they had long hidden this truth from their people, choosing to keep them in obedient ignorance.

O'Shovah was spending more and more of his waking hours in meditation, for he had begun to think schismatic thoughts. Lurking under his ruminations on the possibility of parallel dimensions was the realisation that, except for suffering from poor morale, the enclaves were functioning full well without the guidance of the Ethereals. Farsight's continued requests for reinforcements from the core sept worlds had not been answered, and yet the enclaves had still fought off the most monstrous of threats. Since the defeat of the greenskin menace, the colony worlds were all thriving without exception.





Though he dared not speak of it openly, subversive ideas had sprouted from the seed of bitterness in Farsight's heart. Perhaps the castes would be better off seeking a natural harmony, thought O'Shovah, without the Ethereal caste moderating and controlling them at all times. Their actions in the past had bordered on despicable; their war crimes and cold-hearted politics had seemed necessary and wise at the time, but now, in retrospect, were exposed as deplorable. It was said that Master Aun'Va was able to convince any Tau he spoke to of the justice of his actions, no matter how drastic – was it possible that the Ethereals had been influencing the other castes through some means other than logic and loyalty? The more O'Shovah thought about it, the more he recalled incidents where Tau had acted with unnatural obedience in the presence of the Ethereals. Even the fundamental myth of Fio'taun, where the Ethereals appeared from the stars to broker peace between the warring castes over the course of a single night, spoke more of an external force acting upon Tau society than an internal resolution.

Heresies reeled through Farsight's mind, taking him to the edge of panic. For him to reveal these terrible truths would shake the Tau Empire to its core. Worse still, in all likelihood, they would bring about the Mont'au, the time of horror, all over again. Yet the secrets were of such magnitude that putting them to the back of his mind and continuing to lead his people was impossible.

With a sickening lurch of thought, Farsight realised that the most dangerous threat to the Tau Empire was himself.

Leaving his battlesuit behind for more devoted champions to use in his stead, O'Shovah fled into the searing wilderness of the Vior'los plains, exiling himself to a twilight existence of arid caves and dust with nothing but his own dark thoughts for company.

## AN EMPIRE MOURNS

The Tau of the core sept worlds heard progressively less from the Farsight Expedition as the years wound on. Soon, the probes sent across the Damocles Gulf failed to reappear altogether. Commander Farsight, whose natural lifespan was long spent, was officially proclaimed dead. The entire Tau Empire mourned the passing of their mightiest hero and the end of his glorious quest to bring the light of the Greater Good to distant stars.

The truth was to come to light some decades later, when an outrider probe's routine orbit led it past the Farsight Enclaves and back to the sept worlds at the empire's core. Instead of being barren of Tau life, the colonies were flourishing. They had clearly found their own way in the galaxy, independent of the commands of the Ethereal council. Even their sept colours and symbols had changed.

Aun'Va was furious. How could the empire's most beloved champion have turned his back on his people, putting his own interests before the Greater Good? How could he have led so many of their people astray? The Ethereal's white-hot anger at Farsight's desertion cooled into a cold fury that was far more dangerous.



Since Aun'Wei's passing, Master Aun'Va had become the Supreme Ethereal in his stead. He used every bit of his influence to destroy the hero he had created all those years ago. He informed the council of the probe's findings, insisting that O'Shovah was a dangerous rebel, a rogue influence whose heresy should be condemned in the most public way possible. All images of Farsight were to be destroyed, all monuments to his glory reduced to rubble and all mention of him erased from history. The entire area of space on the far side of the Damocles Gulf was renamed the Forbidden Zone, off-limits even to the most senior of Tau. All across the empire, O'Shovah's supporters were forced into hiding; those who spoke well of him were taken away for sessions of questioning, from which very few emerged.

Only upon his home planet of Vior'la did a few images of Farsight still linger, for the Commander still had many supporters on that world. To destroy all sign of his presence would risk a dangerous backlash that Aun'Va, even in his anger, was wise enough to avoid. Instead, the Supreme Ethereal allowed a single statue to be left standing outside the battle dome of Mont'yr, repurposing it from a glorious monument to a grave reminder that without the guidance of the Ethereal caste, even the finest mind could be turned from the light.

### THE FARSIGHT ENCLAVES

*Though the first Damocles colonies established by the Tau were burnt to the ground by a vengeful Imperium, Farsight's forces put into place a great many reclamation programs when they returned across the Gulf. With the might of all five castes behind him, O'Shovah not only retook the systems on the far side of the Gulf, but reshaped them in the image of the established sept worlds. Each was built to the needs of a particular caste, and the four systems that spanned the new Tau worlds were linked together by many orbital stations and relay beacons. Though O'Shovah did not encourage it, the worlds were soon referred to as the Farsight Enclaves. By the end of the 41st Millennium, they would have yet another name – the Forbidden Zone.*

On the far side of the Damocles Gulf, the Farsight Enclaves continued to forge their worlds to better suit their own destinies. Yet with their leader missing for so many years, they too had begun to see O'Shovah as a distant memory. Generation after generation was born, lived briefly, and died out. Over a hundred years passed without sign. As time marched on without him, Commander Farsight became little more than a whispered myth.

## COMING OF THE GREAT DEVOURER

As 997.M41 drew to a close, long-range reports of a strange galactic cloud reached the fringes of the enclaves. It fit no recognised energy patterns until Commander Arra'kon, who had been a wise military leader to the enclaves for many years, correlated it with recent data fed to him from his hidden allies in the core septs. Silence fell over the Fire caste high command when they saw what the anomalous readings represented – the tendrils of a Tyranid hive fleet heading right at them.

The Tau had learned much from their two-year war against Hive Fleet Gorgon earlier that century. The Tyranids were a foe like no other, able to adapt and spawn at an appalling rate. It was imperative that the splinter fleet snaking towards them be taken apart before it made planetfall on any of the enclaves, or their swarms might spell death for every living thing dwelling there.

The Air caste fleets from each of the enclaves were mobilised to intercept the hive fleet, and led into space by Admiral Kor'O'Kai of Tinek'la. Learning from the mistakes made against Hive Fleet Gorgon, Kor'O'Kai's fleets isolated and destroyed the leading elements of each bio-fleet, carving helical attack patterns around each tendril and reducing it to spattered ruin over the course of a punishing six-week space battle.

In the end, the sheer number of the Tyranid ships proved insurmountable, even with the Air caste's masterful efforts. Three out of four of the bio-ship clusters were set upon and destroyed, but as the Air caste were fully engaged, the fourth cluster entered colony world space above Vior'los with relatively little opposition. As the skies grew sick with the Tyranids' pre-invasion corruptions, and desert vegetation swelled and bloated, a hail of mycetic spores began to rain down from the splinter fleet above.

Longer-lived than any Fire caste warrior before him, the hermit O'Shovah watched the skies turn purple-grey above his desert refuge. The cacti and creepers that had provided him with water grew, out of control, into horrible new shapes. Something was attacking his world, something that was changing the substance of his home to better suit its purposes. O'Shovah could only think of one reason why an invading entity would boost the amount of biological matter on a planet before it attacked, fattening it like a grox-calf intended for the feast. The invaders were coming to feed and he knew that his people needed him more than ever.



Amidst the terror and desperation that erupted across the enclaves, a note of joy rang out on Vior'los. An old dark-skinned warrior had walked into the Great Vior'los Museum claiming to be Farsight, the famous hero of old, and demanded his revered battlesuit be returned to him, submitting to the required genetic tests with dignity and determination. Sure enough, O'Shovah had returned to them in the hour of their greatest need. The Fire caste took great heart as a living legend emerged from the desert to guide them. They had soon redoubled their efforts to hold back the Tyranid swarms infesting the Vior'los plains.

Studying every scrap of information his commanders could supply about the Tyranid race, O'Shovah coordinated a new war effort that hinged upon aerial supremacy. A massed spearhead of eighty Crisis Teams engaged every winged Tyranid they could find to the exclusion of all else, tearing them out of the skies with long-range missile fire whilst staying well away from the swarms below.

Once they were sure of their aerial success, the Fire Warriors of Vior'los boarded the anti-grav docking pontoons that Farsight had requisitioned from the planet's orbital stations and used them to skim across the seething plains. Wherever larger Tyranids were found, they were engaged and destroyed by volley after volley of pulse rifle fire from the anti-grav pontoons. In this manner, O'Shovah intended to break the Tyranids' leadership structure in a worldwide killing blow strategy that destroyed the mind-links co-ordinating each brood into a cogent invasion force.

## MONT'KA DENIED

Over and over again, the Tyranid leader-beasts were hunted and destroyed by the pinpoint application of firepower, and over and over again, they were reinforced by fat-bodied mycetic spores that rained out of the skies. Thousands of citizens died every day as the insidious invaders probed at every defence and settlement, exploiting the least weakness to break through in a tide of chitinous bodies to slaughter those inside. Each time Farsight adapted his strategy, optimising military protocol to better slay the foe, the Tyranids would reinforce and adapt in turn. Though it burned him to admit it, O'Shovah's plan to cut off the head of his monstrous foe was not working.

Calling an emergency council, Farsight convened with the greatest minds of the enclaves. His old friend, O'Vesa, was still clinging to life by virtue of a cocktail of age-regressive drugs of his own invention. He suggested that if the art of killing blow was not working, then perhaps the patient hunter might be given a chance. Farsight's brow wrinkled, but he gave the idea full consideration nonetheless. Their world was ripe for the plucking, on the brink of being devoured by the Tyranid hive fleet above. As horrifying a notion as it may seem, perhaps the should not try to prevent the attack. Instead, they would allow it to happen, and then strike back.

The very next night, Farsight and his seven most trusted commanders escorted O'Vesa to Vior'los' Earth caste research facility, Fio'ro'tl, deep in the Valley of Dust. Given enough time, the ancient scientist believed that he and his colleagues could develop a countermeasure that could destroy the Tyranids before their final triumph. O'Shovah knew that this was their last chance. With his planet all but overrun, he gave the order for the rest of the Tau upon Vior'los to evacuate.

Before the week was out, there were only twelve Tau left on the entire planet – Farsight and his seven battlesuit commanders, O'Vesa, and three of Lub'grahl's most capable Earth caste. Using samples of the xenos biomass gathered from the battlefield, the veteran scientists worked night and day to develop a biological countermeasure, their research facility guarded by six Crisis battlesuits, a Broadside, and one of the few Riptides that had been 'accidentally' diverted to the Farsight Enclaves from the ships en route to Mu'galath Bay.

Though O'Shovah had deliberately kept the facility's defences as small as he dared in order to escape detection, on the eighth day, the swarms found them nonetheless. Thousands of scuttling weapon-beasts poured through the gullies and valleys from every direction, blade-limbed colossi stalking in their midst. Farsight relayed his greatest of respects to his honoured comrades and prepared to give his life to buy O'Vesa a few more precious seconds.



The battle that unfolded between the battlesuit commanders and the Tyranid swarms was the stuff of legend. Ob'lotai 9-0, the Broadside battlesuit operated by the AI engram of Farsight's old team leader, bulls-eyed dozens of Tyranid leader-beasts from his vantage point atop the research station. The seventh Commander Brightsword's fusion blades blazed bright as they cut through the giant battering-ram monsters that assailed the gates, alien ichor evaporating into choking clouds around him as he felled one, boosted away, then slashed through another. Wise Arra'kon moulded complex firing solutions to defend every new ingress, coordinating the flamer blasts from Sha'vastos and Torchstar to consume the greatest number of the lesser weapon-beasts wherever they scuttled through the rocks.

When a towering monstrosity killed Shas'O Varg'ha with a blast of bio-electricity, burning him to death inside his Riptide, Commander Bravestorm, long interred within his life-supporting battlesuit, charged underneath the Tyranid Bio-titan's mid-section. Powering his ancient Onager Gauntlet to maximum, Bravestorm punched out its thorax in a gory salute to his fallen comrade.

Meanwhile, Farsight duelled with the hissing leader-beast at the swarm's heart, matching the Dawn Blade against the hive creature's crystalline swords. Even O'Vesa was able to join the fight at the last, remotely accessing the interface of the fallen Riptide and bringing its weapon systems back online in order to deliver the deathblow to a squat-bodied broodbeast that was birthing lesser Tyranids straight into the facility's corridors.

Suddenly, a great cloud of dust whirled up, obscuring the combatants as the Manta missile destroyer *Or'es Por'kauyon* hovered above them. O'Vesa signalled to Farsight that he had summoned the Air caste's finest to extract them; the deed inside the facility was as good as done. One by one, the battlesuits boosted up into the air and boarded the Manta. Below them, the research facility was buried under leaping Tyranid bodies as the Tau made their escape. Of the brave Earth caste scientists, only O'Vesa survived.

Over the course of the next few cycles, the world of Vior'los was stripped bare of every last shred of biomass. The ribbed mouthparts of the hive fleets had descended to feed, hungrily sucking up the rendered-down gruel of their conquests from the many digestion pools below. Farsight and his commanders monitored the vile spectacle from high orbit. As the twin flames of grief and anger twisted in his gut, O'shovah began to doubt the course they had chosen. When he cast a questioning glance across to O'Vesa, the wizened scientist just smiled and pointed back towards the bio-ships themselves.

Farsight saw nothing at first, but soon, a black stain began to spread across the chitinous flanks of one of the Tyranid vessels. Within a matter of only a few moments, the affliction had spread to a second ship, followed swiftly by another and then another, until none were free of the malign tendrils. The bio-ships shuddered and writhed as the discolouration blossomed outwards to cover them entirely. One by one, the fleshy Tyranid vessels fell into themselves, rotting and falling away like a piece of fruit decomposing in a matter of seconds. Before the hour was out, the bio-ships had disintegrated entirely.

The countermeasures the Earth caste had made, explained O'Vesa, had been a suite of self-replicating poisons. The necrotising agents had been on time-delayed release in order to ensure they were fully taken inside the hive fleet before activating. The vector of transmission had been the bodies of the Earth caste scientists themselves; they had imbibed the poisons as their last act upon Vior'los. Once their bodies were broken down in the digestion pools, the bacterial codes they had locked within themselves infected the air itself. As O'Vesa had hoped, the Tyranids had even stripped most of Vior'los' atmosphere away to fuel their further conquests. In doing so, they had doomed themselves to a swift and painful death.



## A HERO REBORN

The last act of the Earth caste scientists had moved Farsight on a deep level. Here was the true expression of the Greater Good; not in clever politicking or the waging of war, but in self-sacrifice, so that others might live better lives in their stead. Though he was used to the warriors of the Fire caste laying down their lives in the name of the Tau Empire, to see such selflessness in another caste humbled him. The deaths of the scientists had ignited the flame of ambition in his heart once more.

O'Shovah strove to see Vior'los rebuilt and resettled, its three principal cities named for the Tau scientists that had given their lives so that the rest of the enclaves might live. The barren wastes and volcano ranges would be rebuilt as Tau cities that boasted many grand monuments. On Lub'grahl, the favoured planet of the Earth caste, field after field of white, oval memorials were lain in the name of all those that had given their lives for the Greater Good.

No longer would O'Shovah shy away from his destiny as a leader and a hero. The fight must go on.

'VIOR'LOS ONCE BURNED, TO ERADICATE THE SPOOR OF THE ORK. IT WAS REBORN, BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE WITH HONEST TOIL. TODAY OUR PLANET HAS DIED AGAIN, CONSUMED BY A NEW THREAT. YET IN THE PROCESS THE GLUTTON-BEASTS HAVE BEEN CONSUMED IN THEIR TURN BY THE FIRES OF OUR DEFIANCE. LET THOSE SAME FLAMES GROW FIERCE IN YOUR HEARTS, MY PEOPLE. WITH THEM WE SHALL BRING LIGHT AND WARMTH TO THE COLD STARS OF A NEW HORIZON.'

*- Commander Farsight*

# ROAD TO REBELLION

**O'Shovah's journey from hero to rebel covers three centuries of warfare. Within that great span have been battles that changed the course of history for the Tau Empire, from the most glorious of victories to the deepest pits of recrimination. Though the history that follows is forbidden knowledge within the sept worlds of the Empire's core, the most fervent supporters of Farsight's cause have it committed to memory. It will continue to be passed on long after his death.**

**771.M41 Battle Dome Mont'yr**
*The young prodigy Shoh is inducted into the training academies of Vior'la.*

**715-731.M41 Scourge of the Arachen**
*The war against the Arachen lingering in the Western Veil Nebula absorbs many of the Fire caste's new recruits. Over the course of sixteen years of battle, Shoh secures a string of promotions, though many of his teammates disappear without trace after each Trial by Fire.*

**731-733.M41 Enlightenment atop Mount Kanji**
*Shoh, Shassera and Kais study under Commander Puretide. Though the legendary warrior's teachings allow them to see the truths of battle with clear eyes, the fires of their rivalry have only just been lit.*

**733-742.M41 Warscaper Farsight**
*O'Shoh's first real command sees him reinforce the red oxide planet Arkunasha against the numberless hordes of Waaagh! Dok. On the cusp of total victory, he is forced to withdraw his forces from the Argap Plateau and return to the sept worlds. It is during this conflict that he earns the moniker 'Farsight'.*



**742.M41 A Terrible New Foe**
*By using the cunning infiltration tactics masterminded by the Ethereal Aun'Va, the Tau colonise a great many human worlds on the far side of the Damocles Gulf. The resultant counter-invasion sees a vast battle group of Space Marines and Imperial Guard scour the Tau colonists from the Damocles Gulf and penetrate deep into the heart of the Tau Empire.*

**742.M41 The Battle for Dal'yth**
*The war philosophy of the Imperial savages is brutal and wasteful in the extreme, but undeniably effective. O'Shovah is reassigned to Dal'yth where, fighting alongside his comrade-in-fire O'Shassera, he engages the Imperium in a series of bitterly contested wars. Just as the Tau are ready to encircle and exterminate the trespassers, the Ethereal caste orders a truce, and the Imperium's armies are allowed to leave the Tau Empire unmolested. In the aftermath of the war, Aun'Va orders the Fire caste heroes known as the Swords of Puretide to have their prototype Puretide engrams removed by lobotomy – though Farsight shields his friend Sha'vastos from this fate.*

**745.M41 The Time of Questioning**
*After studying the Imperium and realising the Tau Empire had fought against the merest fraction of its might, Aun'Va decides that a morale boost is needed to drive the next phase of expansion. Meanwhile, to preserve Puretide's teachings, he orders O'Shaserra and O'Kais to be placed in deep stasis until they are needed for the honour of command in future engagements.*

**745.M41 The Great Reclamation**
*Farsight works tirelessly to reconquer the worlds of the Damocles Gulf, and with the majority of Imperial forces occupied elsewhere, he succeeds magnificently and his legend is set in stone. O'Shovah is lauded as the greatest of heroes, and statues of him are raised across the Tau Empire. Crowds from every caste cheer with news of each of his victories, yet his requests for further reinforcements are met only with silence.*

**760.M41 The Forking Path**
*The Farsight Expedition reclaims all of the worlds lost to the Imperium bar one. Just as battle plans are laid to reconquer the last world, Illuminas, Commander Farsight diverts his armies to repel the raids of a nearby Ork empire. What starts as series of isolated battles against infested Ork asteroids swiftly escalates into a costly war across a large battlefront. Instead of following the path allocated to him by the Ethereal Council, Farsight prosecutes his new war with great gusto, disobeying a direct order and shaking their faith in him in the process. Over time, Farsight becomes incensed at the continued lack of reinforcements and absence of new technologies, which he feels his expedition should be receiving. He begins to believe that the Tau Empire at large has abandoned him, and a seed of doubt grows within his warrior heart.*

**815.M41 The Beast Ascendant**
*While Farsight is away fighting Orks in the astroid belt, Waaagh! Grog descends upon the Tau world of Atari Vo, as the warlord lands his meteor base right on top of the planet's capital city. Grog is a resourceful leader, and meets the Tau firepower with every gun he can hire and as much looted weaponry as he can get his hands on. Farsight falls victim to his own ambition and stages an assault upon the Orks when they appear weak. In fact, the Ork forces were stronger than ever. The war escalates ever further, encompassing the span of a decade until it consumes three of the Farsight Enclaves' four sept worlds. When O'Shovah returns to find his colonies in flames, he learns the truths of all the elements before launching a devastating counter-attack. He comes to understand the material world all the better for it, though the realm of the Ethereals still remains a mystery to him.*

**823.M41 The Way of the Short Blade**
*O'Shovah studies drone-scans of the veteran Ethereal Aun'Shi in combat. By connecting his neural network to the honeycombed outer layer of his battlesuit, Farsight learns to truly feel through his 'second skin' and develops a style of close-range fighting that imitates the styles of Aun'Shi, but which can be performed in battlesuits. Perfecting it against captured Orks that the Earth caste have trapped for their own experiments, O'Shovah trains his closest acolytes until they learn to relish the art of close combat.*

**825.M41 Assassination on Arthas Moloch**
*As Farsight continues his purges of the greenskin race, Orks are again discovered, this time upon Arthas Moloch, an artefact world on the fringes of the Damocles Gulf. The resultant bloodletting sets free a host of ectoplasmic nightmares that rampage through the Tau expedition, killing off the Ethereals at its heart before vanishing as swiftly as they arrived. During the battle against these unholy fiends, Farsight gets a glimpse through a Warp rift and sees a vision of the Eye of Terror. In the process, he realises the dire threat that looms over all sentient life – the ancient evils of Chaos. O'Shovah cannot believe that the Ethereals would keep their knowledge of such a terrible threat a secret, but the evidence seems clear. The revelations shake him to his core.*

**826.M41 The Tether Cut**
*With the events of Arthas Moloch receding into painful memories, The Tau of the Enclaves wage their never-ending war against the Orks without the guidance of the Ethereals. A new era of violence is begun, yet the Farsight Enclaves continue to thrive.*

**832.M41 Through Independence, Enlightenment**
*O'Shovah's meditations lead him to believe that the people of the Tau will never be free whilst the Ethereal caste exists. Fearing that his conclusions will do harm to the Greater Good, he disappears from active service and begins a new life as a hermit in the mountains of Vior'los.*

**834.M41 An Empire Mourns**
*Farsight is reported dead to the wider Tau Empire. Even though they dare not show it openly, the eldest generations of Tau feel a pang of loss that their childhood hero has finally passed into memory.*

**845.M41 Censure**
*Aun'Va receives word that Farsight lives yet, and that his enclaves not only still exist, but have split away from the Tau Empire to form their own territories. Incensed beyond measure, the Ethereal Supreme excommunicates Farsight from the Greater Good. He orders all imagery of the rebel to be destroyed and any who speak his name to be taken away for extensive questioning, often never to be seen again.*

**975.M41 The Huntress Awakens**
*Aun'Va releases O'Shaserra from stasis and tells her of Farsight's treachery and exile, setting her on a collision path with her ex-comrade.*

**997.M41 The Supreme Commander Speaks**
*During a speech that rallies the Tau Empire for the new phase of expansion, O'Shaserra destroys the statue of O'Shovah outside the Mont'yr Battle Dome with her fusion blasters. It is a symbolic gesture that none can ignore.*

**997.M41 Hidden Allies**
*An unexpected visitor arrives in the Farsight Enclaves; the Vision of Aun'Shi, a ship seemingly devoid of crew and earmarked for the imminent Third Sphere Expansion. After checking thoroughly for some sort of trap, the stasis holds are opened and a young Tau, Commander Torchstar, is found among the frozen passengers. She awakens and explains how some old friends and sympathizers still remain among the septs who illicitly arranged for the ship's course to be altered before launch. Secreted away in the cargo is a sizable collection of some of the Tau's newest, untested technological prototypes, including several XV104 Riptides and the blueprints and schematics for much more.*



**997.M41 The Jaws of the Kraken**
*The Tyranids of Hive Fleet Kraken penetrate the boundaries of the Farsight Enclaves. War is joined against the Tyranids on Vior'los, most populous of the enclave sept worlds. Commander Farsight comes out of exile in order to lead the defence, and sees that the Tau need heroes now more than ever before. Farsight's favoured Mont'ka tactics prove largely ineffective against the Tyranid hordes – their leader figures are so common as to render the strategy moot. The Earth caste scientist O'Vesa persuades Farsight to try Kauyon, the strategy of the Patient Hunter, and Farsight reluctantly agrees. Whilst defending an Earth caste research facility with seven of his most trusted commanders, Farsight buys O'Vesa enough time to develop a bio-toxin that kills the entire splinter fleet.*

**998.M41 The Revelation of Kauyon**
*In finally mastering the greater scope of Puretide's teachings, Commander Farsight acquires insight into the tactics of Shadowsun and Aun'Va. He meditates long on the fact that the entire Damocles Gulf war was in fact one giant application of Kauyon, drawing the Imperium into Tau space and then hitting it hard whilst it was overstretched. O'Shovah learns a new respect for Aun'Va, though he knows that the truth of the Ethereal's great plan must never be revealed to the populace.*

# THE EIGHT

**The Eight have become legend amongst the Farsight Enclaves, for they are warriors beyond compare. Led by O'Shovah himself, each of the battlesuit pilots in the unit is a veteran of dozens of battles. In the case of Commander Bravestorm and Farsight himself, they bring almost six hundred years of cumulative experience in the arts of war to an already potent assembly of warriors.**

### COMMANDER FARSIGHT

*Were it not for O'Shovah's boldness and faith in the Tau race, the elite battlesuit strike team known as the Eight would never have seen the battlefield.*

### COMMANDER ARRA'KON

*Born and trained on Vior'los, Commander Arra'kon was overall military commander of the Enclaves at the time of Farsight's return from the desert. His analytical mind and the advanced new support systems from the recently arrived* Vision of Aun'Shi *help him make the most of his extensive anti-infantry weapons suite.*

### COMMANDER BRAVESTORM

*The blackened, twisted creature that pilots this battlesuit has a comprehensive life-support suite. Incredibly, he is the same warrior whose self-sacrifice once saved Dal'ryu, though he is forever confined to his modified battlesuit.*

### COMMANDER SHA'VASTOS

*The first Tau to be fitted with a Puretide neurochip, Sha'vastos was saved from his subsequent lobotomisation by the intervention of Commander Farsight. His prototype neurochip suffered rapid degeneration after the battle, however, so Farsight had him secreted away in stasis until he could find a cure. Many decades later, O'Vesa was able to recalibrate the neurochip and reawaken the old warrior.*

### COMMANDER BRIGHTSWORD

*Though half a dozen generations separate the pilot inside this heavily scarred Crisis suit from the original Commander Brightsword, he has inherited all of that lineage's legendary ferocity, and like those before him, has pledged his life to the service of Farsight and the Enclaves.*

### SUB-COMMANDER TORCHSTAR

*The youngest of the Eight and a defector from the Tau Empire, Torchstar is an impetuous Vior'lan whose affinity with fire has seen her immolate hundreds of the Tau's foes.*

### SHAS'VRE OB'LOTAI 9-0

*The Broadside battlesuit known as Ob'lotai 9-0 is crewed not by a flesh and blood Tau, but by a late-generation mnemonic AI engram of the original Shas'vre Ob'lotai.*

### HONOUR-SHAS'VRE O'VESA

*O'Vesa is not in fact a shas'vre at all, but an old Earth caste colleague of Farsight's kept alive by microdrones of his own invention, and pilots a modified Riptide battlesuit.*



**COMMANDER FARSIGHT**

*XV8 Crisis battlesuit, plasma rifle, shield generator, the Dawn Blade.*

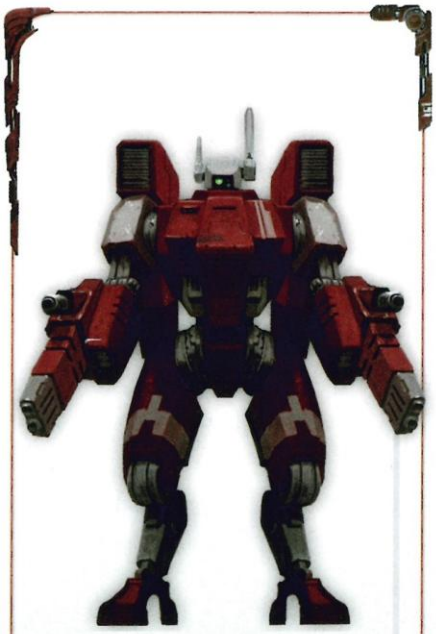


**O'VESA**

*Riptide Shas'vre with XV104 Riptide battlesuit, ion accelerator, twin-linked fusion blasters, riptide shield generator, early warning override, stimulant injector, two shielded missile drones, Earth Caste Pilot Array.*



**Commander Bravestorm**
*Commander with XV8-02 Crisis 'Iridium' Battlesuit, plasma rifle, flamer, stimulant injector, shield generator, two gun drones, Onager Gauntlet.*



**Commander Brightsword**
*Commander with XV8 Crisis battlesuit, twin-linked fusion blasters, advanced targeting system, stimulant injector, shield drone, Fusion Blades, Warscaper Drone.*



**Shas'O Sha'vastos**
*Commander with XV8 Crisis battlesuit, plasma rifle, flamer, shield generator, vectored retro-thrusters, two gun drones, Puretide Engram Neurochip.*



**Broadside Shas'vre Ob'lotai 9-O**
*Broadside Shas'vre with XV88 Broadside battlesuit, twin-linked high-yield missile pod, twin-linked smart missile system, velocity tracker, two missile drones, seeker missile, bonding knife ritual.*



**Shas'O Arra'kon**
*Commander with XV8-05 Crisis 'Enforcer' battlesuit, plasma rifle, cyclic ion blaster, airbursting fragmentation projector, counterfire defence system, two gun drones, Repulsor Impact Field.*



**Sub-commander Torchstar**
*Commander with XV8 Crisis battlesuit, two flamers, target lock, drone controller, two marker drones, Multi-Spectrum Sensor Suite, Neuroweb System Jammer*





# Unity and Glory



*O'Shovah typically wears deep red in memory of the blood spilt by Arkunasha's fallen heroes and in honour of his old home world, Vior'la. Many of the warriors from the Enclaves have also taken up this tradition, resulting in a striking force on the battlefield.*



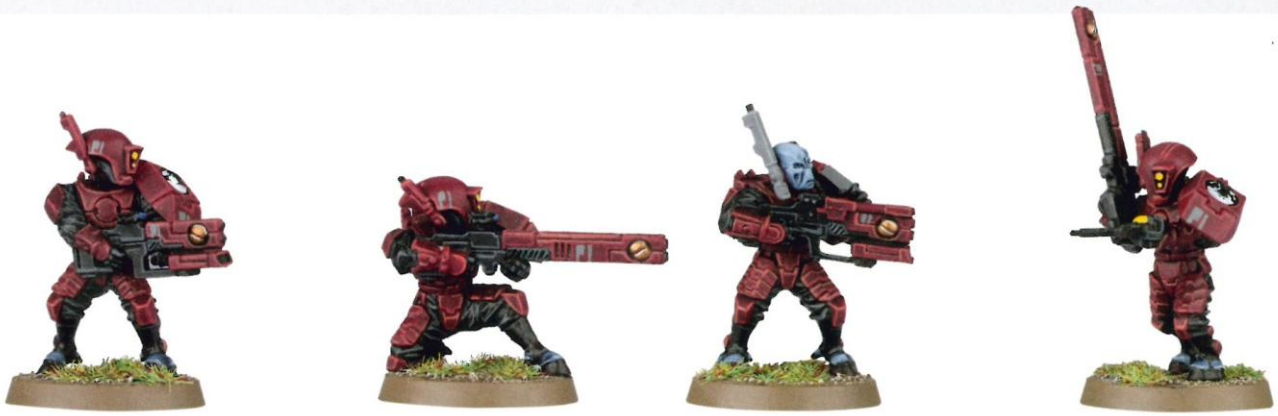
*Farsight's shield bears the personal sigil that he has adopted since Arthas Moloch.*



*The Dawn Blade, refitted for use by a battlesuit, has cut down numerous foes of the Enclaves.*



*Though of an earlier design, Farsight's battlesuit has been heavily modified.*



*Fire Warriors form the mainstay of any Farsight Enclaves army.*



*Pathfinders often set into motion the Mont'ka, or 'Killing Blow'.*



*These Fire Warriors fight for Farsight and bear his personal sigil on their shoulder pads.*



*Ob'lotai 9-0*







*Shas'O Sha'vastos*





*Commander Brightsword*





*Sub-Commander Torchstar*







# THE WAY OF WAR

**The Tau can outshoot just about any other army on the tabletop battlefields of Warhammer 40,000. Rather than talking about the static tactics of the gun line, however, these next pages look at how to get the most out of an army solely comprised of super-mobile battlesuits.**

The visual spectacle of an army of Tau battlesuits is really quite something. Imposing, high-tech and bristling with guns, each model is almost a small unit in its own right. Such armies will nearly always be outnumbered – even the most elite Space Marine army likely has more models than its battlesuited equivalent – but rarely outgunned. Not only that, but with a bit of planning and (you guessed it) foresight, the super-mobile nature of an army of Jet Pack Infantry allows you to stay one step ahead of your opponent.

One of the central tenets of the Farsight way of war is knowing the enemy, and taking the right weapon for the job. An army boasting dozens of plasma rifles is perfect for taking down small, elite forces, but will struggle against a horde of Tyranids or Orks. Likewise, burst cannons and flamers, though excellent against massed infantry, will be turned aside easily by power armour. Because of this, it is wise to have a variety of weapon loadouts in your battlesuit collection. Almost all armies will include a few vehicles, for example, so you can bet a few battlesuits with two fusion blasters will come in useful. It's a good idea to have a mix of weaponry – think of what you will likely be facing, and make sure you have the right unit in your collection to kill it.

Tau armies have an excellent variety of long-range weapons, but only a few Shooting phases to make the most of them – it is likely that your opponent will be trying to close the distance, and you should do your best to stay out of harm's reach. The better you are at this, the more turns you will get in which to whittle down your enemy. A Seismic Fibrillator Node can potentially earn you another Shooting phase if used in the early game, and by leaving yourself room to manoeuvre, you can draw out the shooting game until your opponent's army is ready to be broken in a single turn.

### IN THIS SECTION, YOU WILL FIND:

- **The Army of the Farsight Enclaves:** Alterations and additions to the rules given in *Codex: Tau Empire*, that will help you transform your collection of Citadel miniatures into a cadre of hardened Fire caste warriors from the Farsight Enclaves.
- **Cities of Death Stratagems:** New stratagems for a Farsight Enclaves army in games of Cities of Death.
- **Planetstrike Strategems:** Additional stratagems for use with a Farsight Enclaves army in games of Planetstrike.
- **Missions:** Five narrative missions to recreate some of Farsight's most famous battles, as well as three Altar of War missions to use against any foe.

The true glory of Farsight's favoured Killing Blow is leaping in for that devastating close range salvo that clinches the game. A wall of battlesuits jumps forward, letting fly with rapid-firing plasma rifles and fusion blasters until the enemy is nothing more than smoking ash. If you keep your units paired up so that there is always another close by, you can make the best use of the Supporting Fire special rule – anything that somehow survives your fusillade will likely be cut down by Overwatch fire if it tries to charge. If the dice are against you – well, at least you have a decent statline to fall back on. Be warned, though; as any Tau player will tell you, close combat is the last place you want to be!

Good firing discipline is essential for a shooting army. With the ability to pre-measure, you should never find yourself out of range – make sure that around half of your target unit is within your unit's reach and you should get a decent amount of hits. Then, once the Shooting phase is over, you can use your unit's jet packs to boost backwards or jump behind cover, denying your opponent the opportunity to get his revenge for as long as possible. The most important lesson to learn, though, is to concentrate your fire. Choose a target, shoot at it until it's good and dead, and then move onto another target – a smattering of kills here and there is unlikely to deal with the many threats you'll be facing.

Some Tau players like to keep their units in a central mass, concentrating their fire on the deadliest section of the enemy army before dividing down the middle and heading out to the left and right flanks. If the enemy chases down the group on the left, those on the right will be able to shoot with impunity or grab objectives for another few turns, and vice versa. Other players like to stick to a firebase, jumping out, shooting, and jumping back – if the enemy does somehow manage to charge, the Supporting Fire special rule affords them as much Overwatch as they need to destroy the threat. It's always worth having a few flamers around for just this reason; the Wall of Flame rule can tip a combat in your favour before it's even started, or even keep the chargers from reaching you altogether. You might include a Repulsor Field and/or Warscaper Drone too, forming another line of defence and stacking the odds further in your favour.

Markerlights are extremely valuable when firing so many high-strength guns; after all, you want to make sure all that quality is made to count. Units of Drones are a good place to look for markerlights, as they can easily keep pace with the battlesuits – they too have the ability to 'shoot and scoot'. If you get the hang of using these units in tandem, you should find their fluid style of play very rewarding. A unit of Gun Drones with a few Shield Drones at the front and a few Marker Drones at the back is a great utility unit with which to back up a battlesuit team, especially if it's joined by a battlesuit Commander with a drone controller – really getting your worth out of that high Ballistic Skill.

## THE KILLING BLOW

Keeping a distance and outmanoeuvring the foe in the Assault phase is all very well, but sometimes you'll feel the need to go for the killing strike. Commander Farsight's 'Through Boldness, Victory' ability is perfect for an aggressive play style, as it allows him and his unit to Deep Strike without scattering. This is a perfect way to place your fusion blasters in the rear arc of your opponent's most dangerous vehicle and reduce it to slag with the Melta special rule. Though the rewards are high, so are the risks – deep striking into the midst of the foe is a classic way of getting yourself charged in the next turn, so make sure that those enemy units near where you plan to land are whittled down or eradicated beforehand. If you do get charged, there are still ways to tip things in your favour – though he should avoid unfavourable challenges if possible, Farsight's Dawn Blade can destroy pretty much anything up to and including enemy Dreadnoughts, and a Commander model equipped with the Fusion Blades can be absolutely lethal if you make the most of the Precision Shots rule.

Deep Strike tactics are dramatic but dangerous, as there is a lot that can go wrong – a unit of Pathfinders with a homing beacon can also help, but if you hold too much of your army in reserve, you're missing out on valuable opportunities to shoot your opponent to smithereens in the early game. You might want to consider an Aegis Defence Line with a comms relay if you're keen on this boldest of tactics; otherwise a few bad Reserve rolls might well ruin your game plan.

## TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Knowing when to hold back, when to press your attack home and when to go for objectives is extremely important. If you're not counting two or even three turns of purely destroying your enemy before you start to move for the win, you'll find your games going south quickly. Likewise, wait too long, and the game might end whilst victory is still in the opponent's hands. Knowing when to launch the Mont'ka is not something that can be easily taught, because the circumstances will change with every game. Still, your battlesuit teams can potentially cover half the board in a single turn, if necessary – you should be able to grab those objectives in one fell swoop, and defend them to the last if the dice prove overly fickle.

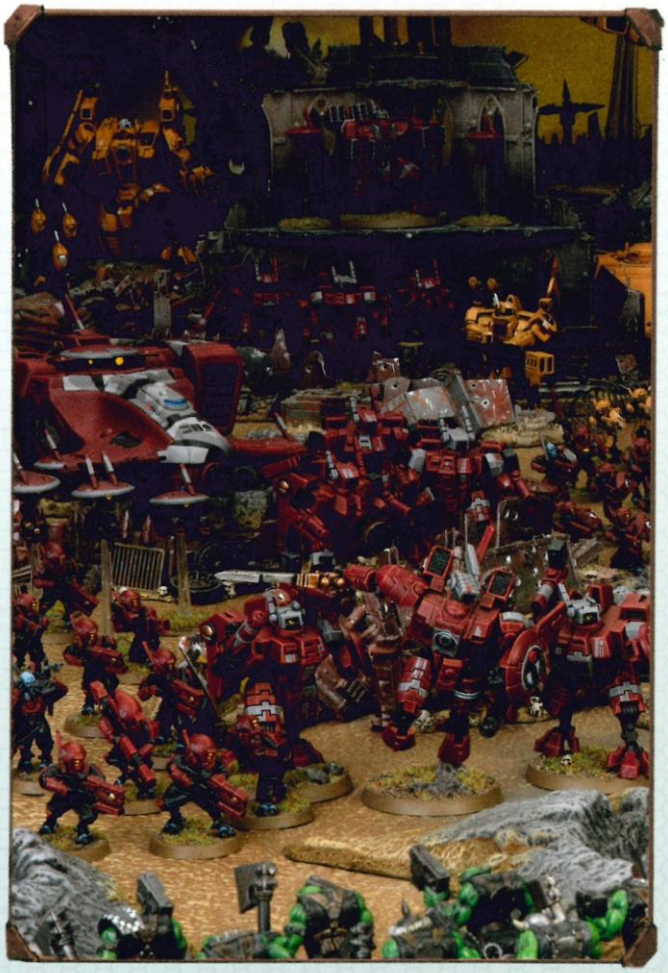
The support units that will be backing up your mobile Crisis battlesuits are amongst the most powerful in the game. It's a good idea to take a Broadside team or two – when equipped with heavy rail rifles and velocity trackers they can deal with enemy Flyers with ease. On the other hand, when given targeting arrays, they can even kill powerful enemy characters at range and potentially get you a Slay the Warlord Victory Point early in the game.

The Riptide, a relatively new addition to the arsenal of the Farsight Enclaves, is an excellent centrepiece for a battlesuit army, and it should be fully capable of fulfilling the role of the Hammerhead in a conventional Tau force. You might even want to make room for more than one of these massive beasties in your collection, because there's nothing they can't handle short of a Super-heavy tank. An Earth Caste Pilot Array can be a very useful upgrade if you fancy making the most of the Riptide's Nova Reactor rules or the dreaded ion accelerator. Such an upgraded monstrosity should avoid close combat at all costs – it'll struggle to hit even a basic Imperial Guardsman due to its terrible Weapon Skill, but it should more than make up for it in the Shooting phase.

## THE EIGHT

On the narrative side, it can be great fun fielding just Farsight's Commander Team, the Eight, by themselves. A collection of powerful battlesuit Commanders with a wide variety of wargear, it takes a fair bit of skill to make the most of them. Yet when it comes together, they can triumph against a whole army of enemies. There's just something about a group of selfless heroes with their own specialisations fighting against impossible odds – especially when they're piloting giant battlesuits that bristle with a plethora of futuristic weaponry!

The bottom line, of course, is that you should collect whatever appeals to you, and paint it whatever colour you like. The Farsight Enclaves boast a swathe of units that we haven't even begun to talk about, and almost any mix of colours and troops is a viable choice. It's hard to go wrong with thirty to forty Fire Warriors backing up your battlesuits, for instance, and a few Flyers really complement a lightning-fast style of play. To fully comprehend all of the strategies and tactics available would take a mind worthy of Puretide himself, so feel free to hone your Mont'ka at the exclusion of all else – this army is built for it. There will always be new challenges – just remember, the truly wise adapt...



# THE ARMY OF THE FARSIGHT ENCLAVES

**A Farsight Enclaves army is chosen using the army list presented in *Codex: Tau Empire*. It also has a series of supplemental rules (presented below) that can be used in addition to the material found in *Codex: Tau Empire*. Note that you can only use the options from one codex supplement when choosing your army.**

### BATTLESUIT SPEARHEAD

In a Farsight Enclaves army, all XV8 Crisis Teams are troops choices instead of elites choices. However, when choosing a Farsight Enclaves army, you must include at least one XV8 Crisis Team consists of three models (not including Drones).

### ORK HUNTERS

Units in a Farsight Enclaves army have the Preferred Enemy (Orks) special rule when making close combat attacks.

### TA'LISSERA BOND

Units in a Farsight Enclaves army that have the option to take the Bonding Knife Ritual special rule must do so.

### SIGNATURE SYSTEMS

Any character in your army that may select Signature Systems may not select from those listed in *Codex: Tau Empire*, but may instead select from the Signature Systems of the Farsight Enclaves (opposite), at the points cost shown. Note that XV104 Riptides in your army may select items from the Signature Systems of the Farsight Enclaves.

### FARSIGHT'S COMMANDER TEAM

When choosing a Farsight Enclaves army, you have access to a special unit called Farsight's Commander Team. If you choose to take this unit, Commander Farsight does not allow you to take an XV8 Crisis Bodyguard Team as normal; he has the Commander Team instead. This special unit is an HQ choice that does not take of a Force Organisation slot and consists of up to seven other battlesuits chosen from those listed on pages 38-39. They must be equipped exactly as described; the Signature Systems rule above does not apply to them. They can take no other options. Each of the Commander Team models is Unique and has the Independent Character special rule.

### DIVERGENT DESTINY

A Farsight Enclaves army cannot not include Aun'Va or Commander Shadowsun.

### ALLIES

In addition to following the Allies Matrix for *Codex: Tau Empire*, Farsight Enclaves detachments and *Codex: Tau Empire* detachments may ally together as Battle Brothers.

### FORGING A NARRATIVE

*Though these rules represent an army of the established Farsight Enclaves, where Ethereals are absent and unwelcome, you may wish to play an army from before O'Shovah's rebellion. If so, it is perfectly acceptable to include Ethereals (except Aun'Va), as Farsight had at least three Ethereal advisors when he first set out.*

## WARLORD TRAITS

When generating his Warlord Traits, a Farsight Enclaves Warlord may either roll on the Warlord Traits table in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook or on the table below.

**WARLORD TRAITS TABLE**

| D6 | WARLORD TRAIT |
|---|---|
| 1 | **The Way of the Short Blade:** *The hero has made it his life's work to study the Way of the Short Blade, Farsight's groundbreaking treatise on close quarters battlesuit combat.* The Warlord has Weapon Skill 5. If your Warlord is not equipped with a battlesuit, re-roll this result. |
| 2 | **Echoes of the Grand Master:** *Through the teachings of Farsight, a portion of Commander Puretide's genius will sometimes blossom in the most gifted students.* The Warlord has one of the following special rules (choose which one as soon as this Warlord Trait is rolled): Counter-attack, Furious Charge, Monster Hunter, Stubborn or Tank Hunter. |
| 3 | **The Way of the Broken Sword:** *Commander Farsight teaches that a foe whose cohesion has been broken apart is already half beaten.* One use only. Declare your Warlord is using this ability at the start of one of your opponent's turns. Your opponent has a -1 modifier to Reserve Rolls he makes this turn. |
| 4 | **The Fire Unquenchable:** *The spark of flame in every Fire Warrior's heart is fanned to a blaze in the presence of this legendary hero.* The Warlord has the Fearless special rule. All friendly units from *Codex: Tau Empire* within 6" of the Warlord have the Stubborn special rule. |
| 5 | **Countercrisis:** *Farsight knows well when to strike without hesitation, and he teaches his commanders the same.* XV8 Crisis Teams have a +1 modifier to their Reserve Rolls. |
| 6 | **Through Surety, Destruction:** *The commander has optimised a specific firing solution, drilling his unit in a set piece kill that exemplifies Farsight's favoured Mont'ka philosophy.* One use only. Declare your Warlord is using this ability at the start of one of your Shooting phases. For the duration of the phase, the Warlord and his unit have the Shred special rule. |

# Signature Systems of the Farsight Enclaves

**The Signature Systems used in the Farsight Enclaves are, if anything, even rarer than their equivalents in the Tau Empire at large. Only one of each Signature System may be taken per army.**

## The Mirrorcodex ..... 50 points

*After the Damocles Crusade, Farsight applied his genius to unravelling the Imperium's war doctrine, codifying the main tenets of both the Tactica Imperialis and the Codex Astartes. Farsight attempts the same with every alien species he encounters, incorporating what he learns into his Da'thle'vral, or 'Mirrorcodex'.*

If a model in your army has the Mirrorcodex, you add 1 to your dice roll when Seizing the Initiative. Furthermore, if a model in your army is bearing the Mirrorcodex, roll a D6 at the beginning of each of your turns and consults the table below. The effects listed affect the bearer and all friendly units within 6", and last until the end of the turn.

| D6 roll | Effect |
|---|---|
| 1-3 | None |
| 4 | Preferred Enemy (Space Marines) special rule |
| 5 | Preferred Enemy (Space Marines and Imperial Guard) special rule |
| 6 | Preferred Enemy (Everyone!) special rule |

## Seismic Fibrillator Node 45 points

*On his adopted home planet of Vior'los, O'Shovah bested the Ork Warlord Grog by turning the elements against him. Instrumental in these victories was the Seismic Fibrillator Node, an invention of Earth caste scientist O'Vesa. This disc-like device emits resonant frequencies of such power that they cause localised earth tremors. When used correctly, this tremor can be greatly magnified.*

One use only. A model with the Seismic Fibrillator Node may use it at the beginning of any turn. Roll a D6. On the roll of a 1, there is no effect. On a 2+, all open ground within 36" is treated as difficult terrain, and all difficult terrain is treated as dangerous terrain. Roll a D6 at the end of each turn in which the Node's effects are in play. On a 1-4, the Node's effects cease. On a 5+, the Node's effects continue for the duration of the next turn.

## Warscaper Drone ..... 35 points

*Farsight first mastered turning a planet's environment against his foes on the oxide planet of Arkunasha. Since then, he has never passed up an opportunity to use a world's topography and climate against the enemy. To achieve this, he sends out Warscaper Drones of his own invention before each major engagement. The drone's intelligence will augment the owner's own systems with detailed scans of the local environment, allowing him to draw the enemy into dangerous locations, without putting himself in harm's way.*

Nominate a drone purchased by the character from the Drones list – this is a Warscaper Drone in addition to its usual type. All models in the same unit as the Warscaper Drone has the Move Through Cover, Outflank and Acute Senses special rules. Furthermore, any enemy unit that is both outside of its deployment zone and within 12" of a Warscaper Drone treats difficult terrain as dangerous terrain.

## Fusion Blades ..... 30 points

*This peculiar but deadly innovation was created at the request of the third Commander Brightsword. They are, in appearance, heavily modified fusion blasters, but in truth, they are miracles of science. When the firing impulse is sustained, each weapon can fire a constant stream of energy that blazes from the muzzle of the gun like a blade of pure light. They consume an incredible amount of energy, however, and are prone to shorting out in the midst of battle.*

Commander with a twin-linked fusion blaster only. Replace one twin-linked fusion blaster's profile with the following:

| | Range | S | AP | Type |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Shooting | 18" | 8 | 1 | Assault 1, Melta, Twin-linked |
| Melee | - | 8 | 1 | Melee, Armourbane, Blind, Power Outage |

**Power Outage:** Roll a D6 at the end of every Assault phase in which the Fusion Blades used their Melee profile. On the roll of a 1, neither the Shooting nor Melee profile may be used for the rest of the game.

## Earth Caste Pilot Array ..... 30 points

*The squat, muscular physiology of the Earth caste makes them ill-fitting pilots for their famous battlesuits. In the Farsight Enclaves, however, it is not unheard of for a battlesuit to be built to accommodate an Earth caste pilot. The honour of donning the Hero's Mantle has been granted to very few such individuals, but an Earth caste pilot can judge a battlesuit's accuracy and energy tolerances far better than his Fire caste equivalent, even if his skill at close quarters leaves much to be desired.*

Models with battlesuits only. The model re-rolls all rolls of 1 To Hit in the Shooting phase, and may re-roll the dice when using a Nova Reactor. However, their Weapon Skill is 1.

## Talisman of Arthas Moloch ..... 25 points

*The artefact world of Arthas Moloch was little more than a devastated wasteland when the Farsight Expedition arrived. Yet they recovered a number of strange artefacts there, this hexagrammatic talisman among them. Farsight has seen first hand that the talisman protects the wearer and those around him from baleful energies, though neither he nor his advisors have the faintest idea of how it works.*

The Talisman of Arthas Moloch confers a 5+ invulnerable save. In addition, the bearer and all friendly units within 12" roll four D6 for their Deny the Witch rolls instead of one, taking the highest result.

# Cities of Death Stratagems

**These are additional stratagems for Cities of Death games. They can be used by your army if you are using the supplemental rules given in the Army of the Farsight Enclaves section (pg 50). To do so, simply add them to the list of available stratagems you can choose from.**

## Key Building Stratagems

### Improvised Research Facility

*Farsight's staunch allies in the Earth caste have set up their equipment in the heart of the battle zone. They have been working around the clock to unlock the secrets of the foe's wargear in order to give their comrades in the Hunter Cadres the best chance of victory. If the Fire caste can buy them enough time, their contribution just might tip the balance...*

Roll a D6 at the beginning of every game turn after the first. If the D6 result is lower than the current turn number, all friendly Tau units have the Preferred Enemy special rule for the rest of the game.



## Obstacles Stratagems

### Air Caste Skytrawlers

*The Air caste have coordinated their attacks to scour the skies, their sensors linked so that enemy craft can be tagged with markerlights and then taken down with ruthless efficiency by the drone-swarms in their wake.*

This obstacle is not placed on the board. Roll D3+3 before the game and make a note of the number – this is the number of Skytrawler points you have for this game. Up to two Skytrawler points may be expended at the beginning of each of your Shooting phases. For every point expended, you may place a markerlight token next to a single enemy unit with the Jetbike, Skimmer or Flyer unit type.

## Deployment Stratagems

### Magnorail Network

*The Tau have established a magnorail network in the city that enables them to get their ground troops to battle at great speed, allowing reinforcements to close in wherever they are needed most.*

Nominate D3 Infantry units before deployment. Those units have the Outflank special rule.



## Dirty Tricks Stratagems

### Selective EMP Pulse

*In truly desperate times, the Tau of the Farsight Enclaves have been known to occasionally make use of local energy sources to fuel a city-wide electromagnetic pulse. This temporarily shorts out the systems of any large-scale energy signatures across the whole of the city boundaries and beyond. This disruptive event effects all major mechanisms, regardless of whether they are friend or enemy.*

At the start of any friendly Shooting phase, you may roll a D6. On a 1, nothing happens. On a 2+, all vehicles on the table (friend or foe!) suffer a single automatic hit on their side armour with the following profile:

| Range | S | AP | Type |
|---|---|---|---|
| Infinite | 1 | - | Assault 1, Haywire |

### Kroot Stalker Squad

*Farsight's Kroot mercenaries stalk the ruins, hungry for the taste of flesh. Disguising themselves with the dust, ash and debris of the ruined cityscape, these violent hunters are almost impossible to detect until they spring their ambush.*

Roll a D3 at the beginning of each of your turns. If the result is equal to or less than the turn number, nominate a single city ruin on the table. That city ruin is both difficult and dangerous terrain for all enemy models, though this stratagem has no additional affect on friendly models.

### Monitor Drone scans

*Farsight has lead his foes to a specific site to spring the final deadly phase of his attack, the Mont'ka. The night before the battle erupts, however, he has ensured that every nook and cranny of the kill zone has been scanned by monitor drones, giving his Hunter Cadres vital information about the lay of the land before the killing begins.*

When a friendly unit makes a Difficult Terrain test or determines its charge range, it may re-roll the result.

### Total Eclipse

*Studying not only the topography of the city in which he plans to do battle, but also the phases of the celestial bodies above it, Farsight launches his attack to coincide with a lunar or solar eclipse that plunges the battlefield unexpectedly into darkness – of little consequence to warriors with blacksun filters, but a serious problem for low-tech foes.*

At the beginning of the game, choose a turn number and write it down in secret. At the beginning of the game turn that corresponds to that number, show your opponent the number you wrote down. The Night Fighting mission special rule immediately comes into effect (no need to roll). At the beginning of every subsequent game turn, roll a D6. On a 1-4, Night Fighting ceases to apply; on a 5+, it continues – this game turn also has the Night Fighting special rule.

# Planetstrike Stratagems

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

## ATTACK STRATAGEMS

**Plasma Barrage** **Stratagem Points: 2**
**When declared: Immediately before the firestorm**
*Though it costs a tremendous amount of energy, the Air caste of Tinek'la have perfected the art of entering low orbit and delivering a punishing barrage of plasma that incinerates the foe before Farsight's Fire caste launches their attack.*

Your firestorm attacks are AP2.

**The Gale of Fire** **Stratagem Points: 2**
**When declared: Immediately before the firestorm**
*Farsight's allies in the Air caste modify their aircraft's emissions to include a large amount of volatile fuel before boosting away from the site of battle. Farsight himself ignites the resultant cloud of gas, causing a bow wave of flame to roar across the skies and scorch the earth below.*

Instead of resolving a firestorm as described in *Planetstrike*, every enemy unit, building and gun emplacement on the table takes 2D3 automatic hits with the profile below, using Random Allocation. Vehicles are hit on their side armour.

| Range | S | AP | Type |
|---|---|---|---|
| N/A | 6 | 3 | N/A |



**Red Tsunami** **Stratagem Points: 3**
**When declared: Immediately before the firestorm**
*By placing batches of seismic fibrillator nodes on the fault lines of a nearby sea or ocean, Farsight triggers an underwater earthquake that sends a tidal wave crashing into the enemy fortifications immediately prior to the main attack.*

Before resolving the firestorm, every unit, building and gun emplacement on the table takes D6 automatic hits, using Random Allocation, with the profile below. Vehicles are hit on their side armour.

| Range | S | AP | Type |
|---|---|---|---|
| N/A | 2D6 | - | Tidal Wave |

**Tidal Wave:** If this attack causes one or more rolls on a damage table, you may re-roll the results. If the Strength rolled is 11 or 12, treat it as Strength 10 instead.



**Mont'ka Strike** **Stratagem Points: 1**
**When declared: At the beginning of any of your turns**
*The Tau practice of Mont'ka is well known across the Empire, though Farsight is without doubt the one who understands it best. By rehearsing the exact manoeuvres they intend to use and picking the optimum time to strike, Farsight's cadres can deliver a simultaneous attack that tears the heart out of the enemy force in one fell swoop.*

For the course of the turn in which this stratagem is used, you may re-roll each of your unsuccessful Reserve Rolls. Furthermore, you may re-roll the scatter dice for each unit that Deep Strikes into play this turn.

**Kill Zone** **Stratagem Points: 1**
**When declared: At the beginning of any of your Shooting phases**
*The extensive plans laid down for the coordination of the Fire caste's efforts come together in a single moment of time, at a single location – woe betide any enemy forces that are caught in the kill zone when Farsight gives the command to strike...*

When this stratagem is used, nominate a single point on the board and place a marker there. For the duration of this Shooting phase, any Shooting attack that targets an enemy unit within 8" of the nominated point has the Twin-linked special rule.

## DEFENCE STRATAGEMS

**Second-guess** **Stratagem Points: 1**
**When declared: At the beginning of any of the enemy's Shooting phases**
*Farsight is a master at preempting his foes. Meditating extensively before every battle, O'Shovah often knows how and when the enemy will strike before they know themselves. He briefs his forces accordingly, and then the destruction begins.*

In the turn this stratagem is used, all friendly Tau units on the battlefield have the Stealth special rule. Furthermore, for every unit your opponent brings into play from Reserve this turn, place a marker by the side of the board. In your subsequent turns, you may expend these markers to re-roll failed Reserve Rolls on a one-for-one basis.

**Aggressive Defence** **Stratagem Points: 2**
**When declared: At the beginning of any of the enemy's Assault phases**
*The warriors of Farsight's cadres are taught to punch into the enemy with a determined fusillade of fire whenever their positions are threatened, tearing the enemy's charge asunder in a welter of pulse fire and plasma bursts.*

When this stratagem is used, all friendly Farsight Enclaves or Tau Empire units on the battlefield re-roll failed Overwatch rolls for the duration of the phase.

# ALTAR OF WAR:
# FARSIGHT ENCLAVES

## INTRODUCTION

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

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

## STRATEGY

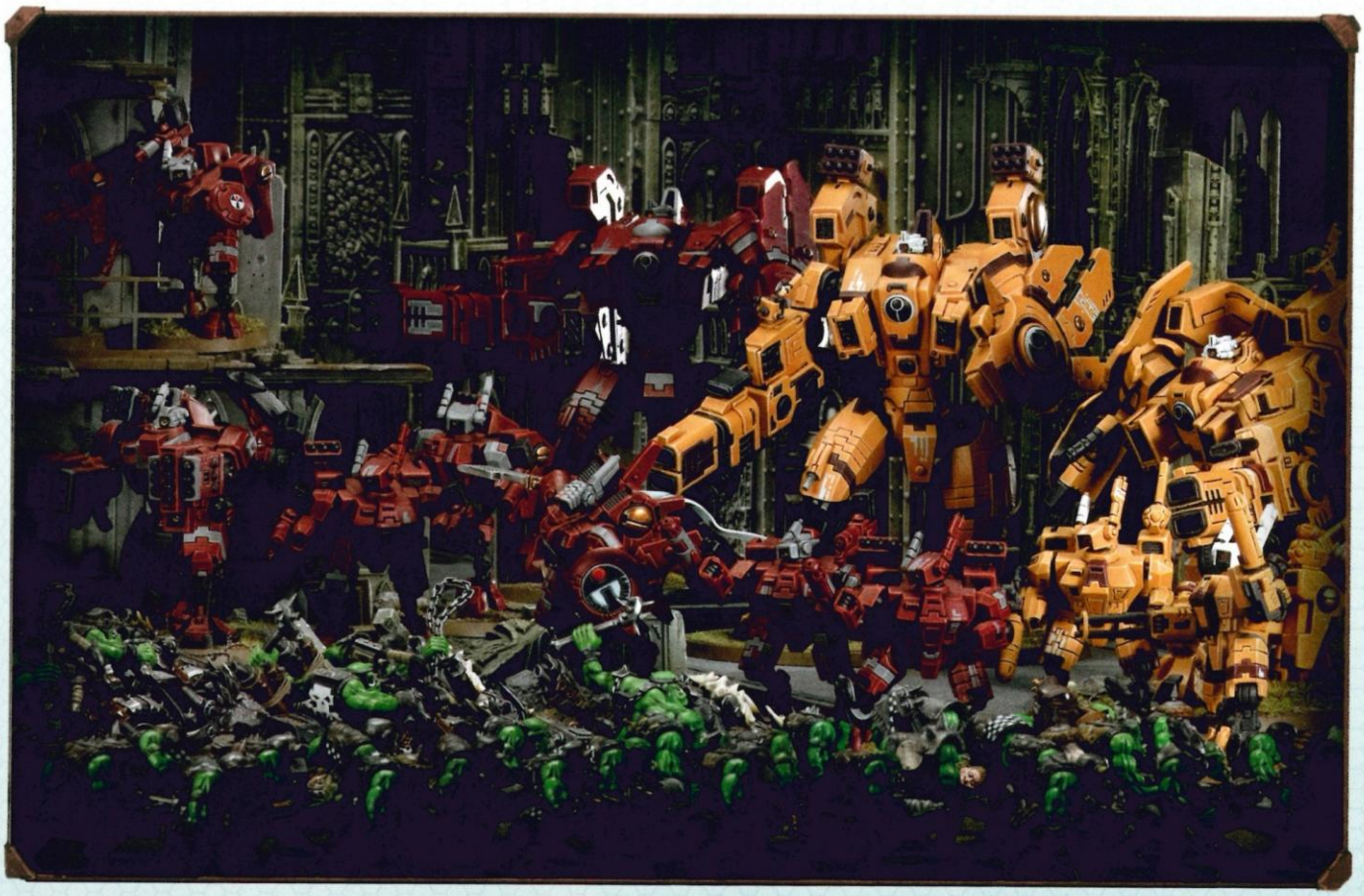
Different armies use different strategies when they go to war, which affects the types of battle that they fight. The Eldar, for example, are highly mobile, specialised and precise, and rely on the guidance of their Farseers to strike the enemy at exactly the right place and time to ensure a swift victory. Meanwhile, Imperial Guard regiments are immense, heavily armed formations that are perfect for grinding down an opponent in a war of attrition or defending a position in a prolonged campaign.

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

## TACTICS

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

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



## A GALAXY'S WORTH OF CHALLENGES

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

## HOW TO USE ALTAR OF WAR MISSIONS

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

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

## THE MISSION

If either you or your opponent wish to use an Altar of War mission, then you must make a roll-off at the start of The Mission step of Fighting A Battle (as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

The winner of the roll-off can choose to either roll on the Eternal War mission table, or instead roll on the Altar of War mission table for their army. Other supplements also have new types of mission tables, and the winner of the dice roll-off could choose to roll on one of those, if they prefer and are allowed to do so. These rolls will determine which mission is used for the battle. Note that each set of Altar of War missions is linked to an army chosen from a specific codex; in order to use Altar of War missions, an army chosen from the appropriate codex must be the primary detachment. In the case of *Altar of War: Farsight Enclaves*, the missions are linked to armies chosen from *Codex: Tau Empire*, using the additional rules found elsewhere in this book.

For example, Phil and Simon have arranged to play a game of Warhammer 40,000. Phil has brought along his Farsight Enclaves army and this book, while Simon is using his Space Wolves and has Eternal War missions from the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. They roll-off and Phil wins. He decides to roll on the Farsight Mission table in this book. If Simon had won, he would have rolled on the Eternal War Mission table.

## ALTAR OF WAR: FARSIGHT ENCLAVES MISSION TABLE

| D6 | Mission |
|---|---|
| 1-2 | Or'es Mont'ka |
| 3-4 | Way of the Broken Sword |
| 5-6 | Way of the Short Blade |

### The Battlefield

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



### The Enemy

The player that won the roll-off and rolled on the Altar of War Mission table is known as 'the Farsight Enclaves player' in the rules and missions that follow, and their opponent is 'the enemy player'. Note that the player that loses the roll-off counts as 'the enemy' for the purposes of an Altar of War mission, even if they have a Farsight Enclaves army too.

### Reserves

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

### Carry On As Normal

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

## SELECTED MISSIONS

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

### Echoes of War

After the Altar of War missions, you will find a selection of Echoes of War missions, which represent key historical battles inspired by the violent struggles within the history of the Farsight Enclaves. The Armies section of each of these missions provides guidance on the forces present so that you can replay the pivotal events using the armies, characters and war machines described in this book. Similarly, each Echoes of War mission includes a map that depicts the battlefield on which these vital conflicts were fought.

For those with a mind for historical accuracy, you'll notice certain restrictions and rules that we use to replicate the conditions of the battle in question. Whilst the Echoes of War missions have been inspired by specific events, with a little imagination they can easily be repurposed to recreate battles of your own invention. As such, if you choose to go this route, you can modify these missions using any combination of forces and terrain you have in your collection.

ALTAR OF WAR:

# OR'ES MONT'KA

'To strike! That is the distillation of purpose into a single perfect moment. Be the first to strike.'

**The Fire caste practise two stratagems above all others – the Kauyon, which draws the prey to the Patient Hunter, and the Mont'ka, the technique of the Killing Blow. This latter tenet revolves around the painstaking preparation of a single devastating attack, launched when the course of the war hangs in the balance. The Fire caste will practice long and hard for the final blow that will clinch victory for their warriors, often rehearsing the same series of manoeuvres and fire solutions for days until their forward observers – typically a team of Pathfinders – inform them that now is the time to strike.**

**When all of the elements are in place, and the enemy army has over-stretched itself, down comes the Killing Blow to sever the head of the foe and end its threat for good. Once the command is given, Fire Warrior Teams hasten to the battle site in squadrons of Devilfish, Crisis Teams drop down from the skies above with all guns blazing, and the sky fills with the contrails of Air caste fighters as the final ambush is launched. Though the plasma bolts, missiles and fusion blasts of the Mont'ka are likely to tear out the enemy army's throat, it is the carefully-honed precision of the Fire caste's synchronised attack that is the most formidable weapon of all.**

## THE ARMIES

Choose armies as described in the Fighting a Battle section of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. The Farsight Enclaves player must choose a primary detachment from *Codex: Tau Empire* using the extra rules presented in this book.

## THE BATTLEFIELD

Use the deployment map included in this mission. The players roll-off and the winner of the roll-off decides which half of the table they will deploy in. The opposing player deploys in the opposite half. Then, set up terrain as described in the Fighting a Battle section of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

### Objectives

No objective markers are placed; the goal in this mission is to cause as much damage to the enemy army in as short a time as possible (see victory conditions).

## DEPLOYMENT

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

The enemy player deploys first, anywhere in their half of the table that is more than 9" from the centre line of the table. The Farsight Enclaves player then does likewise.

## FIRST TURN

Roll a D6. On a 2+, the Farsight Enclaves player goes first. On a roll of 1, the enemy player goes first.

## GAME LENGTH

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

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Farsight Enclaves player wins if, at the end of the game, he has completely destroyed a number of enemy units that is equal to or higher than the number of game turns that have taken place in the game. If not, his opponent wins instead.

## MISSION SPECIAL RULES

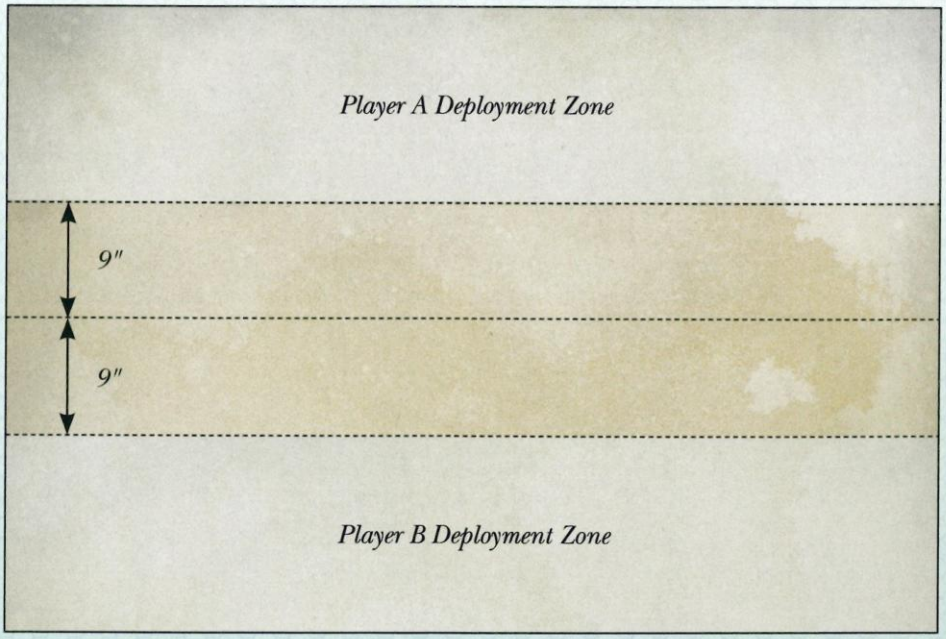
**Practice Makes Perfect:** The Farsight Enclaves player may re-roll any Reserve rolls he makes, whether they are passed or failed. In addition, when the Farsight Enclaves player deep strikes a unit, he may re-roll the scatter dice. Lastly, all units in the Farsight Enclaves army have the Acute Senses special rule.

**Precision of the Hunter:** Character models in the Farsight Enclaves player's army make Precision Shots on rolls of 5+.

**Reserves:** The Farsight Enclaves player may place any number of units in reserve. (Remember, though, that a player automatically loses if they have no models on the battlefield at the end of any game turn.)






Player A Deployment Zone
9"
9"
Player B Deployment Zone

ALTAR OF WAR:

# WAY OF THE BROKEN SWORD

'An enemy that stands divided is an enemy easily conquered.'

**Commander Farsight learned early in his training that to break the cohesion of an enemy force is to rob it of strength. Just as the Tau Empire seek to thrive through unity, O'Shovah and his commanders seek to deny their foes the opportunity to do the same. Their pinpoint attacks reduce the enemy command structure to tatters, ensuring that their troops are scattered across a war zone and unable to support each other. Whilst confusion and fear reign amongst their prey, the Hunter Cadres will close in, administering a series of lightning-fast strikes that neutralise or destroy the independent elements of the foe.**

**The Tau of the Farsight Enclaves call this technique the Way of the Broken Sword. This is a reference to the military council at the beginning of the Arkunasha war in which, when asked about his strategy for engaging and defeating the greenskin threat, Farsight took down a ritual sword and broke its blade in two. Even though the Fire caste have a saying that 'a broken blade can still cut', the accuracy and efficacy with which it can do so is greatly reduced, allowing the Tau to strike the killing blow in the meantime.**

## THE ARMIES

Choose armies as described in the Fighting a Battle section of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. The Farsight Enclaves player must choose a primary detachment from *Codex: Tau Empire* using the extra rules presented in this book.



## THE BATTLEFIELD

Use the deployment map included in this mission. Each player rolls a D6, re-rolling ties. Whoever scores higher decides which half of the table they will deploy in. The opposing player deploys in the opposite half. Then, set up terrain as described in the Fighting a Battle section of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

### Objectives

No objective markers are placed; for the Farsight Enclaves player, the objective of this mission is to break the cohesion of his enemy's battle line (see victory conditions). For his opponent, the objective of this mission is to ensure his units are in a coherent battle line when the game ends.

## DEPLOYMENT

Before any models are deployed, the enemy player should roll to determine their Warlord Trait.

The enemy player deploys first, anywhere in their half of the table that is more than 12" from the centre line of the table. The Farsight Enclaves player then does likewise.

## FIRST TURN

Roll-off; the winner of the roll-off may choose to go first or second.

## GAME LENGTH

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

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

The player with the most Victory Points at the end of the game is the winner. If both players have the same number of Victory Points, the game is a draw.

### Primary Objective

At the end of the game, each player receives 1 Victory Point for each enemy unit that has been completely destroyed. In addition, at the end of the game, the Tau player rolls D6+6. The result is the Cohesion Distance (in inches).

For every unit left in play in the enemy army that is within Cohesion Distance to another unit in the same army, the enemy player gets 1 Victory Point. For every unit left in play in the enemy army that is not within Cohesion Distance to another unit in the same army, the Farsight Enclaves player gets 1 Victory Point.

### Secondary Objectives

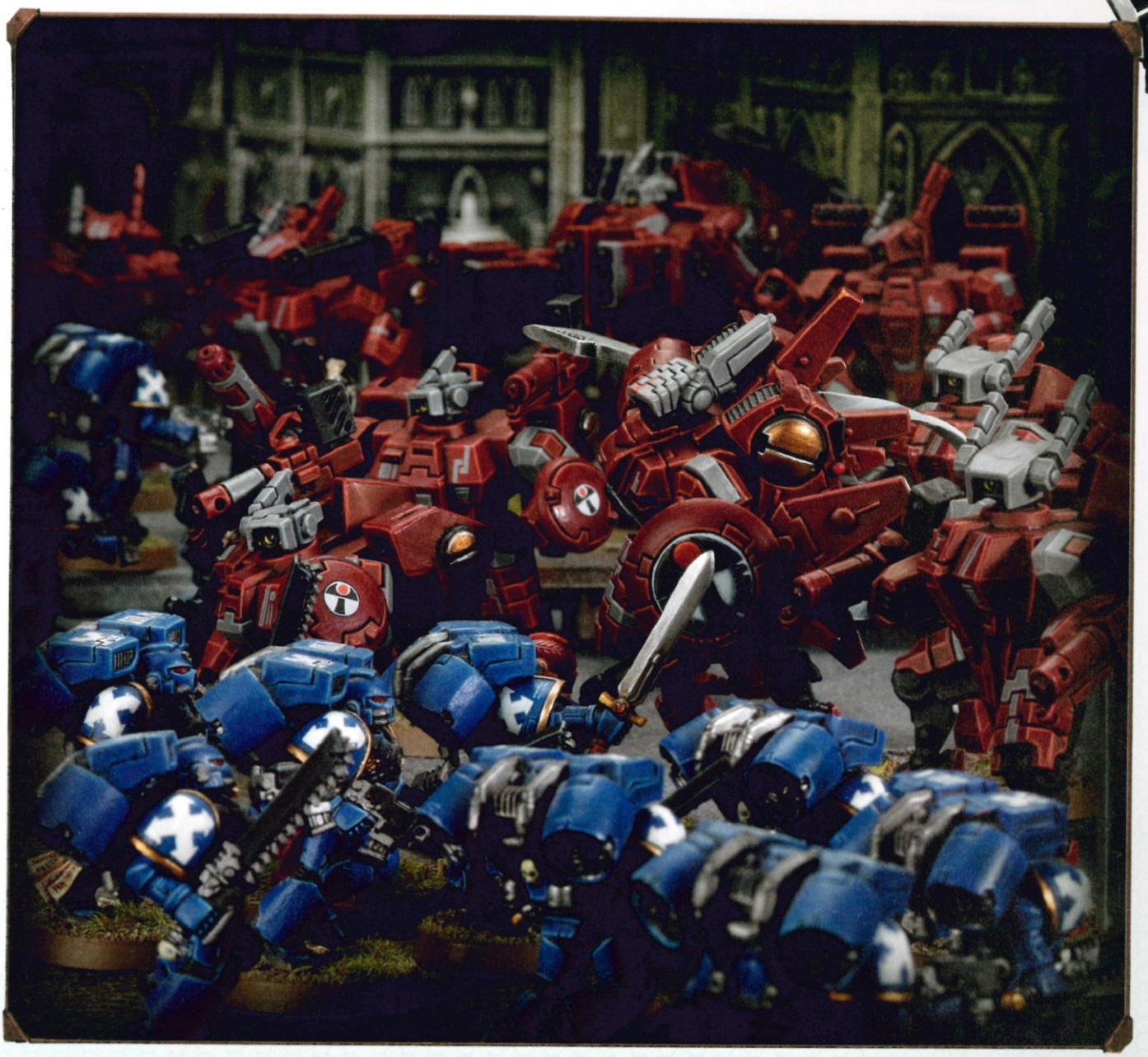
**Slay the Warlord, First Blood, Linebreaker.**

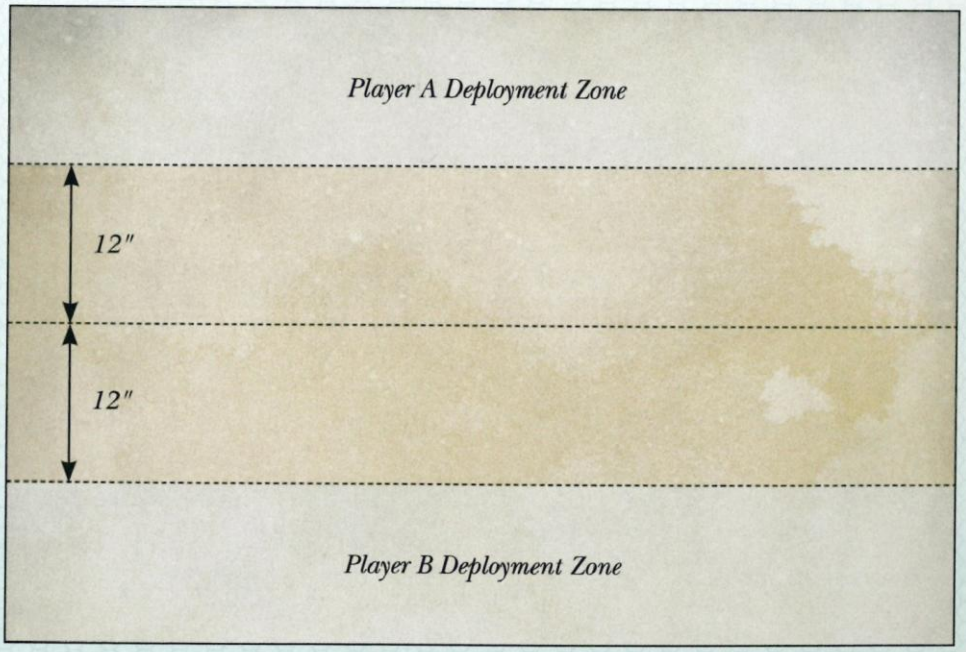
## MISSION SPECIAL RULES

**Confusion as a Weapon:** Enemy units within 12" of a unit from the Farsight Enclaves army that entered play in the previous player turn must use their lowest Leadership value, not their highest.

**Way of the Broken Sword:** If the Farsight Enclaves player is not using a model with a specific Warlord Trait as his Warlord, his Warlord automatically has the Way of the Broken Sword Warlord Trait.

**Reserves:** Both players may place any number of units in reserve. (Remember, though, that a player automatically loses if they have no models on the battlefield at the end of any game turn.)




Player A Deployment Zone
12"
12"
Player B Deployment Zone

ALTAR OF WAR:

# WAY OF THE SHORT BLADE

**'Learn to shorten your reach! If your foe can come close enough to negate your striking power, all stratagem is lost; and when all stratagem is lost, the battle is lost.'**

**Uniquely amongst his peers in the Fire caste, Commander Farsight places great importance upon the mastery of close-quarters warfare. This is a direct result of his long and bloody wars against the Orks, where he had little choice but to learn how to fight both at close range and even in hand to hand combat – a form of military engagement avoided by the Tau Empire at large. Yet O'Shovah believes that if a Tau warrior learns the arts of close quarters warfare as well as long range slaughter, he will become a true master of the military arts.**

**In learning how to overcome the foe in close quarters, and in broadcasting the footage of such a feat, O'Shovah gave his forces a potent morale boost – a triumph of the spirit for a race that traditionally fears melee combat. He realised that after receiving the right training and being inspired by the right words, the Fire caste would have discipline and courage enough to defeat the brutish thugs of the savage races where they were strongest. In the process, their self-belief would be rekindled, and their morale would become all but unshakeable for the rest of the war.**

## THE ARMIES

Choose armies as described in the Fighting a Battle section of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. The Farsight Enclaves player must choose a primary detachment from *Codex: Tau Empire* using the extra rules presented in this book.

## THE BATTLEFIELD

Use the deployment map included in this mission. Each player rolls a D6, re-rolling ties. Whoever scores higher decides which half of the table they will deploy in. The opposing player deploys in the opposite half. Then, set up terrain as described in the Fighting a Battle section of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

### Objectives

No objective markers are placed; the Farsight Enclaves player's goal in this mission is to kill as many enemy units in close combat as possible (see victory conditions).



## DEPLOYMENT

The enemy player deploys first, anywhere in their half of the table that is more than 9" from the centre line of the table. The Tau player then does likewise.

## FIRST TURN

The Farsight Enclaves player goes first unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)

## GAME LENGTH

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

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

Each player must keep a tally of the number of units they cause to be removed from play during any Assault phase. This also includes units removed from play because of Overwatch fire. The Farsight Enclaves player wins if his tally equals more than half of his opponent's tally. If not, his opponent wins instead.

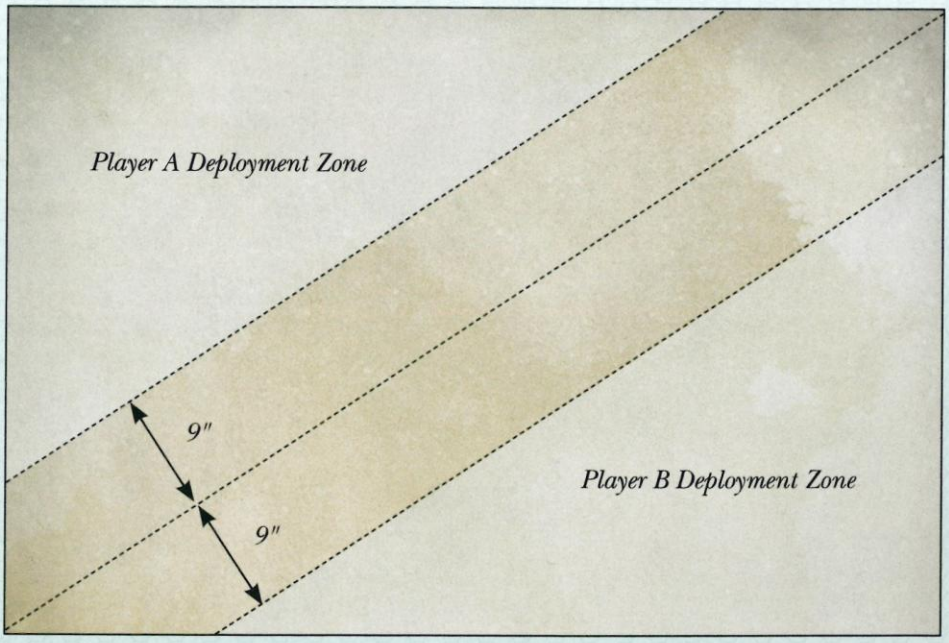
## MISSION SPECIAL RULES

**Way of the Short Blade:** All units in the Farsight Enclaves player's army have +1 Weapon Skill in this mission. Furthermore, if the Farsight Enclaves player is not using a model with a specific Warlord Trait as his Warlord, his Warlord automatically has the Way of the Short Blade Warlord Trait.

**Inspiring Speech:** All Tau infantry units have the Stubborn special rule. Roll a D6 at the end of each of the Farsight Enclave player's turns. If the result is less than the number of Tau units that have been removed from play in the game so far, the Inspiring Speech rule ceases to apply.

**Reserves:** Both players may place any number of units in reserve. (Remember, though, that a player automatically loses if they have no models on the battlefield at the end of any game turn.)




Player A Deployment Zone
9"
9"
Player B Deployment Zone

## ECHOES OF WAR:

# BLOOD IN THE RED DESERT

**The brilliant tactician who will earn the name Farsight must free the oxide deserts of Arkunasha from the Orks infesting it. Ten years of war unfold as each side learns to adapt to the hostile red storms and rust devils that haunt Arkunasha's chasms, engaging the foe whilst living tornadoes of particulate iron whip around them. Though the Tau have unrivalled mobility and a fierce aggression, the desert storms hide the Orks until they can enact their bloody revenge. The fate of the planet hangs in the balance with every battle as Tau ingenuity is matched against the sheer ferocity of the greenskins.**

### THE ARMIES

One player commands Farsight's army, chosen from *Codex: Tau Empire* and using the additional rules in this volume. The other commands an Ork army from Waaagh! Dok, chosen from *Codex: Orks*. Both players select forces to an agreed points limit. The Farsight Enclaves player must include Commander Farsight as the Warlord of his army. The Ork player must include a Warboss (to represent one of Painboss Toofjaw's lieutenants) as the Warlord of his army.

### THE BATTLEFIELD

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

#### Place Primary Objectives

After setting up the terrain, the players take it in turns to place a total of four Primary Objectives (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook). No objective may be placed further than 18" from one of the short table edges.

### DEPLOYMENT

The Ork player must first determine his Warlord Trait. He then deploys first and the Farsight Enclaves player deploys second, using the rules from the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook and the deployment map opposite. Any unit that cannot be deployed starts the game in reserve.

### FIRST TURN

The Ork player goes first unless the Farsight Enclaves player can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

### GAME LENGTH

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

### VICTORY CONDITIONS

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

#### Primary Objective

At the end of the game, each Primary Objective is worth 2 Victory Points to the player that captures it. In addition, the Farsight Enclaves player scores 1 Victory Point for each enemy character they have killed. Lastly, each side scores 1 Victory Point for each enemy unit that is removed from play in the Assault phase (keep a note of these tallies).

#### Secondary Objectives

**Slay the Warlord, First Blood, Linebreaker*.**

* In this mission, the Ork player scores 1 Victory Point for each of his scoring or denial units that end the game with at least one of their models in the Farsight Enclaves deployment zone. Units that are falling back or have gone to ground do not count.

### MISSION SPECIAL RULES

**Night Fighting*, Reserves.**

**The Book Unwritten:** The Ork Hunters special rule does not apply in this mission.

***The Red Storm:** The Night Fighting mission special rule automatically applies during the first game turn, with no need to roll. At the end of every game turn in which Night Fighting is in play, roll a D6. On the roll of a 1-5, Night Fighting continues to apply in the next game turn; on a roll of a 6, it is no longer in play for the rest of the game.

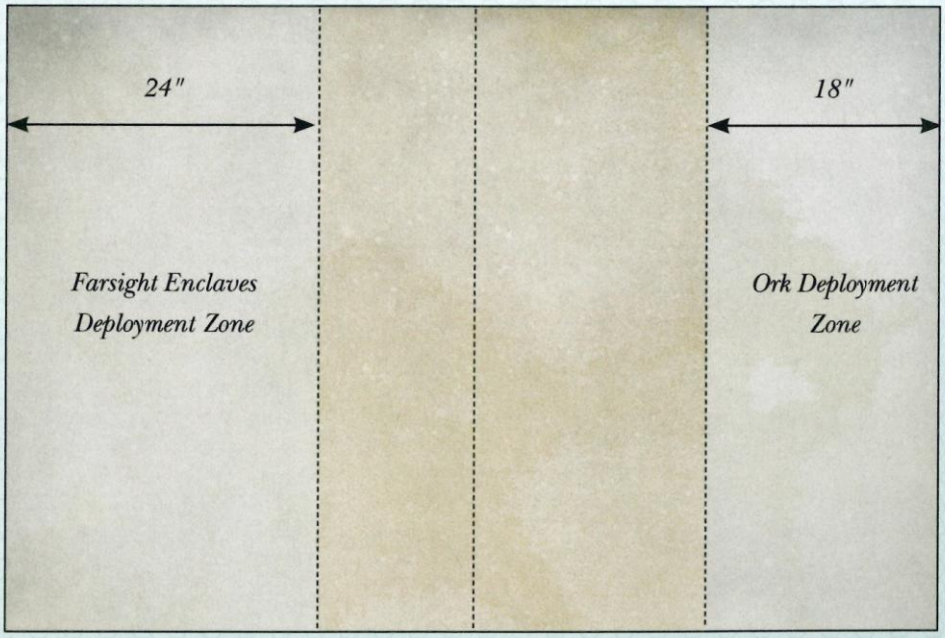
The Night Vision special rule does not ignore the effects of this version of the Night Fighting mission special rule.

**Revelations yet to Come:** Farsight's Dawn Blade is replaced by a master-crafted fusion blaster. Furthermore, the Talisman of Arthas Moloch and the Mirrorcodex (pg 51) may not be chosen by any models in this mission, and Farsight's Commander Team (pg 50) may not be used in this mission.

**Rust Devils:** At the beginning of any turn in which the Night Fighting mission special rule is in play, the player whose turn it is rolls a D6. On the roll of a 1-3, nothing happens; on the roll of a 4+, they may place a large blast marker anywhere within 12" of a table edge that is not closer than 1" to model or piece of terrain; this marker is a rust devil. It is treated as impassible terrain and blocks line of sight.

At the beginning of each turn, the player whose turn it is must scatter any rust devil markers in play 2D6" – if a Hit! is rolled, the marker must be moved towards the nearest unit (friend or foe) by the shortest possible route. If the movement does not cause the rust devil to come into contact with any units, it remains in play. If this movement causes a rust devil marker to touch a piece of terrain and/or one or more units, it stops as soon as it is in base contact. Any unit touched by a rust devil marker immediately suffers 2D6 Strength 9 AP- hits that use Random Allocation. Once these hits have been resolved, remove the rust devil marker. Vehicles resolve these hits against their side armour.




24"
18"
Farsight Enclaves Deployment Zone
Ork Deployment Zone

ECHOES OF WAR:

# THE BATTLE FOR DAL'YTH

**Aun'Va's campaign to colonise the planets on the other side of the Damocles Gulf has led the Imperium to retaliate with spectacular force. A battle group of Imperial warships have translated from the Warp into the heart of the Tau Empire, hammering their way past militarized colonies and orbital stations to make planetfall upon the core sept world of Dal'yth. Across the planet, Farsight and O'Shaserra mount a series of cunning retaliatory strikes upon the massed ground forces of the Imperial Guard and the Space Marine insertion forces that bolster them.**

## THE ARMIES

One player commands Farsight's army, chosen from *Codex: Tau Empire* and using the additional rules in this volume. The other commands a Space Marines army chosen from *Codex: Space Marines*. Both players select forces to an agreed points limit. The Farsight Enclaves player must include Commander Farsight as the Warlord of his army. The Space Marines army cannot include any fortifications.

## THE BATTLEFIELD

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

## PLACE PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

After setting up the terrain, the sides take it in turns to place a total of D3+2 Primary Objectives (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

## DEPLOYMENT

The Space Marines player must first determine their Warlord Trait. They then deploy first and the Farsight Enclaves player deploys second, using the rules from the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook and the deployment map opposite. Any unit that cannot be deployed starts the game in reserve.

## FIRST TURN

The Farsight Enclaves player goes first unless the Space Marines player can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

## GAME LENGTH

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

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

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

### Primary Objectives

At the end of the game, each Primary Objective is worth 5 Victory Points to the Space Marines player and 1 Victory Point to the Farsight Enclaves player. In addition, at the end of the game, the Space Marines player receives 1 Victory Point for each of the Farsight Enclaves player's units that has been completely destroyed, and the Farsight Enclaves player receives 2 Victory Points for each of the Space Marines player's units that has been completely destroyed. Units that are falling back or are not on the board at the end of the game, count as destroyed for the purposes of this mission. A unit that is removed from play and then re-enters play because of the Imperial Behemoth special rule (below) awards the Farsight Enclaves player 2 Victory Points every time it is removed from play (but not when it is In Transit – see below). Remember to keep track as the game progresses.

### Secondary Objectives

**Slay the Warlord, First Blood.**

## MISSION SPECIAL RULES

**Reserves, Revelations yet to Come** (pg 62).

**High-yield EMP:** Once per game, at the beginning of any game turn, the Farsight Enclaves player can activate a High-yield EMP; roll a D6. On a 1, nothing happens. On a 2+, all vehicles on the table (friend or foe!) suffer a single automatic hit on their side armour with the following profile:

| Range | S | AP | Type |
|---|---|---|---|
| Infinite | 1 | - | Assault 1, Haywire |

**The Imperial Behemoth:** If a Troops or Heavy Support unit in the Space Marines army is removed from play, place it to one side – that unit (or rather an identical reinforcement unit) is now In Transit. At the end of the subsequent Space Marines turn, all units In Transit move into Ongoing Reserves.

**Rapid Reaction:** At least half of the Farsight units must begin the game in Reserve. However, the Farsight Enclaves player may re-roll their Reserve rolls, and all Farsight Enclaves infantry units have the Outflank special rule.

### FORGING A NARRATIVE

*This game is also great to play with four players! In addition to the forces listed, a third player commands an army chosen from* Codex: Tau Empire *with Commander Shadowsun as its Warlord. This player forms a team with the player using Commander Farsight. The fourth player commands an army chosen from* Codex: Imperial Guard, *and forms a team with the player using the Space Marines army. Both additional players select forces to an agreed points limit. In this case, just replace 'Farsight Enclaves player' and 'Space Marines player' with 'Tau team' and 'Imperial team' in the mission's rules.*




12"
Farsight Enclaves Deployment Zone
12"
12"
Space Marine Deployment Zone
12"

ECHOES OF WAR:

# THE WAR OF DAKKA

**Though Commander Farsight had learnt much about the greenskin psyche on Arkunasha, he encountered an Ork warboss of remarkable cunning after his reconquest of the Damocles Gulf. Diverting almost all of his resources into capturing the alien warlord, Farsight pursued his foe to the colonized world of Atari Vo. The resultant war saw the commander's anger get the better of his intellect, for Warchief Grog's asteroid base had crashed into the planet's capital city, and O'Shovah could not stand to see so many of his people die. Before the end, he had been outmanoeuvred, outgunned and even outguessed by his nemesis; ambushed at the crater that was all that remained of Tau'rota'sha, he barely escaped with his life.**

## THE ARMIES

One player commands Farsight's army, chosen from *Codex: Tau Empire* and using the additional rules in this volume; Commander Farsight must be their Warlord. The other player commands an Ork army from Waaagh! Grog, chosen from *Codex: Orks*. Both players select forces to an agreed points limit. The Ork player must include a Warboss (to represent Grog himself) as the Warlord of his army, at least one unit of Flash Gitz led by Kaptin Badrukk, and at least two other units of Lootas and/or Flash Gitz (in any combination). The Ork player may not include any fortifications in their army.

## THE BATTLEFIELD

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

## DEPLOYMENT

The Ork player must first determine his Warlord Trait. He then deploys up to half of his army first and keeps the rest in Reserve. The Farsight Enclaves player deploys second, using the rules from the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook and the deployment map opposite. He may not keep any units in reserve, apart from Flyers.

## FIRST TURN

The Ork player goes first unless the Farsight Enclaves player can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

## GAME LENGTH

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

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

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

### Primary Objective

The Farsight Enclaves player gets D3 Victory Points for each of his units that voluntarily leaves the board by the Ork table edge (see Entrapment and Escape). Roll separately to see how many Victory Points each such unit earns at the end of the game. If Commander Farsight himself voluntarily leaves play in this manner, he is worth 3 Victory Points at the end of the game. The Ork player receives 1 Victory Point for each Farsight Enclaves unit that has been completely destroyed. Units that are falling back at the end of the game, and units that are not on the board at the end of the game, count as destroyed for the purposes of this mission. The exception is those units that have voluntarily left play (see Entrapment and Escape).

Note that Farsight Enclaves Flyers are not affected by the above rule, and they obey the usual rules for entering and leaving play.

### Secondary Objectives

**Slay the Warlord, First Blood.**



## MISSION SPECIAL RULES

**Reserves, Revelations yet to Come** (pg 62).

**The Crater's Edge:** All Ork units have the Shrouded and Stealth special rules for the duration of the first game turn.

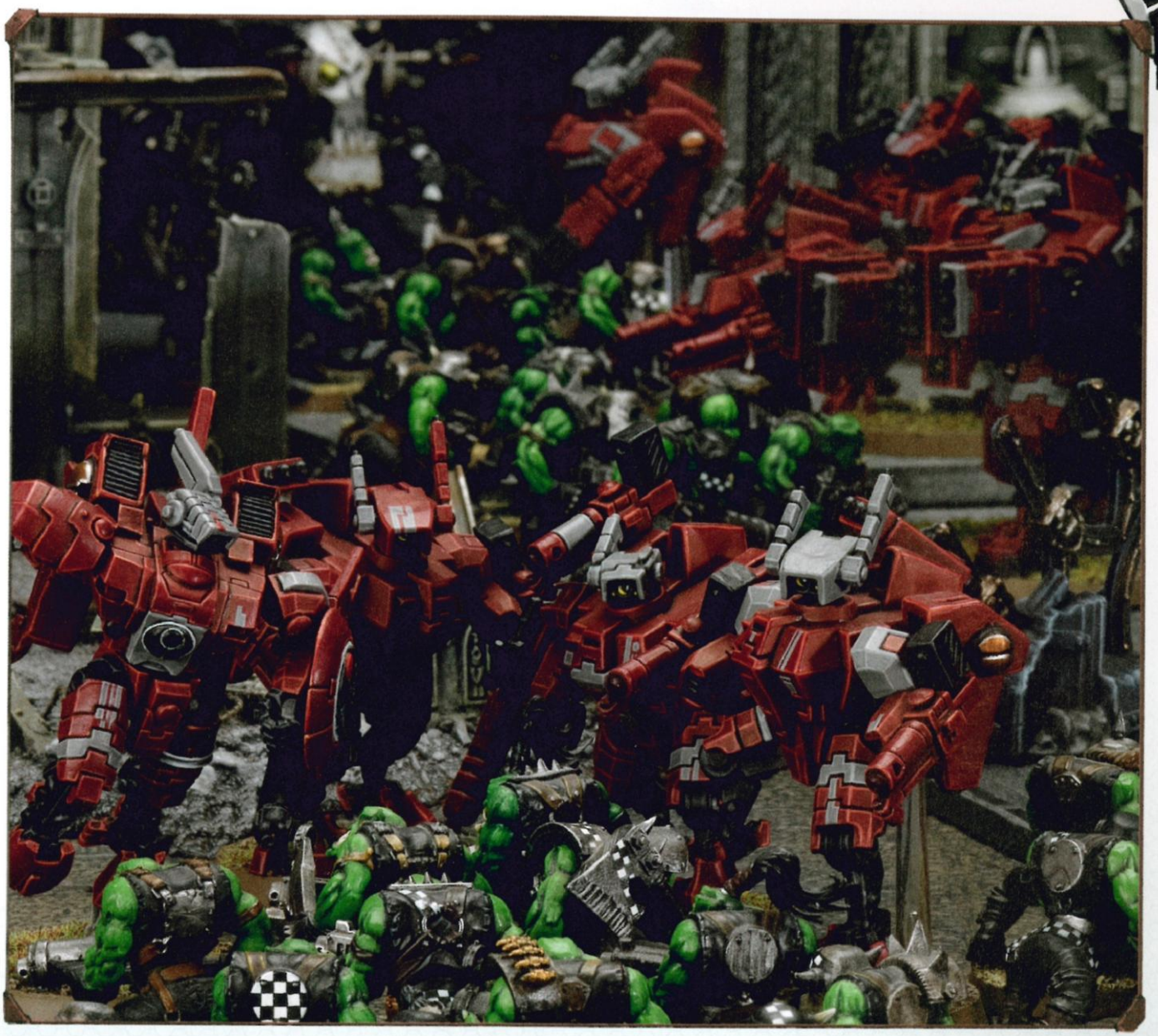
**Entrapment and Escape:** Farsight Enclaves units can voluntarily leave play by the Ork table edge – as soon as one of the unit's models moves off the board in this manner, the whole unit is removed.

**Grog's Dakka Elite:** All Ork ranged weapons have +1 Strength in this mission. This includes Kaptin Badrukk's own ranged weaponry.

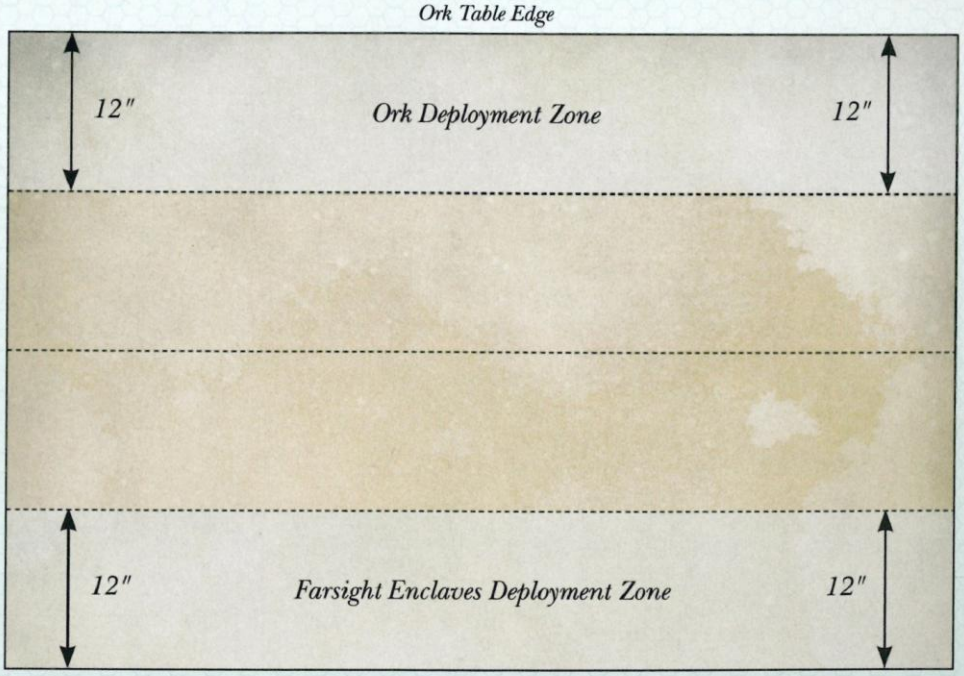
**The Jaws of the Trap Close In:** All Ork units have the Outflank special rule in this mission, and pass their Reserve Rolls on the result of a 2+.

**Air Caste Support:** The Farsight Enclaves player may make a Shooting attack in every one of his Shooting phases after the first. This ability is used by Commander Farsight, and counts as firing a ranged weapon.

| Range | S | AP | Type |
|---|---|---|---|
| Infinite | 10 | 1 | Assault 1, Blast |



*Ork Table Edge*




*Farsight Enclaves Table Edge*

ECHOES OF WAR:

# ARTHAS MOLOCH

**Farsight and his expedition have travelled to the artefact world of Arthas Moloch, intending to scour the greenskin taint from the planet's surface. In doing so, they have unleashed an ancient evil. A glowing disc of energy has appeared above the Great Star Dais at the heart of the planet's necropoli, and countless crimson-skinned fiends have spilled out alongside cackling acrobats whose limbs spit mutagenic flame. Farsight is forced to learn quickly of this unholy alliance, concocting a counter-strategy that has very little to do with reason and everything to do with gut instinct. His attack must be swift, for if the forces of Chaos achieve their mutual goals, all three of the Ethereals that have accompanied Farsight's expedition will be mercilessly slain and, in the process, the Tau Empire will be brought to the brink of perpetual war...**

## THE ARMIES

One player commands Farsight's army, chosen from *Codex: Tau Empire* and using the additional rules in this volume. The other commands a Daemon army, chosen from *Codex: Chaos Daemons*, and including only units with the Daemon of Khorne or Daemon of Tzeentch special rules. Both players select forces to an agreed points limit. The Farsight Enclaves player must include Commander Farsight as the Warlord of his army and a single Ethereal. The Daemons player must include one Daemon Prince with the Daemon of Khorne special rule, one Bloodthirster, and one Lord of Change. With the exception of Commander Farsight, neither side may take special characters.

## THE BATTLEFIELD

Set up terrain as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook, using the deployment map opposite. A piece of terrain representing the Great Star Dias must be placed in the centre of the table; this follows the rules for a Shrine to Chaos (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

## DEPLOYMENT

The Daemon player must first determine his Warlord Trait. He then deploys up to half of his army using the deployment map opposite and keeps the rest in Reserve. The Farsight Enclaves player deploys second, using the rules from the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook and the deployment map opposite. The players then roll-off; the winner of the roll-off deploys a single unit of 20 Ork Boyz, with sluggas and choppas but no other upgrades, anywhere in the Daemons deployment zone that is not within 1" of another model. This unit has no upgrades. If there is not room to deploy the entire unit of Ork Boyz in the Daemons player's deployment zone, deploy as many as possible – the rest are not used.

## FIRST TURN

The Farsight Enclaves player goes first unless the Daemons player can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

## GAME LENGTH

The mission uses Variable Game Length (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook). In addition, if at the end of any of the Daemons player's turns from game turn three onwards, there are no units locked in close combat, the game ends immediately.

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

If the game ends whilst the Farsight Enclaves player has at least two models with Talismans of Arthas Moloch (see below) in the Daemons player's deployment zone, the Farsight Enclaves player automatically wins. If the game ends because of the Variable Game Length rule and the Ethereal has been removed from play, the Daemons player automatically wins. Any other result is a draw.

## MISSION SPECIAL RULES

**Reserves.**

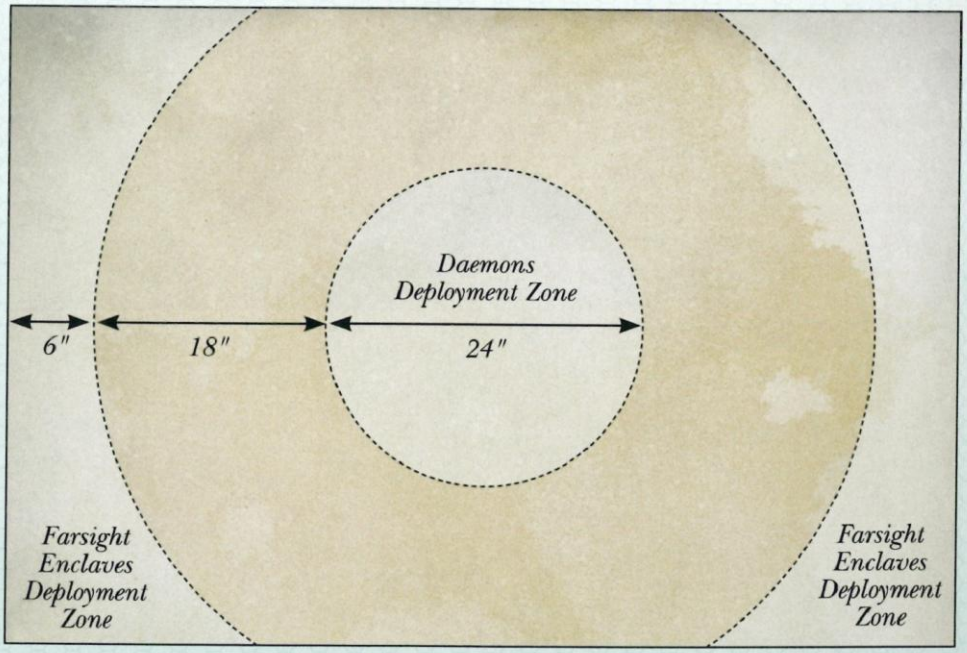
**The Last Orks Standing:** The unit of 20 Ork Boyz is treated as an enemy unit by both players. This unit is Fearless and cannot move (other than to Pile-in or Consolidate), shoot or charge, but can make attacks in the Fight sub-phase. If one player targets this unit with an attack, the other player treats that unit as his own unit purely for the purposes of resolving that attack. Any other rolls that the Ork Boyz need to make are made by the player whose turn it is.

**The Talismans of Arthas Moloch:** Immediately before determining Warlord Traits, the Farsight Enclaves player must nominate three of his characters to have Talismans of Arthas Moloch (pg 51) – in this mission, more than one can be taken in the same army, and they do not contribute towards the Farsight Enclaves player's points allowance.

**Daemonic Focus:** The Daemons player may re-roll the dice when rolling on the Warp Storm table.






Daemons
Deployment Zone
6"
18"
24"
Farsight
Enclaves
Deployment
Zone
Farsight
Enclaves
Deployment
Zone

ECHOES OF WAR:

# THE SHIELD OF EIGHT

**A tendril of Hive Fleet Kraken has descended upon the enclave world of Vior'los, intending to devour every ounce of bio-matter it can harvest from O'Shovah's adopted home. In doing so, they have brought the old warrior out of his hermit-like existence in the desert caves. Donning his customised battlesuit once more, Commander Farsight fights with every iota of determination he can muster against the encroaching swarms, but it is only at the last that he manages to tip the balance. With the aid of his seven most trusted commanders, O'Shovah buys his Earth caste allies the time they need to devise a biological countermeasure that will use the hive fleet's voracious hunger against itself.**

## THE ARMIES

One player commands the Eight, using the exact forces detailed on page 38-39 of this volume, with Commander Farsight as its Warlord. The other commands an army chosen from *Codex: Tyranids*, totalling up to no more than 1500 points and with the Swarmlord as its Warlord.

## THE BATTLEFIELD

Set up terrain as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook, using the deployment map opposite. The Farsight Enclaves deployment zone represents the Earth caste research facility should include as many ruins and/or buildings as possible and at least one Bastion.

## DEPLOYMENT

The Tyranid player deploys first. The Farsight Enclaves player deploys second, using the rules from the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook and the deployment map below.

## FIRST TURN

The Tyranids player gets the first turn unless the Farsight Enclaves player can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

## GAME LENGTH

The Farsight Enclaves player rolls 2D3+1 at the end of each of his turns. If the result is equal to or less than the turn number, the Earth caste have finished their biological countermeasure, and the game ends immediately.

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

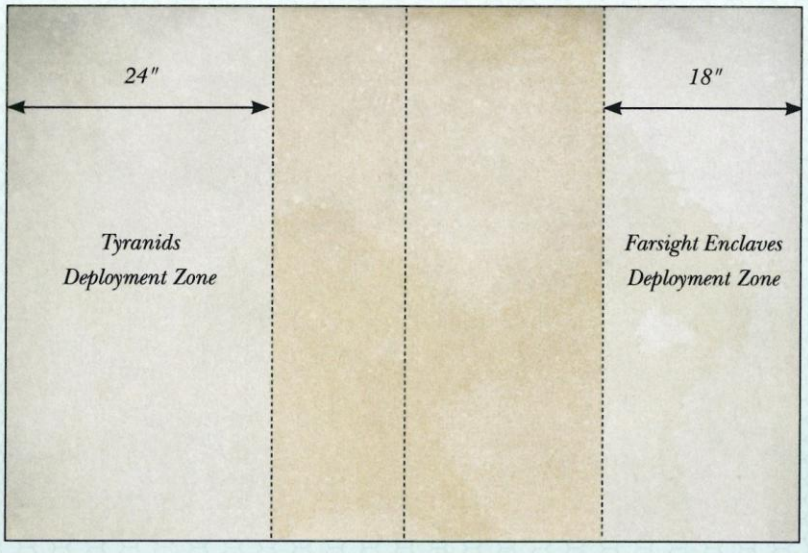
If the Earth caste finishes the biological countermeasure, the Farsight Enclaves player wins automatically. The Tyranids player wins if all of the non-drone Tau models are killed and the Bastion has suffered a Catastrophic Breach, Total Collapse or Detonation! result on the Building Damage table. Any other result is a draw.

## MISSION SPECIAL RULES

**Reserves.**

**The Endless Swarms:** If a non-HQ unit from the Tyranids army is removed from play, place it to one side – that unit (or rather an identical reinforcement unit) is now Inbound. At the end of the subsequent Tyranids player's turn, move all units that are Inbound into Ongoing Reserves.

**Heroes of the Greater Good:** Each non-Drone model in the Eight has the Feel No Pain and It Will Not Die special rules.





*A few Tau officers stood near the empty auditorium's central console, desolate in their silence. Amongst their number was a full-spectrum hologram, a wheezing XV8 battlesuit with a glowing fist, a scowling young female with flames tattooed across her skin, and a serious, pallid warrior with linear cranial scarring.*

*'I have gathered you here because I trust you,' said Commander Farsight from the command throne in their midst. 'I trust your vision, I trust you to fight, and more, I trust you to speak freely.'*

*'Then I say Vior'los is lost, Commander O'Shovah,' said Shas'O Varg'ha from the command cradle of his new Riptide. 'Mont'ka has been found wanting; a sad truth.'*

*The ancient Earth caste genius, O'Vesa, spoke up. 'There remains another viable stratagem; that of Kauyon. With the facilities at Fio'ro'tl, we could use the foe's overconfidence against itself.'*

*'Perhaps,' said O'Arra'kon, a halo of luminous calculations in the air around him. 'For optimal results, we would need to escape detection as long as possible, though it will end in hard fighting.'*

*'That is within our power,' replied Farsight levelly. 'A small but deadly force. Evacuate all contingents. We stay behind and buy time, with our lives if necessary. For the Greater Good.'*

*As one, the commanders shouted in fierce assent.*





WARHAMMER 40,000



## THE FLAMES OF REBELLION

Commander Farsight was once hailed by every Tau caste as a genius warrior-leader without compare. As his career blazed a bloody path across the Damocles Gulf and back again, O'Shovah split away from the Tau Empire, doggedly pursuing the Orks that had killed so many of his Fire caste comrades. It was the first overt sign of a rebellion that was to change the course of Tau history. Embittered and vengeful, Commander O'Shovah formed the planetary systems known as the Farsight Enclaves. Out on the fringes of Tau space, O'Shovah's battlesuit-led armies were to encounter not only Ork warlords, but also the biological horrors of the Tyranid race and a Warp-spawned foe so terrible it redefined reality.

*Inside you will find:*

***A WARRIOR BORN:** The story of Farsight's meteoric rise through the Fire caste's ranks and the exile that led him to be the Tau Empire's greatest anti-hero.*

***UNITY AND GLORY:** A showcase of the fantastic range of Tau Empire Citadel miniatures, presenting the colours and insignia of those under Farsight's command.*

***THE ARMY OF THE FARSIGHT ENCLAVES:** A set of supplemental rules that, in conjunction with* Codex: Tau Empire, *allows you to assemble your Farsight Enclaves models into a force for Warhammer 40,000 battles.*

***MISSIONS:** A series of narrative missions that enable you to play through O'Shovah's military career, alongside a set of Altar of War missions that showcase the Farsight Enclaves' favoured fighting styles.*

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*You will need a copy of both* Warhammer 40,000 *and* Codex: Tau Empire *to use the contents of this book*

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