

WARHAMMER

DARK ELVES



WARHAMMER ARMIES









DARK ELVES



By Mathias Eliasson
v.1.4

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Warhammer: Dark Elves*, your indispensable guide to the ravagers of the known world. This book provides all the information you'll require to play with a Dark Elves army in games of Warhammer.

WARHAMMER – THE GAME OF FANTASY BATTLES

If you are reading this book, then you have already taken your first steps into the Warhammer hobby. The Warhammer rulebook contains all the rules you need to fight battles with your miniatures, and every army has its own army book that acts as a definitive guide to collecting and unleashing it upon the tabletop battlefields of the Warhammer world. This book allows you to turn your collection of Dark Elves into a host of cruel warriors ready to bring bloodshed and torment to any realm.

DARK ELVES

From the chill land of Naggaroth, the black-hearted Dark Elf legions come. Seeing the world as both prey and prize, they take what they want from whomsoever they please, leaving nothing but ravaged bodies and ruined cities in their wake. Betrayed long ago by their High Elf kin, theirs is an existence dedicated to revenge. Immerse yourself in the cruel delights of Naggaroth, bend your knee to the Witch King, and prepare to do battle for glory and plunder.

The Dark Elves are an intimidating army, filled with the promise of slaughter. Bleak-eyed warriors march to battle alongside cruel knights, merciless sorcerers and savage monsters of the chill wilds. Dark Elf soldiers stand amongst the elite of the Warhammer world, superior to most warriors, and overmatched by none. They are ruthless killers, masters of all the many ways of death. Whether you want to fight your battles with steel, poison, sorcery or sheer fighting ferocity, you will find the Dark Elf army a perfect weapon with which slaughter your foes.

The Dark Elves were cast from their homeland of Ulthuan following a bitter civil war. They are now merciless raiders, dedicating their lives to the infliction of pain and

misery on others. The Druchii, as they call themselves, are united in their hatred of all other living things, ruled over by Malekith – the dread Witch King of Naggaroth.

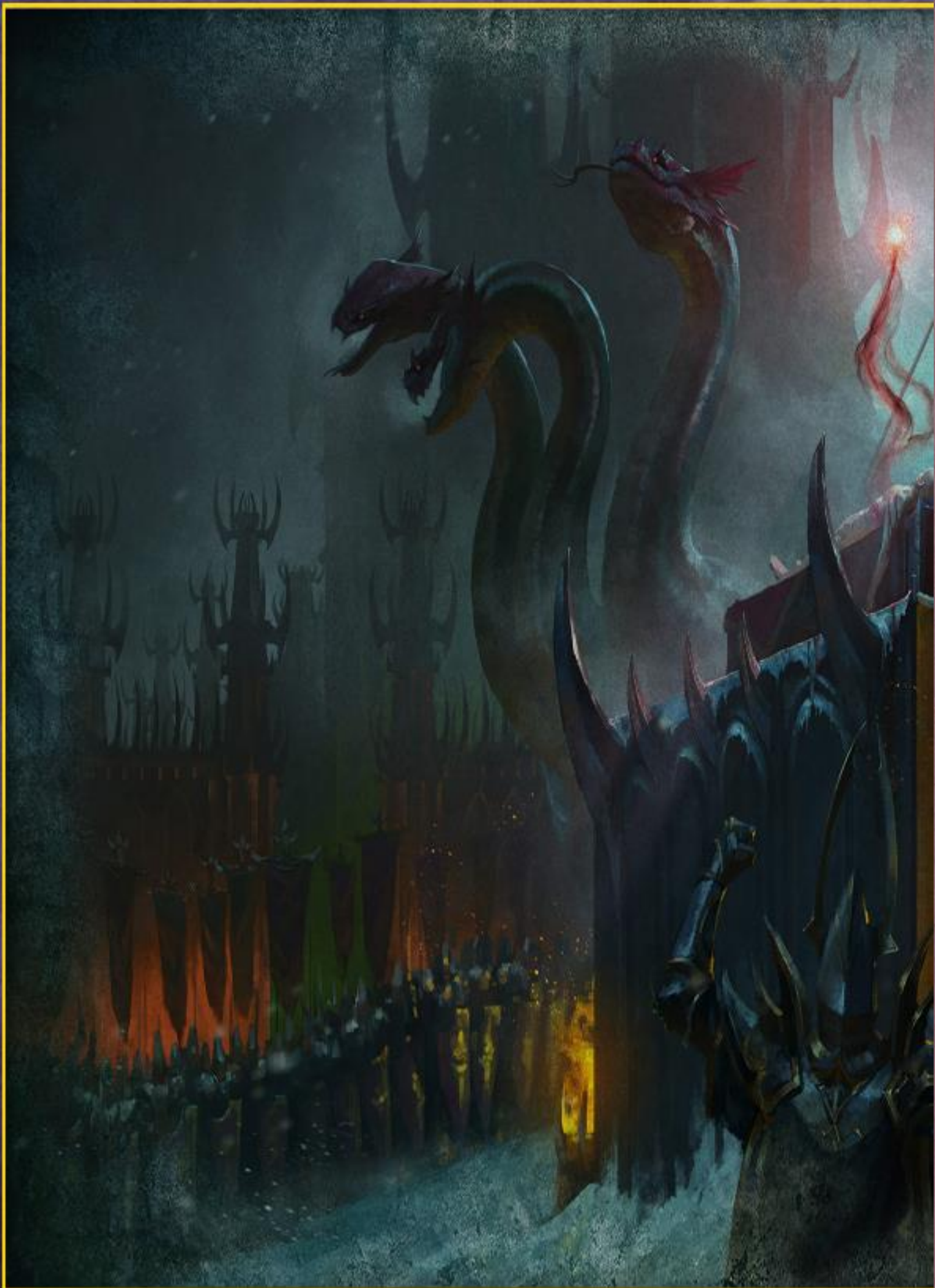
Their army contains many highly-skilled warriors such as Black Ark Corsairs, Witch Elves of Khaine, Cold One Knights and fearsome Black Guard, as well as monstrous creatures including wild Manticores and many-headed War Hydras.

HOW THIS BOOK WORKS

Warhammer: Dark Elves contains the following sections:

- **The Lords of Naggaroth.** This first section introduces the Dark Elves, explaining their ongoing struggle to reclaim their ancient homeland in Ulthuan. Herein, you will find a detailed account of how the Dark Elf race was betrayed and the terrible sacrifices they have made in their quest for vengeance.
- **The Merciless Host.** In this section, you will find all the characters, unit types and monsters available to the Dark Elves. You will find a full description of each unit, which covers its role upon the battlefield and its specialised combat abilities, in addition to any rules and unique skills it possesses. This section also includes the destructive Lore of Dark Magic – the Dark Elves' twisted source of mystical power, and the Black Armoury – magic items unique to the denizens of Naggaroth.
- **Dark Elves Army List.** The army list takes all of the units presented in the Merciless Host section and arranges them so you can choose an army for your games. Each unit type also has a points value to help you pit your Dark Elves force against your opponent in a fair fight.







THE LORDS OF NAGGAROTH

In the chill land of Naggaroth lies a realm steeped in malice. This is the home of the Dark Elves, the outcast children of Ulthuan. They watch the world with malevolent eyes, knowing it is their birth right to rule and the destiny of others to serve – if they are permitted to survive at all. Yet the Dark Elves know that they cannot claim their glorious inheritance whilst the hated High Elves endure. They are two halves of a race sundered long ago, separated by the greatest betrayal ever to occur in all the ages of the world. Even should every other land bow to their rule, the Naggarothei will not rest until they have brought ruin to Ulthuan, toppled its temples and driven the High Elves into the sea. On that day, the Witch King of Naggaroth will finally claim a throne long denied him, and the rule of the Dark Elves will spread to every corner of the world.

THE DARK ELVES

The Dark Elves are voracious raiders who ply their bloody trade across the length and breadth of the world. They take whatever they want and will gladly risk their lives for the promise of glory, power and riches.

The history of the Dark Elves is one of betrayal, of birth rights denied and retribution long overdue. The future they desire is one of glorious dominion, where the gleaming spires of their hated enemies are cast down, and the rule of their immortal Witch King, Malekith, reaches every corner of the globe.



Once, the Elven peoples were united in common cause, battling as one against the perils of Chaos. Those who would one day become the Dark Elves fought in the forefront of this terrible war, spilling their blood to protect the land of Ulthuan and the lives of their kin. This they did unflinchingly and without fear, for they revelled in the boundless joy of battle. Where many Elves were soldiers, defending their lands and loved ones, these were killers who delighted in the many ways of death.

Such ferocity soon came to be regarded with distaste. Thus, when the threat of Chaos receded, those very Elves who had driven it thence were played false by their peers and cast from their ancestral home. A lesser people would have been forever broken by this betrayal, but the Dark Elves were determined to thrive. From the chill land of Naggaroth, they have watched the world with opportunistic eyes, ever alert for a



chance to reclaim their rightful station. In that bleak realm, the Dark Elves found a home as unforgiving as themselves – a fit site from which to plan a deserved vengeance. Here they established their own kingdoms amongst the dark mountains and pine forests of the aptly named Land of Chill. The largest and oldest of these cities is Naggarond, where the ancient and undying Witch King holds court and continues to mastermind the Dark Elves' never-ending war against the High Elves.

Thus do the dread hosts of Naggaroth spread across the world, their fell banners dancing grimly on the wind, each warrior alert to the prospect of wicked joy that every battle brings. Ranks of spearmen advance remorselessly across the field, a shadow of death that consumes all who stand in its path. Black Ark Corsairs, given monstrous aspect by their scaled cloaks, hack through the foe, each chill-hearted pirate determined that his bladework and cunning will outdo that of his fellows. War Hydras thunder into the fray, trampling those who stand their ground, belching forth dark flame to consume those who flee. Cold One Knights strike home in a blur of steel and claw, the cold skill of the riders matched only by the savagery of their steeds. Sorceresses unleash their dark and forbidden magic, stripping flesh from bone and soul from body. Blood-drenched Witch Elves dance amongst the carnage, slashing with frenzied abandon at any who come

"Listen, young lord, and heed me well. I have been bidden to instruct you in the Art of War. We Druchii are the greatest exponents of warfare, and you must study hard that so you will not bring shame to the land of Naggaroth, your city, your house and ultimately your lord and master King Malekith.

You must learn to be cunning, for the slow-witted will be defeated by clever tacticians. You must be ruthless, for the honour-bound will lose the battle before it starts. But above all you must learn to be merciless, for we cannot allow weaklings to thrive while traitors still hold our ancestral lands. Thus I will instruct you, as is the command of Malekith, rightful Lord of Ulthuan, and one day you too may march your army upon the shores of our homeland.

Hear, my lord, of the Druchii. From distant Cathay to the usurped lands of our accursed kin, from the cold lands of Norsca to the steaming jungles of the Southlands, our armies are rightfully feared. We alone keep alive the great and noble traditions of our ancestors of Nagarythe. Only we follow the path laid by mighty Aenarion the Defender. Only we follow the True Way."

-Furion of Clar Karond

within reach. Directing every assault are the black-hearted Dreadlords of Naggaroth, who expend the lives of their followers as easily, and with as little compunction, as they order the destruction of the foe. The armies of desolate Naggaroth revel in the misery they wreak as they murder their foes and plunder the lands. The Dark Elves would rule all the world, or else see it burnt to ashes.

THE ELVEN RACES

The Dark Elves, or the Druchii as they account themselves, are not the only Elven race to walk the world. They are but one of three great civilisations to have sprung from Ulthuan's cradle – though they dismiss the others as snivelling and effete weaklings, unfit to inherit the legacies of ancient times. East of Naggaroth, still rooted to the fractured land of Ulthuan, dwell the High Elves, the Asur. Between these two realms there can never be peace, for the betrayals of old were but the opening volleys in a close-fought and bitter war that has only escalated as the millennia have flowed past. Whilst the Dark Elves aim to rule the world, they at least make their ambition plain. Not so the High Elves, who seek control under the guise of protection, and care not what consequence this might have on other lands. Further eastward still, upon a continent infested with humans and other barbaric primitives, lies Athel Loren, the realm of the Wood Elves, the Asrai. The Wood Elves are held in contempt by both the Dark Elves and the High Elves, for they seek neither to rule nor control, only to endure.

ANCIENT TRADITIONS

Dark Elf society is rigidly structured, its titles and positions stemming from the ancient traditions of pre-Sundering Nagarythe. New ranks and honours are created only on the rarest occasions, and most of those are abolished at Malekith's decree as soon as he hears of them. For the Witch King to do otherwise would suggest that the royal traditions of Nagarythe were somehow flawed, and if there is one truth closer to Malekith's black heart than any other, it is that the Nagarythe of old was a realm beyond all reproach.

This underlying order goes entirely unnoticed by those few outsiders who glimpse the inner workings of Naggaroth. Seeing the constant stream of politicking, disgrace, betrayal and assassination, they confuse an attack upon the person holding a particular position with an attack upon the position itself. Yet no Dark Elf wishes to see these ancient titles cast down, for there is no more effective way of measuring one's worth than by reckoning the minions that grovel below and the fools who preen above.

Any noble could easily carve out an entirely new fiefdom in the blasted landscape of Naggaroth. That none of them do so is because such achievement would never bestow the same status as rising to high rank in one of the great cities. Worse, it would be taken as an acknowledgement of weakness by those the Dreadlord seeks to call his peers, and weakness is seldom tolerated long in Naggaroth.

No matter their allegiance, all Elves are long-lived to the point of immortality, possessed of a self-assurance that falls little short of other-worldliness. They are swift of both body and reflex, capable of an effortless grace that shames the most elegant of men. They are long-limbed and graceful, with slim, adept fingers. Their muscles are strong and their reactions every bit as quick as their agile minds. Their eyes are large and oval, containing a disturbing, otherworldly wisdom that unnerves other creatures. For the Dark Elves, a cold beauty masks the natural attractiveness of their race and a scowl or sneer often mars the pale skin of their elegant faces. They are, for the most part, dark-haired and sinister, and their bleak stares convey nothing but contempt. Despite their deathly pallor and cruel faces they are savagely beautiful and highly intelligent.

Though a Dark Elf's swiftness of mind and deftness of body serve him well individually, it is the combination of the two that grants him such murderous prowess in battle. Every detail of an opponent's poise and stance speaks volumes to an attentive Elf, telling him not only where and when the enemy intends to strike, but also the manner in which the act of attacking will weaken the foe's guard. Thus has many an enemy died midway through a blow he thought fit to end the battle, his life stolen by an impossibly swift blade, guided by a quicksilver mind.



Over the millennia the Dark Elves have been twisted and corrupted until they have become complete opposites of the noble and altruistic High Elves. They are a cruel and wicked race, revelling in the pain and despair of others, completely untrustworthy, and capable of carrying out the most wanton acts of depravity and murder.

Of all of the races in the Warhammer world the Dark Elves appear to be the most purely evil, for they will take pleasure in performing a malicious act for no other reason than that it causes suffering to others. Like a child that pulls the wings off a fly, a Dark Elf will slowly torture a prisoner to death simply to see how much pain they can inflict before the victim dies. They are beings whose embittered souls relish only hatred, malice and spite, for the pits of their black hearts are blunted to all other sensations. Only by inflicting pain can Dark Elf experience something akin to joy. Not even the followers of the vile Chaos gods are so depraved, for while they are perfectly capable of performing acts of quite unspeakable horror, they at least do so in the name of their gods and to spread their unholy religion. The Dark Elves neither have nor seem to feel the need for such reasons or excuses.

Dark Elves are bitter, vicious killers that detest all the creatures of the world, including others of their kind. In the debased courts of Naggaroth only the strongest and most ruthless survive for long. The Druchii, as they call themselves, are disdainful, spiteful degenerates and murderers who delight in the despair they spread across the world. To a Dark Elf, there is no sound sweeter than the agonised screams of their foes, no draught sweeter than the blood of innocents laced with the tang of terror, and no sight more treasured than the death throes of their enemies.

During their long lives, the Dark Elves spend many centuries perfecting their skills. They have deep emotions, feeling joy and despair more keenly than any other people. Many Elves spend their years honing their talents with peaceful pursuits, such as sculpture and poetry. Others turn their hand to weaving intricate



magic or fashioning the most exquisite artefacts. By these means, an Elf gives meaning to his centuries-long existence, able to master his happiness and woe. For a Dark Elf the infliction of misery and pain, the delicate art of murder and torture are his only means of expression. He can take joy only from the suffering of others, for a lifetime of cruel indifference and harsh battle has clouded all other pleasures. Dark Elves live to gratify their own desires and to dominate others. They see the artful endeavours of their cousins as soft and indulgent, evidence of a weakness to be expunged if the Elves are to remain a power of the world.

Though all Elves can broadly be accounted equal, the Dark Elves deem that only they make full use of their natural gifts, for they alone of Elvenkind do not allow such concepts as mercy and tradition to shackle their deeds. Elves are cunning of mind and clever beyond the ken of lesser mortals. Their every word conceals a depth of meaning that is altered wholly by the slightest change of inflection or stance. Dark Elves, in particular, are adept at the art of twisting speech to serve their cause and can gleefully manipulate the emotions of another to whatever end best suits their own interests. Thus do the Naggarothi make and break alliances in a careless fashion, knowing that their silver tongues can always be counted upon to heal the wounds of the past. It is this, more than anything else, which renders Dark Elf society so opportunistic and impetuous. When the deeds of old can be erased by a cleverly-spoken word, what need is there for integrity and law?

HEIRS OF NAGARYTHE

Such beliefs were founded in the prehistory of the world, in the days of the Elven civil war that culminated in the Sundering of Ulthuan. Thousands of years before the rise of men, the Elven isle was shattered by a bloody internecine war between the kingdom of Nagarythe and the realms of the other princes. Nagarythe was powerful; the strength of the first Phoenix King Aenarion flowed in the blood of its people. Their ruler, Prince Malekith, was an unmatched warrior, brilliant general and mighty sorcerer. However, military strength alone was not enough to win the war. Against Malekith and his followers were arrayed Dragon riders, potent Mages and the glittering legions of the Phoenix King, Caledor the First. The civil war lasted for decades, until Malekith unleashed the raw power of magic in a last gasp attempt to snatch victory. When this sorcery backfired and toppled the lands of Nagarythe into the seas, the ancestors of the Dark Elves were cast adrift from their lands and their race.

The exiled Elves found sanctuary in Naggaroth, the Land of Chill. It is a fitting name, for this wilderness is a cold, forbidding land and the homeless Elves fought hard to survive. And survive they did. As the years became decades, and the decades became centuries, the battle for survival gnawed away all compassion. The Dark Elves became as harsh and unrelenting as their new realm, with no thoughts for peace or forgiveness.

Hatred, for their kin on Ulthuan at first and later for all beings, has been the frozen fire that burns in the hearts of the Dark Elves, sustaining them through the hardships they have endured. This is no truer than with Malekith, the Witch King of Naggaroth, undisputed ruler of these pernicious folk since their exile from Ulthuan. Malekith thirsts for power. Sustained by dark sorcery, the Witch King has ever turned his gaze to the glittering isle of the Elves. Where once he demanded justice for himself and his people, now only a cruel thirst for vengeance remains. Malekith would see the world destroyed before he accepts another to sit upon the Phoenix Throne.

For five thousand years Malekith has waged war against the Phoenix Kings, spilling enough Elven blood to stain red the Sea of Malice. Riding to war upon his Black Dragon Seraphon, Malekith has brought woe to all the races in the world, but to the High Elves above all. For in Druchii society there is no foe more despised than the High Elves; hated cousins viewed by the Dark Elves as effete weaklings. Though their society is riven with intrigue and treachery, when the Witch King's warhosts set sail for Ulthuan the Dark Elves are truly united in purpose. During their long war against the High Elves, the Druchii slaughter neither for riches nor fame, but out of pure, unadulterated hatred, centuries of bloodshed lending strength to the of each jagged sword. Only when every last High Elf is slain and Malekith claims his birth right upon the Phoenix Throne will the Witch King's eternal need for vengeance be slaked.

THE ART OF WAR

As suits their nature, the Dark Elves almost invariably wear dark and sinister attire. Their helmets and other wargear are exquisitely well-made, and highly decorated with distinctive patterns in black, gold and silver. Almost all Dark Elves, both men and women, are deadly and extremely dangerous fighters, equally adept with sword, spear or their famous repeater crossbow. At times of war almost the entire Dark Elf population can be called to arms, which means that the Dark Elves are capable of fielding huge armies even though the total number of Dark Elves is very small compared to the other races that inhabit the Warhammer world.

In battle the Dark Elves prefer to use guile and cunning to defeat their enemies rather than pure brute force. Dark Elf armies have large numbers of the infamous Dark Elf Scouts and Dark Rider cavalry. These troops range ahead of the main army, spreading fear and confusion and reporting back with detailed information on the enemy's deployment. If at all possible the Dark Elves will use this information to draw the enemy into a trap or ambush.

Even when forced to fight a pitched battle, a Dark Elf army will not normally charge the enemy head-on. Instead the Dark Elves will use their repeater crossbows and repeater bolt-throwers to wear down the enemy and goad them into a rash attack. As the enemy move forward. Dark Rider cavalry will mount hit and run attacks on their flanks, while Dark Elf Scouts will





emerge from hiding to unleash flurries of well-aimed crossbow bolts before they can be attacked back. Only when the enemy's advance starts to falter under the relentless hail of missiles and surprise attacks will the Dark Elves unleash their Cold One Knights and War Hydras to finish the enemy off.

Dark Elves are aggressive warriors that mercilessly cut down their opponents with viciously sharp weapons. They move through the charnel reaches of the battlefield with a skill and fluid grace that lesser mortals could never hope to match. At these times the Dark Elves are most empowered by their hatred, and they shout their praises to twisted gods as they vent their malice.

Although the majority of Dark Elves are warriors by nature and inclination, this is not true for all of them. While the High Elves are the greatest wizards in the whole world, the Dark Elves are also a race touched by magic power. Whereas the High Elves have always taken great care to protect themselves from dangerous magical energies, especially Chaos Daemons, the Dark

The chaotic nature from which Dark Magic draws much of its power attracts many malevolent spirits and dark sprites. They feed off the mysterious energies that are released and as a result can often be found hiding in the shadows around Sorceresses or other creatures of a magical nature. They are petty thieves, stealing away any small objects that take their fancy, but perhaps their most sinister act is the kidnapping of young babies. Nobody knows to what purpose they will occasionally steal away a child, but many a mother has woken to find her newborn babe vanished from the safety of its crib.

Elves long ago embraced the Dark Gods of Chaos. The natural magic powers of Elves and the unnatural vitality of Chaos are mated together in the Dark Elves, so that they have become the ultimate masters of dark sorcery.

The High Elves Mages knew of the power of Dark Magic but for long ages turned their back on its possibilities, considering it too dangerous to use. It was Malekith who long ago first started experimenting with the power of Dark Magic. Many say that in doing this he was touched by the power of Chaos, and it was this which corrupted his once noble spirit. Be this as it may, Malekith's experiments revealed a new form of magical energy of terrifying power. Once he had mastered its deadly secrets for himself, Malekith began to teach a small but growing band of followers how to use Dark Magic. Thus were born the Dark Elf sorcerers and, in time, the entire Dark Elf race.



THE BLACK HOST OF NAGGAROTH

At the head of each Dark Elf army stands one of the Dreadlords, ruthless warriors who have waged war upon a hundred battlefields and who kill with the practiced ease of centuries of combat. Each Dreadlord has left a mountain of corpses behind him in his ascension to power, yet their penchant for carnage never truly fades. Dreadlords command the armies of Naggaroth through fear and terror, and great hosts of disciplined Dark Elf Warriors march to obey their master's will. With bladed spears and cunningly-wrought repeater crossbows the Dark Elves' victims are slain, the sound of swords clashing and steel biting flesh drowned out by the screams of the dying. Wholesale butchery ensues as the infamous Cold One Knights crash into the fray, the lethal skill of Malekith's shock cavalymen matched only by the ferocity of their stinking reptilian mounts. Merciless Dark Riders gallop forth on cruel-tempered steeds as black as midnight, running down those that attempt to flee with shouts of callous joy.

Amongst the serried ranks of Dark Elves are those that have devoted themselves to a lifetime of bloodshed. Beautiful but maniacal Witch Elves enter a frenzied orgy of violence as they hurl themselves upon their enemies and lash out with finious abandon in the name of Khaine, God of Murder. In cold contrast are the Executioners of Har Ganeth, they who spill blood in the name of their fell god with practiced efficiency, every blow a killing strike aimed to sever head from neck.



THE CRUEL AMASSED

The Dark Elves do not fight with silvered steel alone, for Malekith's dark sisterhood of Sorceresses, steeped in forbidden lore, wield the power of Chaos itself. A Sorceress can blast the meat from her foe's bones or summon forth daemonic pacts to devour the souls of her enemies. Using stranger sorceries still, Malekith has learned to imbue armoured steel giants with the souls of killers, creating fell embodiments of Khaine that carve through the ranks of those born of flesh and blood.

The Dark Elves trap and enslave lesser races, but also all manner of unnatural beasts. The Druchii are adept at bending almost any creature to their domineering will, and they have harnessed the creatures of the land, air and sea for their wars. Leonine Manticores soar through the skies on bat-like wings, enormous War Hydras and Kharaibdyss are driven into battle by the bladed whips of their Beastmaster keepers. From the dark depths of the Boiling Sea repulsive sea creatures drag themselves onto blood-soaked shores, summoned by dark sorceries and driven into a frenzy by the cloying scent of blood. Beasts more dangerous still lurk in cavernous lairs beneath the Blackspine Mountains,

colossal slime-skinned monstrosities of aeons past that the Dark Elves delight in unleashing upon their enemies.

Of all the beasts under the Dark Elves' control, it is perhaps the Black Dragons that are the most feared. These obsidian-scaled drakes are near-legendary creatures possessed of a malign intellect, able to belch great clouds of corrosive gas and conjure a primal dread in their foes. Malekith's favoured generals, the fiercest Dreadlords of all, have spent centuries training these beasts and honing their skills in aerial combat. It has been known for entire armies of these Dragon Lords to ravage the shores of the Old World, burning the cities of the lesser races to cinders in orgies of wanton havoc.

Yet for all the legions of Naggaroth, the eldritch power wielded by its Sorceresses and the titanic beasts that accompany Malekith's hosts, the Dark Elves' greatest source of strength remains their boundless hatred for all other creatures. This loathing burns so fiercely in their black hearts that it lends steely determination where other mortals would surrender to pain or fatigue. With hatred as their strength, the Dark Elves will enslave and dominate the world, or die in the attempt.

THE TOUCH OF CHAOS

Chaos has left its mark upon the Elves, just as it has on almost all the races of the world. In this race, however, the power of the Dark Gods has taken a subtle form. It has fanned the arrogance of the Elven soul, reinforcing all that is prideful and hubristic. Long ago, compassion could have been said to be the Elves' defining trait, for such was the nature granted them by the Old Ones, but now generosity has been eclipsed by narcissism, empathy by conceit.

However, Chaos has not changed all the Elves in equal manner. The Wood Elves it has made isolationist, deniers of the wider world who blindly hope that, so long as their realm knows order, no danger can threaten it. The High Elves have become ever more stubborn, having gained certainty beyond words' ability to convey that they, and they alone, can shield the world against the perils it faces. For the Dark Elves, however, Chaos has brought enlightenment – the knowledge that the world exists only for the pleasure of the strong. They have embraced this revelation with a burning passion that shames the cold hearts of their ancient cousins. Indeed, it may yet set the very world afire.

The Imperial war galley Graf Gustav had the wind at her stern as she cut through the temperate waters of the Great Ocean. Although evening was gathering and the skies were darkening, the Araby Coast line was visible on the horizon.

Lord Ushrivel stood on the hack deck and peered out into the growing night. Despite the prevailing wind at her back, the ship still sailed like a pig he thought. Not like the black-sailed heavers of his own race, the Druchii. No, not at all.

Somewhere behind in the deepening gloom, further off the coast, Lord Ushrivel's raiding fleet followed just out of sight. Even Ushrivel's keen vision could not detect them. Last night, the fleet had ravaged a convoy of Imperial Traders heading back to their homelands. The Dark Elf ships had destroyed them all, save for this one war galley. Ushrivel was hoping to use his enemies' ship to scout the lands and to draw close to another convoy, but they had cruised these waters all day with no sign of prey. A dark fin broke the surface of the water just outside of the ship's wake and caught Ushrivel's attention. Even as he watched, two more fins rose from the depths and trailed the ship expectantly.

"Well," Ushrivel thought, "if no new victims come our way, at least we can still have a little fun."

With his cape whirling behind him, the Dark Elf Lord turned and issued his command, "Set out the gang plank and bring up the rest of those prisoners now!"

DEADLY RAIDERS

The Dark Elves are a selfish, arrogant people who believe that all other mortals exist merely to be exploited, enslaved and abused in order to fulfil the Druchii's every whim. It is in the nature of the Druchii to be treacherous and scheming at all times, for honour is an alien concept in the land of Naggaroth.

Filled with their master's loathing, surrounded by an uncaring wasteland, the Dark Elves look at the lands and riches of others with jealous eyes. They gladly take what they want, uncaring of the woe and mourning left in their wake. Their palaces are decorated with gold and silver hewn from the rocks by the hands of others. The Dark Elves seize harvests, livestock and vital winter stores to fill the banqueting tables of the Lords of Naggaroth, sparing no thought for those they leave to starve. Slaves, thousands chained with terror and iron, labour endlessly in the forges of Naggaroth to mould stolen steel into weapons and armour worthy of the Witch King's mighty armies. Few have ever escaped from slavery at the hands of the Dark Elves, and fewer still speak of their captivity. Such tales as are known tell of the daemon-haunted dungeons of the Witch Kings, of living sacrifices to the Chaos Gods, and of souls burned up to fuel the sorcery of Naggaroth.





The many raiding fleets of the Dark Elves make this dread existence possible. From their forbidding citadels they sail out across the world, going to war in vast raiding hosts that plunder enemy nations and butcher whole cities. When the armies of the Dark Elves set forth they do so for the joy of killing, for the suffering they can inflict on lesser beings and for the chance to spill the blood of the weak. Ultimately though, they do so for power, for the spoils of war are the Dark Elves' greatest source of wealth – a town or city found populated only by corpses is a sure sign of the Druchii's passing.

Mightiest amongst the Dark Elves' vessels are the Black Arks, great citadels that float across the seas upon sorcery and sacrifice. Each Black Ark is the evil heart of a bloodcurdling armada that spreads terror wherever it lands. Great serpents from the deep crash through the waves alongside the reaver ships, while Manticores and Black Dragons circle the skies above.

When the Dark Elves attempted to break the spells that contained the Realm of Chaos, they unleashed a cataclysm which turned the north of Ulthuan into a wasteland. So great was the destruction that much of the area sank under a gigantic tidal wave, but the Dark Elves were not daunted. As the mighty flood swept over the land the Witch King and the strongest Dark Elf Sorcerers cast powerful spells on their fortress-palaces, shielding them from the deluge. The castles tore free from the very bedrock of the land and floated on the roiling waters, held together by titanic binding enchantments. These spells allowed them not only to float but to be navigated.

Thus were created the Black Arks of Naggaroth, mightiest of all the sea-going vessels in the Warhammer world. They are enormous craft: sinister floating fortresses, covered in eldritch carvings which

are painful to behold. They are regarded by the Dark Elves as being the furthest outposts of Naggaroth, and they range the wide seas performing inscrutable errands in the service of the Witch King.

The Black Arks are much bigger than they appear from the surface of the ocean. Like icebergs, much of their bulk is below the surface. In the rock below are dark dismal caverns, lit by eerie green witchlights, wherein dwell monsters. The cataclysm that led to the creation of the Black Arks cast up many monsters that had previously dwelled on the sea-floor. Sensing their malice and terrible evil, the Dark Elves summoned these monsters and bound them into their service, keeping them in huge caverns excavated in the bowels of the Black Arks, along with many other creatures that dwelled only in their now sunken homelands. These creatures are supplemented and replaced with new generations of sea monsters gathered from the Boiling Sea to the west of the Dark Elves' homeland.

The Black Arks range across the oceans of the Warhammer world, bringing fear, terror and destruction with them. The Dark Elves make great use of captured slaves, either to carry out the multitude of menial but vital tasks that no self-respecting Dark Elf would ever dream of performing, or to serve as the living victims of the hideous rituals the Dark Elves carry out to honour Khaine.

The Black Arks travel far and wide to procure these slaves. Each Black Ark is home to a small army of Dark Elf warriors, which can be landed on the coast of an unsuspecting kingdom, perform a lightning raid, and be away before any of the local defence forces are able to react. In this way countless millions of doomed souls have been taken back to Naggaroth to a fate far worse than death.

In the rare instances when a Black Ark is forced into battle on the high seas, it and its monstrous occupants are terrible foes. The Arks sail inexorably closer to their enemy, the waters around them seething with a horde of monsters that swarm around the enemy ships. The monstrous presence of the Black Ark looms above the enemy fleet, tower upon tower, spire upon spire of living rock, unnaturally afloat on the surface of the sea. The Arks are surrounded by a shimmering magical mist which bewilders the crew of any enemy ship that approaches the Ark too closely or attempt to fire at it.



It takes a very brave or foolhardy crew to attempt to board a Black Ark. If they do they are greeted by raking repeater bolt thrower fire and will be assailed from all sides by the dreaded Black Ark Corsairs. These deadly warrior-knights are sworn to carry out the orders of the Black Ark's ruler without question, whatever foul deed or heinous crime they are ordered to commit.

Upon these vessels, armies of vicious warriors await the time to strike. Bands of cruel Dark Elf Corsairs sharpen their wicked blades in anticipation of the slaughter and slaving to come. Merciless killers armed with deadly spears and repeater crossbows swap gory tales of past glory and boast of the depravities they will unleash upon their victims. In the pitch black holds of these ships, the wails of toiling slaves are punctuated by the screams of those sacrificed upon the bloodied altars of dark gods.



Alongside these massive vessels are smaller craft, skiffs, and slave-powered galleys. These lighter, more manoeuvrable ships carry Dark Elf Corsairs to the shore or into boarding actions with other craft. One such vessel is the Hydra Ship, a light, multi-hulled, single-deck sailing ship designed primarily for rapid troop transport. The wide, multihull design of the Hydra minimizes the ship's water displacement, allows for higher cruising speeds, and increases its crew capacity. Great creatures from the depths are raised above the waves by the chilling calls of the Beastmasters, and atop the sea serpents and kraken Dark Elves artisans raise defensive towers and shooting galleries.

CURSED OF NAGGAROTH

Since the civil war that raged in Ulthuan 7,000 years ago, the Dark Elves have been a constant threat to the peace of all nations. Their horrific rites and festivals have been performed in all the countries of the Old World, their Huge Black Arks carrying them across the unforgiving seas so that they may plunder and murder with malicious abandon. The shores of Ulthuan itself are constantly ravaged by their raids, and the fleets of other races only venture near the Bleak Coast when it would be certain death to stay further away. The monsters of the deep are at the beck and call of the twisted Beast-Lords, who are powerful Mages specialising in the binding and controlling of wild monsters and daemons. The Beast-Lords sing harsh enchantments over the waves, calling more of the dreaded creatures that have plagued the legends of races for millennia. The Kraken, Megaladon, and Sea Dragon have all destroyed ships, while on convoy from distant Cathay, or just port-hopping along the coasts of Bretonnia and Estalia.

The horrifying power of the Beast-Lords was demonstrated three centuries ago, when a Black Ark and its fleet were sighted from the Dwarfen sea fortress of Barak-Varr. The Dwarfs promptly assembled their fleet and sailed forth to destroy them, as was their duty. The descendants of the Ancestor-Gods confronted the Dark Elf fleet, which was small compared to their own, and their Runes and Engineers proved worthy to the task. However, the Dark Elves had laid a trap; as the Dwarfs closed for the kill the Beast-Lords shrilled their keening cries across the tumultuous waves. From the depths rose scores of mighty beasts, including the dreaded Gargantuan, the swift and deadly Black Leviathan, and the ship devouring Promethean. The Dwarfs cried in horror and tore at their beards when they realised their peril. The monsters rent the proud Dwarfen Dreadnoughts and Ironclads, Monitors were torn apart by the writhing coils of Sea Dragons, while the Dark Elf Sorcerers on the Black Ark bombarded the fleet with magical annihilation. Only a few Dwarfs survived that dreadful defeat, and most of those that did immediately took the Slayer Oath.

There is little warning of a Dark Elf attack. A magical shadow descends upon the fleet, swathing it with dark clouds. Those on land see nothing but a swift-moving storm. Ships and watchtowers along the coast are overrun before the alarm can be raised. The Dark Elves' prey continue with their everyday lives, oblivious to the danger that closes in on them. Only when menacing black vessels appear off the shore do they realise their doom has arrived.

The bulk of such a raiding force is made up of Corsairs from the ships and Black Arks, who are led to suitable targets by a scouting force of Dark Riders and Shades. Occasionally the captain of a Corsair force will employ the services of sell-swords and cut throats who know the local area and are eminently disposable should his force run into any kind of opposing army.



Fire and death quickly follow, as the Dark Elves take what they want and destroy everything else. All that remains is a blasted ruin and the corpses of those spared the short, woeful life of a slave. For weeks at a time, the Dark Elves prowl their chosen coastline, launching terrifying raids as they see fit. Only when their holds are full of moaning slaves and pillaged riches do the Dark Elves finally relent, returning to distant Naggaroth with their spoils. As the Dark Elves return to their desolate realm, they leave a trail of woe in their wake, eradicating peace and prosperity and replacing it with terror and death.

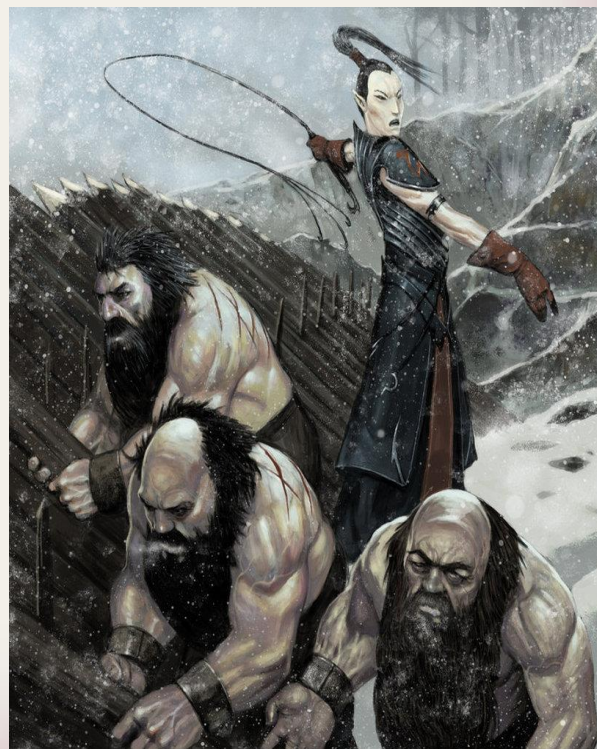
THE REIGN OF DARKNESS

For the Dark Elves, all of the world's bounty is theirs to do with as they wish – provided that they have the strength to claim it. They have turned aside from the benevolent gods of their pantheon, flocking instead to the worship of their more capricious and cruel deities, in particular Khaine, Lord of Murder. It is a match well made, for the Dark Elves care nothing for the sanctity of life and consider the lesser races to be nothing more than insects begging to be ground beneath a boot heel if no more productive or entertaining use can be found for them.

Naturally, the Dark Elves consider all other races inferior. Even those who approach them in skill and intellect, the Naggarothi dismiss as weaklings, sneering at the laws and traditions that waste resources nurturing the weak even as they shackle the ambitions of the strong. The Dark Elves have no such restraint; in Naggaroth, the weak perish, and the strong take whatever they desire.

None of this is to say that the Dark Elves wish to see all other races exterminated out of hand. So long as mines must be worked, farms must be tended, fortresses must be raised and ritual sacrifices are required to win the favour of the gods, there will always be a place for primitives in the realm of Naggaroth. Indeed, some of the more capable barbarians can even be wielded as weapons in their own right, manipulated by threats, trinkets and empty promises into assailing the shores of hated Ulthuan or else wreaking havoc upon the high seas. Only the High Elves have no hope of survival under the yoke of Naggarothi rule, for every Dark Elf dreams of the day when their ancient enemies will at last be scoured from every corner of the world. None consider the possibility that, when the last High Elf dies screaming in agony upon Khaine's altar, the ultimate victory might leave a void of purpose that is impossible to fill. On that day, the Dark Elves will learn just how much of their souls have been devoured by their ancient hatred – and they may not find the tally to their liking.

Until that day finally dawns, the Dark Elves will continue their bloody quest as they always have. Great raiding fleets, their sails black against the night sky, bring woe and destruction to all the shores of the world, bearing terror and death to distant realms, often for no better reason than because there is no-one who can stand against them. With every year that passes, the power of Naggaroth ascends to greater heights, built upon the backs of slaves and fuelled by a constant stream of plunder from far-off lands. As the other elder races fade, the Dark Elves thrive, knowing that their hour has at last come. Stormclouds gather across the High Elf realms, and the Witch King's malevolent laughter echoes upon the wind. Naggaroth will rise, Ulthuan will fall, and a vengeance thousands of years in the making will finally see its bloody conclusion.





DARK POWER

Inside the dark chamber, the flickering light of a dozen candles illuminated the exotic and macabre ornaments that filled the sweet smelling room. The sorceress stood over a small boiling cauldron adding the last few ingredients into the black pot. As she sprinkled in a fine powder from her long delicate fingers it sparked into a dark blue flame. The potion was nearing completion and any mistake in the ritual preparation could now prove fatal. In a deep resonant voice she made the final incantation, the words spilling from her lips. It was as though the words had a life of their own; with each new one the air around the sorceress grew heavier. This was an old tongue, and the ancient words had the ability to destroy the very essence of life itself.

Morathi felt the magical power which she was summoning growing in strength. It was probing her mind searching for a path through which it could escape. The energies carried on growing and Morathi could feel her mind begin to surge. Visions of distant lands, the past and the future, formed before her. Should she choose, she could visit any of these worlds and travel through the corridors of this strange dimension. Quickly clearing her thoughts she focused upon releasing the spell. A dark aura grew and she could feel her long hair writhing and snaking with a life of its own as the magical essence was absorbed into her entire body. Pointing her finger at the cauldron, sparks of energy flashed about her. With the command of a single word, the magical energy was released and a bolt of black light burst from her hand into the bubbling liquid.

Morathi turned away from the cauldron, letting her body relax. Such concentration drained her of great amounts of strength. The Dark Powers had almost overcome her and lured her away from the real world. Had she chosen to travel down the paths open before her without the correct preparation, even she, the most powerful sorceress in the world, would have been easy prey to the daemons and dark creatures which stalked that realm. Morathi lay down on a luxurious four poster bed, collapsing upon the silk covers which enveloped her body. Against the black cloth her curved sleek figure was a contrasting white in colour. Her skin was smooth and almost like marble, upon her body there were no wrinkles of age.

There was still much work to be done before the potion was complete; she would have to carefully distil it into her small phials and even this simple task had its own dangers. Dealing with any form of magic was always a complex affair, but Morathi was well practised in such arts. As one of the oldest mortals to still walk the world, she had by now acquired a great deal of skill in the dark arts. For now though Morathi was content to rest on her bed as practising with such power always tired her and she felt in need of rest.

"I trust I'm not disturbing you." A voice came from her doorway, Morathi turned to face the uninvited visitor. There was but one person who would have the tenacity to enter her chamber without warning, her son Malekith.

"The Hag Queen has called council at the feast of Khaine, she has proof that the cult of Slaanesh has once again been active. She specifically requested you attend." Her son spoke as though he were some simple messenger rather than the king of his realm. Morathi smiled. He had learnt to use tact well, his voice betrayed no emotion.

Malekith approached the bed and sat down on the edge, Morathi sat upright, her silk robes revealing a sleek and ageless body beneath them. His armour was still coated with the blood of those slain in a recent battle. He removed his helmet and a long mane of silver white hair fell about his shoulders. His scarred face brought a fleeting stab of pain to Morathi. Even four thousand years after her son had been terribly marked, the anguish she felt when reminded of that fateful day had not diminished, she knew it never would.

"Ah Hellebron! Will she never learn that it is only through my will that her petty coven of hags still practice their primal arts? I could crush her with a single word. In truth they are my creatures; I do not serve the Witch Elves, they serve me." Morathi let out a small contemptuous laugh.

"Then do I assume you will not be attending the feast, mother?" Malekith's tone was still colourless, if he had an opinion on whether she should attend or not he was not freely giving such information away. Morathi was pleased her son was learning so much about the subtlety of politics and the importance of controlling his speech. He had yet to

learn fully the extent to which his tone, speech, and indeed silence, could be read by his opponents and used against him.

"Malekith, I am impressed by your reserve, but you still have much to learn. I am bound to attend but it is not because Hellebron so commands. Should I choose I would have her killed tonight, but in doing so I would not gain. In fact my power would be weakened."

Malekith turned an attentive head towards his mother. Though he despised her for reminding him of his weakness she was right. His mother had a wisdom he could gain from. When this purpose was no longer of value to him he would punish her for her contemptuous attitude towards him. Until that day, though, he was content to learn from her, to suckle from her knowledge.

Morathi raised her hand, tenderly stroking her son's face as she continued.

"Hellebron's power over me is but one of the many lies that perpetuate her existence. It is one of the strengths of our culture, my son, that we do not readily embrace the truth. Each of the noble houses is built on the foundations of a lie. They believe that they have earned their power, and it is theirs to command. Ours is the only power in this kingdom, all else is but an illusion of grandeur. The truth behind such lies, my dearest Malekith, is that their power is little more than a gift to them from you." Morathi stroked her son's hair; she knew this always had a relaxing effect on him. "It is also a gift which we can take back at will." Malekith smiled at his mother's words; she had a way of bringing clarity to him.

"I attend the feast to perpetuate the lie, my son. Hellebron believes that she rules the temples. She truly believes that through her devotion the temple of Khaine is the sole religion of our people. In doing so she underestimates how deep rooted the worship of Slaanesh and his dark arts reach, and thus my sorceresses gain in power, unseen by the Witch Elves. Lies are power. They have the ability to change history. And history is built upon the lies of the victor."

Morathi laid back upon the bed and motioned for Malekith to join her.

"Come my son you must be tired after your little battle, lie with me and tell me how bravely you fought."



THE DARK COVEN

The mere mention of Dark Elves is enough to spread a cold shiver of fear down the spine of all inhabitants of the Warhammer world. There are no realms where they cannot strike and no race safe from their malicious raids. But amongst the Dark Elves, exists a cult that spreads fear even amongst its own people. This is known as the Dark Coven, the Cult of Slaughter. They are the worshippers of Khaela Mensha Khaine, the god of hatred, the god of murder, the dark god of war.

The worship of Khaine, which is now banished from Ulthuan, began in the kingdom known as Nagarythe. Whilst this practice was largely frowned upon, it was tolerated by the Elven people as the early sacrifices to Khaine took the form of animals. It was during the many wars that were waged upon Ulthuan by raiding parties of marauding Norse warbands, that the first sacrifices of mortals began. The captive warriors were offered to the god so that he would lend the Elves of Nagarythe strength. The prisoners would be bound to great altars and sacrificed in plain view of the enemy army who knew that similar fates awaited them should they lose.

The Elves of other realms allowed this savage indulgence in the knowledge that the Elves of Nagarythe were feared and valuable fighters who had



saved Ulthuan from many invasions. Aenarion himself, the first of the Phoenix Kings, wielded the sword of Khaine, a mighty weapon of the Gods which had the power to cleave even the greatest of Daemons in two. Whilst he and his people waged war against the threat of constant invasion, Khaine became an accepted part of the Elven way of life. As time passed the threat grew less, with the death of Aenarion, the sword of Khaine was laid to rest in its shrine far to the North of Ulthuan upon the Blighted Isle. Banned from each of the other Kingdoms of Ulthuan, the crazed devotees of Khaine still prospered and flourished within Nagarythe.

The temples of this dark god were maintained by a select group of warrior priestesses known as the Brides of Khaine. It was these bloodthirsty Elves who were responsible for the pre-battle sacrifices. When peace settled upon Ulthuan, the priestesses found themselves without victims for their bloody altars. Rumors spread of the strange disappearance of villagers within Nagarythe and, although the finger of suspicion pointed towards the growing cult, no proof of these foul deeds could ever be brought to bear.

Soon a new threat reared its head within Ulthuan. Once again, founded within Nagarythe, an equally sinister practice had taken root. It was the worship of Slaanesh, the Chaos God of pleasure, and Morathi, the sorceress widow of Aenarion was at its heart. Malekith, Morathi's own son, took it upon himself to denounce the cult and publicly chastise his mother. He used the followers of Khaine to hunt down those who practiced the cult of pleasure and betray them to him. But all along, this 'witch hunt' was a clever ruse.

Malekith saw a great opportunity to rid himself of those who had opposed his claim to the throne. He used agents of the temples of Khaine to plant false evidence in the homes of his enemies as proof of their fall to the lure of Slaanesh. His victims would disappear from the day to day affairs of court, supposedly serving their fate within Malekith's deepest dungeons. This again was a lie, Malekith instead would offer these prisoners to the priestesses in gratitude for their services. All this time, Malekith allowed both cults to flourish, and he had the perfect tool with which to destroy the political opponents who had thwarted his right to be the King.

When he deemed his position strong enough he made his move. Accusing the Phoenix King himself of being at the heart of the cult, he poisoned him before he could retaliate and accounted for his death as suicide in shame of the discovery of his dark secret. It was too bold a move and few believed such a wild accusation, but Malekith had already dispatched some of his strongest rivals and none dared challenge him, lest they suffer a similar fate. The priestesses of Khaine seized the temple of Asuryan, brutally slaying all within and so beginning a civil war that still rages to this day.

Malekith now claimed the right to the throne of Ulthuan and stepped into the Flames of Asuryan. His fate is told elsewhere, but ultimately his coup failed. War was waged upon Ulthuan and Malekith's forces were defeated. As he was forced into exile, his most powerful sorceresses cast spells upon the main cities of Nagarythe and tore them from the mainland to form mighty floating fortresses. Many of the temples had formed major landmarks within the cities, and on the long journey west they became important focal points. When the exiled Dark Elves landed on the continent of Naggaroth, these temples quickly became havens of worship. At the same time, the cult of Slaanesh, without any threat from persecution, also quickly took root. Both vied for the support of Malekith.

The Witch King knew that only one religion should dominate his new realm. He needed to unite his people quickly in order that he could make his plans to seek vengeance on the High Elves. Malekith decided against intervention in the struggle between the followers of Khaine or Slaanesh, to do so would only turn the followers of one cult against him. He strictly forbade a religious war; the civil war had already taken its toll on the Dark Elves, but he also knew that in doing so he was encouraging an underground battle of dark intrigue and evil machination. This appealed to Malekith's twisted sense of pleasure, and he let the two factions fight for control of his people's allegiance.

THE BRIDES OF BURNING BLOOD

The Brides of Burning Blood are one of a growing number of Witch Elf cults that have no permanent shrine in any of the Dark Elf cities. They prefer to worship Khaine solely on the battlefield, where the gore-soaked ground is their altar, and the blood of their foes their offering to the bloody-handed god. They have little interest in taking live captives back to Naggaroth, for they believe that blood spilt in the heat of battle, where it is raw and still filled with both fear and anger, is amongst the most treasured by Khaine. As Khaine is also the lord of suffering, the Brides make use of a rare poison with which they coat their wicked blades, a toxin that literally boils the blood of its victims. Any that are cut by such a blade die in fits of agonised screams, their own steaming lifeblood erupting from ruptured arteries.

After a battle the gore-soaked Brides are brought before the Death Hag one at a time. Should more than a few patches of skin be discovered that have not been touched by an offering to Khaine – namely blood spilt in battle – then it will be decreed that the sacrifices made were unacceptable to the Lord of Murder. In a frenzy of repentant fury, the Witch Elves then seek out other victims and will fall upon them with renewed vigour. It matters not if these victims are other Dark Elves, so eager are the Brides to spill blood in the name of their merciless god.

The temples of Khaine already had many agents who secretly stalked the streets of the newly founded cities. Over many decades they had become skilled in the art of subterfuge, and their assassins had perfected their gruesome methods as they secretly dispatched Malekith's foes in Ulthuan. Under the devious guidance of Hellebron, High Priestess of Khaine, the followers undertook a secret war against Slaanesh. Whilst Hellebron used her caustic tongue in the courts of Naggarond to undermine the support of Morathi, she positioned her servants tactically within the nobility. Morathi proved every bit the equal of her rival. Just as it seemed that Hellebron would prevail, Morathi revealed the discovery of an ancient gift from Khaine. It was a powerful cauldron which had the power to restore the youth to those who bathed in it. Rumors spread quickly through the realm of Naggaroth that Morathi was favored by Khaine. The loyalties of the Dark Elves were torn between Morathi, a sorceress who openly worshiped Slaanesh, and Hellebron their High Priestess. Because many of the Brides of Khaine now pronounced Morathi their Queen, a stalemate had been reached, and Hellebron knew that if she did not act fast she would quickly lose support.

In a move that only the head of a bloodthirsty cult such as the Witch Elves could conceive, the deadlock was broken. At the command of Hellebron, hundreds of sorcerers and nobles who supported Morathi were taken from their beds and slain on the altars of Khaine. The screams of the dying echoed into the cold night air, and it is said that even Morathi herself was forced to take flight on her Dark Pegasus to escape the murder. This night became known as Death Night and has since carved itself a permanent place within the history of the Dark Elves and indeed the whole of the Warhammer World.

The next morning, Malekith summoned Hellebron and her priestesses to his palace. As they entered the main hall a murmur grew amongst the nobles who had gathered. Hellebron had somehow constructed her own Cauldron of Blood. Hellebron led a procession of the most stunning women. Gone were the haggard wrinkles and sagging flesh, replaced by a smooth and beautiful youthful complexion. Her beauty rivaled that of even Morathi herself. All knew that Dark Magic had



been wrought and from that day the priestesses became known as Witch Elves. In a desperate but cunning move, Morathi declared herself the Queen of the cult, outmaneuvering the devious ambitions of Hellebron. The enraged Hellebron was placated by Malekith who granted the cult recognition by allowing the Witch Elves to stalk the streets once each year on the anniversary of Death Night, taking prisoners wherever they should find them. Over the coming year the Witch Elves discovered their attractiveness faded and that their voluptuous appearance reverted to that of an old crone, but on Death Night they would once again be able to restore their beauty.

Since that day the devotees of Khaine have been loyal subjects to Malekith. For one night each year the Elves in the cities of Naggarond must lock their doors and shutter their windows. On Death Night, the Witch Elves emerge from their temples. They are driven into an insatiable lust for blood by a concoction of poisonous herbs, which only the Hags, the High Priestesses of the Witch Elves, knew how to prepare to prevent them from killing the Witch Elves themselves. Anybody found out on the streets will be dragged to the altars of Khaine to suffer a long and painful death. The assassins pick the locks securing the houses of certain nobles and other high ranking Elves, then the Witch Elves will burst in to take entire families to be sacrificed. It is said that they bring their victims to the height of pleasure before they plunge them into a torment of pain and suffering the likes of which no mortal could ever envision in his worst nightmares. The screams of their victims can be heard until the sun rises and then an eerie silence follows as each Dark Elf gives thanks to Khaine that he and his family were spared the slaughter.

The assassins employed by the temple to spy and kill the enemies of Hellebron are recognized as some of the most deadly killers in the world. They spend many decades perfecting their art which has been practiced for over three thousand years. The temples provide the assassins with an array of deadly poisons which only the Witch Elves know how to prepare safely. Extracts from plants collected by Dark Elf raids from across the world are mixed together to deadly effect. Some of these toxins work fast, killing the victim instantly as the poison enters his system. Every vein in the body turns black creating a lattice spiderweb appearance to the corpse. But many of the acolytes of Khaine prefer more subtle methods of death. Poisons such as the lethal Black Lotus can take hours to work themselves into the bloodstream. As it infuses itself into the victim's system he suffers horror-filled visions, slowly and agonizingly lapsing in and out of consciousness before death finally overcomes him.

When the Dark Elves go to war it is only on rare occasions that the Witch Elves do not accompany them. Each Black Ark has its own temple located deep within its bowels, and when it makes landing the Witch Elves emerge to seek offerings for their Lord. They will, on rare occasions, carry one of the ancient



Cauldrons of Blood with them. A large and ominous sight, these are rare and sacred artefacts, gifts from their god, and the few that survive are infused with much of his malevolent energy. They are massive cauldrons brimming with the warm blood and skulls of previous sacrifices. The statue of Khaine the Bloody Handed looks down into the gruesome liquid, watching over his servants as they march to war. Again the Witch Elves have adopted the traditional custom of sacrificing enemies before the battle. With their deaths, an aura of hatred and murder emanates from the Cauldron. The vision of those Elves within the proximity of this dark shrine is overcome with a red mist of murder and hatred.

The Witch Elves also prepare special potions to take before they go to battle. The Hags mix these toxic potions into the Cauldron of Blood, and each Witch Elf sips from a ceremonial goblet handed to them by the Hag. The effect is to drive the Witch Elves into a frenzy of bloodlust. They are infused with the power of Khaine and will immediately seek out the foe to sacrifice to their god. Such is the potency of the potions that the Witch Elves care little for their own safety and will relish battle against many times their own number. It is the lust to shed blood alone that drives these crazed females.

The followers of this dark deity are not just limited to the Land of Chill. It has spread far and wide across the Warhammer World. The worship of Khaine has, with good reason, been forbidden in all of the realms of man. Still there are always those who seek to destroy civilization from within. Witch Hunters seek out and purge these underground cults, and all records of the God were burned at the orders of the Grand Theogonist Johann Helstrum. Nevertheless, many assassins and cutthroats still secretly gather to pay homage to this dark god, and the cult continues to grow in number. But it is within the realm of Naggarond that Khaine has truly found his following, and with each Dark Elf raid his kingdom of slain souls grows ever larger.



As the sun sank over the edge of the world, the cast by the innumerable black towers of the fortified city flowed and merged together, oozing through the silent, empty streets like some insidious evil, invading every corner and doorway, leaving nothing untouched by the chill darkness.

The Hag Queen gazed out over the roof-tops and turrets of the Dark Elf city of Ghron, watching the last feeble rays of daylight recede from the bleak, rocky wilderness of Naggaroth, the aptly named Land of Chill. Seated next to the highest window in the tallest tower of the Temple of Khaine, Hellebron, Hag Queen of the Witch Elves, could see right across Ghron. From this vantage point she constantly scoured the streets and courtyards with her cruel gaze, like some ancient bird of prey surveying its territory for the slightest movement that might betray the presence of its prey.

And ancient she was, as were all the Hag Queens of Khaine the Lord of Murder. How ancient, even the Hag Queens themselves found it hard to remember now. Suffice to say that when Naggaroth was still a new land of promise to the exiled Dark Elves, many centuries ago, they were already the oldest of their kin.

Her age did not make the journey from the Witch King's court at Naggarond to the North Tower any easier. In fact, each year, it seemed to get harder for her to travel the distance across the wastes between the two cities, every jolt of the carriage ride echoed in her aching joints and bones. But on one point she was resolved: she would not remain in the Witch King's court at this time, not while she was in this condition, even though she was leader of the Witch Elves.

She would not give her enemies at the court, especially the ageless Morathi and her panderers, the pleasure of whispering about her behind her back. Hellebron knew that they would, and she would rather suffer a thousand pain-racked journeys to Ghron than tolerate such treatment.

As the last ray of sunlight shone through the window directly into her eyes, the Hag Queen flinched and turned away, catching sight of her

reflection in the mirror that hung against the bare stone wall of her chamber in its macabre iron frame.

The creature that glowered back at her from the glass was appalling to look upon. The gaunt, drawn face, with its eyes sunk deep in their shadowy sockets, was lined and pock-marked, while wrinkled skin hung in great folds from the neck. Tufts of hair sprouted from ugly warts on the hooked, almost beak-like, nose and the jutting chin. Long strands of coarse, grey hair grew from the scalp. On this haggard old crone the characteristic delicately-pointed ears that the Dark Elves shared with their hated High Elven kin had a more sinister, bat-like quality, adding to the hideous appearance of the apparition in the mirror.

It was a vision that the nightmares of a pious man would have been hard-pressed to create. The Hag Queen looked back at her reflection despisingly through half-closed eyes. Then, slowly, a cruel smile formed on her thin lips. It had been a long year. In fact each year seemed to drag on longer than the last. But the time of waiting was over. Death Night was here once more.

The guards posted at the gates of the city shivered, not so much from the cold but because of the unnatural stillness that pervaded every street and square of Ghron. Each offered up a swift prayer that tonight it would not be their bodies that were offered up as living sacrifices to the bloodthirsty Chaos gods. The guards gave the barren wilderness and bleak skies only cursory glances, for on this night the greater danger came not from without but from within.

Tonight the Witch Elves would prowl through all the cities of Naggaroth and steal away any Dark Elves they might find, even going so far as to break into houses to take petrified inhabitants back to their blood-soaked temples, never to be seen again. Tonight the Brides of Khaine would engage in their riotous celebrations, debauched revelries and depraved acts, in praise and honour of their master, the Lord of Murder. Tonight was Death Night.

Within the temple of Khaine the Witch Elves knelt before their Queen.

"Sisters," the ancient crone intoned hoarsely, her voice weak and cracked. "The time has come once more that we must give thanks to our master, Khaine, mighty Lord of Murder, his name be praised."

"His name be praised," echoed the assembled sisterhood.

"Let us worship him with offerings of blood and flesh that his dark appetites may be sated."

Slowly, Hellebron shuffled over to the stone altar that stood in the centre of the chamber. As she did so, the other Witch Elves formed a circle around it. Dark stains covered the altar's cracked surface, betraying its dire purpose. On the altar rested a chalice that might once have been gleaming silver but which was now stained and encrusted with the dry remnants of the same liquid that on occasion drenched the sacrificial altar. The Hag Queen lifted the chalice in her bony grasp and raised it above her head, her frail, emaciated arms shaking slightly under its weight.

"Now let us drink from the crimson cup so that our lord's desires may be our desires, his appetites our appetites, his thirst our thirst. Let us glory in the destruction we create in his name. Praise be to Khaine!"

"Praise be to Khaine!"

Lowering the chalice again, Hellebron put it to her lips and took a mouthful of the warm blood it contained. As she did so, her eyes closed in dark ecstasy and a wicked smile formed on her lips. At last she swallowed and was almost unable to contain the surge of pleasure that flowed through her wasted body at its sickly-sweet taste. Turning away from the altar, the Hag Queen carried the blood-filled chalice to the Witch Elf at the head of the circle who then also drank of its foul contents before passing it to the Dark Elf woman on her left. And so it continued, with each of the witches drinking of the life-giving fluid.

When the Hag Queen opened her eyes a hideous apparition floated before her. The constantly shifting skeletal form seemed to stretch and contract in front of her as it reached for her with talons as long as knives. The poisonous herbs mixed with the blood were rapidly taking effect, creating nightmarish hallucinations inside the Witch Elves' minds. And, of course, the older the mind and the more vileness it had witnessed, the worse the imagined spectres. The calcified horror opened its mouth so wide that its jaw seemed to dislocate, revealing row upon row of pointed fangs dripping with blood.

Hellebron screamed. The piercing cry echoed around the chamber with seemingly no likelihood of it stopping. Then a second shrill cry joined it and then another, and another, until the voices of the Witch Elves were all united in one cacophonous scream.

A gibbous moon hung in a cold cloudless night sky, its wan light illuminating only the topmost pinnacles of Ghroind. Not a sound could be heard anywhere across the city as its Dark Elf inhabitants cowered in their homes, willing dawn to come quickly. Then a shrill piercing scream cut through the silence. The guards on the gates gripped the pommels of their swords for reassurance or hefted deadly repeater crossbows into position. Dark Elves in their houses ensured that all doors and windows were firmly locked and bolted, although they knew, deep down, that their precautions would do little to stop the rampaging Witch Elves should they decide to raid their home.

With a deep, resounding boom the doors of the temple of Khaine, covered with the flayed skin of prisoners who had been flogged to death, burst open and the savage warrior women poured out into Ghroind. Whooping and howling, they ran through the streets of the city in a frenzy, their only intention to kill in honour of their depraved master. Their cries, which had begun as screams of terror at the illusions thrown up by their fevered brains, were now exclamations of excitement and exhilaration as the intoxicating herbs drove them into a delirium of bloodlust.

Within their homes the Dark Elves shivered. Death Night had begun.

Deep within the temple of Khaine, Hellebron delighted in the anguished screams of those dying in excruciating pain as the Witch Elves put to death their prisoners. They inflicted on the sacrificial victims – the chosen ones – such tortures that every fibre of their beings was filled with exquisite agony, until at last, having suffered unimaginable torments, they were released into blessed oblivion.

A young Witch Elf, only recently admitted to the sisterhood, approached her queen, cautiously and with her head bowed in reverence. Appropriately enough for the oldest Hag Queen of the Witch Elves, Hellebron was considered to be one of the most dangerous and violent of all the Hag Queens, and all feared angering the Dark Witch. After a moment's pause, the young initiate spoke in a low voice: "Your bath is ready, majesty."

With the young witch's help, the ancient hag rose from her throne and, ever so slowly, hobbled across the flagstone floor and through an archway out of the room. Eventually she reached the bathing chamber. There, in sweltering humidity, another young Dark Elf woman was pouring a deep crimson liquid from a pitcher into the great iron cauldron that dominated the room. The bath was now full, the steam rising from it condensing in clouds around them.

With the aid of her servants, the disgusting crone disrobed, revealing the true grotesqueness of her withered form in all its macabre glory, and clambered into the cauldron, submerging totally for a few brief seconds so that every part of her was immersed in the rejuvenating fluid, before settling with only her head above the surface.

Lying in her annual ritual bath, Hellebron savoured the sweet smell of fear that still hung about the blood, as, not so very long ago, it had clung to the lacerated bodies of the dying. She luxuriated in its invigorating warmth, which soothed every aching joint and relaxed every tense muscle.

There she lay, only at last having to get out before the cooling blood coagulated.

The creature that rose from the bath, stepping out of the red mist gracefully and without assistance, was very different from the crone that had entered it. The young Witch Elf, having never witnessed the transformation of a Hag Queen before, stood in speechless awe, staring at the exquisitely beautiful woman now in front of her. The Hag Queen's skin, usually pallid like that of all Dark Elves, was now like fine marble glowing with a cold inner light. Her hair fell in long dark tresses and her figure was the most enchanting and voluptuous the young witch had ever seen. The strangely cadaverous beauty was almost disturbing but, at the same time, was more powerful and captivating than any magic, even stronger than that of Naggarth's greatest masters of dark sorcery.

"My robe please, sister," purred the Hag Queen in a voice no longer a gasping wheeze but now as soft as velvet, her seductive, dulcet tones stirring the girl from her reverie.

"Yes... Your majesty."

As she dried herself, Hellebron revelled in her newly recovered strength, every part of her body feeling charged with new life. Restored and revitalised once more by blood, the ancient Dark Elf considered that she would never lose the sensation of tingling excitement she felt each time she bathed in the crimson, life-giving fluid, Khaine be praised! How many such bathings she had enjoyed she no longer knew, but that did not matter now. At the moment, the Hag Queen of the Witch Elves felt that she could do anything!

But there at the back of her mind, on the edge of consciousness, was the awareness of the nagging certainty that, gradually and inescapably, over the coming year, her body would deteriorate, no doubt more rapidly than before, reverting to its true, decrepit form, until that night, which brought with it the hope and expectation of renewed life, came again. That night when she would know the vigour and beauty of youth once more. Death Night.



THE DRUCHII PANTHEON

The Elves worship a wide variety of deities of varying power and temperament. These beings are divided into two main spheres of influence, with neither having dominance over the other. This is encapsulated in the Elven belief of *yenlui*, or balance; a philosophy that dictates that there must be harmony between the light and dark natures of the Elven spirit.

The most widely acknowledged Elven gods outside of Naggaroth are the *Cadai*, or the gods of the Heavens, who represent the more positive characteristics of elven culture and the natural world. These are ruled by *Asuryan*, the greatest of the gods, and include such figures as *Isha*, goddess of fertility and healing, *Kurnous* the god of hunters, and *Vaul* the smith god.

In elven belief many of the unsavoury aspects of their nature and the world at large are also represented by gods known as the *Cytharai*, or gods of the Underworld.

Of these, *Khaine* is the most well-known, being a god of murder and war, but there are others such as *Ereth Khial* who rules the Underworld, *Atharti*, a goddess of pleasure and indulgence, and *Hekarti* the goddess of Dark Magic. These gods are not openly worshipped on *Ulthuan*, though they have small shrines that are usually shunned except during essential ceremonies of appeasement. Unlike their cousins on *Ulthuan*, the Dark Elves openly pay homage to these forbidding powers, the worship of whom rose through the *Cults of Excess* that preceded the civil war.

KHAINE, THE BLOODY-HANDED GOD

Khaine, or *Khaela Mensha Khaine* as he is known in the Elven tongue, is the god of murder, hatred and destruction. He is the kindler of war, the ruthless personification of a vicious creed. *Khaine* believes that conflict is necessary for peace to reign; only slaughter gives the promise of life any meaning; and love is nothing unless tempered by the blackest of hatreds. In order for there to be life there must also be death, in order to have peace there must also be war, in order to have happiness there must be suffering, in order to have love there must also be hatred and murder. He is a god who gives his supplicants license to do as they will, and forbids nothing, save denial of his divine will.

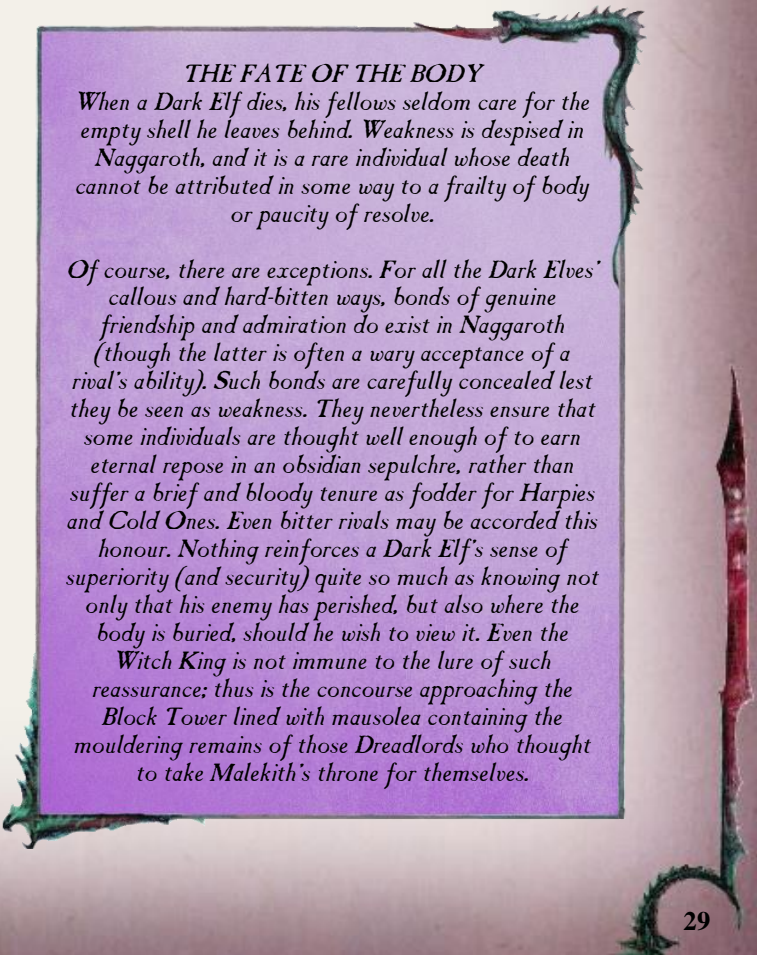
It is, therefore, little wonder that it is *Khaine's* blessing the Dark Elves seek most keenly, for their lives are founded upon deeds of slaughter and torment. They have no time for life, peace, happiness or love, and thus no time for the Elven gods that represent these virtues. They let their dark sides control their lives and actively seek opportunities to cause death and carnage. They revel in their wickedness and gratify it at every opportunity.

Whilst all Elves know of this dark deity and respect him as a necessary evil, only the Dark Elves have formed a society that openly accepts and encourages the worship of this evil master. *Khaine* is the immortal brother of *Morr*, the God of Death. Jealous of his brother's vast underworld kingdom of the dead, he steals away all souls that have been murdered or slain in war, building his own dark realm of death.

Where the High Elves treat warily with the Lord of Murder, the Dark Elves embrace him with abandon, sacrificing slaves, comrades and even their own children to catch *Khaine's* attention for even a moment. Such devotion pleases the Bloody-Handed God in a way that the hollow observances of the High Elves never will, but *Khaine* is easily bored, and each passing year the sacrifices must become ever more wild and barbarous if they are to attract his ruddy gaze.

All Dark Elves are touched by *Khaine* to some degree, for their heritage is tainted by the *Widowmaker* and the acts their ancestors performed at *Aenarion's* side. Many, however, wholeheartedly embrace the Bloody-Handed God's cruel vision. Such Elves are known as the *Knives of Khaine* both revered and shunned by their fellows, they are loyal only to their ruthless creed.

Within Dark Elf society there are a number of religious cults committed to the dark rites of their god. Of these the *Witch Elves* are by far the more numerous and renowned. They worship *Khaine's* war-like aspect, taking frenzied joy in the destructiveness and mayhem



THE FATE OF THE BODY

When a Dark Elf dies, his fellows seldom care for the empty shell he leaves behind. Weakness is despised in Naggaroth, and it is a rare individual whose death cannot be attributed in some way to a frailty of body or paucity of resolve.

Of course, there are exceptions. For all the Dark Elves' callous and hard-bitten ways, bonds of genuine friendship and admiration do exist in Naggaroth (though the latter is often a wary acceptance of a rival's ability). Such bonds are carefully concealed lest they be seen as weakness. They nevertheless ensure that some individuals are thought well enough of to earn eternal repose in an obsidian sepulchre, rather than suffer a brief and bloody tenure as fodder for Harpies and Cold Ones. Even bitter rivals may be accorded this honour. Nothing reinforces a Dark Elf's sense of superiority (and security) quite so much as knowing not only that his enemy has perished, but also where the body is buried, should he wish to view it. Even the Witch King is not immune to the lure of such reassurance; thus is the concourse approaching the Block Tower lined with mausolea containing the mouldering remains of those Dreadlords who thought to take Malekith's throne for themselves.

of bloody battle. They are the brides of Khaine – beautiful but deadly, cruel and uncaring, their bodies lithe and strong. There are many who would give their very lives to lie in the seductive embrace of the Witch Elves of Khaine.

ERETH KHIAL, THE PALE QUEEN

The supreme goddess of the Underworld is Ereth Khial and she is second in power only to Asuryan. In the days before the rise of the Everqueen, she sought to seduce Asuryan, but was banished for her temerity. When he resisted her she flew into a rage and stole the souls of the Elves and imprisoned them in a black pit, known as Mirai. It is said if ever Ereth Khial is so angered again, she will raise the dead, who will outnumber the living and eat them!

She has thus ever been an outcast in the eyes of the Elves of Ulthuan. She is, however, a much-courted deity in Naggaroth, for the Dark Elves see their own betrayal echoed in her fate. The Pale Queen alone offers the Dark Elves some salvation from Slaanesh's hunger, for her own armies are forged from the stolen souls of the Elf-dead. This is not to say all the Elves who have ever died now labour in Ereth Khial's service, for countless souls remain bound into waystones and trees, and a far greater number have been consumed by Slaanesh. Yet still, year by year, the Pale Queen's army grows. One day, her shadow legions will tear down Asuryan's vaunted creation in payment for his insults of old.

Though most Dark Elves care little for the fate of their souls, some fervently worship the Pale Queen, seeking to ensure that she will come to their aid when death claims them. It is far better, they believe, to perform abased service in the Underworld's grim embrace than to meet oblivion at Slaanesh's hand. Such ideals are woefully misguided, and it is probably little consolation that most will never find out how mistaken they are – the Dark Prince begrudges even the smallest scraps to fall from his table, and Ereth Khial can risk only the subtlest of thefts.

There is a rumour in Naggaroth, however, that there is one soul Ereth Khial yearns to seize beyond all others. In Malekith, the Pale Queen sees a consort whose ruthlessness is fit to match her own, and she has sworn that it is he who will one day lead her final vengeful assault on creation.

Ereth Khial's most feared servants are the Rephallim – invisible wraith-creatures who lead souls to the underworld and keep them imprisoned there. Worshipers of Ereth Khial hide themselves amongst Ulthuan society. They perform vile ceremonies entreating their goddess to send the wicked Rephallim to snatch away important High Elf counsellors, military leaders and mages. They summon the avatars of Ereth Khial with dark rites and set them upon their foes using talismans unique to each victim – effigies made using the target's hair or blood, or treasured items stolen from the prey's borne.

ANATH RAEMA, THE SAVAGE HUNTRESS

Anath Raema is the sister of Khaine, and is the goddess of the savage hunt. It is from Anath Raema that Dark Elves are gifted the joy of the chase and the thrill of the kill. It matters not to Anath Raema who or what is hunted, for every living creature is seen as mere prey to this bloodthirsty goddess.

The Savage Huntress is a vengeful deity, who about her waist wears a belt of heads and hands – tokens claimed from hunters who bore her blessings but offered no praise in return. Legend also tells that her amorous advances were once spurned by Kurnous, and so she is also worshipped by some Elves as a patron of jealous lovers; an avenging deity who will hunt down and slay those who have wronged her supplicants.

HEKARTI, MISTRESS OF MAGIC

Hekarti is the goddess of conjurations and Dark Magic. She has no shrines, save for a small temple within Ghroind's Dark Convent. She sees all the Winds of Magic and has six arms to carry her sacred accoutrements – a serpent-headed staff a beating heart, a scorpion, a broken arrow, a serrated dagger and a phial of orphan's tears.


It was to Hekarti that Morathi first turned when she set out upon the long path to mastering sorcery. Hekarti is a goddess of conjurations and Dark Magic and from her the wizards of the Dark Elves draw much of their power. She has no shrine, save perhaps a small temple in the Dark Convent in Ghroind, for Hekarti is said to be everywhere. She is many-headed, like the Hydra, so

THE FATE OF THE SPIRIT

The Elves are cursed to have their souls devoured by Slaanesh when their mortal bodies perish. The High Elves and the Wood Elves have taken precautions to guard against this fate, sealing their spirits away in waystones and elemental creatures. The Dark Elves, however, have no such defence against the Dark Prince.

They are more than capable of devising one, but refuse to surrender their being to such a half-life of dulled senses and diminished sensation. The knowledge that naught but oblivion awaits in the end only spurs the Naggarothi to a wilder and more callous existence, for they believe a life lived without limitations or censure is their only compensation.

This is not to say that all Dark Elf souls meet their end as ambrosia for thirsting Slaanesh. A few are delivered by the intercession of other gods. Ereth Khial, the Pale Queen, is always eager to acquire Elves to slave for her in the Underworld, and sends her winged servants to steal souls whilst the Dark Prince's attentions are elsewhere. Other damned souls are occasionally rescued by Loec, the Trickster, who engages Slaanesh in contests of chance, and then cheats to seize the prize. Such interventions are rare, but frequent enough to kindle some hope of salvation.



that she can see all of the winds of magic, and has six-arms to carry her sacred accoutrements; a serpent-headed staff, a beating heart, a scorpion, a broken arrow, a serrated dagger and a phial of orphan's tears.

With Hekarti's favour it is possible to tap directly into the Winds of Magic and unleash their full power. Such is the nature of Dark Elf sorcery, making their spells far more destructive than those of lesser races. Hekarti does not give her blessing for free though, and there is always a price to pay, in blood – the Sorceress's or someone else's, Hekarti cares not!

Unlike many of her kind, Hekarti pays close attention to the desires of the Elves. She is ever locked in jealous contest with her twin sister Atharti, the Goddess of Pleasure, and resents her sway over mortals. It was supposedly this rivalry that first enticed Hekarti to grant wisdom to Morathi. That said, the Hag Sorceress has always kept her devotions to the two sisters in careful balance – Naggarothi legends have many grim examples of what happens to those who favour one above the other.

ATHARTI, LADY OF DESIRE

Atharti is the goddess of pleasure and seduction, often depicted as a masked figure entwined with blood-red snakes. She has a profound rivalry with her sister Hekarti, and each has made many attempts to slay the other. The Lady of Desire is a mistress of all forms of seduction, and the very sight of her is said to cause mortals to collapse in complete and unquestioning abasement. For this reason, those Naggarothi who infiltrate High Elf society count Atharti amongst their foremost patrons, for only she can unlock the hearts and minds of those they wish to corrupt.

DRAKIRA, QUEEN OF VENGEANCE

Drakira is the daughter of Ellinill, Lord of Destruction. No affection binds them, for theirs was ever a family bound together only by a shared delight in the suffering they could inflict upon the mortal Elves. Indeed, Drakira was often mocked by her brothers and sisters, for theirs was the power to wreak destruction on a grand scale, whilst hers were subtler gifts whose wicked fruits bloomed only with patient tending.

When Isha wept for the woes Ellinill's children inflicted upon the Elves, Drakira saw an opportunity. It was she who shaped Isha's tears of mourning into bitter shards, who stoked the mother goddess' grief until her desire for retribution burned bright. Thus did Drakira, frailest of the Ellinilli, bring about the fall of her siblings. Those who survived the horror Isha's grief unleashed were ever careful never to offend their sister again.

All Dark Elves know this story, and are careful to treat the Queen of vengeance with the respect her family denied her. They believe that she looks favourably upon their vendetta with the High Elves, for what goddess of retribution could possibly deny a people so

badly wronged? The truth is, of course, that Drakira supports the Elves of Ellthuan and Naggaroth in equal measure. The desire for vengeance burns bright on either side of the ocean, and the Queen of vengeance has no need to take sides. She lends her aid to an Elf in whom the desire for retribution burns bright, regardless of rank or rightness of cause. There is always a price, of course. No act of vengeance leaves the perpetrator entirely as he was, and a bargain with Drakira inevitably costs the supplicant more than he ever intended to give.

NETHU, KEEPER OF THE LAST DOOR

Nethu is Ereth Khial's son, and the gatekeeper of Mirai, the Underworld. It is his task to see that those souls claimed by the Pale Queen remain sealed away until the hour of the Rhana Dhandra – the last battle of the gods. It is also Nethu's duty to see that no intruder breaches the Mimi to steal away the secrets of the dead—at least, not without offering a suitable tribute to the Pale Queen.


In this, the Keeper of the Last Door is aided by a host of Dark Pegasi, who watch unblinkingly from the battlements of his dark fortress, easily mistaken for statuary by the unwary. When roused, none are safe, for their shadowy maws consume soul-stuff as easily as mortal flesh.

Nethu carries a silver harp that he uses to tease the soul of an Elf from his body and a heavy iron key for the gates of Mirai. Rites of Nethu allow converse with the spirits of the dead and there are legends of daring Elves who have tricked Nethu to gain access to the Underworld and learnt the secrets of the deceased. Some Dark Elves wear amulets of Nethu fashioned from bone bound with raw sinew to protect against disease.

Agents of Malekith living within the cities of Ulthuan carve secret runes of Nethu upon the chambers of High Elf nobles and civic dignitaries. Once ensorcelled, their victims suffer a wasting ennui that drains both body and spirit. Those cursed in this way are driven mad by the potent hex. Some believe it was the power of Nethu that allowed Malekith to twist and torment the dreams of Moniael. After Ashantir Lightweaver cast himself from the pinnacle of the Tower of Hoeth, such a rune was found by the Swordmasters under the dead mage's bed. This led to a desperate hunt for the cultists that had placed it there. The search caused untold shock and grief that lasted for nearly a year, after which the Loremasters decreed that the agents had long since fled and escaped retribution.

ADDAIOTH, BRINGER OF WRATH AND FIRE

Addaioth is the god of the all-consuming flame. He can be ranked as the least subtle of all the Elven gods and prefers direct and forceful solutions to any obstacle placed in his path.



The Bringer of Wrath and Fire is a being of monstrous pride and unbridled power. When Ellinill set about devouring his offspring, most fled or attempted to hide. Addaioth did neither, but met his ebon sire in battle. For three days and three nights, son matched father blow for blow in a conflict that shook the heavens and drowned the mortal world in flame. Addaioth knew that he was overmatched, but his hubris made concession unthinkable, and his anger lent him the strength to fight on. Nonetheless, it was a battle that Addaioth could not win. He was sure to have been vanquished had not Ladrielle, Lady of Mists, blinded Ellinill and spirited Addaioth away to the mortal world.

As the millennia passed, Addaioth healed from the grievous wounds he suffered that day, but he has never forgiven Ladrielle for interfering. He knew that the other gods believed him to have fled the field, and the shame of it hangs heavy on him. Nonetheless, the Bringer of Wrath and Fire knows he is destined to fight his father once again, and spares no effort in preparing for that inevitable battle. He labours beneath the mountains, crafting new weapons to aid his victory. Alas, Addaioth is a poor smith and too proud to ask Vaul for aid, thus every blade he creates is flawed beyond redemption. With each failure, his anger grows, causing the ground to quake and lava to flow. In Naggaroth, the Dark Elves see fire burst from the mountaintops and know that the Bringer of Wrath and Fire has forged another crooked sword.



MATHLANN, LORD OF THE DEEPS

Mathlann is the King of Storm and Sea, the ruler of the savage creatures of the deeps. He is an unpredictable deity, as likely to bestow curses as he is to grant favours, and seemingly makes no distinction between the various races of Ekes, only seeing a difference between those who plough his beloved seas, and those who prefer to remain bound to dry land.

Black Ark Corsairs revere Mathlann most highly. In part, this is simply good sense – any Elf who spends so much of his life upon the waves is well-advised to ensure he remains in good standing with the King of Storm and Sea. However, the Corsairs also feel a kinship with Mathlann that transcends mere worship, for they too are a force of destruction that strikes without warning from calm seas, bringing ruin to fleets, ports and coastlines.

ELDRAZOR, LORD OF BLADES

Eldrazor is a god obsessed with the skilful arts of war. He seldom ranks high amongst his pantheon, for many Dark Elves scorn his reluctance to fight save in the pursuit of honour. However, once Eldrazor decides to fight, he does so without mercy. Any tactic is permissible within his Arena of Death, and as he constantly redefines the arena's bounds in the mortal realm, it is impossible to know you're within it until it is far too late...

ELLINILL, LORD OF DESTRUCTION

Ellinill is a many-faced god of destruction. He has more than a hundred guises, with which he wreaks mayhem and havoc upon the world. Each has a separate name and appearance, such as Hukon the god of earthquakes, Addaioth the god of volcanoes and Estreuth the god of drought. In the times before the Sundering, offerings of flowers, floating lamps and burned incense were used to appease him. In this way, the High Elves of Lothorn still pay peaceful homage to Ellinill in his guise of Mathlann, god of storms.

However, the Dark Elves' worship of Ellinill is not so peaceful. From towering cliffs and upon the decks of their ships, the Druchii sacrifice living creatures to bring safe passage for their Black Arks or to unleash a tempest upon their enemies. Often Corsairs will chain some of their captured slaves to the prows of their ships in appeasement of Ellinill.

Some shrines to Ellinill are built over deep, lava-filled chasms in the mountains of Naggaroth. These pillared temples resonate with the chanting of priests and the screams of captives as they are buried into the fiery depths in exchange for favours from the Lord of Destruction.

Legend tells that Ellinill once had more than one hundred offspring, each of whom had inherited an aspect of his destructive nature. Together, father and progeny inflicted all manner of disasters upon the world, revelling in the harm they unleashed upon the Elves. Ellinill was proud of his children, but he was also paranoid, and worried that they might conspire to supplant him. Individually, the offspring were no match for their sire, but the Lord of Destruction was wary of their combined power, and so he watched them closely.

Finally, Isha could bear the suffering of the Elves no more, and pleaded with the other gods to curtail the actions of the Ellinilli. All save one refused to heed her, for they were all wary of provoking Ellinill's wrath. Only Loec the Trickster answered Isha's plea, and he soon deceived Ellinill into believing that the long-feared betrayal had arrived. Upon hearing Loec's words, the Lord of Destruction flew into a rage and, one by one, hunted down and consumed his children, reclaiming the facets of destruction they had once embodied. Yet the battles had weakened Ellinill, and he would never again know the level of godly might he once enjoyed.

Of all the Ellinilli, only five survived: Addaioth, Bringer of Wrath and Fire; Estreuth, Herald of Famine and Drought; Hukon the Sunderer; Mathlann, King of Storm and Sea; and Drakira, Queen of Vengeance. They hid themselves in the mortal world, and have never returned to the heavens lest they join in their siblings' fate.

Suriak Blackblade strode down the deserted street. The light of the full moon cast eerie shadows down the dark alleys that branched off the road. It had been many months since he had last walked in his home city of Ghrond, but even so the streets were normally lined with Elves cavorting in all manner of twisted pleasures. A scuffling behind him broke his train of thought, and he turned to face the source of the noise. A shadow darted into an alleyway, disappearing into the darkness. Probably just a rat, Suriak thought, laughing at his own nerves. Still he was close to home now and would welcome the warmth of his house.

He had left his family to join one of the slave raids. For nine months the Ark of Damnation had sailed across the Sea of Chaos, launching strike raids at any settlements they happened upon. By all accounts it had been a most successful voyage, and Grides percentage of the profits would raise the status of himself and his family a great degree. Slaves fetched a high price in the city of Ghrond, and Suriak was pleased with his cut. At last he would be able to leave the lower outskirts of the city and move into one of the towers that overlooked this dangerous quarter. He would be thankful when he could escape this rough area where murder and theft were everyday occurrences. Perhaps he would even be able to purchase one of the slaves that the raids had captured.

Another sound behind him caused Suriak to turn once more. This time the noise was too loud to be mistaken for vermin. A short distance behind him he could see the silhouette of an Elf facing him. By the length of the figure's hair he guessed it must be a female. In her hands she held two wickedly curved blades, and stood motionless facing him. As Suriak glanced back over his shoulder he saw that his route had also been blocked by another woman. A sudden thought caused his heart to beat intensely. The deserted streets, a full moon, how foolish could he have been. Tonight was Death Night, when the Witch Elves emerged to revel in the shedding of blood and the slaughter of innocents.

The two Elves started to walk toward Suriak. Their movement was graceful

and had they not clutched deadly blades in their hands it would have been alluring. As they drew closer, Suriak could make out their attractive, sharp features. Visages of astounding beauty, their long flowing black hair seemed to move with a life of its own. Their slim and shapely bodies were barely covered by a small amount of purple silk cloth, their long, pale legs ending in knee high, black leather boots. Had Suriak not known of their dark intent, then he would have truly been in paradise, but these were Witch Elves. If he were to stand any chance of surviving this encounter he could not let his mind become clouded by their stunning appearance. Carefully drawing his own blade he slowly backed towards a wall, using it to guard his rear. The Witch Elves now stood before him. He could see by their bloodshot eyes and dilated pupils that their minds were under the spell of the legendary potions that created a lust for blood.

"You have two choices." one of the Elves spoke to him. Even her voice was seductive.

"You can come quietly with us, experience pleasures the like of which are beyond your wildest imagination before learning the true meaning of pain, the Elf ran her finger down the length of her blade, "we can offer your body in holy sacrifice to Khaine where you stand."

The Witch Elves invitation was a tempting offer, but Suriak preferred to remain alive and neither of those options gave any such allowance. He thrust his sword towards one of the Witches and prepared for battle. She parried the blow easily, bringing both her weapons in an upward thrust at his torso. He had barely dodged the attack before the second Elf was upon him swinging her blades straight for his neck. He managed to duck drawing a small dagger from his boot as he did so. Again the first Elf came at him. Anticipating her action, he quickly stepped to one side. The Witch Elf was over balanced and, as she passed him, he thrust out with the dagger, driving it deep into her rib cage. As the second assailant charged him, all he could do was kick out with his boot, but he connected with a knee and sent her stumbling to the floor for a moment.

Suriak sprinted away down the street, thanking his good luck and the combat experience gained in the previous months. His home was close by, and if he didn't get indoors he would be dead by morning. As he rounded the corner his heart sank. There before him the door to his home hung loosely from it hinges. Suriak bound into the hallway. The runes of Khaine had been traced in blood upon each wall of his small house. As he ran into his bed chamber a bloody heap in the far corner confirmed his worst fears. His wife lay dead, a sword in her hand, where she had tried to fend off the murderous intruders. In the center of the room a crib lay broken and empty. Suriak fell to his knees, dejected and broken. If only he had been here to protect them instead of seeking fortunes abroad. He did not hear the Witch Elf enter the room behind him, nor did he care as her poisoned blade cut a small scratch into his exposed back.

Suriak groggily opened his eyes. He could not move his arms or legs and his mind span with clouded visions. A musky incense filled his nostrils, and in the dim light of the candles he could see a massive statue of Khaine towering above the altar upon which he was hound.

"At last, the sleeping one wakes." He had heard the smooth and sultry voice before. The evening's events flooded back into his memory and Suriak struggled to free himself.

"It is futile to attempt escape, you are tightly bound. By struggling you will only prolong the agony. Come relax, believe me you will enjoy the experience far more if you free your mind to us." The Witch Elf leant over Suriak, her full red lips kissed his forehead as she gently caressed his long dark hair.

"Your spouse fought well, she must have been a brave warrior before she bore your child." The Witch Elf laughed as she saw Suriak resume his struggle to break from the chains at the mention of his daughter. She drew a curved ceremonial dagger and ran the cold flat steel blade across Suriak's exposed chest.

"Fear not, the infant still lives and will make a fine addition to our coven."



The last rays of the setting sun reflected redly off the shapely helms and finely-crafted weapons of the Silver Helm patrol, the white tunics of the High Elf warriors appearing orange in the light.

The Elves were returning through the pass to the enclave of Arnheim. Aillion hated these mountains. The Blackspines were a relentless range of jagged peaks, precipitous crags and bleak, rocky escarpments — perfect ambush country.

Aillion knew that the patrol would not reach Arnheim before nightfall, and travelling through these harsh lands in darkness appealed to him even less than having to make camp here for the night. However, he was determined that they should make it through the Stormfire Pass before they stopped.



Behind Aillion rode a troop of twenty High Elf warriors, all mounted on the grey or dappled steeds prized by their race. Their thoughts and fears were the same as those of their lord. None felt any love for the chill peaks and all dearly wished to be back in the enclave at the soonest opportunity.

Although the most capable of fighters, these lands held unknown dangers that inspired feelings of uncertainty and fear in even the bravest Elves. As the crimson light faded around them, the horsemen anxiously scanned the ridges above the pass, expecting at any minute to be assailed by an Orc warband or some deadlier denizen of the mountains, incensed by their intrusion into its territory.

The crags were indeed home to many fearsome creatures, but none so relentless and dangerous as the black-clad, sharp-eyed warriors who were watching the High Elves passing at that moment.

A groan from the end of the column of riders made the others twist round in their saddles. In shocked surprise, they saw the last Elf in the line slumped over the neck of his startled steed, a crossbow bolt protruding from his back. The bolt had found its mark perfectly, having pierced the Elf's heart. He was already dead.

The dead Elf's panicked horse bolted along the pass, disturbing the other animals. As the steeds whinnied and shied, shouts came from some riders: others spun round, first one way then the other, in a desperate and futile attempt to locate the sniper.

But there was no further crossbow fire or, in fact, any sign of the attackers. Apart from their dead companion, it was as if nothing had happened at all.

"We should go after them," suggested one of the Silver Helms, rather too boldly, "and ride them down."

"In this half-light?" retorted Aillion. "We should soon find them easily if we split up."

"No!" barked the unit's commander. "We stay together."

The young knight glowered back at Aillion with a look of defiance but kept his place in the line.

"Now let us be on our way."

The Dark Elf Shade party watched the riders ride off, their keen eyesight not in any way inhibited by the lack of light. No, their time was just beginning.

The guard shivered, as much from a growing sense of unease as from the cold. It had been his dubious pleasure to be one of those selected to take the first watch. The troop had made it out of Stormfire Pass as the sun finally vanished beyond the jagged horizon, but they were still within the boundary of the mountains.

It had been decided that to go on through the night, consumed with tiredness after two days' hard riding, and at the mercy of keen-sighted potential enemies, would be pure folly. No, this way the resting Elves could be sure of being surrounded and protected by their fellows, who could give warning of any potential threat in plenty of time. Still, however, even though they desperately needed sleep, many could not after the attack in the pass.

What was that? The guard looked round quickly to his right, straining to see anything at all in the darkness. He was sure that he had heard something not far from the camp. Looking to his far left and then to the right he could see the other guards staring out into the night. Neither had reacted to the sound, suggesting that they had not heard it. There it was again, only closer now. Cautiously, sword at the ready, the Elf slowly stepped away from his post in the direction of the sound.

The black-cloaked figure let the body of the Silver Helm slip from his grasp and slump to the ground, the Elf's throat cut. Without saying a word, through a series of hand signals, the leader of the Dark Elf scouting party directed his warriors towards the crest of the ridge overlooking the camp.



Even though the cold towers of Naggaroth, the usual haunts of the foul Dark Elves, were leagues away to the north, beyond the uncrossable Doomglades, bands of their hawk-eyed scouts would regularly make guerrilla raids on the High Elf enclave of Arnheim. Theirs were the tactics of sniping and ambush. It was said that they would harry their prey for days, slowly picking off their victims, one by one.

Unimpeded by the rugged terrain of the mountains, the Dark Elf Shades had followed the patrol for the last two days, using shortcuts familiar to them that actually ran

through tunnels and caves under the range of the Blackspines. The Dark Elves had known of a number of ways through these tunnels for centuries although they did not venture into the deeper caves, for there dwelt indescribable, eyeless things that shunned all light and warmth, that could tear apart rocks and Dark Elves with equal ease. However, a trained Scout could travel through the safe tunnels and cut out several leagues of more awkward and hazardous paths above ground.

The six Dark Elves were now crouched at the top of the escarpment, repeating crossbows at the ready. With one silent signal from their leader, the Scout party stealthily scurried down the slope and melted into the night.

Aillion was woken by a cry. In seconds, the troop was on its feet, some seeing to the horses, which were whinnying nervously. Several of the Elves who had been on guard were standing together just outside the edge of the camp. Aillion quickly joined them.

"It's Gandrell," said one of the guards. "His throat's been cut."

"Any sign of the attacker?" demanded Aillion.

"No, nothing."

There was a shout from another Elf nearby. "Over here. There's a set of footprints."

Aillion strode over to the young Silverhelm. The single set of prints of a pair of booted feet in the grey dust disappeared into the night, towards the higher ground. The High Elf commander stood deep in thought for several moments, his brow lined in concentration. So far he only had evidence of one assailant and if they could be dealt with swiftly, the danger would be over.

Aillion's supernaturally keen High Elf hearing heard a slight 'click' from away in the darkness, followed by a loud 'shhhh-thunk'. A look of horror spread over the face of the Silver Helm by Aillion's side, and then he slumped forward. Even before the body of the first Silver Helm hit the ground, a crossbow bolt in his neck, another was clutching at a shaft sticking out of his midriff.

As Aillion roused himself, a shadow seemed to coalesce from the darkness around him into a humanoid form. Drawing his sword and leaping to one side in one fluid movement, Aillion felt the bolt glance off his scaled armour and swept his blade around in an arc. There was a cry and then the shadow was swallowed up by the night once more.

"Arm yourselves! We are attacked!" he yelled, suppressing his own growing feelings of panic. The body and the footprints had been a trap, and he had led his men straight into it.

Two more Elves fell under a hail of arrows. He felt so helpless, fighting an unseen and unreachable enemy. He had no idea where the next attack would come from and so made a snap decision.

"To the horses!" he commanded. "Let us ride away from here!"

The Dark Elves revelled in the screams of the dying High Elves, their hated kin. Naggaroth was theirs: the lords of Ulthuan would never take it from them.

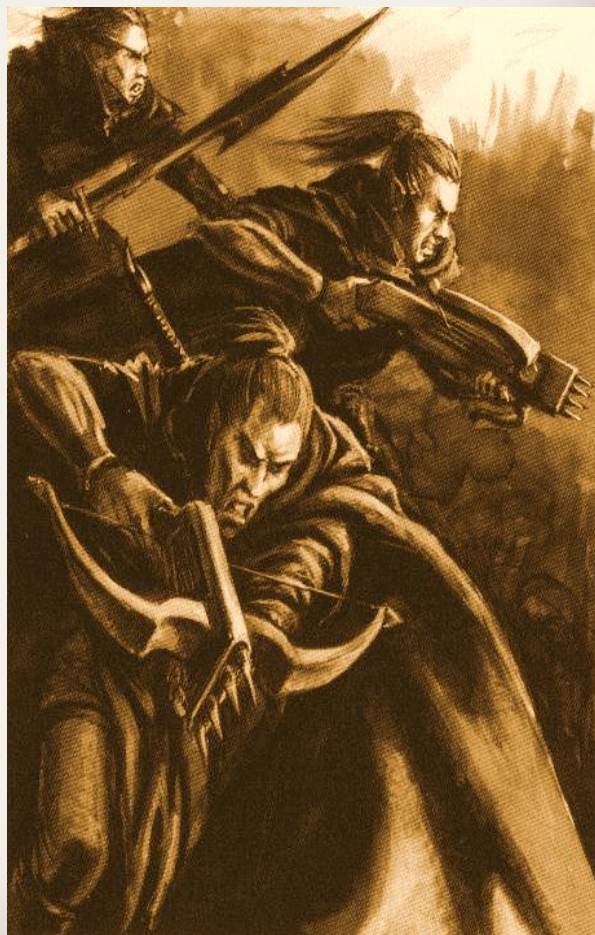
With the first soft light of dawn, the sentry standing at the gates of Arnhem looked out at the mountains to the west and caught sight of the lone grey horse galloping across the plain towards the enclave. When he saw a rider slumped across its neck he immediately alerted his superior.

The gates were opened to admit the horse, and the guards immediately made to help the Elf slouched semi-conscious in the saddle, with a crossbow bolt stuck in his side. The rider was wheezing badly, suggesting that the bolt had punctured a lung.

As he was helped down from his exhausted steed, Aillion half-opened his eyes. "They ambushed us... We could not help ourselves..." His words came raspingly and he appeared to be almost delirious. "They charged down the rearguard." Tears began to run down his face. "They killed the horses..."

He coughed and a trickle of blood ran from the corner of his mouth. "They killed us all..."

And then he was dead.



KEY

Gate to the Underworld Sea



Road

Temple

NAGGAROTH

The Land of Chill

CHAOS WASTELANDS



Naggaroth

The Old World

Ulthuan

Araby

Lustria

THE BLACK OCEAN

LUSTRIA

GULF OF LUSTRIA

The Obsidian Face

N






THE LAND OF NAGGAROTH

THE LAND OF CHILL

The Dark Elves were driven from the Elven land of Ulthuan many centuries ago and now live in the northern regions of the New World. Their bleak and unwelcoming homeland is known as Naggaroth, which translates as the Land of Chill. The name is an appropriate one, for most of Naggaroth is a harsh wilderness of frozen tundra.

Naggaroth is a bleak and forbidding territory that is as unforgiving as the Dark Elves who have made it their home. Sinister cities tower from the wind-swept tundra, casting their forbidding shadows across jagged mountains and shadowy forests. The surrounding landscape is bleak and forbidding. Its northern plains are barren and windswept expanses, broken only by jutting outcrops of rock. Black ribbons of rivers, their black waters tainted by magic and blood, crisscross the ice fields, carving elaborate canyons and deep ravines in the frozen ground. Further south, the thin soil is slightly more fertile, allowing sparse pine forests to grow. Here, the Dark Elves have huge plantations to feed the cities, worked by slaves who labour until they drop dead, their bodies left to decay and nourish the barren soil.



"I was old even when the world was still young, and thus it is I who writes of the long gone days, of millennia of hate, treachery and betrayal. I write to you, young Druchii, for I know the truth. I have stood among the ruins of Anlec and I have circled the world on my Black Ark, the Claw of Dominion. I will tell of the world as it was, for I have eaten the fruit of the Black Tree and, by the will of the Witch King, I have lived through ages even as my comrades have died. Thus I can tell you, Elf of true blood, of your past.

Though we have wandered far to this land, called the New World by the hairy barbarians, the usurper humans, we have not forgotten the spires of Anlec and our forests of pale grey trees. For this place was not always our home.

Your true home and mine lies far away from here, across the Sea of Chaos. Once Nagarythe was the greatest of Elven kingdoms. The beauty of our northern shores were famed throughout the world, and the folk of Nagarythe were known as the greatest warriors of all Elvenkind. There were also lesser Elven kingdoms, pale shadows of Nagarythe, insignificant in importance compared to our glory."

*The Founding of Naggaroth,
as told by Furion of Clar Karond*

Most The Dark Elves live in six heavily fortified cities, their innumerable towers built from black stone, rising like sinister pinnacles into the dark storm clouds. These are the most depraved settlements in the known world, where murder lurks in every shadow and the weak are slain for the amusement of the strong. All of these cities are evil places, steeped in death and agony. Their black dungeons are crammed with captives whose wailings fill the air and whose moans seep through the thick walls of the high towers, saturating the place with pain and despair. From the tips of the high towers, above the filth and smog of sacrificial fires, the Sorceresses cast their malign magic over the world and consort with the darkest daemons of Chaos. To dwell in a Naggarothi city is to walk side by side with death every day of your short life.

The surrounding landscape is bleak and forbidding. To the north the land is flat and windswept, only broken by outcrops of bare rock and poisoned black-water streams that criss-cross the landscape. Further south the thin soil becomes slightly more fertile and the temperature rises high enough to support dark forbidding pine forests, as well as huge plantations where slave workers are forced to work until they drop dead in their tracks in order to provide food for the Dark Elf cities.



NAGGAROND, THE TOWER OF COLD

Naggarond is the oldest and largest of the Dark Elves' cities, and quite likely the most malevolent place in the world. Its black stone walls rise a hundred feet and set within them are four vast gateways with doors of iron fifty feet high. About the ramparts are set a hundred towers, each rising as high above the battlements as the walls rise above the bare rock of the city's foundations. From these towers fly the dark banners of the Witch King, painted upon the flayed skin of those sacrificed to Khaine. Severed heads and other body parts belonging to those who have displeased Malekith rot upon spikes that spear outwards from the battlements – hundreds of decomposing bodies and crow-savaged skeletons greet those who pass through the gates – and the skins of those flayed alive in the god's honour hang from the walls.

Behind its impenetrable walls, Naggarond rises high into the foothills of the Iron Mountains. The city is a jumble of mansions, barracks, temples, slave pits and crooked alleys, all swathed in a perpetual pall of smoke. Through chill day and frozen night, worshippers of Khaine tear beating hearts and tangled entrails from their still-living victims and cast them into the flame pits of their hungry god. Thus is the very air of Naggarond thick with the essence of murder.




Few walk carelessly through these streets. Those seeking sacrifices make no distinction for rank or loyalty – Khaine's thirst is slaked as readily by the highest of Dreadlords as it is by the lowliest of slaves. Murder and thievery of all kinds are rife, for the Witch King tolerates any and all deeds, save for those that inconvenience his rule. Indeed, Malekith provokes discord, for anarchy serves to weed out the weak and thus make his people stronger. To this end, he deliberately sparks contests that set one noble house against another, encourages revolt amongst the innumerable legions of slaves and sets the Hag Queens of the murder cults at one another's throats. Such turmoil frequently leaves quarters of Naggarond in scorched and blood-soaked ruin, but the Witch King cares not so long as the feeble perish and the strong thrive.

At the centre of Naggarond stands the Black Tower. No mere fortress is this, but a city within a city – a maze of palaces, ramparts and towers huddle within its curtain walls and jut from its sheer sides. A corona of deadly magic plays about the highest peak of the tower. Here dwell those nobles held highest in Malekith's regard – an honour that brings wealth and patronage, but also danger. The Witch King has ever been a volatile monarch, generous when fortune smiles, but unflinchingly merciless when all does not go his way. Naggarond's court is therefore a place of rapid rises and meteoric descents – few can play this game of politics for long, and none who take part die a natural death.

The central bastion of this tower belongs to Malekith alone, and none save the Black Guard of Naggarond are granted entrance without the Witch King's permission. Neither torches nor lanterns are permitted

within; though he would never admit it, the Witch King has long been discomfited by wholesome flame. Many of these rooms and passageways lie entirely in gloom, and others are dimly lit by the bloody glow of accursed sigils. Few Dark Elves enter these shadowed chambers without pressing cause, for they lie heavy with neglect, dust and an unmistakable melancholy. When Naggarond was founded, the Witch King intended his citadel to rival the finery and splendour of Ulthuan's greatest mansions. However, as the millennia crawled by, Malekith lost the taste for fripperies and fleeting indulgence. The lower chambers, which once glittered with light and rang to the wild laughter of courtiers and companions, are now desolate and web-haunted, full of faded tapestries and haunting silence. Only in the upper reaches are the glories of yesteryear maintained. Here, in rooms bedecked with plunder from around the globe, the Witch King holds court and makes his plans against hated Ulthuan.

The council chamber is a particularly gruesome spectacle. Its vaulted roof is lost in shadow, and its walls are draped in tapestries woven from bloodied hair. The jagged likenesses of cruel gods stare down from intricately-carven buttresses, their eyes glowing in the darkness. At the centre of the room sits a vast circular table struck from a single slab of obsidian. One hundred chairs of blackened bone and flayed skin sit alongside. Some are occupied only when the council meets. Others are permanently engaged, for their occupants are long dead, having displeased Malekith in ages past. It is whispered that one of the corpses was once close kin to the Witch King, a brother perhaps, or maybe even a son. Some of these dead councillors are desiccated and brittle – testament to their centuries of service. Others are relatively fresh, with maggots and beetles crawling through still-fleshy skulls.



Malekith's iron throne sits at the head of this table, but he much prefers to prowling about the perimeter so that no one can ever be certain where his fitful gaze lies. Occasionally, he will call for silence and make play of holding a one-sided conversation with one of the corpses. It is impossible to know whether he truly speaks with the dead or merely does so for macabre effect – certainly, no-one has ever dared ask. Nor do any question the need for such a council in a land bent to one supreme rule. It is simply Malekith's will, so it is done.

When not consumed by matters of war and state, the Witch King retires to his personal rooms at the very top of the citadel and the scrying chamber therein. It is said that the sorceries of Malekith enable him to look out upon the whole world from the height of his tower, to direct his gaze wherever his malicious intents demand. Under this scornful stare, the armies of the Witch King march to war and his heralds ride all across his lands, taking the will of the Witch King to his furthest domains. From his chambers at the very top of the citadel, the Witch King bends his thoughts and eyes to the mist-shrouded isle of Ulthuan, forever staring at the prize he so desperately wishes to claim as his own, or else see destroyed.

The city is shrouded in a perpetual pall of sacrificial smoke that rises from the burning altars of Khaine, the god of murder. Upon these altars the Hag Queens tear men and Elves apart. They pluck beating hearts from living bodies and pull entrails from bellies and burn them in the sacrificial flame of the God of Murder. In the temples of Khaine blood flows night and day, and more honour Khaine with their deaths than anywhere else except perhaps the city of Har Ganeth itself, where the pavements are stained with blood.

About the Hag Queens gather the Brides of Khaine. Voluptuous and cruel, beautiful but deadly, these Witch Elves tend the altars and feast upon the raw flesh of men. In the temples of Khaine the Dark Elves give themselves to the rites of Khaine, orgies which last for many nights, where thousands die and the Witch Elves feast upon raw hearts and drink warm blood. Many

have died within the deadly embrace of the Brides of Khaine.

In blood-stained chambers within the walls of the city are the barracks of the Black Guard of Naggarond, the most favoured warriors of the Witch King. Their every whim attended to by an army of slaves, the Black Guard spend their days and nights training for war. In wide drill squares they butcher slaves for weapons practice and offer up the remains to the dark gods of the Elves. Their armouries contain the most ancient and deadly weapons of the Dark Elves – dire swords, halberds and spears that were created in the time of Aenarion or later forged in witchfire and blood by the likes of Hotek and Furion. Other Dark Elves shun the chambers of the Black Guard, for they are quick of temper and will slay any who look upon them and do not show due deference. Thus, their halls are silent except for the screams of the Black Guard's victims and the biting laughter of their captain, Kouran.




GHROUND, THE TOWER OF PROPHECY

In the absolute bitterly cold north of the Witch King's realm stands the spire of Ghrond. In shape it is likened to the great city of Naggarond, yet is far smaller in size, a fortress to be garrisoned rather than a place in which to dwell. Its single, massive tower rises from a mountain spur like a grim, black and slender spear.

This is the domain of Malekith's mother, the beautiful seeress Morathi. From Ghrond's pinnacle, Sorceresses of the Dark Convent can see through the snowstorms that whip about the tower and into the ever-shifting Realm of Chaos. It is said that the patterns of change therein hold the secrets of fate and that all the mysteries of the world are laid bare to see who dares look. Every day, black-clad riders gallop from the tower of Ghrond bearing prophecies southward to Naggarond. These foretell auspicious moments in which the Witch King will meet with success, or carry warnings of an enemy's growing power.

Morathi rules Ghrond without compromise and does not tolerate interference from outside. It is one thing for the Hag Sorceress to support Malekith in his rule but quite another for her to accept it herself. The Witch King tolerates his mother's small rebellion so long as her tithes are promptly delivered and generous in scope – and generous they are, for the mines beneath Ghrond have ever been rich in gold, silver and gemstones of all kinds. Even after thousands of years, there remains sufficient wealth buried beneath Ghrond to buy the loyalty of every Elf in Naggaroth.

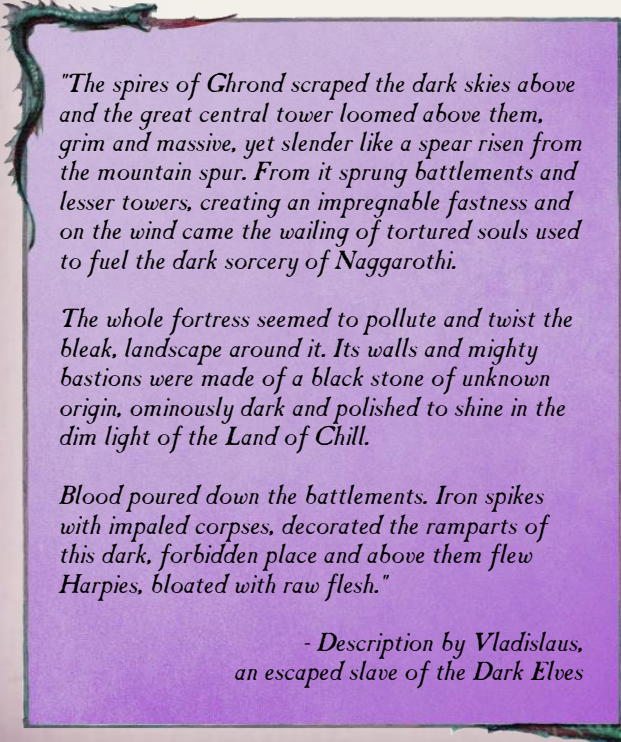




Ghronnd is legendary as a luxurious palace of decadence, not just in Naggaroth but in many distant lands also. The tales are rendered all the more alluring by a law that forbids male Elves from entering its inner sanctums, save at Morathi's decree. Those few who are admitted are at once the most cursed and blessed of mortals, for their lives – and their deaths – serve only the Hag Sorceress' pleasure. For those who do not catch Morathi's eye, there is only a life of battle against the horrors of the northern wastes. Daemons, monsters and worshippers of the Chaos Gods are drawn constantly to Ghronnd and to the heady broth of sorcery and excess that flows about its walls. The defence of Ghronnd is therefore a near- ceaseless battle, fraught with danger and privation. Yet the Dark Elves who defend the ramparts never consider desertion to softer lands. Captivated by Morathi's beauty and their own desires, they are as much slaves to the Hag Sorceress as the wretches who toil in the mines below.

From the pinnacle of Ghronnd's tower, Sorceresses of the Dark Convent can see far across the tundra, and peer into the ever-shifting Realm of Chaos. Within the Realm of Chaos the lands seethe with energy, rising and falling like the sea, whilst the air is bathed in competing colours of magic, turning and twisting, howling and crying like the wind. The Sorceresses observe the changes in the Realm of Chaos, for it is said that the patterns of change hold the secrets to the future, and that all mysteries are contained therein for those who dare to look.

Every day dark clad riders gallop away from the tower of Ghronnd bearing the reports of its guardians to Naggarond. These foretell of things to come, of auspicious moments when the Witch King's armies may meet with success, or of the growing power of his enemies. From these observations the Witch King plots his strategies and launches his armies upon the world.



"The spires of Ghronnd scraped the dark skies above and the great central tower loomed above them, grim and massive, yet slender like a spear risen from the mountain spur. From it sprung battlements and lesser towers, creating an impregnable fastness and on the wind came the wailing of tortured souls used to fuel the dark sorcery of Naggarothi.

The whole fortress seemed to pollute and twist the bleak, landscape around it. Its walls and mighty bastions were made of a black stone of unknown origin, ominously dark and polished to shine in the dim light of the Land of Chill.

Blood poured down the battlements. Iron spikes with impaled corpses, decorated the ramparts of this dark, forbidden place and above them flew Harpies, bloated with raw flesh."

*- Description by Vladislaus,
an escaped slave of the Dark Elves*

KAROND KAR, TOWER OF DESPAIR

The Dark Elves built only one city upon the shores of the Sea of Chill. Even in a land where misery and torment are the currency of daily life, Karond Kar can be counted the bleakest of all refuges. The citadel stands sentinel on the edge of the Sea of Chill, perpetually battered by gale-force winds, icy rain and tidal waves the size of mountains. Its folk can therefore be counted amongst the hardest of a hard people. Indeed, they have become so acclimatised to their frozen conditions that more temperate climes cause them a measure of discomfort.



Karond Kar is also known as Slaver's Gate, for it is to here that the great reaving fleets bring their living cargo; men from the Old World, Elves from Ulthuan, and more from all across the world, all destined to serve the Witch King. Many slaves die upon the altars of Khaine, their hearts torn from their bodies, whilst others are sent north and south to labour in the mines and quarries of the Witch King. Countless thousands die as they cross the wide seas to Karond Kar, stifled and suffocated in the holds of slave ships or tortured to death for the amusement of the black-hearted crews. Those are the lucky ones. When the survivors are finally unloaded onto the ice-wreathed docks, naked to the elements, they soon find that their torment is just beginning. Not only chains keep them from escaping, for the city stands out on a thin peninsula surrounded by freezing waters. There is no escape from Karond Kar, though thousands have perished attempting to do so, rather than face the cruel attentions of their new owners.

From the docks, the slaves are brutally driven forth amidst jeering crowds, beaten onward by lash and scourge. Such is their number that those that stumble are doomed to be crushed beneath the feet of their fellows as the whips of the Dark Elves drive them onwards to the markets. Those who slip their spiked chains are flayed, then cast bodily into the icy ocean. Both forms of death are much appreciated by the maddening spectators, who throw rocks to trip the panicked slaves and send servants to break the chains whilst the captives are still dock-side, in the hopes of inciting even more violence. At this sight the crowds laugh all the louder and cry with pleasure, for such is their love of cruelty that this sorry spectacle is rated a great entertainment.

The slave markets are vast and those captives that make it to the wide open plazas beyond the docks are roughly examined and divided by age and gender, destined to labour in mines and quarries or serve in the dungeons and kitchens of the great towers. The palaces of the slave traders overlook the markets so that they



might see when a ship or Black Ark has returned from its marauding. These slab-sided mansions are decorated with the bones of slaves that have died on the unforgiving voyages. Night and day, Karond Kar echoes with tortured wails, for its sorcerers delight in binding together their captives' souls to their mortal remains, and the city trembles with the wails of these desperate spirits. Trapped between life and death, these wretches haunt the streets of the Slaver's Gate. Even in death the slaves are put to use, for Dark Elves love to hear the shrieks of their dead slaves, a sound of dread and despair. It fills their dreams with delicious images of suffering and pain.

The traders themselves seldom leave the comforts of their opulent homes but can be occasionally lured into the rain-drowned plazas by news of a particularly impressive bounty. A captured High Elf is the most valuable of prizes, and a wealthy slaver will gladly trade much of his remaining stock – or even members of his own family – for the opportunity to bring such a sweetmeat before his patron's tender mercies. For more commonplace cargoes, slavers hold audiences and auctions within their chambers, playing off the greed of Corsair captains to ensure a healthy profit. The slavemasters drive a hard bargain, and no fleet leaves Karond Kar with wealth equal to its expectations. However, no captain will challenge the terms of a trade once it has been completed, for they know that Assassins aplenty lurk in the crowds, waiting silently for the slavemasters' commissions. Better to leave Karond Kar with a light purse, they reckon, than to never leave it at all.

HAR GANETH, CITY OF EXECUTIONERS

The very name of Har Ganeth is cursed with evil. In Ulthuan none will even speak of the city which they call only the Cursed Place, whilst to the Dark Elves it is the City of Executioners whose very streets are steeped in sacrificial blood. A madness overtook the city long ago, a thirst for blood and flesh that ever since has only been kept in abeyance by some of the strictest laws in all Naggaroth. Only in Har Ganeth are acts such as murder, thievery and public debauchery considered to be crimes – a hard burden to bear for a people so steeped in thoughtless depravity. Worse, under Har Ganeth law there is but a single penalty for infraction; the transgressor is led in chains to the summit of the highest sacrificial pyramid and beheaded – there can only be one punishment in Khaine's chosen city. Only the foolish or the clever are lawbreakers in Har Ganeth, and it is not always possible to tell the two apart until the executioner's blade sweeps down – the truly clever have made an elegant escape long before this point.



This situation certainly does not mean that internecine rivalry is less prevalent in Har Ganeth than in other cities – it is merely conducted in a different manner. The Dreadlords long ago learnt that commissioning a murder is as likely to end with their death as it is that of the victim. Therefore they concentrate upon tricking rivals into acts of law-breaking that can only be answered by the executioner's blade. Such plots are seldom anything other than subtle, and they can take years to finally reach fruition. Har Ganeth is a den of shadow politics like no other, where every request or concession is merely a piece in a wider game of disgrace and death.

DARK ELF FORTRESSES

Dark Elves follow the ancient style of Elven tradition, but their fortresses tend to feature clusters of tall towers built on a single massive knoll of rock. The principle building stone is the purple-hued volcanic rock of Naggaroth and the Dark Elves use huge iron portcullis gates to guard the entrance. Gateways are situated either high up in the fortification and are approached by causeways, or are at the base of the crag, perhaps to allow access directly from the sea by ships and sea beasts under the evil power of the fort's Sorcerers.

The towers of their fortresses are very tall and tapering and frequently have grotesque sculptures overhanging the main building. These give the fortress the distinct 'horns' that are seen when it is silhouetted against the night sky.

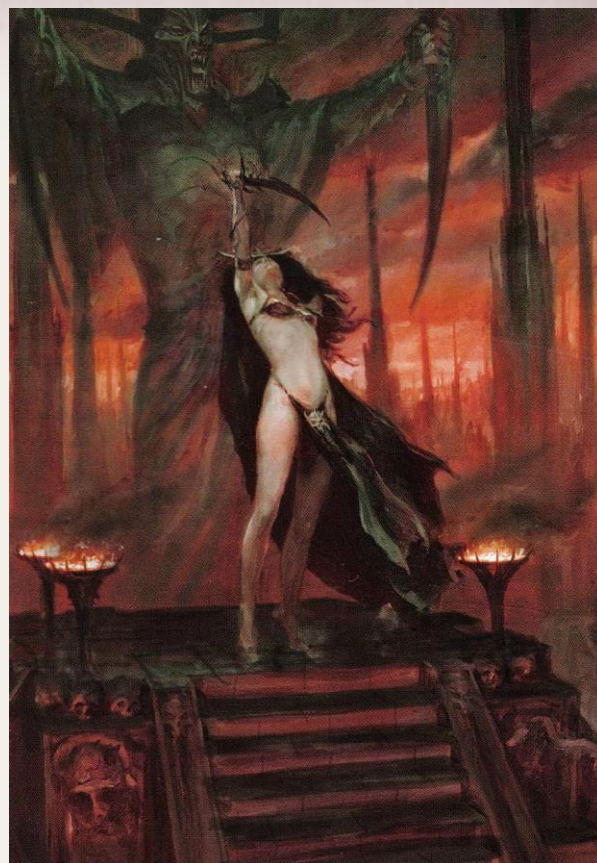
There is one being in all of Har Ganeth who is above its many laws. Crone Hellebron has ruled the city almost since its founding and sees no reason to obey her own dictates. Whilst she invites petitions from those who would purchase a portion of her immunity – for suitable favours, naturally – such requests are few and far between. It takes a scoundrel of a particularly bold or desperate sort to bare-facedly admit lawbreaking intent to she who is the supreme enforcer.

Only on Death Night – an eve of bloody excess in Khaine's glorious name – is Har Ganeth's order thrown completely to the winds. Elsewhere in Naggaroth, Death Night is celebrated almost exclusively by Witch Elves, and other Dark Elves do all that they can to avoid being offered up as sacrifice to the Lord of Murder. In Har Ganeth, however, everyone participates in the madness of Death Night; it is the one brief interlude in which a year's worth of pent-up wickedness is allowed free rein. The great gates of the city are sealed, slaves and prisoners are set loose in the streets and the very air crackles with anticipation. As the moon rises, madness descends. Wine and blood flow like water through the city, wild screams split the night and half-eaten corpses clog the gutters. Witch Elves dance naked around the bodies of the slain, flagstones grow slippery with spilled entrails, and everywhere, stupefied Elves lie entwined with one another atop the gore-drenched dead.

Only as dawn rises, and a great brass gong rings out, does the debauchery cease. As the bleary-eyed survivors wearily drag themselves from the streets, the gates of Hellebron's palace open and her elite guard sweep into the charnel madness searching for Elves too sated to escape. These they drag to Hellebron's chambers, and the great brass cauldron therein. Whilst other Hag Queens choose to bathe in the gore of maidens and innocents, the Blood Queen of Har Ganeth favours only that blood which is spiced with the corrupt insanity of Death Night.

In Ulthuan, none will speak of the city that they call the Cursed Place; whilst to the Dark Elves it is the City of Executioners. Once the High Elves brought battle to Har Ganeth, and attacked the city with as great an army as had ever dared the Witch King's lands. For many days and nights the battle raged without relent, until the High Elves were driven from the field. Many fell as they turned to flee, collapsing from exhaustion. Others were taken captive by swift Dark Riders as they attempted to run. They awoke upon the blood-soaked altars of Khaine. The Witch Elves even took those Dark Elves too weary to offer resistance.

The victory celebration of the Dark Elves was a terrible thing to behold. Captive after captive were brought to the altars and slain in the cruellest ways imaginable. The screams of the dying mingled with the shallow laughter of the Witch Elves as they danced naked about the bodies of the slain. Wine and blood flowed from the altars and drunkenly the Dark Elves praised their evil god. For many nights the sacrificial fires burned,



and the Dark Elves feasted upon the flesh of their defeated foes. The Dark Elves were gripped by a madness of death and destruction and fell upon each other in ecstatic violence.

Blood fountained from the windows of the high citadel and ran down the streets like a river. Crimson gore splattered the Temples of Khaine and coloured his brazen idols. The steps of the great Shrine of Khaine were littered with dismembered corpses and spilled entrails. Everywhere laid Elves entwined with each other and covered in blood, stupefied with wine and gorged upon unholy meat, sated upon the horrors of their own depravity. When it was over, the sun rose upon a city stained red with blood, assuring Har Ganeth's infamy in the annals of Ulthuan. To this day the walls and streets of the city are still stained from that great celebration.

HAG GRAEF, THE DARK CRAG

Hag Graef is the city most feared by all the Dark Elves' captives, as no man or Elf has ever escaped from this place. Its name means the Dark Crag and it is well earned. The city has been built at the bottom of a cold, dark valley and is completely surrounded by mountains of bare rock that stretch higher than the highest walls in the world. No sunlight reaches the city of Hag Graef and it is shrouded with perpetual gloom and shadow.

Hag Graef is a place of twisted and impossible architecture. Its eight black towers rise from the canyon floor like the ossified remains of some loathsome cephalopod. Between the towers are strung walkways, platforms and bridges of every conceivable shape and

size. Some are fashioned from withered timber and soot-stained bone, others are crafted from jagged stone or woven from the silk of monstrous spiders. The larger platforms are so massive as to be towns and villages in their own right, and are supported by gantry works of iron and stone. It is upon these that the majority of Hag Graef's citizenry dwell, crammed into crooked mansions of cinderbrick and fire-blackened wood; the towers are home only to the city's most powerful Dreadlords. Cramped conditions, combined with the Dark Elves' peremptory nature, ensure that rivalries flare into violence with alarming regularity. Those who do not walk cautiously through Hag Graef's webwork of streets have their throats slit and bodies heaved into the morass of sewage and rotting flesh that covers the canyon floor.

All about the city are the mines and quarries of the Witch King, from which uncountable slaves dig iron and stone to arm his warriors and build his fortresses. Thousands of slaves labour in his service. The rocks below Hag Graef are honeycombed with mines and quarries that are, in turn, threaded through with chain gangs of slaves who claw iron and jet-black stone from the belly of the world. The slaves scrape and hack at the rock, often deep underground in narrow tunnels and black passageways. This is the most miserable of existences, toiling far from any natural light, chilled to the bone by the piercing wind that howls through the tunnels. There is little to eat but scraps of foul dark bread, as Dark Elves like to see their slaves cold and starving, their wills broken, and enjoy beating them all the harder when they collapse from thirst and starvation. Chained together, Even after death there is no respite, for the mines are riddled with veins and lodes of warpstone solid magic – that animates the corpses of the dead and keeps them labouring until they decay into piles of bones.

All the black mountains about Hag Graef are riddled with tunnels and excavations, and it is during their excavations for rock and ore that the Dark Elves discovered the great subterranean lake they call the Underworld Sea. Beneath Naggaroth the mountains rise and buckle, so that as the peaks rise into the air a gigantic cavern lies beneath the earth. So great is its extent that the Dark Elves have sailed upon this sea and explored its countless caves and branches, though doubtless the Underworld still holds many secrets. In the deepest caverns of this Underworld the Dark Elves discovered strange reptilian creatures which they called Cold Ones. The stables of Hag Graef are full of these monstrous beasts, and many Dark Elves descend into the depths to hunt them.

Driven by the wealth of its mines, Hag Graef has risen to become Naggaroth's second city. In fact, it is so prosperous that its armies and influence overshadow even those of Naggarond. So eager are Hag Graef's people to escape their abyssal home that the forced conscription present in other cities is completely unnecessary here. Indeed, over the centuries, Hag Graef has earned a reputation for producing, if not the most disciplined fighters, then certainly the most desperate. The city's mercenary rulers, ever eager for profit, have taken to selling warriors into service elsewhere in Naggaroth, taking with it the opportunity to infiltrate spies.

So rich is Hag Graef in soldiery, slave and coin that were its eight great families ever truly united of purpose, they could doubtless overthrow the Witch King. Naturally, Malekith is aware of this, and spares no effort in keeping the Dark Crag's nobles at one another's throats. He need scarcely bother – with so much wealth at stake, intrigue and betrayal are already rife.





Hag Graef's greatest prize is the position of First Dreadlord – he who holds this title is the nominal ruler of the city and all its domains. The First Dreadlord sets the tariffs that govern the city's trade and is an excellent position to take a cut of all merchantry. With this wealth comes a life of patronage and grand opulence beyond the dreams of other Elves, but few incumbents survive long in office. Indeed, many of Hag Graef's social elite consider the lavish ceremony of ascension to be little more than the official opening of a new round in a particularly deadly game. None of this deters the city's nobles from competing for the First Dreadlord's chains of office. Arrogance is as rife here as it is in any other quarter of Naggaroth, and no Dark Elf believes himself foolish enough to end his rule shot, stabbed, poisoned, garrotted or beheaded – he cannot be persuaded of the danger, even though these things have happened to previous rulers more times than can be counted.

Life is scarcely less competitive elsewhere in Hag Graef. The eight families constantly vie with one another for the First Dreadlord's favour, even as they plot to have him violently removed from office. Even family ties do not guarantee loyalty – many a brother or daughter has risen to new heights over the corpses of their siblings thanks to the timely use of poison or by pressing enough gold into an Assassin's hand.

It should, therefore, not be surprising that Khainite Assassin cults flourish nowhere in Naggaroth so well as they do in Hag Graef, where there are always Dreadlords seeking to remove rivals or in need of protection from the machinations of their enemies (or their friends). Even so, there are insufficient hired blades to meet the incredible demand, and an Assassin might well answer to a hundred different masters over the course of a year. Under such circumstances, discretion and silence have become traits valued as highly as more traditional skills. As a result, many Assassins sever their own vocal chords to ensure they are no longer physically capable of revealing an employer's identity.

CLAR KAROND, TOWER OF DOOM

In Clar Karond untold hordes of slaves labour upon the fleets of the Witch King. It is Clar Karond that serves as Malekith's principal shipyards, for it is here that the keels are laid for many thousands of raiding vessels that harry the land of Ulthuan and beyond are built. The city is vast and sprawling, and all around it is surrounded by forests of towering pines, black trees that harbour few creatures and cloak the ground beneath so that all is darkness in the forests of shadows.

Clar Karond stretches from the banks of the Redvenom River up into the trackless pine forests of the Duskridge. It is from these ancient woodlands that the Dark Elves harvest the black timber from which they build their sleek hulled warships. The Naggarothi do not perform this work themselves, of course, for such labours are considered well beneath them, but instead set thousands of slaves to the task. These black trees are felled for the hulls of the raiding ships by gangs of chained slaves, leaving great swathes of destruction that cut like scars through the woodlands. Nothing but the moans of the slaves' misery and the hewing of wood fills the silent groves, for the Dark Elves have driven all other living things from the dark shadows beneath the boughs of the forest.

NAMES OF POWER

Family ties are seldom flaunted in Naggaroth. For a Dark Elf to achieve true renown, he must do so through his own actions, not through the long ago deeds of some withered sire. For this reason, few Dark Elves betray their lineage in name or title, but instead adopt warrior names chosen to strike fear into the hearts of their allies and enemies. Such titles must be backed up by deeds if they are to have any chance of gaining acceptance and renown, so it is common for Dark Elf lordlings to adopt names that reflect their vile proclivities, or that can at least be proven by fearsome acts. A Naggarothi who assumes the warrior name 'Venomblade' had best go to battle with his weapons coated in the deadliest of poisons, lest he suffer mockery – and likely a poisoned death – at the hands of his peers. Similarly, a noble who takes the name Severspine will go to almost theatrical lengths to remind other Dark Elves of its appropriateness.

Curiously, some of these warrior names have now become so renowned that they are handed down, in exactly the same way as the family names that have been all but abandoned. Thus have the sons of five generations borne the Fellheart name, and thus has a warrior named Chillblade served at Malekith's right hand since his ascension – even though no Elf of that name has lived longer than a hundred years. The Dark Elves see nothing contradictory in this behaviour, for while a family name is granted merely for having been born, a warrior name will only be ceded to a progeny who has performed the deeds to deserve it. As such, the latter will always be worth more than the former, even if both are handed down through the blood.

As the woodlands receded, their hearts torn out by hooked chains or consumed by dark fire, the ever-expanding streets of Clar Karond have spilled into the gap. Year by year, the city swells further, having grown fat on the labours of its slaves and despoliation of the surrounding land. Once, there was but one great tower looking over the Redvenom River; now the Duskridge bristles with jagged minarets. With each wave of expansion, new ramparts have been raised not only to protect the city as a whole, but also to defend each tower from its neighbours. As a result, Clar Karond's streets are tangled and mazelike, marred by half-collapsed buildings, severed concourses, and entire districts buried forever as newer and more impressive fortifications are raised.



Clar Karond is also famed for its Beastmasters. It was here, many long centuries ago, that the knights of Hag Graef brought the first Cold Ones to be broken, and much later, that the ferocious Kharibdyss of the deeps were bent to the Dark Elves' will. Now, Manticore pens, Harpy cages and other enclosures are as common in Clar Karond as the temples of Khaine. Both are outnumbered by the pelt-draped shrines of Anath Raema, for the goddess of the savage hunt has ever been the patron of Beastmasters. Thus, when the armies of Clar Karond go to war, they do so in Anath Raema's name, driving her savage children before them to break the enemy lines with tooth and claw.

West of Clar Karond lies Doom Gate, most easterly of the entrances into the underworld realm. Guarded by seven Hydras, Doom Gate is hidden amongst the soaring trees of the Black Forests. Dark Elf patrols from Doom Gate scour these woods, seeking escaped slaves and mutant monsters for the fighting pits of Clar Karond. The Corsairs of the city eagerly wager their prizes on these gladiatorial contests, which see humans and Elves pitted against chimeras, bears, Chaos spawn, wolves and each other.

HAR KALDRA, THE FORGOTTEN CITY

Har Kaldra was once a mighty fortress that dominated the landward passes between Naggarond and the Ironfrost Glacier. Now it is a scarred and ruined crater, surrounded by the out-flung remnants of its own walls, a testament to Malekith's fickle rage. It was the Witch King that wrought Har Kaldra's ruin, meeting the rebellion within its walls with all the sorcerous might at his command. Thousands perished in that one night of horror and fury, and thousands more were taken in bondage to Naggarond, there to die in its firepits and gladiatorial arenas.

THE WATCHTOWERS

Across the northlands of Naggaroth the Witch King has raised many watch towers upon the borders of the Realm of Chaos. Though mighty he is ever fearful of treachery, for betrayal and treachery weigh heavily upon his mind, for such is his nature that he supposes others to be as greedy for power as himself. He sees enemies to the south in Ulthuan, to the east he spies the men of the Old World whose power grows by the day, further still are the Dwarfs – enemies of old who plot with men to overthrow him.

However, Naggaroth is a land in little danger of invasion. Few enemy fleets survive more than a few hours in its corsair-infested waters, let alone long enough to close with the jagged coast and land troops. The only real dangers come from the Lustrian legions to the south and the hordes of Chaos that roam the frozen wastelands to the north.

The Dark Elves consider that they need no fixed defences against the former, for the Lizardmen stir themselves to meaningful assault but infrequently. The



latter, however, have proven so undeterred by their appalling losses and ignominious defeats that the Naggarothi have founded many great citadels to hold the hordes of Northmen at bay. Each of these watchtowers is the size of a city, provisioned to withstand years of siege and garrisoned with a great host of Naggaroth's foremost warriors.

Yet the greatest enemy is not mortal at all, but lies to the north, in the Realm of Chaos. Here the Chaos gods watch and listen, gathering their armies for the tune when Chaos shall inherit the whole world. The Witch King watches also. His towers guard against the warbands that would harry his lands. His armies wait for the invasion of the gods, safe behind their stone walls in the bitter cold of the north. Thus have threats from the Realm of Chaos been held at bay, at least for now...

THE UNDERWORLD SEA

For hundreds of years the raiding fleets of the Dark Elves were confined to the Sea of Chaos and the Great Western Ocean. Then the Dark Lord of Hag Graef Kaledor Maglen discovered the Underworld Sea, a huge water-filled underground cavern that links the Sea of Chaos to the Broken Land on the eastern coast of the New World. The sea runs under the Black Spine Mountains, and is part of a huge network of natural caverns and tunnels which honeycomb that great mountain-range.

The Underworld Sea, as its name implies, consists of a huge labyrinthine maze of dark tunnels and strange caverns. Movement is dangerous even on the best travelled and well known routes, for the threat of cave-ins or flash floods is a constant danger, and there are many strange and extremely dangerous creatures that inhabit this unearthly subterranean realm – and their eyes are far more accustomed to the gloom than those of the Dark Elves. Tales tell of a fearsome race of

creatures who prey upon the raiders but such legends are dismissed by the Dark Elf nobility as the ramblings of weak-minded fools.

The most accomplished explorers of the Underworld Sea come from the tribe of the Shades, mountain dwellers who forsook the life of the bleak cities in ages past. Yet even they have only uncovered a small fraction of the secrets held by the Underworld Sea. Each decade brings new discoveries, and recently the Shades have been finding increasing evidence that point towards an entire lost civilisation hidden deep within the underground caverns. Who or what these underworld dwellers might be, or how they came to be living so far beneath the world, no one, as yet, can say.

For the moment, the Dark Elves care little about lost races and hidden civilisations. Instead they are glad the Underworld Sea gives them passage to the west, giving them access to the Boiling Sea and beyond, the rich lands of Cathay and Nippon. Now there is no corner of the world safe from the ravages of the Witch King!

THE PETRIFIED FOREST

Blighted beyond imagination, the Petrified Forest consists of endless tracts of dead, grey, ashen trees set in a desolate, ash-blown wilderness. No breeze stirs the air and nothing clean or pure will grow in this region of utter desolation. Trees of eternal stone and chasms of echoing emptiness fill this hateful place, and none who are unfortunate enough to bear witness to this evil place can ever forget it. Just why the forest should exist in such a state is a mystery, though there are vague references within the archives of Hoeth to a battle between ancient powers, godlike in stature, at some time during the infancy of the Elvish race.

THE SHADOWLANDS

This benighted realm was once the proud land of Nagarythe, site of Anlec where Aenarion held his court. When Malekith rose to inherit the rule of his father, the people of Nagarythe were grim and warlike, having lived under the terror of the Daemon invasions and the unforgiving rule of Aenarion. Some Naggarothi did not swear fealty to Malekith when he moved for the Phoenix Throne, and here as elsewhere in Ulthuan the strife of civil war divided houses and set families to fighting amongst themselves. To this day, the descendants of these warring factions battle for possession of their ancestral homelands.

Today what little remains of Nagarythe is known as the Shadowlands. It is a sparse realm, where no cities raise their tall towers above the silent desolation. The Shadow Warriors, loyal to the memory of the ancient Shadow King Alith Anar, stake their claim to these lands, but it is one that the Dark Elves strongly contest. Every year there are battles between the folk of Naggaroth and the Shadow Warriors, every year the curse of Nagarythe claims more victims.

Most prized in the minds of the Dark Elves, and most ill-regarded in the chronicles of the High Elves, is the blasted site of ancient Anlec. Several times this dark castle has been rebuilt and destroyed over successive wars, and the lands about it are so saturated with the blood of Elves that only one plant will grow there - bloodroot, a thorny bramble highly prized by Dark Elf Assassins for its toxic sap. Though it has been scoured by fire and magic, the evil of Anlec still hangs in the air around the blackened rocks, and it is utterly silent, for no birds fly there and no small animals thrive within the twisting bloodroot bushes. Anlec has perhaps claimed more Elven lives, from both sides of the divide, than any other place in Ulthuan.

Along the coast of the Shadowlands rise many small isles, though most of these are little more than strangely formed rocks jutting from the waves. The magic of the Sundering scoured these islands, leaving them as twisted, lifeless places. Residual Dark Magic taints the waters still, and mutant beasts stirred from the lightless depths by the collapse of Nagarythe still lurk in the waters, dragging ships down to a murky demise.

THE BOILING SEA

On the west coast of the New World, across the Black Spine Mountains on the opposite side of Naggaroth, lies a region of islands and monster-infested waters known as the Boiling Sea. Only the Black Arks of the Elves dare to enter this inhospitable and dangerous territory, and they do so for one reason only – to capture the monstrous sea creatures that have become such an important part of their fleet.

The Boiling Sea was created many millennia ago, before the recorded history of the Elves had begun. It came about when an immense earthquake rocked the New World. The tumultuous heaving of the lands ripped apart the western coasts and toppled them into the seas. Vast tracts of cliff tops and shoreline were pulverised and drowned beneath the onrushing sea, creating the patchwork of islands that now run along the length of the coast, which the Elves call the Broken Land.

The earthquake also tore deep rents in the sea bed, terrible chasms like wounds in the world's flesh that have never healed. Through these fissures, molten lava surges up from the world's core, heating the water and creating great bursts of explosive vapours. In parts the sea here literally boils, giving rise to the region's name.





Of all the Dark Elves' warships, only the Black Arks dare to enter this inhospitable and dangerous territory. They do so for one reason only – to capture the monstrous sea creatures that have become such an important part of their fleet. Although many parts of the Boiling Sea are deadly to all forms of life, there are many others where the mineral-rich waters teem with all kinds of creatures, ranging in size from tiny plankton through to the huge sea creatures that are hunted by the Dark Elves for their fleets. Two of the most infamous monsters used in the Dark Elf fleets are the Sea Dragons and the Helldrakes, both of which are found in considerable numbers around the Boiling Sea. The Sea Dragon is largest of all sea-going monsters; easily capable of carrying a spired castle on its back crewed by Dark Elves. Once, long ago they were true dragons, but down the centuries they have mutated, becoming something less than true dragons and yet more. The Helldrakes are smaller but far more ferocious, combining the ferocity of a wolverine with razor sharp claws and fangs capable of biting through the thickest steel. They are controlled by a small crew of specially trained beast-handlers that are the only ones capable of controlling the beasts.

THE BLACK FORESTS

Situated in north Naggaroth, the Black Forests cover the landscape with dark, forbidding trees of ill-favoured aspect. These forests sprawl with a mixture of towering pines, black trees and a bleak desolation that sears the soul with its unending vistas of emptiness. The ground is cloaked in shadows as chained gangs of slaves from the principal dockyards of the Witch King fell the massive timbers – dragging them back for dark uses in Clar Karond, the Tower of Doom. Strange monoliths and ancient ruins dot the few desolate clearings.

With more and more of these creatures brought back from the Boiling Sea, the Dark Elf fleets have changed dramatically – at least since the Naggarothi learned how to sorcerously fuse battle-fortresses to the beasts' backs. Traditional warships are widely scorned, and now many Black Arks are accompanied solely by flotillas of these terrors of the ocean waves.

THE BLIGHTED ISLE

At the very northern tip of Ulthuan lies the Shadowlands, all that remains of the land that was shattered and destroyed when the Witch King attempted to unbound the spells that contained the Realm of Chaos. Rising from the misty seas is the Blighted Isle, largest of the islands, home to the forbidding Shrine of Khaine. The Elves have long since abandoned this dark and rocky isle, but it is still a place of great power and deep significance.

The shrine itself is a massive black altar in which is embedded the Sword of Khaine, the ultimate weapon. The sword is as old as the world; a shard of the fatal weapon forged by the Elven smith god Vaul for Khaine; a fragment of crystallised death capable of slaying mortals, Daemons and gods. The only mortal being to wield the Sword of Khaine was Aenarion, and in doing so fulfilled a prophecy that cursed the Elves to aeon of tragedy and his line to eternal damnation,

The shrine sits on a vast plain covered with bones and skulls. Many battles have been fought across its skull-strewn plains between the Dark Elves and the High Elves for control of the shrine, and at night the spirits of slain warriors drift over the battlefield locked in eternal conflict, forever captured by the will of Khaine. The struggle for the Shrine of Khaine is symbolic of the struggle in the soul of the Elf race, between those who follow darkness and those who seek some measure of harmony. None can say how this struggle will end, or indeed, if it ever will.

The crash of Dwarven boots echoed down the valley as rank upon rank of Longbeards, Hammerers and Ironbreakers marched along to the martial beat of the drums and the rising notes of war horns. On the hillsides above them dark shapes flitted from shadow to shadow. The Dark Elf scouts whistled to each other in the manner of birds, reporting the slow progress of the Dwarf King's army. They could see him now, borne upon his throne which was carried on the shoulders of four sturdy Dwarf veterans. As the Dwarf column reached the centre of the pass a piercing howl echoed across the mountains.

On the summit of Mount Blood, Morgir smiled grimly at her second-in-command Kherith.

'We'll give them a few more minutes. I want the rock fail to cut the King off from retreat. They will be caught like rats in a trap. Are your riders ready for the charge?'

'Yes, my lady! They wait in the copse to the east, and will charge as soon as the ground starts to tremble.'

'The King must not escape, I have need of him. His blood will be useful to me when I seize power from my brother. Dwarf blood, I am told, is very rich, and the blood of their High King will be a most useful bargaining tool with my master.'

The Dark Elf Knight shuddered despite himself. He dared not think what could possibly make Morgir more powerful. The screams of her rituals echoed around the tower on the dark nights, and the unearthly voices of the beings she summoned would vibrate through the black stone like an earthquake.

Morgir started to chant, gesturing frenziedly with her hands. The air grew hot and dry and Kherith felt the moisture being pulled from his body. A dark aura surrounded the sorceress now, and as she traced her arms through the air faint shadows were left in their wake. Willi a hideous screech Morgir snatched a dagger from her belt and plunged it into the acolyte standing beside her. As the Dark Elf's life bubbled away into the rough grass his mistress spoke the final incantation and the ground began to shake.

As the trees around them toppled to the ground Kherith's Knights charged from the woods, ahead of them the hillsides collapsed. A massive wall of rock and dust plunged into the valley bringing screaming death onto the heads of the Dwarf rearguard. The splintering of wood and the screech of tortured metal echoed harshly in the midday air, as the Dwarf's artillery train was crushed.

Screaming her triumph, Morgir lashed out at the bewildered Dwarfs with three bolts of darkness. As the magic arced down towards the valley floor the spell suddenly dissipated. Frowning, the Sorceress closed her eyes, seeking out what was amiss. There! Another wizard! Opening her eyes she scanned the Dwarfs' ranks and spotted a splash of red beside the High King, an Imperial Wizard of the College of Bright Magic. Even as she watched she saw a massive fireball hurtle into her Knights, smashing them from their saddles and turning the scattered woods into a massive ball of flame.

Summoning up the energies for another spell, Morgir laughed aloud. She still had plenty of power left and the Dwarf King's blood would be hers!



ANNALS OF THE BLACK TOWER

THE CHRONICLE OF NAGGAROTH

The history of the Dark Elves is the history of the Witch King himself. Without his long-remembered insurrection against the callow Phoenix Kings, there would be no kingdom of Naggaroth and no Dark Elf race to rule it.

Malekith's long reign has been one of blood and terror, of iron-fisted rule backed by assassination and subterfuge. His will, and his will alone, guides the Naggarothi onward to their dark destiny. The Witch King may court the opinions of the Dreadlords who bask in his reflected glory, but only when it amuses him to do so. Only Morathi's sibilant voice does he heed, and then always with an ear alert to deception. Even the eldest of his other courtiers has strode the world for but a fraction of Malekith's existence, and the Witch King hangs upon their words no more than he would consider the counsel of a clever child. So long has Malekith lived – and so generous has he been with his blood – that few of Naggaroth's nobles do not claim descent from his line.

At Malekith's command, the Dark Elves have brought war to hated Ulthuan many times, their goal to claim by arms the birthright that was denied to them. Time and again, the Witch King's armies bring ruin beyond imagining upon their hated foes, only to be cast back across the western ocean through the vicissitudes of fate. To a mortal ruler, even one such defeat would be a tragedy, the undoing of a lifetime's work. For Malekith, who long ago achieved immortality, they are but setbacks that create fresh opportunities. When brute force failed, the Witch King sent infiltrators and assassins to undermine Ulthuan from within. When subversion did not yield lasting results, Malekith reached out to other realms, bribing their armies to make war in his cause.

To date, Ulthuan has endured every attack, but has each time paid for its survival with slaughtered warriors and ravaged kingdoms – yet it will not be able to do so forever. The fires of war that have left Ulthuan scarred serve only to temper the Witch King into ever more powerful forms. From every defeat, Malekith emerges stronger than before, and ever more determined to triumph. Where the High Elves despair for each of their warriors that falls, the Witch King spends the lives of his followers without care for their survival – they are the weapons of his vengeance, nothing more.


Soon there will come a time when the High Elves cannot meet the blood price that Malekith's hatred demands. On that day, the Witch King will finally know lasting victory, and the High Elves will be obliterated once and for all.

THE DARK EPOCHS

Having known only the guidance of Malekith's firm hand, the Dark Elves cannot reckon time according to the rule of kings, as is the custom with the High Elves. Rather, they record the great epochs of the Witch King's rule, ages of the world that turn on deeds of fire and slaughter. Only the first of these epochs – the Age of Glory – tallies exactly with the rule of a Phoenix King. Aenarion was father to both the children of Ulthuan and Naggaroth, and is revered as such in both lands. Other ages might end in conjunction with the close of a Phoenix King's reign, but only in order to celebrate his death.

The Dark Elf calendar contains four seasons, though they are not founded in changeable weather – bleak Naggaroth is ever cold and wracked with storms, no matter the time of year. Dark Elves therefore dedicate the seasons (Blood, Despair, Decadence and Savagery) to their four most worshipped deities (respectively Khaine, Ereth Khial, Atharti and Anath Raema). In Naggaroth, dates are therefore recorded by age, then year, then season and finally the day (though the latter two are seldom used in regard to momentous occasions).





Kaleth Blackheart prodded his spear down through the gratings that kept his prisoners secure within the hold of the small ship. He could see the tall spiked towers of his homeland and was eager to refresh himself. He spat at one of the slaves.

"The sooner we get to the city the quicker I rid myself of your ugly company." He thrust the tip of his spear at the captive below him. The raiding party would be at the gates of Karond Kar within the hour, for Kaleth though it was not soon enough. The sun was setting and unless they picked up speed the group would not make it to the city harbour before nightfall. The journey had been a rough voyage already and Kaleth was eager to get off the small vessel. He much preferred the safety of travelling in the massive Black Arks. On this voyage alone they had twice been forced to evade the attentions of the High Elf patrol ships and as they had neared the Dyre Straits a many tentacle leviathan had surfaced, grasping a dozen crewmen from the deck of the ship and dragging them down to the dark depths of the ocean.

Still, the ship was nearing its destination and the once the precious cargo had been unloaded Kaleth doubted that he would have to make any similar voyages for many years to come. Slaves were a valuable commodity and any Dark Elf noble willing to fund a raiding expedition could assure himself a great deal of wealth and prestige should it prove successful. His was a poor catch though, any slaves that had been worthy of capture had died in the defence of the village. The High Elf warriors had put up a stout defence, many of his Corsairs had fallen in the attack but against the black barbed bolts of their repeater crossbows they stood little chance. No living soul had been left within the village, his warriors had wanted to torch the dwellings, but Kaleth had refused them the pleasure. A deserted village would serve to haunt the dreams of any High Elves that came across it.

Those that had been left alive were either old and weak or very young. Still they were now captives and one way or another they would be put to good use by the Dark Elves. Those who were too frail to be put to work in the mines would find themselves on the sacrificial altars for the pleasure of Khaine's disciples. Even Kaleth had to suppress a shiver of fear as he thought of the fate awaiting those pitiful wretches. The Witch Elves had a unique talent for causing their victims to die an excruciatingly painful and agonising death.

The clouds that seemed to permanently hang over the city grew a menacing shade of black as the dark of night descended. Beneath these clouds Kaleth could make out the sacrificial pyres of the city. The hundreds of souls that perished each day within the city would be burned on those fires of an evening. Many thought the black cloud that shrouded the city were a result of these sacrificial flames and few ever questioned such belief. Kaleth could sense by the hurried shouts of the ship's captain that he too was dreading the imminent nightfall. The port of Karond Kar was surrounded by jagged rocks capable of tearing a hole in this small raiding ship as though it were soft flesh. But this was the least of the captain's fears. He was an experienced sailor and had navigated this route on many occasions.

Karond Kar, the City of Despair as it was also known, was the first stop off point for the slave vessels returning from their raids on Ulthuan and the Old World. The strong winds that buffeted the tall spiked towers of the city carried with them an eerie howl. The Corsairs had told him the noise was the screams of dead spirits, the ghosts of prisoners who had died in anguish and had been buried far from their home soil. Hundreds of slaves from every continent were brought to this busy port to be sold to rich nobles and slavers.

The pyres served as beacons to guide the ships safely home, but nightfall brought with it a fresh and far greater menace. A shrill piercing shriek from high in the dark sky reminded Kaleth all too well of this threat. Karond Kar served as the home to the Harpies. During the daylight hours these creatures would roost upon the many tall towers that grew up from the city. Come dark, though, these deadly scavengers would fly above the city in great flocks seeking out weak and easy prey. A ship still out at sea would make all too much an opportune target for Kaleth's liking. These creatures were said to have the ability to charm anyone with their enchanted songs and Kaleth for one did not relish the prospect of what they would do to him once they had him under their spell.

The captain too had heard the Harpy's high pitched scream and as more followed he began to bark orders to the crew. Kaleth the slave master did not need to be told his duty. Unlocking the iron bars he ordered the nearest slave out of the hold. The slave climbed up the ladder slowly, his progress impeded by his shackles. Kaleth grabbed hold of the chain and dragged the slave to the upper deck.

He was a mere youth, Kaleth guessed his age to be less than one hundred. The defence of the village would almost certainly have been the first combat the boy would have seen. Still, if he was prepared to fight as a warrior then he should know the consequences. Quickly he caught a rope thrown to him from the rigging and hoisted the prisoner up the mast. The youth held his head high and remained silent, he would have made a fine warrior given a few decades more training.

Tying the other end of the rope to the foot of the mast, Kaleth ran to join the Corsairs who had drawn their swords and held them in a defensive position. Kaleth could not suppress smile of anticipation at the forthcoming spectacle. The wild flapping of leather wings caused him to stare up towards the bound victim. He could make out five or six of the creatures in the dim light. Grotesque wings and black, bestial scale-covered legs gave way to a voluptuous female body. Their wild hair blew in the wind. Kaleth was entranced by their strange feral beauty, and could quite easily see how legends told that they were the spirits of Witch Elves slain in battle. They hovered around the sacrificial offering for a brief moment before one of them screeched and attacked the youth, raking long talons at his unprotected body.

As the dread monsters ripped the young Elf apart, his screams merged with the chorus of waves crashing against nearby rocks and the savage cries of the Harpies. They were in a feeding frenzy, lashing out at the prey. Each snarled ferociously at each other as their razor sharp claws ripped great gashes across the chest of the prisoner. One by one they flew off carrying the severed limbs of their victim back to their roosts. As the last of them flapped its wings to head home the gnawed rope fell down to the ship deck landing in a pool of blood at the foot of the mast.

With the harpies stomachs full the ship and its crew would be granted safe passage now and Kaleth looked forward to the small but welcome purse he would receive for his catch. The captain barked out commands to steer the ship to the docks. Kaleth walked towards him waiting until he had issued his comma ads before engaging him. "That youth could have fetched me a tidy sum at the markets."

The captain turned to face him, "It was worth the cost to save my crewmen. You will of course be compensated for your loss as usual."



THE AGE OF ENDLESS GLORY

I I - 80 (Imperial Calendar c. -4500 to -4419)

The Elves were once but a single race that lived in peace and contentment amidst the paradise of Ulthuan. They were torn apart thousands of years ago, amidst turmoil and bloodshed. Over that time, the Dark Elves have grown to become the most ruthless warriors in the world.

The earliest days of the Elves go unrecorded, even by their own chronicles. They lived in contentment and peace on the isle of Ulthuan and learned the arts of civilisation and the skills of magic from the enigmatic Old Ones. Alas, nothing endures forever, and this proved true of that Golden Age. This paradise was shattered and the Elves doomed to a slow dwindling by the coming of Chaos.

When the great star gate of the Old Ones collapsed, a cataclysmic rent was torn in reality the ravaging as Realm of Chaos spilled into the world and a tide of Daemons swept across the globe, leaving slaughter and destruction in their wake. Sustained by the roaring magic of the broken gate, the Daemons roamed at will, slaughtering countless mortal creatures and defiling the lands. When they came upon Ulthuan, the Daemons found an island steeped in magical energy and they gathered into a massive horde to devour and destroy the Elves' homeland. The Elves were defenceless against this surprise onslaught, untouched as they were by the depravities of war, their queen a figure of peace and healing.

The Elves were defenceless against this onslaught, untouched as they were by the depravities of war, yet from the blood and slaughter emerged the greatest Elf hero to have ever walked the world: Aenarion. In him, the mightiest warrior spirit was kindled, and it was Aenarion who would rally the Elves and teach them the ways of war. His heart burned with the dark fires of battle and his prowess with blade, spear and bow remain unmatched to this day. A beacon of hope, Aenarion fought across Ulthuan and in his presence the warlike nature of the Elves was awoken.

Though Aenarion and his growing band of warriors fought ceaselessly and without fear, the Daemon horde was unending. Aenarion called to the gods to aid him, offering sacrifices to them for their intervention. Yet the gods remained silent. In desperation, Aenarion went to the sacred fire of Asuryan, lord of all the Elven gods, and offered himself as the ultimate sacrifice. With prayers upon his lips, Aenarion hurled himself into the white-hot flames. Though the mystical fires burnt his body and seared his soul, Aenarion refused to surrender. Through almighty strength of will, he lived through the punishment of the cleansing fires. Purified by his ordeal, a light shone from within Aenarion, glow of power that filled Elves with courage and caused Daemons to cower in his presence. Invigorated by the

purity of Asuryan, Aenarion waged his war with ever greater zeal. Soon he was hailed as the Phoenix King, the reborn son of Asuryan.


As Aenarion's army swelled, the tide of war changed in the Elves' favour and the Daemon host recoiled from their renewed anger. It was at this time that Aenarion met with the first of the Dragontamers, the powerful mage Caledor. With the aid of his Dragon riders, Caledor too had held back the first invasion of the Daemons from his lands. The two saw the strength that existed in each other and shared a common purpose. Caledor recognised the sacred blessing bestowed upon Aenarion and swore fealty to the Phoenix King, adding the strength of his armies to the host of Aenarion. For decades the two fought against the Daemons and the Elves learnt their warcraft well. Their natural grace steeled with the discipline of Aenarion, the armies of Ulthuan grew in power year by year. As magic swirled through the world, Caledor set the priests of the smith-god Vault to bind the mystical energies into weapons with which to fight the Daemons.

Yet for all of the strength of the Phoenix King's hosts, the legions of Chaos Daemons were without number and the magelord Caledor saw that there could be no ultimate victory by war alone. Caledor devised a bold plan to rid the world of Chaos forever. The Dragontamer and his mages would create a magical vortex to siphon away the power of the Daemons and return it to the Realm of Chaos. Aenarion cursed Caledor as a fool, deeming such a tactic to be the most desperate folly, for the magic and weapons the Elves used against the Daemons drew heavily upon the energies of Chaos pouring from the north.

THE DOOM OF KHAINE

Aenarion then heard news that was to quench the fire of his heart and turn it into a chill hatred: his wife, the Everqueen Astarielle, was slain and his children were missing. In a cold rage, Aenarion swore that he would destroy every Daemon in existence in vengeance for this heinous act. Though calmer minds counselled otherwise, Aenarion travelled to the Blighted Isle and beheld the Shrine of Khaine, the Elves' bloody god of murder. Jutting from within the black altar stood the weapon of the Lord of Murder – Widowmaker, Spear of Vengeance, Sword of Khaine, Godslayer. It was an accursed weapon and the moment Aenarion drew the weapon, he invited Khaine into his heart and soul, and thus doomed himself and his entire line.

Armed with the weapon of the war god, Aenarion slaughtered Daemons by their thousands from the back of the immense Dragon Indraugnir. The hordes of Chaos were hurled from Ulthuan by the might of the Elves. Magical wards and glittering spears protected



the growing cities of the Elves from attack and for a while a fragile peace descended. In the ravaged lands of Nagarythe, in the north of Ulthuan, Aenarion set his capital and established his kingdom. Here rose the great fortress of Anlec, a bastion against the Daemons from which the armies of Aenarion could sally forth. Its towers rose higher than any other city in Ulthuan, and five curtain walls surrounded a central keep that could hold ten thousand warriors. It was a city built as a defiant gesture to the legions of Chaos, its black and silver banners proclaiming that these were Aenarion's lands. To him came the most warlike and vengeful Elves, to serve in the army of the Deathbringer.

Aenarion now championed the cause of those Elves who had suffered most during the war, for their sorrow reflected his own. They gathered to the Phoenix King's side and repaid him with an unassailable loyalty. Aenarion soon came to trust these new followers more than his allies of old and, with their aid, founded a new kingdom in bleak Nagarythe. It was fitting, Aenarion said, that a king should rule from a land that matched his mood. Where other Elves fought to survive, Aenarion's warriors fought for the joy of fighting, and slew for slaying's sake. They sneered at the weakness they saw abound in other lands, and swore never to stoop so low themselves.



Though his despair at Astarielle's death never abated, Aenarion took another wife, the beautiful seeress Morathi, whom he had rescued from the predations of a Slaaneshi host. Later legends say that Morathi bewitched the Phoenix King, though it will never be known whether this is true or if he simply did not care about her character and history. Many were surprised at his choice, for Morathi was as different from Astarielle as night is from day but, by now, the Phoenix King had become so grim of outlook that few dared question him on any decision, let alone upon one so personal. To those that did enquire, Aenarion said simply that he had chosen a consort suited to the times at hand and would be drawn no further on the matter. Whilst it was plain to all that Morathi truly loved Aenarion, none could ever be certain that he returned her affections – by that point the Phoenix King rarely seemed to embrace any emotion that was grounded in ought other than anger or despair.

Conversely, it was utterly apparent that Aenarion had come to rely on Morathi's council almost to the exclusion of all others. With each year that passed, her influence became ever more evident in every decision he made. The Elves of other lands looked upon this development with increasing levels of concern, but the folk of Nagarythe cared not, for they loved Morathi almost as dearly as they did their king.

In due course, Morathi gave birth to a fine and strong son and Aenarion named him Malekith and took him as his heir. Hunting, duelling and other blood sports became common in the Court of Aenarion and it was here that the most proficient warriors gathered to hone their skills in daily battles against encroaching Daemons. Nagarythe became a land obsessed with war and death and Caledor departed to found his own kingdom in the south, much to the anger of Aenarion. Morathi spoke to Malekith and taught him the secrets of rulership and diplomacy, even as Aenarion taught his son his unmatched skill at arms and gift of command. Malekith soon became one of Aenarion's most deadly warriors, and learnt spellcraft from his mother so that he could wield fireballs and prophecy as easily as a sword and spear. The young prince had inherited all the many gifts of his parents, and under their tutelage became not only an accomplished warrior and skilled mage, but also a leader of great quality.

The court of Aenarion had become a wild place, full of savage gaiety and bitter mirth. By then, few in Nagarythe believed it was even possible to win a lasting victory against the Daemons, so they took what joy they could in every moment. Not every outlet of their indulgence was entirely wholesome, however. Hunting, duelling and other blood sports became increasingly common, and rumours abounded of sacrifices to forbidden gods. War and death had become the twin obsessions of Aenarion's court, and many of his oldest friends – Caledor amongst them – could bear it no longer, and departed to found a kingdom in the southern mountains. Caledor's betrayal angered Aenarion greatly, and for a time, many feared that Ulthuan would war amongst itself. And perhaps it would have done, had the Daemons not come once again, in numbers that far overshadowed any previous assault.

THE GREAT RITUAL

In time, the Daemons came again, in a sweltering tide of death that eclipsed all assaults so far. The war between Elves and Daemons had reached its final stage. Touched by Asuryan and marked by Khaine, Aenarion was all but invincible, but he could not be everywhere. Though he battled as hard as before, this time Aenarion could not break the daemonic horde. Ulthuan stood on the brink of destruction, and would surely have fallen had it not been for Caledor. When the ancient mage beheld the Daemons' renewed onslaught, he deemed it beyond the power of the Elves to contain. Thus, he sent no forces to aid Aenarion's counter-attack, instead gathering his followers at the Isle of the Dead to begin the desperate ritual to drain the Daemons' magical lifeblood from the world.

When Aenarion learned of this, he was torn. Caledor had betrayed him a second time, but in doing so had created a slim chance of victory. Pride and duty fought in Aenarion's soul. Pride urged him to leave Caledor to his fate, to fight on heedless of consequence. Ultimately, the Phoenix King found he could not set his duty aside. Marshalling his followers one last time,

Aenarion bade them ride to Caledor's aid. Morathi, fearful of losing her king, pleaded with Aenarion not to go. She begged him to stay, promising a life together through all the ages of the world. But in this one matter, Aenarion would heed her not. Climbing wearily onto Indraguir's back, he left his weeping wife behind and rode to meet his destiny.

What followed was a battle that shook the world. As Caledor's mages began their great work, the host of Nagarythe hurled itself at the Daemon horde with a fury borne of desperation. Under wailing skies wracked with fire and lightning, they held the line in Aenarion's name. That day, Elves fought like gods reborn, and their Phoenix King battled with a might to which mere words could never do justice. As the ritual reached its peak, four Greater Daemons combined their power to assail Caledor's wards – only Aenarion and Indraguir were close enough to stop them. They did not hesitate, but charged into the fray. Now, at last, the Phoenix King met his match. Though the ensuing battle saw all four ruinous beasts defeated, victory left both Aenarion and Indraguir mortally wounded.

Weary beyond words, the Phoenix King sank to his knees. Sensing victory, the Daemons howled with one terrible voice, but then Caledor completed his ritual and their dark laughter was stilled. With a burst of energy that shook the mountains, the Great Vortex sprang into life. A whirling, screaming tempest of

magic engulfed Ulthuan, slaying thousands and shattering forever those fortresses whose walls still stood. Trapped within the eye of the vortex stood Caledor and his mages, frozen in eternal battle against the forces they sought to contain. The exhausted Aenarion clambered atop Indraguir who, with the last of his strength, brought the Phoenix King once more to the Shrine of Khaine. Aenarion's final act was to return the Widomaker to its home and there breathed his last – he was never again seen by mortal eyes. The first and greatest of the Phoenix Kings was dead, lying atop the corpse of his loyal Dragon.

Ulthuan lay in ruins, but as the Great Vortex drew away much of the magic corrupting the world, the Daemons vanished back to their unholy realm. The Elves thanked the gods, praised Aenarion, and set about creating a realm of light and warmth to drive away the evils of the recent past – but labour though they might, the Elves would never regain the Golden Age of yore. In drawing the infamous Widomaker, Aenarion had set in motion events that would lead to the sundering of the people he had striven to protect.

Ulthuan was in ruins, but the vortex drew away much of the magical energy corrupting the world. The Daemons vanished and Ulthuan was spared. The Elves thanked the gods and praised Aenarion, and set about creating a realm of Light and warmth to drive away the evils that had beset them.



The howling of alarm horns woke Delekth from his slumber. As well as his own tower's alarm, he could make out at least three separate horns sounding out in the distance. He did not feel well rested; his sleep had been disturbed with terrible visions of dark and monstrous creatures. There were many Druchii who went insane due to the terrible nightmares which those who guarded the northern lands of Naggaroth would suffer. It was not uncommon for a warrior to throw himself from one of the tall towers which were dispersed at regular intervals across the land. Others would murder their fellow guards before taking their own lives. A sneer crossed over the sharp, cold face of Delekth at the thought; those warriors were weak, they deserved to die.

Delekth hastily put on his chainmail and grabbed his crossbow before running up the steep narrow spiral stairway. He reached his designated spy hole and looked out to see what danger approached. Looking out to the east he could see that a dank mist had already enveloped the neighbouring tower. An uneasy feeling crept over him, causing his stomach muscles to tighten. He had never seen a mist so dense or that rose so high before.

Thick tendrils of the eerie fog reached up to his portal, like writhing tentacles they seeped through as though they were trying to grab him. Peering down into the grey swirling cloud he spied movement. Something was rapidly ascending the open stairway that surrounded the tall pinnacle.

The Watchtowers reached hundreds of feet up into the sky, long thin bastions of rock atop of which was built a small stronghold. They had been constructed as the first line of defence against the incursions of Chaos that would sporadically sweep down from the Northern Wastes.

He rammed a cartridge of bolts home into his repeater crossbow and readied his aim towards the stairs. Whatever was climbing the tower was doing so quickly and he knew it would be upon them soon. Delekth heard the sound of guards firing their weapons from the level below, followed shortly afterwards by the unmistakable clatter of battle being met. Then he saw the first of his attackers as it scrambled up onto the tower platform. It was huge: monstrous horns were silhouetted

throughout the mist and in its hands it wielded a massive sword. Behind it came another, then more.

Delekth did not hesitate, he fired a salvo of bolts into the monsters. The first fell, tumbling off the stairs but more swiftly took its place. The sound of hundreds of bolts whistling from their crossbows filled the corridor but still the creatures came at them. For each one that fell another two seemed to spring from the fog. From the level above, Delekth could hear the sound of a reaper bolt thrower. Its massive missiles shrieked as they sailed into the mist, followed by a dull thud as they struck home. There were too many of these creatures for the crew of the machine to miss. For a short while, Delekth could see that they were winning. The Daemons were not managing to close in on their position before being mowed down by the intense amount of missile fire. Then the lord of this horde appeared.

First he heard a monstrous roar that pierced even his cold heart with fear, then he spied the source of the sound. It swooped down from the sky, a massive creature towering over even the tall Daemons which swarmed up the tower. Its two monstrous wings were open wide, slowing the being's descent as it landed at the top of the stairwell. In its hand a huge flaming whip lit up the darkness of the mist revealing even more of the smaller Daemons. With renewed ferocity the dread host charged at the fortress. The speed of the assault surprised Delekth and he was glad to hear the order to retreat.

Springing up a stairway behind him, he heard the metallic groan of the portcullis buckling. With a deafening crash it broke and the Daemon horde poured into the tower. Behind him came the screams of those who were not fast enough to escape.

Reaching the top of the stairs, his heart dropped as he saw the guards closing in. Cursing their souls to Khaine, he looked for another avenue of escape; a few steps back he had passed a door leading into a store room. Charging through the small doorway he turned and bolted the thick wooden timbers shut. Quickly surveying his surroundings he realised that there was no escape from this small room, only the four solid stone walls and a bolted door in front of him. From outside he could hear the Daemons' claws as they

raked on the stone stairway, and from a gap under the door he spied their menacing shadows as they passed by his hiding place. Delekth's heart beat fast as he waited for the Daemons to burst through the door, but none came. He heard the screams of those on the level above as the foul minions of Chaos broke through the upper defences, followed by a period of eerie silence.

As Delekth sat at the rear corner of the small room his mind raced. The Daemon host intent on killing those on the upper level must have missed him. How long had passed? Had the Daemons left? His mind twisted with a thousand unanswered questions.

Then movement from under the small gap at the base of the door broke his confused train of thought. As he watched, a tendril of mist crept into the room. Glowing luminescent in the darkness, it cast terrifying shadows on the walls. Backing himself into the far corner of the room Delekth drew his dagger to stab at the snakelike mist that seemed to be reaching out towards him, flooding into the enclosed room from under the door.

Lord Dranack dismounted from his Black Dragon. As commander of the northern wasteland it was his duty to investigate any incursions into Dark Elf territory.

"Report." He turned to address the Dark Elf guard who sprinted to meet him.

"Two of the towers were taken Lord," the guard replied, trying to catch his breath. "The mists have retreated now and our scouts have been able to enter them." The guard stood to attention as he addressed his master.

"What of the survivors?" the Druchii Lord coldly asked.

"None, my Lord." The guard replied. "Both towers were completely deserted save for the body of a single guardsman which we found locked within a storeroom. It would appear that he took his own life rather than face the Daemons."

The Dragon Lord sneered in contempt. "He was weak, he deserved to die."

THE AGE OF BETRAYAL

II I- 1696 (Imperial Calendar -4419 to -2723)

THE VOYAGES OF MALEKITH

With Aenarion's death, many Elves looked to his son, Malekith, to lead them in this new age. Having been raised in the court of Nagarythe, he was an accomplished warrior, skilful general and powerful spellweaver. He asked that he be allowed to honour his father's memory, but a few raised their voices against this course of action. Some of the princes asked for a cooler, steadier head to guide the Elves in the rebuilding of their civilisation. They whispered about the darkness that had beset the realm of Nagarythe, and recalled the unwholesome rumours surrounding Aenarion's court and feared what mark might have been left on a child raised in such climes. In the end, the doubters prevailed, and Bel Shanaar of Tiranoc was elected. Malekith took the decision with good grace and was the first to bow his knee to Bel Shanaar and swear fealty, even though resentment ruled his heart. Morathi, however, was not so sanguine, but ranted and railed against the iniquities heaped upon her son.

With the daemonic invasion defeated, the Elves looked to explore the world that had been left changed by Chaos. Malekith quit Ulthuan, claiming that Bel Shanaar would be able to rule the isle more soundly without the heir of Aenarion close at hand. Whilst Bel Shanaar floundered, Malekith travelled the world, where small colonies were growing upon the shores of the forest-swathed lands across the ocean. In the newly-founded city of Tor Alessi, he met and married Allisara, a priestess of Lileath. At that time, Tor Alessi was the eastern frontier of the Elven empire, and the constant threat of Orc hordes and the hideous Chaos beasts of the deep woods ensured that there was work enough to sate his warrior's soul. It was in such battles that Malekith made common cause with the Dwarfs, whose civilisation was then spreading westward from the mountains. . In battle against brutal greenskins and warped monsters, Malekith perfected his fighting skills and rose to become a great leader. So great was his reputation that Bel Shanaar appointed Malekith to be his ambassador to the High King of the Dwarfs, Snorri Whitebeard.

In time, Malekith grew restless and resumed his travels. He searched for his father's armour upon the Blighted Isle and stood transfixed before the Altar of Khaine. As well as campaigning across the lands that would eventually become the Empire, Bretonnia and the Badlands, Malekith travelled even further abroad. He journeyed to realms that history has now forgotten and brought war to the despotic kingdoms of the east. He quested amongst the Worlds Edge Mountains and made war against the primal tribes of men in the blasted Chaos Wastes. In the frozen north, Malekith discovered a dead city of impossible age, built by no human, Dwarfish or Elven hand.

He wandered through its ice-trapped streets, between colossal buildings that hurt the eyes to look upon. The shifting ice had ruptured an ancient vault, and within it Malekith found an artefact older even than the Elves. It was a metal crown imbued with powers of sorcery, now known in myth as the Circllet of Iron. Malekith took the Circllet of Iron and resolved to unravel its secrets. It awoke in him a dark curiosity, and from that day forth Malekith turned his will to studying the forbidden depths of magic – the power of Chaos itself.

Absorbed with his studies, Malekith returned to Tor Alessi. Allisara rejoiced at his return, but as his obsession became plain, she soon grew wary. Worse, where she had once seen Malekith's destiny as a shining line of silver, his fate was now hidden from her. One night, a month after Malekith's return, Lileath finally sent Allisara a vision. The next morning, Malekith awoke to find Allisara gone. At first, he searched long and hard for her, but soon his obsession with magic returned and drowned her memory in its dark waters.

While Malekith explored the wider world, new travails beset Ulthuan in his absence. With the threat of the Daemons gone, many of the lessons of hard war were forgotten. Many Elves became indolent and selfish, indulging their heightened senses with ceremonies dedicated to exotic, forbidden gods. From the ancient



temples of Nagarythe they had risen; cults of luxury, pleasure and excess that grew within the cities and spread across the kingdoms. These cults practiced obscene rituals of debasement and sacrifice, and more and more followers were drawn to dark shrines dedicated to gods that should not be worshipped. Many of these Elves sought to escape the bitter grief that the Chaos incursion had left within their lives. In temples filled with beating drums, haunting pipes and narcotic vapours, they danced and feasted and sang blasphemous praises.

Bel Shanaar seemed powerless to quell the growing unrest in his realm. The pleasure cults were gaining more sway with every passing season. The worst affected realm was Nagarythe, but Bel Shanaar was hesitant to act against the lands of Aenarion's people. Princes caught in the grip of the cults began to mutter that Bel Shanaar was weak, and an usurper of the Phoenix Throne.

MALEKITH RETURNS

Malekith soon took ship westwards, to Ulthuan and his stolen birthright. It was now a realm in turmoil, and many of its princes looked to him as a potential saviour. Malekith accepted gladly. He vowed to hunt down the cults and exterminate them, claiming that no kingdom would be beyond his wrath, not even Nagarythe. He took to his work with a ruthless enthusiasm. Month by month, he announced fresh victories, yet always ultimate triumph seemed out of reach. Thousands of cultists were captured, but more always took their place. When Malekith discovered that his mother was one of the chief architects of the cults, he renounced her and ordered that she be imprisoned upon her capture, along with thousands of her misguided disciples. Nobody was above Malekith's scrutiny, from the lowest farmer to the most vaunted prince. Those cultists who surrendered were sent to the castles of Nagarythe to be released from their delusions. Yet it seemed nothing short of outright war would quell the rise of the decadent cults. Malekith asked the Phoenix King to convene the council of princes at the Shrine of Asuryan. He wished to request control of Ulthuan's armies so that he might cast out the cults of pleasure. In secret, however, mother and son schemed to further their shared cause of Bel Shanaar's downfall.

As the princes gathered at the Shrine of Asuryan, a greater part of Malekith's plan was set in motion. Unbeknownst to the other kingdoms, Nagarythe's armies marched, bolstered by depraved cultists and practitioners of Dark Magic. Oblivious to the peril that descended upon their lands, the princes gathered to hear Malekith. His first pronouncement was to declare Bel Shanaar a member of the cults. Malekith said that Bel Shanaar had taken the coward's route rather than be brought forth before the princes, and had poisoned himself before he could be rightfully tried. With Ulthuan on the verge of civil war again, Malekith would assume his rightful position as Phoenix King and avert the coming disaster.

Many of the princes were not swayed by Malekith's speech and denounced him as a murderer and a traitor. At that moment, agents from Nagarythe broke into the shrine and fighting broke out between those loyal to Malekith and those that opposed him. As blood was spilt upon the marble floor, Malekith strode into the sacred flames to accept Asuryan's blessing. Malekith's screams echoed around the chamber, silencing the fighting. The flames engulfed the prince of Nagarythe, stripping away hair, skin and flesh. With a final shriek of agony, Malekith hurled himself back from the burning judgement of Asuryan and his charred body lay smoking upon the ground. Malekith's disciples took up his body and fought their way clear, leaving most of Ulthuan's princes slain in the temple.



CIVIL WAR

As Malekith's followers fled north with his remains, Morathi took command in his stead. Though Malekith yet lived, his body was all but broken and still blazed with Asuryan's flame – he could do little more than watch as war erupted across Ulthuan. This was a conflict heavily stacked in the insurgents' favour. Only a united Ulthuan could have hoped to defeat such a host, and Ulthuan was near leaderless. The other kingdoms knew nothing of the danger until the hosts of Nagarythe besieged their castles. In Tiranoc and Ellyrion, agents of the pleasure cults had infiltrated and influenced the families of the ruling princes. Naggarothi forces occupied these kingdoms. They held families hostage and allowed the rulers to remain in power only to enact the will of Malekith. The armies of Nagarythe were impressive, the strongest military force in the world. Their commanders were veterans of the war against the Daemons and many had been trained by the hand of Aenarion.

The warrior creed of Aenarion had left an indelible mark upon Nagarythe and its citizenry. Iron discipline, backed by fear of their leaders, drove the legions of Nagarythe. To fail was to invite ruin so the warriors of Nagarythe fought with unmatched zeal – better to fall fighting than to lose and face the wrath of Morathi's cultists. There were also those who embraced the opportunity to seize lands from their peers. These renegades raised their armies and marched forth with glee.

As anarchy reigned, the armies of Nagarythe moved swiftly, seizing many of the vital passes across the Annulii Mountains, separating the Inner Kingdoms of Ulthuan from the Outer Kingdoms. With them came many Chaotic beasts that lived within Ulthuan's magic-riven mountains. The other kingdoms knew nothing of the danger until the hosts of Nagarythe besieged their cities. In Tiranoc and Ellyrion, Morathi's agents infiltrated the ruling families and, through sabotage, kidnap, coercion and the threat of assassination, ensured the princes of these lands bent to her will. Divided, the Elven realms were on the verge of being conquered within weeks.

The hour of Malekith and Morathi's victory seemed near, but the surviving princes had not yet given up hope. There was not one amongst them strong enough to succeed Bel Shanaar, for each had worries in his own realm. In their minds, there was only one Elf who could defeat the armies of Nagarythe – Imrik of Caledor. Grandson to Caledor Dragontamer, Imrik had none of his forefather's magical skills, but was a deadly warrior and brilliant general. As prince of Caledor and leader of the Dragon riders, Imrik controlled the second most powerful kingdom in Ulthuan, eclipsed only by the might of the invading Nagarythe armies.

While Imrik rallied the armies of the other Elven kingdoms, the rulers of Nagarythe acted to forestall their foes. They sent word to sympathizers and agents in Saphery, a realm renowned for its mages. Some of

these mages had been tempted by the power of dark sorcery and subverted to the cause of Nagarythe. Titanic magical duels tore the lands of Saphery apart as sorcerer fought mage. Yet for all the power of the sorcerers, they could not prevail and were forced to flee Saphery and seek refuge in Nagarythe and the kingdoms its armies now occupied.

At the time, Imrik was hunting in the mountains of Chrace and was utterly unaware of the war that had engulfed the isle. The princes dispatched heralds to locate Imrik and inform him of their decision. Meanwhile, Morathi used her sorcerous powers to divine the intent of the princes and sent a cadre of assassins to slay the future Phoenix King. The gods, or fate, would decide who reached Imrik first.

It was Morathi's assassins that found Imrik and they closed in on their prey with evil intent. Swathed in magical shadows, they prepared their ambush. Yet they had not accounted for the loyalty and fighting skill of the hunters of Chrace. When the Naggarothi assassins struck, Imrik was alone and vulnerable. However, a band of Chracians who had accompanied him on his hunt heard the fighting and intervened. The Chracians slew the assassins but at great loss, and Imrik was saved. Even as Imrik thanked these warriors, he received word from one of the princes' messengers of the terror being unleashed by the armies of Nagarythe.

While Imrik ascended to the Phoenix Throne and rallied the armies of the other Elven kingdoms, the rulers of Nagarythe acted to forestall their foes. They sent word to sympathizers and agents in Saphery, a





realm renowned for its mages. Some of these mages had been tempted by the power of dark sorcery and subverted to the cause of Nagarythe. Though they numbered fewer than those wizards who were loyal to the Phoenix Throne, their spells were enhanced by a new, darker sorcery that was more powerful than the 'safe' magic employed by the mages. Titanic magical duels tore the lands of Saphery apart as sorcerer fought mage. Yet for all the power of Chaos unleashed by the sorcerers, they could not prevail and were forced to flee Saphery and seek refuge in Nagarythe and the kingdoms its armies now occupied.

There was betrayal all across Ulthuan. Even in Caledor, thought by many to be secure against the wiles of the Naggarothi, a priest of Vault named Hotek secretly forged weapons for the legions of Nagarythe using the magical Hammer of Vault, which Caledor had used to make weapons for Aenarion.

When he was discovered, Hotek fled and sought sanctuary within Nagarythe. Aided by renegade sorcerers, Hotek used the Hammer of Vault to construct a suit of armour for the crippled Malekith; although his body had been all but broken, the prince of Nagarythe had clung to life. Bitterness and anger had fuelled Malekith's will, sustaining him through the long years of agony that he had endured. The burning would never stop, and so Hotek fused his newly forged armour directly to Malekith's body. Clad in a rune-etched skin of black steel, Malekith could once again lead his armies. Swearing oaths of revenge and bargaining his soul to forbidden gods, Malekith grew in sorcerous power. He was no longer the prince of Nagarythe; he would forever more be known as the Witch King.

Malekith rode to battle astride a Black Dragon, raised in secret in Nagarythe away from the prying eyes of the Caledorian Dragontamers. Sulekh was her name and

she was a fearsome beast, much scarred by fighting, the sole survivor of a brood of eight. Her temperament was evil and unpredictable, and only the Witch King could approach her. With promises of blood and slaughter, and threats of pain and humiliation, Malekith had broken Sulekh to his will and fed her upon magical warpstone so that she was truly monstrous. The two of them were terrifying to behold, and where the Witch King led the armies of Nagarythe victory swiftly followed. But for all the guile and ferocity of the hosts of Nagarythe, the kingdoms of Ulthuan would not be conquered. Led by the new Phoenix King, who had taken the name Caledor to honour his grandsire, the armies opposed to Malekith fought a cunning campaign of ambush and counterattack. Where the armies of the Witch King advanced, the warriors of Caledor fell back, only to outflank the soldiers of Nagarythe and strike back from unexpected quarters.

Sapped by this constant hit-and-run warfare, the Witch King's armies advanced, faltered, regrouped and attacked again. For a quarter of a century, no single ruler reigned over Ulthuan, as each side failed to achieve the crushing victory it needed to secure power. Caledor and Malekith finally met at the field of Maledor. For years they had contested their strength against each other with the might of their armies, and at Maledor they would pit their skills face to face. There, the Witch King's legions had the advantage of numbers, and could well have routed their hated foes. Atop cruel Sulekh the Witch King commanded his army, launching them in an all-out attack against the serried ranks of spearmen and archers mustered by Caledor. Malekith's wizards unleashed bolts of black energy and called down terrible storms to ravage the lines of the Phoenix King's army. In Caledor's host, Sapherian mages dispersed the dark magic of Malekith's sorcerers and hurled fireballs and blazing walls of blue flame at the charging Naggarothi.

Seeing his attack lose momentum, Malekith intervened. Swooping down from the dark skies, Sulekh and Malekith crashed into the Elven host. Purple lightning leapt from Malekith's fingertips and cut down scores of Elves while Sulekh belched forth clouds of noxious gas. Arrows and spears pattered harmlessly from the Witch King's armoured body and the scales of his Dragon. Three Elven princes – Tithrain, Carvalon and Finudel – fell beneath the wicked blade of Malekith and the claws of Sulekh.

Even as the tide turned against his army, Caledor led the counter-attack. Surrounded by the hunters of Chrace and flanked by silent Phoenix Guard of

Asuryan, the king of Ulthuan confronted Malekith. The snapping jaws of Sulekh smashed Caledor's sword from his hand and cast the Phoenix King to the ground amongst the bodies of his loyal warriors. As Malekith's spells hurled back the White Lions, Sulekh loomed over Caledor, acidic venom dripping from her jaws. With a defiant shout, Caledor snatched up Mirialith – the Spear of Midnight Fire – from the dead hand of Finudel, and cast it into Sulekh's open maw. The magical weapon pierced the brain of the Black Dragon. In her death throes Sulekh cast Malekith from her back, pitching him into the ranks of the Phoenix Guard. Surrounded by enemies, Malekith had no choice but to cut his way clear and flee, leaving dozens of slain Elves in his wake. The day was lost and the armies of Nagarythe withdrew once more.



After the battle of Maledor, with the jeers of the victorious High Elves still burning in his memory, Malekith's patience utterly snapped. As he fled Maledor, the jeers of the victorious Elves burning in his ears, Malekith's patience snapped. He knew then the one, terrible truth of his predicament: Ulthuan would never be his. Asuryan and the princes had both rejected him, and the common people had not flocked to his side as he had expected. No amount of spilt blood could conceal that the usurper, Caledor, had won. As the full force of this realisation struck home, the resentment and frustration in the Witch King's heart coalesced into a terrible hatred that would remain with him for the rest of his days.



His army was all but shattered by the unending fighting, and with the resistance of his foes showing no sign of breaking, the Witch King made one last, desperate bid for victory.

In Nagarythe, Morathi and Malekith had long studied the blacker arts of magic. A great number of warlocks and witches followed them, drawing directly on the power of Chaos. It was to these dark wizards that Malekith turned. He gathered a huge number of prisoners in preparation for a massive sacrifice and announced his final plan. He and his sorcerers would unbind the magic of the Ulthuan vortex created by Caledor Dragontamer, unleashing the full fury of the Realms of Chaos upon the island.

The Witch King would summon the Daemon hordes to fight at his side and sweep away all opposition. Knowing that their fate was tied to that of the Witch King, the sorcerers agreed to this insane gambit. Malekith and his followers were willing to risk everything for victory – even the future of the whole world. To their minds, failure was incomprehensible; to live in exile and obscurity was unthinkable for the Witch King. He would rather the world ended than see it ruled by any other. Knowing that their fate was tied to that of the Witch King, his sorcerers agreed to this insane gambit, despite the danger of dealing with such untameable forces. Only one of his disciples, Urathion of Ullar, saw the madness of Malekith's ploy and escaped Nagarythe to bring word to Caledor.

THE SUNDERING

Forewarned of Malekith's intent, the mages of the Phoenix King roused their magic to thwart the spell of unbinding. As the Witch King's sorcerers stood upon the summits of their black towers and struggled for control of the vortex, the mages of Saphery roused their own magic to thwart the spell of unbinding. Great forces shook the lands. The mountains trembled and the seas heaved as dark and light waged a mystical battle for control of the swirling power at the heart of Ulthuan.

As night came, the stars obscured by flickering witchlights and coronas of magical energy, the Witch King and his coven exerted the last of their strength. Fuelled by daemonic pacts, their magic was the stronger and the shields of the Phoenix King's mages began to crumble. The vortex itself howled and screeched, and then began to flicker. It was then, at the very moment that the Great Vortex began to fail, that a new power entered the contest. Freed from their long stasis, Caledor Dragontamer and his trapped mages returned to the realm of the living. Instantly realising Ulthuan's peril, they added their own incantations to that of the Phoenix King's wizards, and with a colossal release of magical energy, they dragged the vortex into place once more.

The backlash tore Ulthuan asunder. A tidal wave a thousand feet high crashed upon the northern coasts, engulfing Nagarythe and Tiranoc. Cities were washed

away and countless thousands of Elves perished. The earth heaved and cracked, and so great was the magical explosion that it was noted in the halls of the Dwarfs, thousands of miles to the east. As the deluge swept down upon Nagarythe, the Witch King's followers used the last of their sorcerous power to ride out the storm. Energised with dark magic, their black citadels broke free from their rocky foundations and rose upon the frothing waves. Malekith's plan had failed and his energy was spent; his kingdom lay beneath the waves and his army was all but destroyed. Upon the floating castles of Nagarythe – the Black Arks, as they would be called in later years – the Witch King and his minions fled the wrath of the cataclysm they had unleashed. North and west they travelled, across the churning seas, to the desolate wilderness of Naggaroth.

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The sun sank below the horizon, reflecting a myriad of colours on the surface of the sea. In the darkening twilight, on the cold, sandy beach, a warrior drew his sword. Silhouetted in a thick unearthly mist to his left he could make out the image of a shrine. That was why they were here; the treasure within the temple would decide which of the factions would control the fate of Ulthuan. The Elf relished the coming battle. He felt the cold biting and the combat would at the very least turn his attentions away from the sharp frost that gnawed throughout his entire body.



He knew it would be a bitter and bloody fight, and something deep within his consciousness told him he would not live to see the conclusion. Pushing such thoughts aside, he advanced forward with the rest of his regiment. How dare the arrogant Avelornians invade his land! Had not he and his kin struggled for many years against the invasion of Chaos? Many citizens of Nagarythe had died protecting the people of Ulthuan and their reward was betrayal. For that he would make them suffer. They were a proud, vain people and that was their weakness. A deep rage began to swell inside him. This was his enemy, they had always been so.

A young spearman, his features masked by the tall silver helm of his people, stepped from the mist to challenge him. His face was familiar; he had seen this Avelornian before. The warrior searched his memory for some scant recognition but none came. He easily parried a low thrust; he had seen the attack coming and had learned how to defend from such moves. He had parried that blow a thousand times now. Bringing his blade upward in a powerful arc, he already knew it would kill the young warrior. His sharp steel cut a deep gash in the white tunic of the Elf. A red stain spread across his chest, as the Avelornian sank to his knees before being consumed by the mist that swirled at their feet. Another assailant stepped forward, his face too sparked some recollection in the warrior's eyes. Something deep within his consciousness told him that this warrior would trip and that this would be his undoing. Even as this thought passed through the Dark Elf's mind his challenger stumbled on a rock, falling to the ground. The warrior thrust his blade down into the prone Avelornian's unprotected back, killing him instantly.

In a brief respite the warrior looked about the battlefield. To his left another Dark Elf slew his opponent. This warrior's armour and family insignia were unfamiliar to him. How could that be? He knew the emblems of each of the noble lines of Nagarythe and this was not one of them.

What strange ally had joined them in the slaughter? He had no time to investigate further. A sword arced downwards — it would miss him by inches. It always missed. Again he recognised the features of his opponent; the scar on his cheek, the look of horror that would appear on his face when his armour was pierced. The warrior thrust out with his bloodied blade, his opponent's scale mail tearing open, allowing the sharp sword to slide through him with ease.

The Dark Elf waited for another opponent to appear through the mist, but none would come, there were no more for him to slay. A route to the shrine lay clear in front of him now. Inside it lay the sword of Khaine, forged by the Elf smith god Vaul, such was its power that he who wielded it could challenge the gods themselves. If he could reach it, he could deliver it to Lord Malekith, perhaps even he could use its power to stop this war. He would bring peace to Ulthuan, uniting the Elves together so once again they could rule supreme over the world.

He ran up the black marble steps, although he knew that he would never reach the top; here on the last step he would meet his fate, here he would die. Yet how? There were no warriors to stop him, no one to challenge him. Perhaps the emotion of battle had clouded his thoughts. A sharp sting struck him in his back and he remembered, an instant before seeing, the arrowhead which had burst out of his chest. The warrior collapsed to his knees, slowly feeling his life ebb away, as it had done a thousand times over. As suddenly as it had appeared his body dissipated into the mist.

One by one, each of the warriors fell, their bodies vanishing as they hit the ground. Generations of Elves were doomed forever to fight each other in an afterlife of war.



As the morning sun rose, the mists that shrouded the land cleared. The empty beach showed no signs that a battle had been fought the previous night. The sand dunes that covered the region were undisturbed by the marks of the skirmish, no carrion feasted on the flesh of the dead. Only the white bones of long-dead warriors rose from the windswept sands, destined to be reclaimed at some future time by the shifting dunes. The small band of Shadow Warriors that guarded the temple slipped silently down from the crest of a tall dune.

They had spotted a group of Druchii raiders making their way across the dune-filled plain and swiftly moved to intercept them. The next night, the spirits of yet more doomed warriors would swell the armies in the eternal struggle that was waged upon the Blighted Isle.

THE AGE OF RESTLESS SPITE

III I - 2032 (Imperial Calendar -2723 to -692)

THE RISE OF NAGGAROTH

Dispossessed and vengeful, Malekith founded a new realm for his people – the dread land of Naggaroth from which the Dark Elves cast a shadow of terror upon the world. No longer was there a single race of Elves; the civil war had wrought divisions that could never be healed. Now the High Elves of Ulthuan and the Dark Elf exiles were two distinct peoples, united only by their enmity.

The fleet of Malekith sailed westwards for many weeks, through driving rain, howling wind and waves like mountains that had been unleashed by Nagarythe and Tiranoc plunging into the ocean. Ever towards the sunset Malekith led his people – towards the dark and welcoming night. Across the Sea of Chill and the Sea of Malice the fleet travelled – two storm-wracked bodies of water that had claimed many Elven ships and their brave crews as they had attempted to explore the rugged coastlines of the western seas. In the uttermost westward reaches of the Sea of Malice, in the freezing shadows of the jagged Iron Mountains, the Black Arks of Nagarythe finally halted. Here, in this desolate land, Malekith declared he would recreate the glories of Aenarion's reign and build a capital to put the greatest cities of Ulthuan to shame.

THE FOUNDING OF NAGGAROND

The Black Ark that had once been Malekith's castle beached itself upon the stony shore, fusing with the slate and iron-rich rocks of the foothills bordering the water. Food was scarce, though Malekith and his nobles led hunts across the foothills and brought back deer, boar and great shaggy mammoths to feast upon. Freezing winds howled down from the north, bringing snowstorms and chilling ice. More dangerous than the perils of frostbite and starvation were the many vicious predators that stalked these strange lands. The dark forests to the south and east, and the forbidding mountains to the west, held many fell beasts and hundreds of Naggarothi were devoured in the night as they made camps in the wilderness.

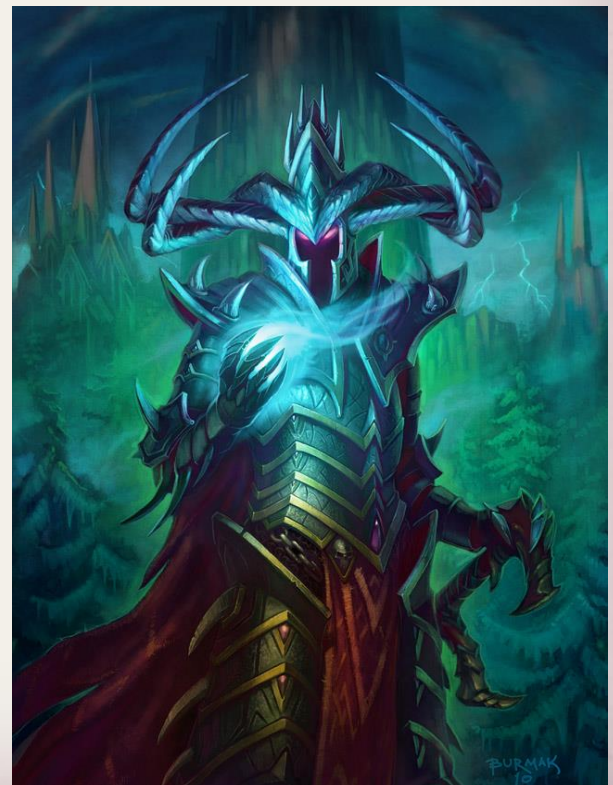
Scouts quickly found rich lodes of minerals in the mountains, but Malekith's people had no aptitude for mining and smelting, nor for building the walls that would be needed to keep away the mutant beasts, nor for farming or animal husbandry. They were warriors and most had known nothing but war – against Daemons, Orcs, Beastmen, and lastly against their fellow Elves. Malekith soon realised that although he still had a formidable fighting force, his people cared nothing for the building of a new civilisation. If the Druchii – the Dark Elves as their enemies had called them during the civil war – were to build a new kingdom in the west, they would need a work force to build it for them – the Dark Elves were warriors all, with no appetite for toil.

So began the bloodthirsty raids of the Dark Elves. At first, their attacks were directed solely against their kin in Ulthuan, to take food and other supplies. The High Elves for the most part would fight to the death rather than be taken in battle, and so Malekith's labour force did not grow quickly. Then word arrived from ships that had travelled further east, to the forests and mountains of the colonies where Malekith had once fought alongside the Dwarfs.



Primitive humans lived there, in caves and mud huts. They were brutal and stupid, but the Dark Elves did not care, for humans also bred quickly and were physically strong. Knowing that these short-lived savages could be easily controlled and swiftly grew in numbers, Malekith dispatched many fleets over the coming decades, to steal away whole settlements of humans and bring them back to Naggaroth.

Though they understood little of what their lords asked of them, the humans learnt well enough from the whips of their masters how to dig ore from rock, herd cattle and forage in the woods. Guided by captured Elven masons and carpenters, the slaves began to build a city around Malekith's citadel. He named this place Naggarond, the City of Winter, and its dark spires started to tower higher and higher over the growing pirate port that nestled in its black shadow.



THE LONGEST OF WARS

With his capital established, Malekith turned his attention back to Ulthuan. Some of his people still clung to a pitiful existence in the ruins of Nagarythe, while the Blighted Isle, and upon it the Shrine of Khaine, was held by neither side. Though he feared to wield the Sword of Khaine himself, Malekith was well aware of its powers and the vengeance Caledor would wreak upon the Naggarothi should he claim it. To ensure that the Phoenix King did not claim the Godslayer, Malekith led an attack that swept across the northern isles of Ulthuan - the Shadowlands that remained of Nagarythe, what little had been spared by the tidal waves. The Elves of Ulthuan remembered the lessons of the civil war and Malekith was unable to forge across the mountains to attack the Inner Kingdoms. At sea, the burgeoning High Elf fleet grew bolder and reinforcements and supplies from Naggarond were often intercepted, further weakening Malekith's grip.

Caledor responded to Malekith's invasion with typical determination, ordering the construction of immense fortifications at each of the main passes through the Annulii Mountains. Never again would Malekith be allowed free passage to ransack and burn the shrines and cities around the Inner Sea. For thirty years Malekith probed and assaulted the outposts in the mountains, but Caledor's armies were well organised and disciplined and every attack was beaten back after vicious fighting. While their armies held back the sporadic raids and attacks of the Naggarothi, the High Elves completed the first of their citadels - Griffon Gate, which historians would later call the Unconquered Fortress. The other Great Gates of the Annulii followed in the coming years, and soon the passes between the sundered lands and the Inner Kingdoms were separated by ramparts hundreds of feet high, held by stalwart defenders, ingenious war machines and powerful spells of protection.

THE BUILDING OF GHROUND

While Malekith fought upon Ulthuan, control of Naggaroth rested with his mother, Morathi. Now steeped in the blackest of magic, Morathi sought further means to increase her mystical power. She sent expeditions into the Realm of Chaos to the north, tasking them to seek out artefacts of the Dark Gods and to observe the ever-changing miasma of Chaos energy. Few of these expeditions returned, and none came back to Naggaroth unscathed. Too great were the perils for Morathi to venture there herself, and so she commanded a great tower to be built in the north of Naggaroth, from which she could personally look upon the energy of the gods. Ghround, the North Tower, this citadel was called, and here Morathi founded the Convent of Sorceresses. She set hideous tests of magical and mental strength to find the most promising young seers and witches from amongst the Dark Elves. Many did not survive; those that did were hardened by their trials, as bitter and devoted to the pursuit of black magic as their mistress. Morathi set this coven of

Sorceresses to studying the Realms of Chaos, gazing into its mesmerising, mindshredding depths to discern its secrets and learn of what had passed and would come to pass. With her dark oracles to aid her, the paths of the future were laid out before Morathi like an insane map, and with this knowledge she charted the course of destiny for her son. Yet for all her foresight and cunning, Morathi could not locate all of the strands of fate that would lead to ultimate victory over Ulthuan.



WAR IN ULTHUAN

The war at sea swung back and forth as much as the war on land, but after two hundred years of naval battles, the High Elves were gaining the upper hand. Their ships and crews were more disciplined than the bloodthirsty Corsairs of Naggaroth, who were used to raiding human and Ore settlements and fighting against unwitting and unsubtle opponents. The High Elves hit the Dark Elf convoys hard and then retreated, sapping the strength of Naggarond's fleet. Even the mighty Black Arks, once invincible, met their match. The Palace of Joyous Oblivion, commanded by Luthern Fellheart, was sunk by the enchanted starblade ram of the dragonship *Indraugnir* in a sea battle not far from the Blighted Isle. Their confidence shattered by this blow, the raiders of Naggaroth were more reluctant to dare the High Elf patrols over the coming years.

Though Malekith could make no inroads towards the Inner Kingdoms, his armies remained poised on the far side of the Annulii mountains, ever ready for a moment of weakness. The huge drain on the fleets and armies required to watch for Dark Elf attack seriously undermined the support Ulthuan could lend to the colonies across the other continents of the world. With the Inner Kingdoms secure against attack by the mountain fortresses, Caledor deemed the time was right to drive Malekith and his Dark Elves from Ulthuan once and for all. Once his borders were protected by the sea again he could then send vitally needed troops and ships to aid in battle all across the far-flung corners of the growing Elven empire.

For nearly ten years, the High Elf fleets sunk any Naggarothi ships that approached the northern coast. Their naval dominance was supreme, and the Dark Elves isolated on Ulthuan grew weary of their master's constant attacks against the impregnable fortress gates of the Annulii passes. It was perhaps untimely, then, that Caledor chose to heap pressure upon Malekith by launching an offensive against the Shadowlands in a bid to claim the Blighted Isle.

Faced with this sudden aggression by their kin, the Dark Elves quickly set aside their seditious plotting and stopped their desertions, instead rallying to the banner of the Witch King. Fighting for their ancestral lands, the Naggarothi were hate-filled and vicious, and Caledor's advance swiftly stalled. Knowing that to retreat would be to give the Dark Elves an opportunity to counterattack, Caledor pushed onwards, fighting for every hillock, valley anti isle. After a further ten years, the Dark Elves were finally driven from the Blighted Isle, at tremendous cost. Malekith's worst fear seemed at hand when Caledor travelled to the Shrine of Khaine. Yet for all the Witch King's dread, Caledor resisted the whispers of the God of Murder and left the Sword of Khaine in its black altar.

With the Blighted Isle now in High Elf hands, Caledor set sail to return to Lothorn. His departure was seen by the scrying spells of Morathi and she called down a storm to sink the High Elf fleet. Most of the ships survived the battering wind and waves, but the fleet was scattered and Caledor's vessel was sent far of



course. Guided by the sorcery of Morathi. Malekith's pirates swiftly intercepted and boarded the Phoenix King's ship. Knowing their intent was to capture him, Caledor cast himself into the sea in his full armour, escaping the torturous revenge Malekith had planned for him. Thus ended the reign of Caledor I. but his death did not end the war. Not for five thousand years have the Dark Elves known peace.

HAG GRAEF AND CLAR KAROND

During the war, the Dark Elves had been defeated several times. Many of their commanders feared returning to Naggarond, wary of the Witch King's temper and the machinations of Morathi. They instead made landfall on the coast of the Sea of Malice many miles south of Naggarond, and here they built a city for themselves. The city was named Hag Graef the Dark Crag.

Situated in a sheer-sided valley, the location of their new city was easily defensible against the creatures of the mountains and any punitive attack that Malekith might launch. An icy river that flows through the city to the Sea of Malice provided a natural harbour for Dark Elf fleets. Over the coming years, Hag Graef attracted other Dark Elves seeking to elude the Witch King for some real or perceived misdeed. Many of the raiders who travelled back from across the ocean first put in to Hag Graef, to unload a portion of their slaves and spoils before Malekith took his share. Sensing that this cauldron of dissent might prove rebellious in future years, Malekith at first thought to crush the dissidents and punish them for their insubordination. His hand was stayed by the intervention of Morathi, who had a far greater aptitude for subtle politics than her son.



Guided by Morathi's counsel, Malekith accepted this new city. He promised rule of the south coast of the Sea of Malice to the rulers of Hag Graef. An oath of fealty to the Witch King would ensure his protection. It was a masterful stroke, for the Dark Elf nobles of Hag Graef were soon gathering their power and took to fighting amongst themselves. Driven by their selfish ambitions, the rulers of Hag Graef looked to Malekith for favour, for they knew that the Witch King's support could tip the ongoing power struggle engulfing their city. Malekith invited half a dozen of the most powerful nobles of Hag Graef to a feast. He offered them a choice. One of the goblets of wine on the table, he told them, was poisoned. Any one of them willing to risk his life to rule should take a drink and Malekith would grant that noble a share of the city. Three of the nobles snatched up goblets without hesitation and downed their contents. They knew that it was better to be poisoned than suffer under the rule of the others. The last three, one-by-one, also drank, forced to prove their worth by the boldness of their peers. It was now that Malekith announced that in fact all of the wine was poisoned, and only by swearing unflinching loyalty to the Witch King would the princes receive the antidote.

The other princes who vied for control bargained with Malekith for warriors and sorcerers, and traded slaves and ships in return for his patronage. Caught up with their petty schemes, each of the ruling families eventually fell under the sway of Malekith, and only through the Witch King's patronage could they resist the ambitions of their opponents. In the end, they ruled only in name, for the Witch King had played them off against each other and now controlled them utterly.

From Hag Graef, the Dark Elves ventured into the Black Spine Mountains. Such expeditions were fraught with danger, as storms and marauding beasts took their toll. For many years, it seemed as if the Dark Elves would be confined to the coast of the Sea of Malice, trapped between the bitter seas and the unforgiving mountains. This was to change dramatically when the Elves of Hag Graef mined further into the mountains. One day the slaves broke through a seam to find themselves in a huge subterranean chamber, many miles across.

A dark underworld sea glittered in the lantern light, fed by dozens of small streams from the heart of the mountains. As the Dark Elves pushed further into the mountains, they found a network of half-flooded caverns and tunnels that stretched the length of the mountain chain. Many were natural formations, while some had the disturbing look of having been hewn by mortal hands in ages past. The caverns were not deserted; all manner of strange animals made their homes in the dark beneath the world. The Dark Elves found other entrances and built fortified gates from which to launch expeditions and guard against monsters rampaging into their lands.

To the east, a group of Dark Elves founded the city of Clar Karond, linked to Naggarond and Hag Graef by

underground tunnels. Particularly in the freezing winter months, travelling under the surface proved much safer than overland or across the storm-wracked Sea of Malice. Clar Karond quickly grew in size and importance, as its location further east made it a natural port for returning Corsair ships. From Clar Karond, slaves and other prizes were moved swiftly to the mines of Hag Graef or to the capital. It saved weeks of sailing for ships to be sent out on raids from Clar Karond, and Malekith ordered a shipyard to be built there. Within twenty years, more ships came and went from Clar Karond than Naggarond and Hag Graef combined. The chance to profit from this endeavour was not missed by Malekith, who again pitted the strongest noble families against each other with the promise of controlling this lucrative trade.

THE CULT OF KHAINE GROWS

While Clar Karond prospered, politics and infighting became rife within Naggarond. Remnants of the many pleasure cults from Ulthuan continued to hold sway over the Dark Elves, but one sect in particular rose to dominate all others. They were cultists of Khaine, the God of Murder, and their bloody sacrifices made a great spectacle for the Dark Elves. The fumes from their pyres swathed the city of the Witch King, and bloodthirsty mobs ran rampant through the streets, killing and maiming in mindless bursts of violence. Rather than quell these excesses, Malekith sought to focus the devotion of these Elves and turn it to his own ends. The Witch King proclaimed himself a mortal incarnation of Khaine, his merciless instrument in the realm of the living. Malekith swore undying devotion

to the Lord of Murder in the shrine of Naggarond, and poured a goblet of his divine blood into the braziers where the Witch Elves burnt the hearts of their sacrifices.

Morathi again aided her son, and gifted the Witch Elves of Khaine with the sacred Cauldrons of Blood. The Hag Queens who led the cult bathed in the blood of their sacrifices and rejuvenated their bodies, as did Morathi herself. Unlike Morathi, who kept the innermost secrets of the Cauldrons for herself, the Hag Queens' revivification was only temporary. As the months passed, they began to age once more and needed to bathe again to reclaim their beauty. For decades, the most powerful Witch Elves indulged themselves in this bloody manner, realising too late that Morathi had ensnared them with an addiction to eternal beauty. The Hag Queen Hellebron, leader of the cult, once refused her ritual bathing, but became so decrepit and age-worn that her loyal followers had to sustain her with their own blood until she repented and bathed in a Cauldron once more. She has been defiant of Morathi ever since, but ultimately it is Morathi who controls the fate of the Hag Queens, not Hellebron.

THE INVASION OF CHAOS

It came about that as Malekith's reign as the Witch King neared its one-thousandth year, a great disturbance was seen within the Realms of Chaos. No seeress or sorcerer could discern what these storms foretold, but before long the intent of the Chaos Gods became all too clear.

From the north came a great host of savage humans riding upon vicious dogs and in war chariots drawn by giant predatory cats. Etched into their skin with scars and tattoos were symbols of the Dark Gods and pictograms of many-headed beasts. Misshapen Spawn and bloated beasts of Chaos ran and scuttled alongside them, while in the skies above winged creatures with iron skins and the heads of snakes soared amongst the unnatural storm clouds. The ragged horde filled the horizon with their numbers and they advanced south from the Chaos wastes as if the gods themselves chased them. The baying and roaring of their beasts could be heard for miles and the bitter cold did not slow nor turn their headlong attack.

To Ghroind came this Chaotic horde, and they fell upon the city in a headlong assault, crashing against the black walls like a frenzied tide. The repeater crossbows of the Dark Elves cut down hundreds of demented tribesmen, but they climbed over the hills of corpses to continually assail the ramparts of the North Tower. The Sorceresses sent mystical word to their mistress in Naggarond, though many were slain in the attempt by daemonic entities brought south upon the winds of Chaos.

For three weeks the siege continued, until at last the Witch King arrived with the army of Naggarond. The Black Guard led the relief, charging with their cruel halberds into the twisted Chaos-men and hacking them





down. Spearmen drove the Chaos followers from the walls of Ghroind and allowed the defenders to sally forth and bolster the army of Malekith. Black-cloaked horsemen rode down those that tried to flee and hunted for survivors escaping across the barren tundra. Into the night the fighting continued, until not a single tribesman was left alive, though fully half of Malekith's warriors had also fallen. The Sorceresses that had survived were brought before Malekith; he had them thrown into chains and sent to the sacrificial altars for their failure to foretell the Chaos attack.

STRIFE IN THE COLONIES

While the cities of the Dark Elves grew in Naggaroth, their exploits further afield also increased. In the new world across the oceans, where slaving fleets terrorised tribes of primitive humans, the influence of Ulthuan was growing ever stronger. High Elf fleets patrolled the coasts and made raiding more perilous year by year. Soon the slaves and spoils began to slow, and Malekith was most displeased. He ordered his Corsairs to target the Dwarf trade convoys, and provided maps of their secret routes that he had learnt whilst he was ambassador to Snorri Whitebeard.

The final part of Malekith's scheme was suggested by Khalaeth Mournweaver, ruler of Hag Graef at that time. The raiders went clothed as Elves of Ulthuan, swathed in white robes and silver armour brought back from raids on the Shadowlands. While they swelled the coffers of Naggarond, the Corsairs would sow dissent between the Elves and Dwarfs. Malekith laughed at the

thought of the betrayal of both races that had once lauded him as a hero. The short, ugly Dwarfs and his effete kin on Ulthuan would never be able to unite against him.

The results of these clandestine attacks proved to be far greater than Malekith had ever hoped. Caledor II had succeeded Malekith's adversary during the civil war. Here was a Phoenix King who thought much of himself and when the Dwarfs demanded explanation for the attacks on their merchants, his arrogance got the better of him. The stubbornness of the Dwarfs played its part also, and within three years, Ulthuan and the Dwarfs were at war with each other. When news reached Naggaroth of the growing conflict, Malekith rejoiced.

In celebration, he hosted a vast ceremony in Naggarond. The debauchery lasted for a whole month, and culminated in a massive hunt during which a thousand slaves were let loose into the forests and the Dark Elves chased them down over the following weeks. Calls for Malekith to lead his people back to Ulthuan became louder and louder, but the Witch King demanded patience from his subjects. The auspices cast by Morathi were good, but she warned that he must await the right time to strike.

For centuries the might of Ulthuan and the Dwarfs were pitched against each other. The Dark Elves profited greatly from the slaughter, roaming the coasts at will to strike wherever they wished. Their fleets waylaid ships packed with reinforcements as they were sent to the colonies, and raiding armies ambushed many Dwarf regiments as they marched along the coastal roads to attack the High Elves. As despair and death engulfed the realms of Dwarfs and Elves, the people of the Witch King prospered like never before.

In Naggaroth, Malekith's domains spread ever further. He gifted the city of Har Ganeth to Hellebron and her Khainite cultists. In return, the crazed Witch Elves would fight for the Witch King and his nobles when called upon. Har Ganeth became a thriving centre for the cult of sacrifice, and its bloody shrines rivalled those of Naggarond. In the centre of Har Ganeth Hellebron raised up a great temple, reached by an iron stairway of a thousand and one steps. At the top of the steps, the altars flowed with blood as sacrifices were made on an almost industrial scale.

Hundreds were slaughtered every day, beheaded by the chosen warriors of Khaine. The severed heads were tossed down the steps at the feet of which Dark Elves bit and clawed each other to grab the heads and take them home. From these blood-soaked rituals arose the cult of the Executioners – guards of the temple who became so gifted with their blades that they could decapitate or eviscerate a captive with one swift strike. Malekith dispatched Assassins raised and trained in Har Ganeth, to sow disorder in the Elven colonies and Dwarf fortresses in the new world, to ensure that no accord could ever be reached between Elves and Dwarfs. Such measures were not needed, as Caledor II

and High King Gotrek Starbreaker were now utterly committed to the destruction of each other.

Events finally took a turn that Malekith took to be the sign to attack. The Convent of Sorceresses spied a fleet leaving the port of Iothern, and aboard the flagship was the Phoenix King. He was departing Ulthuan to personally oversee the war with the Dwarfs. His garrisons had been all but stripped of fighters and his best generals lay dead in the colonies or had been disgraced and dismissed from court.

Malekith looked upon Ulthuan with eager eyes and saw that it was weak and vulnerable. He sent his riders to every city in Naggaroth, and recalled the greater part of the Naggarothi fleet. Every Black Ark returned to the Sea of Malice and an army the likes of which had not been seen for five centuries prepared for invasion. Malekith was confident that, divided and leaderless, Ulthuan would not resist him this time.

ANLEC REBUILT

As the Dark Elf Armada crossed the Sea of Chill, ships from the east brought news that might bode well or ill for Malekith's invasion. Caledor II was dead, slain by High King Gotrek Starbreaker. The Witch King had not expected such a turn of events and his thoughts shifted to who might be named as successor to the Phoenix Throne. With the incompetent Caledor II ruling Ulthuan, Malekith had been confident of overwhelming his kinfolk in a lightning campaign. If another king with the steel of Caledor I were chosen,

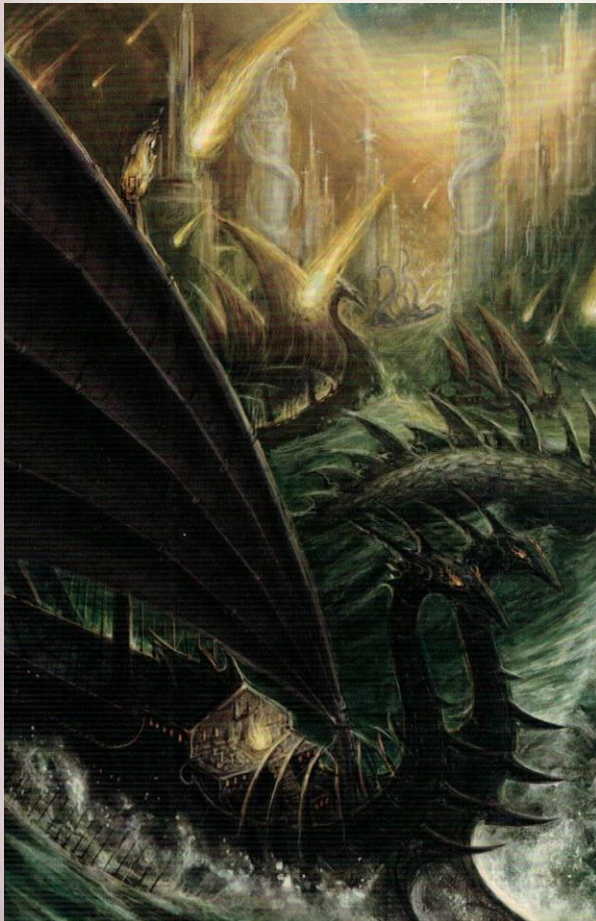
such a swift victory would be impossible. Malekith resolved to take matters into his own hands and ordered the fleet to make all speed to the coast of the Shadowlands. If the Dark Elves attacked before a new Phoenix King could be chosen, they would be able to use the confusion and disarray to secure victory.

The Black Arks Citadel of Ecstatic Damnation and Jade Palace of Bain beached amidst the ruins of Nagarythe. Malekith had chosen his landing site well, amongst the overgrown fortifications of ancient Anlec. He would build Anlec anew and from the lands of the great Aenarion would strike out to reclaim his rightful rulership of Ulthuan. With many thousands of slaves labouring beneath the cruel whips of the overseers, the ramparts and bastions of Anlec were built again around the foundations of the Black Arks. Upon the site of Aenarion's throne room, Malekith raised his flag in proclamation to Ulthuan that Aenarion's heir had returned. As slaves began to erect a new palace to the glory of the Witch King, the Dark Elves moved south and besieged Griffon Gate, beyond which were the verdant Inner Kingdoms.



Faced with imminent war, the princes of Ulthuan swiftly chose their new king. Caradryel, Prince of Yvresse, was elected as the most stable of the candidates, and his first decree was to recall all loyal Elves to defend Ulthuan. Thus it was that the Elves left the lands across the sea, and they did not return for many centuries. Their wars and labours would remain unseen by the wider world. As reinforcements rushed back to Ulthuan, Malekith threw the might of his army against the sparse defenders of Griffon Gate. For all the strength of the Naggarothi host, such was the cunning artifice of the defences and the resolution of the High Elves that Malekith's army could make no headway and the siege ground on for many years.

As Elves from across the globe returned at Caradryel's call, the Phoenix King instituted a system of rotating garrisons that ensured that the gates across the Annulii Mountains were always defended at full strength. The Dark Elves could afford no such strategy and were tired and demoralised, while their enemies ever seemed fresh and prepared. Yet for all the steely resistance of his people, Caradryel had sacrificed many of the colonies abroad and the power of the High Elves slowly diminished with the shrinking of their empire. In the cracked and cratered remnants of Nagarythe, Anlec grew ever larger as the Witch King moved more and more of his people back to Ulthuan, until the cities of Naggaroth were empty except for the slaves and their keepers. All of Malekith's will and energy was bent on breaching the defences of Ulthuan.

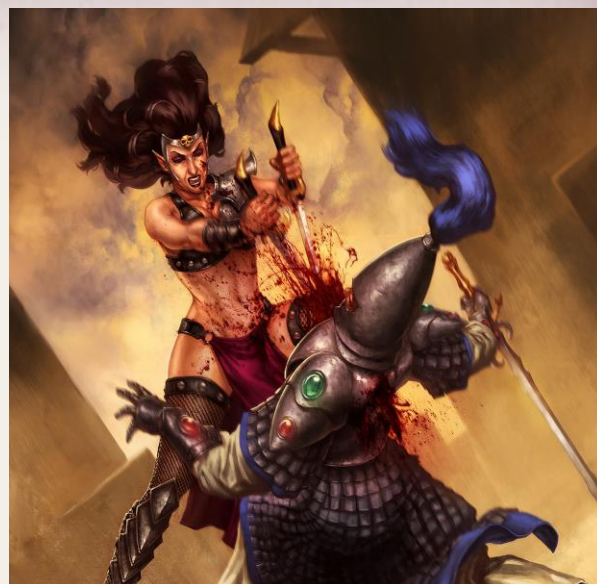


THE WRATH OF TETHLIS

Caradryel was no soldier, but the war with the Dwarfs had given rise to many great leaders and it was to these Elves that the Phoenix King gave command of his armies. Of these, the most gifted was Tethlis. His experience at war was equalled only by his hatred of the Dark Elves, who had left him an orphan after one of their many raids. Tethlis had been one of the generals discarded by the arrogance of Caledor but Caradryel put his faith in the coldly determined commander. He tasked Tethlis with driving the kin of Naggaroth back from the walls of Griffon Gate. Tethlis accepted this command with grim enthusiasm and from the various gate garrisons he mustered the most deadly veterans into a single army with which he would cast the Dark Elves back into the sea.

The High Elves' offensive was utterly unexpected, as a column of glittering knights charged from Griffon Gate and Dragon riders soared overhead. The Witch King had left the siege to his lieutenants, and the Dark Elves fled before the fury of Tethlis' attack. Northwards Tethlis drove the Naggarothi host, harrying them constantly, allowing them no respite to recover their nerve and choose their ground. When news of the rout reached Malekith he flew into a rage, tearing the head from one of the messengers and hurling it at his fellow heralds. Gathering his most fell warriors – Assassins of Khaine, Sorceresses of the Convent and battle-hardened Corsairs Malekith marched out to meet the host of Tethlis.

He now had a new weapon to unleash upon the Elves of Ulthuan. The Witch King rode upon a massive chariot wrought from black iron and enchanted with spells of dread and destruction. Two vicious reptiles pulled it, Cold Ones found in the undercaves of Naggaroth. Behind Malekith, those nobles who had proven their dedication advanced. Some rode in other chariots, others upon the backs of yet more Cold Ones. The High Elves had never seen such creatures in great numbers before. Faced with the ferocious assault of the



foul-smelling beasts, spearmen and archers fell back in disarray before the Dark Elf charge. Though the reverse was unexpected, Tethlis had not plunged foolishly headlong towards Anlec. He brought up reserves of White Lions and Phoenix Guard, and the High Elves rallied and retreated in good order behind the ranks of these deadly warriors. For all of Tethlis' cold fury, the Dark Elves had retained a foothold on Ulthuan and the Blighted Isle.

RISE OF THE SLAYER

Despite the best efforts of Malekith's assassins to hasten his demise, Caradryel reigned for just over six centuries, during which Malekith continually tested the defences of Ulthuan. After Caradryel died peacefully in his bed, Malekith's spies returned from the Inner Kingdoms to bring word that the council of princes had elected Tethlis as his successor. The Witch King knew this did not bode well for his desire to claim Ulthuan. Tethlis had the tenacity and military verve of Caledor I, who had thwarted Malekith's ambitions so many years before. He fully expected Tethlis to resume his campaign against Anlec and so Malekith drew his forces back to protect his new capital. Within a decade, the High Elves came again, launching attacks from the Annulii Gates to strike into the heart of the Shadowlands.

The armies of Tethlis were more disciplined and coordinated than any force had ever been. Now formally trained in their towns and cities, these warriors fought for their homes and out of love for their king. Malekith's warriors battled bitterly, out of hatred for their cousins and fear of their lord. Such bloody battles had not been seen since the civil war. Within forty years Tethlis' offensive, which would be recorded in High Elf annals as the Scouring, threatened to push the Dark Elves out of Ulthuan altogether. Malekith struck back with ferocious counter-attacks and twice was forced to face Tethlis outside the gates of Anlec itself. On the second occasion, Malekith drove his warriors onward in a vicious pursuit, dogging the steps of Tethlis all the way to the Griffon Gate.



Sensing the fortress was poorly defended, Tethlis' army having been scattered by the implacable pursuit, the Witch King ordered an immediate assault. Malekith was to be undone, however, as Tethlis' whole attack and flight had been feigned – a lure to bait the Witch King from his fortress. As the Dark Elves stormed towards the gates, bolt throwers and archers on the valley tops unleashed a storm of arrows that slew one in five of the attackers in the first volley. Tethlis' army regrouped according to the Phoenix King's plan and cut off the Witch King's escape from the pass.


Only the sheer viciousness of the Witch Elves and Executioners of Khaine leading the breakout allowed the Dark Elves to hack their way free. As he led the remnants of his army northwards again, Malekith cursed Tethlis' name and vowed to see the Phoenix King dead. The war continued for another hundred and fifty years, during which Assassins and agents of Malekith tried several times to kill Tethlis. They came closest to success when they caught Tethlis travelling north from the Phoenix Gate. His bodyguard of White Lions was small, but they fought to the last Elf to defend their king, whose own blade accounted for half a dozen of his attackers. Though his guards were all killed, Tethlis himself suffered not a single scratch and he returned to the Phoenix Gate unharmed.

Over the two hundred and fifty years since his ascension to the Phoenix Throne, Tethlis had waged war upon his dark cousins, and now the army of the High Elves was ready for the final push. Forewarned

by Morathi's daemonic messengers, Malekith chose to strike first, before the weight of Ulthuan's hosts could fall upon Anlec a final time. Bitter winter snows and winds swathed Nagarythe and Tethlis' army was forced to retreat to the gates and would be unable to launch their campaign until the following spring. Shrouding his army in sorceries that warded away the winter chill, Malekith sent forth his remaining legions. Their orders were simple: take the Inner Kingdoms or die at the hands of the Witch King and his torturers.

The High Elves were overwhelmed by the first attacks. Several fortresses fell within the first month and isolated garrisons were slaughtered or taken captive. Such was the surprise that Tethlis had no time to mobilise his armies, especially in the depths of winter. The Dark Elves swept through Phoenix Gate and Dragon Gate. However, the success of Malekith's armies proved to be their undoing. They pressed on into the Inner Kingdoms where the weather was much milder. Here Tethlis' hosts awaited them, and they had emptied the winter stores of all food and razed their own villages to deny the Dark Elves shelter. Even the magic of Morathi and her Sorceresses could not protect the armies from the pangs of hunger and thirst, and supplies ran incredibly low. Knowing that to fail was to invite disaster, the High Elves sold their lives dearly.

Such bitter fighting came to a head at the Siege of Tor Lehan. So determined were both sides not to retreat that they wiped each other out – not a single High Elf or Dark Elf survived the siege. Tor Lehan marked the



high point of the Dark Elves' advance. As winter abated, more troops were ferried across the Inner Sea from the eastern realms and the Dark Elves were soon outnumbered. They were within a few days' march of the Shrine of Asuryan but their attack could go no further. Hatred of their kin and fear of their king had driven the Dark Elves this far, but it could drive them no further. With the advantage of surprise well and truly gone, the Dark Elves' morale collapsed. They knew that to stay in the Inner Kingdoms was to risk their enemies surrounding them. Malekith's commanders ordered the retreat to Nagarythe.

THE BLIGHTED ISLE FALLS

Malekith's bloody recriminations were short-lived as Tethlis launched his inevitable counter-attack. For all his guile and sorcerous power, there was nothing the Witch King could do to halt the tide of High Elves pouring into Nagarythe. He abandoned Anlec, breaking out of a siege that lasted for two hundred days, and made for the sanctuary of the Blighted Isle. Left empty, mighty Anlec was destroyed by Tethlis' army; razed from existence by blade, fire and magic. Even the stones from which it was built were melted or ground down so that no trace of Anlec remained to stain the lands of Ulthuan. At the centre of the palaces had stood an Altar of Khaine, which had claimed so many Elf lives their spirits could be heard screaming in torment around its baleful stone. The altar and the earth beneath it, saturated with the blood of so many sacrifices, were dug from the ground and taken out to sea, where they were dropped into an undersea chasm. To this day, the shrieks of the Witch King's victims haunt the waves of that coast, terrifying sailors who dare cross those seas.

Still not content with driving the Witch King and his armies from the mainland of Ulthuan, Tethlis pressed onwards to the Blighted Isle. An armada of hundreds of ships left the shores of the Elven isle to face a dozen Black Arks under the command of Menreith Fellheart, grandson to the lord of the Palace of Joyous Oblivion that had been sunk so many centuries earlier. Menreith was determined not to suffer the same fate as his forefather, and the Battle of the Waves is remembered as one of the most closely fought and bitter naval battles between the two races of Elves. Despite the power of the Black Arks, Menreith could not prevent the forces of Tethlis making landfall upon the Blighted Isle. The High Elves were greeted by a hail of crossbow bolts that scythed through Tethlis' troops as they disembarked into the shallow surf. Bodies and blood littered the waters as the volleys poured down from the cliff tops into the seas below.

Sharks sensed the blood in the water and gathered to feast on the dead and the living alike. Uncaring of the dangers, driven on by hatred of their kin and desperation to protect their final foothold in Ulthuan, the Dark Elves charged into the waters. Amidst the thrashing of the sharks, engulfed by waves and the screams of the wounded, the High Elves and Dark Elves butchered each other, fighting up to their waists

in water, hacking at each other with primal fury. With the dead choking the red waters, the High Elves battled their way onto the land.

The bolts from the crossbows on the cliffs were relentless, hitting friend as often as foe, for the warriors of Malekith knew only that they had to drive their enemies hack into the seas where the Black Arks awaited them. Unbeknownst to the Dark Elves, Tethlis had dispatched a small group of Hawkships from his main fleet, each with a mage aboard to swathe their vessel in a fog that obscured all detection. This flanking force beached upon the Blighted Isle several miles south of the main landing and from their holds rode dozens of Silver Helm Knights, assembled from the most powerful noble families in Ulthuan. The cavalry raced swiftly along the shoreline and fell upon the rear of the Dark Elves holding the cliffs. Swept away by the thunderous charge of the Silver Helms, many of the Dark Elves were driven over the cliff tops and fell to a hideous death on the jagged rocks below.

With their beachhead secure, the High Elves pushed more troops onto the Blighted Isle and advanced upon the Shrine of Khaine. Most of Malekith's warriors were still aboard the Black Arks and could not intervene. Sensing that not even his personal attention could hold back Tethlis' vengeful advance, Malekith quit the Blighted Isle on the back of a Manticore and sent word that his fleet was to return to Naggaroth.

The Blighted Isle had been lost, and with it all Dark Elf presence had been driven from Ulthuan. Malekith knew the temper of Tethlis and predicted that the Phoenix King would not be content while the Witch King still lived. Hidden from the eyes and spells of the High Elves, a cabal of Assassins lay in ambush around the Shrine of Khaine. If Tethlis attempted to draw the Widomaker, they would strike at once, cursed to sell their lives to prevent the Phoenix King from drawing the Murderer of Gods. None in Naggaroth know for sure what befell Tethlis as he stood before the black altar of Khaine. He was heard of no more, and it seems likely that Malekith's Assassins succeeded in their attack. Yet, whispered rumours persist to this day that the Witch King's killers were slain by the White Lions who guarded Tethlis, and that it was the bodyguards themselves who slew the Phoenix King when he tried to take the Sword of Khaine; an act that would have plunged all of the Elves into a new age of darkness and bloodshed to rival the times of Aenarion.

Whether by the hand of foe or friend, Tethlis died at the Shrine of Khaine, and with him the last remaining desire for war was quenched. The High Elves had burnt their own lands and seen their people slaughtered in the fight against the Dark Elves, and they had no more stomach for battle. For his part, Malekith knew his armies were broken, their fighting spirit spent upon a thousand fields of battle, and the Dark Elves returned to Naggaroth to rebuild their strength. Born in blood and the clamour of war, an Age of Hateful Peace descended.

THE BATTLE FOR BLOOD SANDS

Blood Sands is a beach on the shattered coast of the Shadowlands. Its name derives from the many bloody encounters fought on the beach as the Dark Elves have used the shallow waters to gain purchase on Ulthuan numerous times in the past.

And so, once again the Dark Elves have landed on the shores of Ulthuan. A sizable force has undertaken the treacherous journey across the Sea of Chaos and made land. However, they didn't make landfall undetected. A highflying Eagle, soaring upon the high updrafts created by the Annulii Mountains, spotted the Dark Elf fleet three days out from the shore. News of the approaching menace soon reached the High Elves, and soon a garrison had been roused to defend the Elven homeland from their hated kin.

Surf crushed upon the craggy shoreline in thunderous waves and the wind howled over the jagged rocks of the Shadowlands. Amidst the clamour of the elements another sound could be heard. Bestial roars and harsh, otherworldly chants were carried aloft upon the wind. Storm clouds roiled overhead, heavy with rain and flickering with lightning.

In the moments of brightness, large, serpentine shapes could be seen amongst the towering waves. Highlighted by the stark whiteness of the lightning flashes, the Helldrakes and Sea Dragons of Arvain Darksplinter forged through the frothing spume, great castles of black and gold upon their backs. As a massive Hell Drake beached its bulk onto the rocky shore, gangways were thrown down from the tower upon its back and a squadron of knights mounted upon Cold Ones rode forth, Lord Darksplinter at their head. To their left and right more beasts disgorged their crews of bloodthirsty warriors, who streamed through the surging breakers, their hatefilled eyes intent upon the glittering host of silver and white drawing up on the ridge.



Sorcerous energies swathed the Dark Elf host, feeding the storm and blanketing all in darkness. Corsairs clad in cloaks made of Sea Dragon scales formed up around their banner while sinister riders garbed in shadow galloped ahead of the army. Warriors armed with cruel crossbows drew up in long ranks and readied their weapons, while bolt throwers were brought down from the towers upon the beasts' backs.



"See the hated usurpers!" cried Lord Darksplinter, his voice cutting through wind and rain. "See how they dare to keep us from our own lands! This is Nagarythe, our home! Would you see her ruled over by Elves of lesser blood?"

"No!" came the resounding cry.

"What is the price these invaders must pay?" shrieked Darksplinter.

"Death! Death! Death!" roared the Dark Elf host.

With this cry upon their lips, the Druchii surged towards their foes.

The exultant surge of victory burned in Lord Darksplinter's veins. He cast his gaze upon the bloodied corpses littering the coastline and offered up his thanks to Khaine for bringing the Druchii victory. His Cold One grunted and growled as it gorged itself on Elf flesh, tearing gory hunks from the bodies of the Elves who had dared to resist the might of Naggaroth.

The Druchii noble watched with grim amusement as the Black Guard picked their way through the piles of bodies, seeking any Elf still alive so that they might provide more entertainment. The Corsairs were stripping the dead of arms and armour, plucking jewelled belts and golden helms from the tattered remains of the Phoenix Guard. Thoughts of their pitiful god, hated Asuryan who had scorned Malekith and his followers, tainted Lord Darksplinter's mood and his bitterness returned.

To the north lay the ruins of ancient Anlec, palace of Aenarion and the birthplace of the Witch King. The Druchii commander had never laid eyes upon those sacred stones but now the path was open. He would allow his warriors to enjoy the spoils of their victory; the sacrificial fires would burn high and bright tonight. Tomorrow, they would embark upon their ships and bring forth the storms once more. Only the agonising deaths of every usurper in Nagarythe would satisfy the call for vengeance that burned in the hearts of the Naggarothi.



THE BATTLE OF BLOOD PASS

A shout from the top of the tower standing sentinel-like at the entrance to the steep valley pierced the night. A second later, a burst of baleful green light surged into the sky from atop the Watchtower: a beacon that could be seen for miles around, warning of imminent attack. The green light reflected in the cold, black eyes of Diaketh, who stood impassively below the tower and stared intently into the darkness. The Dark Elf warriors under his command had been standing at their posts for almost a week now with little rest, catching only minutes of fitful sleep in full armour, when they had the chance. Warning had come that the Marauder tribes to the north were growing increasingly restless. Once more, it seemed that a new season of raids would soon begin. Diaketh cursed for the millionth time the bad fortune that found him posted in this icy, remote expanse, guarding the northern borders of Naggaroth.

The sound of horses' hooves pounding the hard-packed earth echoed through the darkness, and a figure on horseback took shape, racing towards the tower. As it galloped closer, Diaketh could see that it was one of the black garbed Dark Riders stationed at the tower, and that a group of other bare-chested and savagely painted, rode in close pursuit behind him. Smaller shapes at the heels of the horsemen, and the sound of feral howling reached the ears of the Dark Elves.

Diaketh shouted his order, and the Dark Elf City Guard raised their repeater crossbows and carefully gauged the distance in the gloom. The Dark Rider turned in his saddle and shot his own crossbow while masterfully controlling his steed with his legs. A pair of black-shafted bolts plunged into the body of one of the immense hounds, which rolled in the dust before becoming still.



Abruptly, the Marauder riders reined their horses in, pulling up sharply just outside the range of the City Guard's repeater crossbows. The Marauders stared fiercely at the Dark Elves before retreating the same way they had come.

As soon as the Marauders turned their horses, the first booming sounds of drumming echoed over the land, the doom-laden din rolling over the City Guard. Diaketh's eyes widened slightly as he saw, at the very edge of his vision, a great line of dark armoured figures where the Marauders were retreating. A sickening feeling settled in his stomach, for this was not a minor raid by undisciplined tribesmen - this was something else, something much more dangerous. Before long, he could hear the sound of iron-shod boots marching in unison: he knew that these were the dread Warriors of Chaos. Diaketh yelled to his soldiers to stand ready...

The screeching of Harpies resounded up and down the valley, as the last of the twisted northmen slunk into the gloom of the coming night. Lord Kelebet saw them begin to flock from their caves in the mountainous valley walls and blot out what little light remained. The Harpies swooped down to snatch up the bodies of the fallen, of which there were many, and Kelebet could hear the cries of the enemy survivors as the vicious creatures picked on a their scattered groups.

Kelebet dismounted, handing the reins of his Cold One to his second-in-command, Morithan. The Duke sat astride his magnificent Dark Steed, his scaled cloak pulled tightly around his thin frame to ward away the bitter north wind that had heralded the Chaos attack, his expression pinched and sullen.

Nothing remained of the Watchtower garrison; to the last Druchii, they had sold their lives defending their unwelcome home and bought enough time for Kelebet and his force to arrive and hold the pass. It was just as well they had, for the Dark Elf's keen senses could detect a change in the wind. He could feel the hint of magic and Chaos that hung in the air. He knew from his forays into the wastes that the shadow of Chaos was spreading further again, and that this was just one of many assaults that would come this way.

"The Witch King is traveling to Ghrohd!" Lord Kelebet told Morithan. "Send your best rider to him to tell of what has passed here today. We will also need another Sorceress to revitalize the flames of the beacon."

"I shall go myself," Morithan replied quickly, looking as though he would leave then and there.

"No!" Kelebet snapped, startling his lieutenant, who could not hide his disappointment at losing his chance of leaving this forsaken region. "You must remain here to command the Watchtower. I shall go north and see what the barbarian tribes are up to. If I do not return by the end of the moon cycle, report my heroic death to great Malekith."

Turning away, Kelebet looked along the pass and then stopped in his tracks. He had never understood how Blood Pass had got its name, but now he did. As the setting sun bathed the valley in a ruddy glow, the Harpies feasted on the dead of both Elf and foe. The blood of their banquet ran down the hundreds of natural gullies and culverts that riddled the cliff walls and coated the harsh stone in a glistening crimson sheen.

THE AGE OF HATEFUL PEACE

IV) 1 - 1816 (Imperial Calendar -692 to 1123)

With Tethlis' death, a time of relative peace came between the realms of Ulthuan and Naggaroth. Exhausted by centuries of war, both the High Elves and Dark Elves had spent the last of their strength during the Scouring. In Naggaroth, the survivors of the war drifted back to their homes, quiet and chastened by defeat. Even the all-night sacrifices ordered by Hellebron and the hunts organised by the Witch King could do little to lift the morale of the Dark Elves. The fleet commanders willing to dare the High Elf patrols to the east were few and raiding ships slipped away and returned as sole hunters, unable to gather in great strength and repeat the mighty invasions of the past. Knowing that his people needed time to revive their spirits, and wary of any threat that might prove the fatal blow to their wounded pride and lead to uprising, the Witch King turned all his resources to rebuilding the strength of Naggaroth and its six cities. He instigated the construction of a chain of fortified towers along the border with the Chaos Wastes, to aid Ghronnd in its eternal vigilance. He stationed three Black Arks in the Dire Straits, the perilous stretch of water that led from the Great Ocean to the Sea of Chill, to protect against any High Elf incursion.

It was not long before news began to spread across Naggaroth that cheered the cold hearts of the Dark Elves and stirred in them their old desire for slaughter and mayhem. Kaledor Maglen, famed lord of the Shades and greatest explorer of the Underworld, had discovered a passage to the west, into the Boiling Sea. Named the Black Way for its miles of lightless tunnels. This new route would allow the fleets of Naggaroth to pass into the west and avoid the armada of Ulthuan. In the Boiling Sea, the Black Arks found monstrous creatures, and Beastmasters from Clar Karond shackled these titanic monsters and broke them to the will of the Dark Elves. With spired castles upon their backs, the serpentine creatures of the Boiling Sea became the core of a new raiding fleet.

The construction of the northern watchtowers was completed, and not too soon, for Chaos warbands began to gather in the Chaos Wastes and foray into the lands of Naggaroth. Patrols from the fortifications swept the lands clear of the primitive human tribes that came south intent on pillaging; all that they found was a grisly death or the chains of the slavemasters.

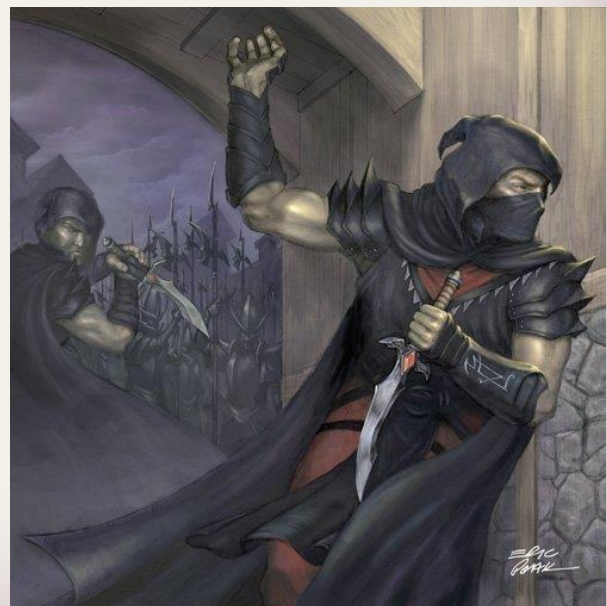
For all his intent on rebuilding the power of the Dark Elves, Malekith never turned his gaze from the ultimate prize: Ulthuan. Spies and agents he had there still, while the auguries of Morathi and her Dark Convent provided the Witch King with much information. A wave of intellectual endeavour had swept the isle of the Elves, following the rise to power of Bel-Korhadris, a mage of Saphery. The mage-king built a great edifice to his own glory and the study of the magical arts,

raising the White Tower of Hoeth to rival the soaring spires of Ghronnd. The Witch King sensed a growing weakness in the heart of the High Elves, a softening of their souls as generations passed and the bloody battles of the Scouring slipped from living memory. But not for him would those bitter conflicts be forgotten, for Malekith was now so steeped in Dark Magic he did not age, and his people were forever reminded of their duty to their lord and the wrongs that had been done to them.

THE SILENT WAR

Direct war against the High Elves would serve no purpose, Malekith realised. Outright aggression would only stir them from their introverted decline, while the Witch King could use more subtle means to defeat his foes from within. Advised by Morathi, Malekith poured support into the many cults and sects that the Dark Elves participated in, openly supporting High Priests and High Priestesses like Hellebron, Aegethir and Kherathi. The cults' ceremonies became ever more extravagant and widely attended.

Luxuries were heaped upon the most dedicated followers of the Dark Elves' sinister gods. From amongst the ranks of these fervent worshippers, the Witch King selected the most intelligent and devoted, and they were sent to learn the arts of subterfuge and spying from the Assassins of Khaine. When they were ready, these agents travelled, one at a time by hidden routes, to the shores of Ulthuan. They blended in with the High Elves and assumed normal lives as carpenters and smiths, as farmers and poets. All the while, they began to spread their poisonous beliefs, and the ancient cults of pleasure began to grow again. This time the cults were insidious and subtle, daring none of the flamboyant rituals that had exposed them in the time of



Bel Shanaar. Century by century, generation by generation, the hidden sects flourished; a dark canker at the heart of Ulthuan that remained unseen by those who reigned.

MALEKITH WANES

Even as the Dark Elf presence in Ulthuan strengthened, Malekith faded. Unbeknownst to the Witch King, the same ennui that had beset his hated cousins had now wormed its way into his own black heart. He believed himself merely to be waiting for his plans to come to fruition, biding his time until the opportune moment. The truth was that Malekith, master of deception, deceived only himself. His body was immortal, but his soul was weary – without the continual challenge of Ulthuan's armies and the provocation of its upstart rulers, his spirit had dulled.

As was ever the case, that which was not clear to the Witch King shone darkly to the eyes of his mother. Morathi watched with mounting bitterness as Malekith withdrew from the world. She sacrificed daily to Khaine, so that he might grant Malekith fresh vigour. When this did not work, she instigated rebellion in the northern city of Har Kaldra, in the hope it would provoke her son to action. When news of the revolt reached Malekith, he flew into a splendid rage and obliterated the rebellious citadel and all within its walls. For a time, Morathi rejoiced, as it seemed that Malekith's former vigour had been returned to him. Alas, this resurgence proved to be only temporary. In response, Morathi's own mood darkened further – but things were soon to get worse.




A year after the ruin of Har Kaldra, a messenger from far-off Athel Loren arrived in Naggarond. His name was Hrothar the Wind Lord, and he bore news that roused the Witch King from contemplation. When Malekith's wife, Allisara, had fled him so many centuries before, she had eventually found her way to Athel Loren. Within its timeless bounds, she built a new life, but slowly came to regret her abandonment. Though the Wood Elves were isolated from much of what passed in Ulthuan and Naggaroth, little by little, Allisara had learned that her visions had indeed come true. She was now consumed with guilt and grief, Hrothar said, and would return to Malekith's side, if he so wished it. This news awoke a glimmer of warmth in Malekith's cold heart. Thus, when Hrothar returned to Athel Loren, he did so to arrange Allisara's return. The Elves of Athel Loren – who had by now come to accept Allisara as one of their own – pledged an escort of many hundreds of warriors, in order that she would be brought safe to Naggaroth.

Malekith tried to keep Allisara's return from his mother's spies, but laboured in vain. The Hag Sorceress swore that Allisara would never reach Naggaroth's shores, for her presence would only serve to further weaken Malekith's ebbing resolve. Yet even Morathi dared not flout her son's wishes openly, and thus she set in motion other plans. Travelling to Ulthuan in disguise, she enamoured Prince Valedor, a warrior whose life had been shredded by the intrigues at Aethis' court. Driven mad by disgrace, Valedor was easily led to believe that Allisara's escort was provided by a forgotten Elven nation that had thrown in its lot with the Dark Elves. Thus did Valedor's army bring Allisara's escort to battle upon the shores of Bretonnia. Many Elves died that day, and not one of them truly knew the cause for which they fought. Allisara was the last to perish in that battle, run through by Valedor's spear. As her lifeblood touched the prince's hands, the madness finally fell from his eyes. Haunted by despair, Valedor cast himself from the bluff into the churning waters below.

THE WITCH KING RENEWED

It was weeks before any in Naggaroth learned of Allisara's fate, and longer still before the news reached Malekith, for none had the courage to lay it before him. In the end, it was Morathi – her jubilation hidden carefully beneath an icy mask – who spoke of Allisara's fate. The Hag Sorceress watched with delight as the last spark of warmth in her son's heart died forever, and his growing rage burnt away the cloak of apathy that had hung so heavy about his shoulders. By dusk, Malekith had convened a council of war. By midnight, eight of the council were dead, and the rest in fear of their lives. It transpired that many of the Naggarothi lords had believed that Malekith's lethargy heralded an opportunity for a new ruler to ascend – thus they had squandered their strength, and that of their armies, against one another. The Witch King's retribution was swift and uncompromising. Noble houses were wiped out overnight, their sons and daughters slain by Assassins. Those who survived knew full well that they



did so only at the Witch King's command, and hurriedly set about rebuilding his armies.

When Aethis succeeded Bel-Korhadris as Phoenix King, Malekith knew that the time had arrived to unleash his hidden agents. There would not be a better moment to strike, for Phoenix King Aethis was a weak-willed aesthete, with little thought to spare for his nation's security. As Aethis' reign progressed, the arts rose in prominence, and under the cover of this societal change, Malekith's cults expanded swiftly and struck without warning. Kidnappings and murders blighted the cities of Ulthuan. Terror of this unseen foe gripped the land, paralysing the High Elves. Nobles were found slain in their beds, mages disappeared from their towers and children vanished from their classrooms. Panic swept through Ulthuan as these crimes grew in boldness and horror, until Aethis finally acted.

Although Malekith's infiltrators were wreaking havoc, they were not unopposed. When Bel-Korhadris had built the White Tower of Hoeth, he had founded a company of mystical guardians to protect it – the Swordmasters. Unknown to either the Phoenix King or Malekith, the Swordmasters were waging a silent war against the pleasure cults and the conflict came to a climax in Lothorn itself, when fighting erupted on the streets of the city between Naggarothi agents and the warriors of the Swordmasters, during which the cultists were all slain. Forced to abandon some of their bolder plans by the persecution of the Swordmasters, the cults of excess faded back into High Elf society and continued their secretive work. Even as cultists were uncovered and executed, more agents were dispatched from Naggaroth to swell the ranks of the cults that remained or even found new ones. Some of these were discovered and slain as soon as they landed on the coast, others slipped through the guard of the High Elves and established themselves as their predecessors had done.

This centuries-long infiltration reached fruition when Girathon, one of Malekith's most trusted agents, acquired the position of chancellor to the Phoenix King. Girathon used his power to subvert much of Aethis' commands and spread confusion throughout the realm. By the time Girathon's deception was uncovered, it was too late. The Phoenix King was dead – acting on Malekith's orders, Girathon had choked the life from Aethis with one of the golden silk scarves the monarch had so adored, before he was himself slain. Malekith ordered a parade and three days of bloodletting in gratitude to the slain agent. What made Girathon's death all the more remarkable was its utter falsehood. Girathon had long been the Witch King's spymaster and when he became directly involved with the Phoenix King, he engineered his own capture and the subsequent opportunity to strike down Aethis.

Fleeing retribution, Girathon swapped places with an innocent servant of the court, casting a glamour upon his victim to give him the appearance of the spymaster. It was this unwitting pawn who was tortured to death,

still raving his innocence, while Girathon commandeered a Hawkship from the harbour and led its crew into a Dark Elf ambush a few miles out to sea.

Girathon continued to serve the Witch King for another three hundred years, during which he returned to Ulthuan eight more times. He had faked his own death so that he could continue to operate within Naggaroth and Ulthuan in absolute secrecy. His personal joy was acts of sabotage, always carried out in such a way that they left evidence pointing to an innocent Elf, who would then be executed for the treacherous acts. Eventually, Girathon's natural talent for schemes and politics caught up with him – he finally died at the hands of his master when the Witch King learnt of a plot by Girathon to seize control of Ghronnd.

Soon after Aethis' passing, the Witch King finally discovered Morathi's role in Allisara's death. Consumed by rage, he commanded that she be imprisoned in the deepest of dungeons. For nearly a year, Morathi languished as Malekith contemplated her fate. Finally, she was forced to kneel before the Witch King's throne, wretched but unrepentant. For a long moment, Malekith watched his mother in silence, but he then spoke in measured tones. She would see no further punishment for her deeds, the Witch King decreed, for he now saw that Allisara's death had only made him stronger. He would grant forgiveness this once, he said, but he also counselled his mother that he would not tolerate a second attempt to meddle with his destiny. It was well for the Hag Sorceress that the Witch King did not glimpse her face as she stalked from his throne room, for her knowing smile could only have made him doubt the wisdom of his clemency.



THE DAY OF BLOOD

In the coming years, rule of Ulthuan passed to Morvael, known in history as the Impetuous. Outraged by the actions of Malekith's agents, Morvael gathered a war fleet and sent it to Naggaroth to exact revenge for the murder of Aethis. The Sorceresses of Ghronnd sent warning, having foreseen the High Elves' assault in signs from the Realm of Chaos. By now, the Witch King's armies were returned to full splendour, and he led them against the High Elf host even as it landed at Arnheim. Outnumbered and ill-prepared, the High Elves were slaughtered. The Dark Elves fought savagely and the massacre is celebrated as the Day of Blood. As the survivors fled eastwards on waters turned crimson by the blood of their fallen comrades, the Witch King drew plans for a new invasion of Ulthuan. More than half the High Elf fleet was destroyed and sensing weakness in Ulthuan's defences, Malekith did not hesitate to send out the call to arms, launching his hosts and fleets upon Ulthuan once more.

The Age of Hateful Peace was ended. The Age of Blood was about to begin.

Lord Yeurl sat atop his Cold One and looked at the human army arrayed before him while absently stroking his fingers over the rough texture of his Orc hide saddle.

"Do you think they mean to fight us?" he asked, turning to his advisor, Khalek.

"I believe they do, my lord," Khalek replied smoothly, letting his gaze pass over the assembled army from the lands known to the humans as Bretonnia. "They have many cavalry, sire, and we are on an open field."

"Yes they do," Yeurl replied, stifling a yawn. "Bring out the slaves, Khalek."

"Sire?" the advisor's face wore his usual bland expression, but the tone of his voice caused the young Dark Elf lord to frown.

"Is there some problem with the slaves?" he asked quietly.

"No, my lord Yeurl," Khalek answered quickly. "I am merely curious as to what cunning ploy my lord has devised."

"Bring the slaves forth and you will see, my impatient counsellor," Yeurl told him with a sly smile.

The order was called out and soon the slaves, nearly five hundred of them, were being herded onto the field of battle, whipped along by the slavemasters.

"Let them go!" Yeurl called out, and the ropes binding the slaves together were cut. They milled about in a confused fashion. "Flee, you verminous filth!" screeched Yeurl in the crude human tongue, standing up in his stirrups and shoeing them away. The slaves gave him a final bewildered look and then began to run towards the Bretonnian line.

"My Lord!" protested Khalek. "Think of your profits from this venture!"

"Khalek, old friend," Yeurl explained, as if talking to a stupid human, "my profits are worthless if I do not survive to benefit from them."

"Of course, my Lord," Khalek nodded slowly. "How short-sighted of me not to consider that."

Yeurl looked towards Saradain, the commander of the crossbowmen, and nodded once. The lithe Dark Elf raised his arm and, at the gesture, a hundred repeater crossbows were lifted to the firing position. Saradain's arm dropped and the air was filled with a cloud of black shafts that tore into the fleeing slaves. Salvo after salvo rapidly followed, felling even more of the escaping humans as they began to slow and stumble over their dead comrades. One particularly lucky or agile man was still running, and soon the cheers of the Bretonnian army resounded across the field, encouraging the fleeing man. Saradain looked to Yeurl, who shook his head once. With another gesture, he commanded his warriors to lower their weapons.

The roaring cheers of the Bretonnians were still rising, the escaped slave was now almost halfway across the field. With a nonchalant slowness, Yeurl reached down and unhooked his repeater crossbow from his saddle. Sighting along its length, he saw that a group of the Bretonnian commoners were riding out to fetch the bedraggled man now stumbling with exhaustion towards them. Breathing slowly, Yeurl closed his eyes and pulled the trigger on the crossbow. The bolt flashed out across the grass of the meadow, but it was clear the shot would fall wide of its mark. As the bolt arced down it veered in flight, turning to its right. A moment later the magical dart was chasing down the slave, who glanced back over his shoulder and gave a scream a moment before the bolt took him square between the shoulder blades. The slave pitched forward and the cheers of the enemy soon became moans of dismay and angry shouts.

"Well, Khalek," Yeurl said smugly, waving an expressive hand to indicate the carnage just wrought. The bodies of the dead were piled in hummocks and mounds that littered the smooth expanse of grass. Already crows were descending to feast on the still warm bodies. Yeurl caught a faint glimmer of movement and noticed that two parties of his Shades, his best scouts from the craggy mountains of Naggaroth, were already taking up position amongst the dead. "You were saying something about cavalry and an open field?"

Khalek did not reply and hid his anger well, though the young lord still noted a hint of a frown. Yeurl held out his right hand, the fingers open. He sat there for a moment until a look of displeasure crossed his face.

"My lance," he snapped, turning to glare at the Dark Elf standing behind his mount, who hurried forward with the long, elegant weapon. He was new, and he wouldn't survive long if he didn't improve, thought Yeurl as his long fingers closed around the padded grip of the lance. Two ribbons, one of black, the other of ice blue, fluttered from its tip in the wind. Resting the lance in the ornate stirrup of his saddle, he turned to his left and spoke with the other knights.

"It seems these humans want to fight us!" he declared with a grin, causing his knights to erupt with a chorus of cheering. Kicking his wicked spurs into the flanks of the Cold One, he led the advance, his knights forming up around him, the infantry running alongside to his left and right, taking cover amongst the piles of slave corpses.

"I want their general's head!" snarled Yeurl as the fighting spirit took hold of him. His blood coursed through his veins, he could feel his heart beating in his chest like the thunder of a storm. He was panting with exertion and anticipation as the unit wheeled to square off against the unit of Bretonnians surrounding the largest enemy banner. Yeurl assumed his opponent would be here and smiled to himself. Another trophy would adorn the walls of his keep when he returned to Naggaroth.

"For Tor Anlec!" he bellowed, lowering his lance to full tilt. The humans were counter-charging, but the mounds of dead impeded their horses. The whinnying of horses and the snarling of the Cold Ones filled Yeurl's ears. The Dark Elf could see the enemy general, his armour gilded and polished, glaring in the midday sun. He sat upon a fine black steed, one which Yeurl swore could have been bred in Naggaroth, such was its fiery temper. In his hand he wielded an etched blade, probably blessed, thought Yeurl as he brought his lance point towards his foe. Their eyes locked, the human with his sword raised for a downward slash, his shield brought across his body to deflect Yeurl's lance.

The human's eyes flickered away momentarily as his mount stumbled on a dead slave, and Yeurl made his move, hauling the Cold One to the left, and swinging the lance across to his other side. The Bretonnian duke tried to pull his shield across but was too late, Yeurl's lance punched through the armour beneath his upraised sword arm, smashing the duke from his saddle. His Cold One leapt upon the black horse, its claws gouging into its chest in a spray of blood as its jaws closed on its throat. As Yeurl shrieked with joy, he looked about him. His knights were battling all around, a few had fallen but not as many as the enemy.

"Let your blades drink deep!" he cried out to his comrades, discarding his lance and drawing a longsword from its scabbard. A lance was thrust towards his face from out of the make, but Yeurl easily swayed out of its path, severing its tip with a casual flick of his blade. His counter-attack crashed onto the shield of the human, almost unhorsing him. Through the narrow visor, Yeurl could see the hatred burning in his foe's eyes, and felt invigorated by it. Let their hatred flow, he told himself, for I know what true hatred is. Snarling an oath, he brought his sword around in a whistling arc, slashing beneath his opponent's raised shield at the last moment, the blade severing the knight's leg at the knee. Yeurl laughed into the sky as his opponent fell clumsily from his saddle with a clattering of armour.

The human knights tried to scatter and run, but the Cold Ones had encircled them and the few who were left were swiftly butchered. Gasping for breath, Yeurl pulled his helm free and gulped in the warm summer air. All around, the dead and dying Bretonnians littered the field amongst the corpses of the slain slaves. A fitting end for such beasts, Yeurl thought. To his right, he saw Saradain had surrounded the human peasants and many held their hands up in surrender.

Shielding his eyes against the glaring sun, Yeurl could see there were several hundred who begged for mercy; some wounded, others simply fearing for their lives. Yeurl was content as he dropped off his Cold One and searched amongst the dead knights for the general he had killed. He had more slaves to replace those he had been forced to kill and, as he hacked off the lifeless head of the Bretonnian duke, he felt the warm rays of the sun bathing his face. Today was a good day.

THE AGE OF BLOOD

V) 1- 381 (Imperial Calendar 1123 to 1503)

When the Witch King launched his new invasion of Ulthuan, his first act was to rebuild the fortress of Anlec. Iron-hard black stone was brought from the quarries of Naggaroth, and with it, mighty walls and towers were raised. Though lacking the sheer size and grandeur of its previous incarnations, this new Anlec was nonetheless a formidable fortress. More importantly, it was a secure base from which Dark Elf armies could once more besiege Griffon Gate.


As the Dark Elves rampaged across Nagarythe, the Phoenix King Morvael mustered what troops he could. With so many warriors lost in the attack on Naggaroth, Morvael was forced to institute a system of militia levies on the people of Ulthuan, insisting that all Elves be trained for military service. When news reached Malekith of this development, he scorned these new troops, dubbing them cowardly bakers and farmers. The first few levies fared badly against the vicious and battle hardened warriors of Naggaroth, but their presence ensured that Griffon Gate was always defended over the next thirteen years. However, its defenders owed success to their steadfast determination and the fortress' cunning design more than to their own skill at arms. Malekith believed that the quality of his

troops and the power of his Sorceresses would eventually prove too much for the garrison, and that it would be only a matter of time before the fortress fell to the army of the Witch King.

The bloody months of the siege ground on into years, and still neither side could find advantage. Though initially frustrated that his attack had stalled, the Witch King soon grew sanguine – even amused – by the situation. His armies could not break through to the heartlands of Ulthuan, but his merciless warriors were slowly grinding the inexperienced High Elf militias to offal for little loss in return. Before long, the Witch King felt sure, the walls of Griffon Gate would empty, and Ulthuan would be at his mercy.

Malekith had another reason to be confident. He was using his magic to visit nightmares upon the Phoenix King, testing his sanity with visions of Ulthuan engulfed in flames and Morvael's family lanced upon spikes amidst the ruins of the White Tower of Hoeth. Season by season, the dreams inflicted upon Morvael became darker and ever more disturbing, turning the Phoenix King into a nervous, gibbering wreck.





Fighting against madness and driven by a heartfelt paranoia, Morvael emptied the Phoenix King's treasuries to rebuild the High Elf fleet. Resurgent again, the warships of the High Elves attacked the supply routes from Naggaroth to Anlec, cutting off Malekith from fresh warriors, food and weapons. While the battles at sea raged, Mentheus of Caledor, a renowned general, took matters into his own hands. Mentheus gathered together an army in a desperate attempt to relieve the siege at Griffon Gate. With a host of levy spearmen, mainly from Chrace and Cothique, Mentheus marched to Griffon Gate, accompanied by a cadre of mages from the White Tower.

Meanwhile, Malekith responded by launching the greatest attack yet on the Griffon Gate. This time, the Witch King himself led the assault parties. With sword and sorcery, he swept the defenders from the ramparts of Griffon Gate and breached the outer walls – only the central keep remained inviolate. In that hour, the fortress could have fallen, but the Dark Elf forces were scattered, and many were distracted by the cruel pleasures they were inflicting on the prisoners taken as the walls were overrun.

Then, during its hour of greatest need, Mentheus of Caledor reached Griffon Gate with a relief host, breaking the army of Naggaroth. Weakened by a lack of supplies Malekith raged as he could not rally his forces swiftly enough, and they were forced from the fortress by Mentheus' phalanxes of spears.

Over the following decades, sporadic fighting between the Dark Elves and High Elves erupted across the Shadowlands. Unable to muster the supplies for an outright battle, Malekith was forced to send his armies on hit-and-run attacks, luring Mentheus' forces into ambushes to whittle down their strength raiding – a poor duty for an army of such magnificence. Worse, the long years of war slowly transformed Ulthuan's inexperienced citizen levies into regiments just as hard-bitten and determined as the Dark Elves they fought.

Eventually, after more than three centuries of bloodshed, Mentheus' army succeeded in pushing back the hosts of the Witch King to the gates of Anlec itself. Here, the Dark Elves turned and faced Mentheus, determined that Anlec would never again fall. That final battle raged for weeks, and the moments of respite were as rare as they were fleeting.

THE FELLBLADES

The Fellblades are elite warriors of the Dark Elf armies and are often linked to the household of a particular Noble family. Fellblades live a life of strict martial training, each specialises in a particular weapon and fighting style. Killing is a way of life for these warriors. Enemies can expect no mercy from them. Fellblades accompany raiding parties to Lustria as paid guards or to further hone their killing skills.

Once again, the Witch King took personal command of the fighting from his black chariot, and none amongst the High Elf host suffered as greatly as those who opposed his blade. In the final assault on Anlec, Mentheus was slain by a bolt thrower. His Dragon, Nightfang, went berserk and the Dark Elves were scattered by the Dragon's rampage. The Dragon was eventually slain with dark spells, but by then Anlec was lost and Malekith was forced to quit Nagarythe once again, his bitterness and rage greater than ever. On his return to Naggaroth, the Witch King ordered the execution of the admirals who had so pitifully failed to breach the High Elf blockade. It was many long weeks before any save Morathi dared speak with him.



The Witch King did have one final revenge. Driven mad by his dreams, overwhelmed by the terrors unleashed by the Dark Elves, Morvael committed suicide. In the Shrine of Asuryan, the Phoenix King abdicated and hurled himself in the sacred flames to perish. Seven Phoenix Kings had now died, and Malekith had seen them all pass, his life sustained by the dark energies of Chaos. The Witch King vowed that he would survive to see the last of the Phoenix Kings die, even if he had to wait another five thousand years.



THE SLAVE'S TALE

My name is Hargan, my second name is of little consequence.

Once I felt the tenderness and love of a warm, caring family, but they are gone. Whether they still live or not is of no importance, for emotion is a luxury that has long since been lost to me.

Once, in what seems like another lifetime, I remember I was scribe to the Burgomeister of Marienburg. It is with trembling hands that I now put quill to paper. Much of my soul they destroyed, but my ability to write, they could not vanquish that. Not without severing my hands, but I would not have been able to labour night and day for them, toiling without nourishment or rest. Who are the faceless 'they' I talk of? They are evil incarnate, they are fear in its purest form. This I write in order that others may learn of them. They must be stopped. Who has the power to defeat them I cannot say.

My home was once a small village on the outskirts of Marienburg. They came in the dark of night, striking with the swiftness of a falcon, silent and in small numbers. They did not need many, such was their skill and stealth they were upon us before any alarm was raised. My only solace was that my wife was visiting relatives in the next village. From my bed they dragged me outside, I remember how my neighbour's child cried, his mother trying to comfort him, but the child sensed his mother's fear and his wailing did not cease. They tore the screaming child from his mother's arms and took him away. I remember the silence that followed and how haunting it felt. No one ever spoke of the child again and his mother was silent in her despair.

At knifepoint we were led to their dark vessel. A great mountain, blacker than night loomed before us. Tall spiked towers reached into the sky, obscuring the constellations. It was then that I knew that our gods had forsaken us. On a small boat we were carried to the nightmarish floating citadel. At times the calm sea would be broken by the gigantic ripples of some terrible beast beneath the surface. What horrors lurked in the waters where I had once swum I dared not guess. On reaching the fortress we were chained together, and so it was we were taken single file down into the depths of the Black Ark. Silent, save for the ominous rattle of our chains, we stepped down a steep spiral stairway. For what seemed like an eternity we marched into the bowels of hell. Occasionally a hideous scream from one of the passageways off the stairwell would chill my soul with a deep fear. It was the fear born of the knowledge that some time soon the despair I felt in my heart would join that chorus of pain.

Like cattle we were crammed into a dark chamber. On wooden racks we slept; there was no latrine, nor was there enough room for a man to stretch to his full length. For how long we were kept like this I cannot tell nor do I choose to guess. The filth that covered us soon developed into sores and before long disease was rampant. Our sleep was disturbed by the cries of those suffering from delirious fevers. The man chained next to me, a simple goatherd from our village, grew weaker with lack of sustenance. For many nights his body was wracked with a heavy fever before he was finally granted peace in death. By the time they finally unchained him from my side his corpse was bloated and maggots feasted on his putrid flesh. Others would occasionally join

us, some of them races that I knew not from where they came. There was no conversation between us. I remember two of the foreigners were caught in conversation by a guard. He drew his wicked blade and sliced their tongues from their mouths. Both died a few hours later from choking on their own blood.

Slowly I succumbed to the nameless disease that crept upon us. In a delirium of fever I can vaguely remember being led from the chamber back up the stairway. How my legs were able to carry my emaciated body I cannot say. My first sight of the dark city of Har Ganeth was one tinged with the madness of my condition. Each of the tall towers was crowned with a hellish skull that tormented me in my delusion. Visions of our mortal future, they mocked me. Death was amongst us and my mind had little trouble conceiving that we had been transported to hell. Only three of the thirty slaves who had been taken from my village remained alive. We were separated into groups and sharp barbed spears prodded us towards our new masters who stood waiting at the end of the dock.

"Kehmor is my name, I am the slavemaster of Lord Ruel and that is all you pitiful wretches need to know of me. Gone are the days when your lives were made complex by the choices that freedom allowed you. Your life will be simple now, obey me or die."

I recall his words well, even though my mind was clouded by illness. As each of us passed him he branded our left chest with the mark of Ruel. A black rune now scars the spot where I once perceived my heart to lie. Our new quarters were little better than those on the Ark. Cold stone replaced the wooden racks but we were still chained and crushed together. We were to work in the mines, digging the ores that would enable this race to forge more of their weapons, more power with which they could pillage and conquer. It was an endless cycle of despair. Night and day became concepts that existed only in my dreams. Soon I ceased to even dream. We were chained together by solid steel-spiked neck collars, more like beasts than men. If one of us tired from the solid work he would be whipped until his back was raw. If one of us should collapse from exhaustion the guards would sever his head from his body with great blades, rather than unlock his collar.

Even in our brief times of rest they would appear. Sometimes they would give us raw meat on a plate. Where it came from I dared not think, eating it with savage greed like some feral beast. Sometimes they would enter the cell and take one of us away. Of the poor soul's fates I cannot say. Screams of pain would usually follow such abductions. For how long I continued to slave in the mines I cannot estimate, but one morning I was led out of the cell by the guards. My mind raced with visions of the torments that I was about to suffer, but fate spared me any real anguish. I was taken to the forests where I was to cut down the mighty pines that covered the mountainside. Their girth is such that it would take ten men to link arms around even the smallest of these giant firs. For countless centuries these ancient trees had grown but, as is the wont of these dark masters, they were cut down in spiteful greed. We would be forced to work in the savage rain and biting snow with just torn rags for clothing. Though the fierce weather of Naggaroth nearly killed me, it was these same

foul conditions that granted me freedom. On one wet cold morning I found an old dagger at the foot of one of the trees. Tempted as I was to slay my evil master I knew that swift retribution would follow. The damp mines and the rain had gradually caused my collar to rust. That night I used the dagger, which I had smuggled into my cell, to work loose my shackles. The next day as soon as we reached the forest, I broke free and fled.

Up into the mountains I ran and, though my legs ached with exhaustion, I found strength in the knowledge that I was free. Behind me the beast-like hounds of my masters bayed. Through the icy streams I swam, to turn their keen nostrils from my scent. For many days they pursued me. A lone slave was of no great importance to them — they hunted me down for their own pleasures. Occasionally I would spy my former captors riding atop great monstrous lizards. The thought of being caught would send a shiver of pure fear through me. These beasts looked capable of tearing me apart as though I was a piece of parchment. High in the jagged dark mountains I hid, always heading west. I did not know to where, but my destination was anyplace away from the murderous attentions of those who sought to enslave me.

My captors called the mountain range the Spiteful Peaks. They were aptly named for they gave no nourishment to me. Neither beast nor plant survived in these accursed rocks. On the third day a monstrous shadow passed overhead. I do not know what manner of creature it was, but its head was that of a lion yet it flew with the wings of a great wyrm. In my past I would have thanked Sigmar that he made the beast blind to my presence but Sigmar had long since deserted me. That evening' spied tendrils of smoke rising into the sky. Cautiously I approached: if it were my hunters then I would face them and with my dagger take as many as I could to their graves. As I neared the encampment it was not the cold sharp tongue of the Druchii that met my ears. In the stranger's conversation I heard the unmistakable accents of Tilea and Estalia. Then my heart rose as I heard the familiar rough accent of a Middenlander. I dared not approach immediately, but instead sat for a while listening to their talk. Much time had passed since I last heard warm conversation but finally the lure of cooked meat bade me approach.

Now I sit here in those very same hills. Over the past months many others have flocked to our group. Rumours of a slave army have given heart to many and have lent them the will to escape and join us, but now they have also brought the enemy to us. We have amassed a small amount of equipment from raids into enemy encampments, but I would be loath to call us an army. We are ill-nourished and have only hatred of those who seek to enslave us as our weapon. Still, if we are to inspire any hope for others we know that we must go to war. As the most learned member of the group I have been chosen as their leader, yet I have no experience of war. I write this on the eve of battle with my former master Lord Ruel. In our hearts we know we are defeated, yet should this letter manage to find its way into safe hands then know this. It is better to die fighting this cold, evil race than suffer the unthinking to wretches that they will surely inflict upon you. With this I leave to meet my fate on the field of battle, but know this, whatever may pass I will not be taken alive.

THE AGE OF GLORIOUS TORMENT

VI) 1- 798 (Imperial Calendar 1503 to 2300)

Malekith now turned his gaze from Ulthuan, and set his sights on the wider world. It had increasingly come to his attention that the globe was now home to many ascendant powers, and he determined that their wealth would be seized and harnessed to the Witch King's cause.

Thus did Malekith decree the Age of Glorious Torment to have begun. He bade the Dreadlords of Naggaroth take ship about the globe, sowing terror wherever they might. Competition amongst the noble families of Naggaroth fuelled a massive expansion of the raiding fleets. Any Dark Elf with the right blend of determination, bravery and ruthlessness could make his or her fortune fighting on distant shores. Even Malekith was not immune to wanderlust's lure. At the head of a black fleet, he travelled the far reaches of the world, wreaking ruin and bringing dismay wherever he went.

For an age, the warriors of Naggaroth put aside their bloody wars with their kin on Ulthuan, to venture further and further abroad across the oceans. Driven by the urge to gather ever greater power, Dark Elf ship captains and glory-hungry princes set out across the oceans seeking plunder and adventure. Competition between the many family dynasties that held sway in the cities created inter-house rivalries that fuelled a massive expansion of the raiding fleets. Any Dark Elf with the right blend of determination, bravery and ruthlessness could make his or her fortune fighting on distant shores.

SLAUGHTER ACROSS THE WORLD

From the Boiling Sea, Black Arks could now raid the oriental lands of the farthest east. Yet for the Dark Elves these were uncharted territories and for each fleet that returned with prizes and slaves, half a dozen came back to Naggaroth in failure.

The sleek and sinister Dark Elf raiding vessels soon became feared across the world. Each dawn, black-hulled vessels slipped their moorings at Arnheim, Kannaroth and Padravan, only to return weeks later, holds laden with slaves, treasures and the wealth of distant lands. Ports were burned across the length and breadth of Bretonnia, the inhabitants put to the sword by scale-cloaked raiders or offered in ritualistic blood-

BLOOD ON THE SNOW

In the midwinter of 1728, the northern reaches of Naggaroth were invaded by a huge army of Chaos-worshipping barbarians that had crossed the Frozen Sea of Chill under the cover of a fierce blizzard. Malekith personally saw to the destruction of the interlopers, crushing them with perfectly-timed charges from his merciless Cold One Knights and cutting off their escape with his Corsair fleets. To ensure the northern tribes were punished for their insolence, Malekith then commanded the Beastmasters of nearby Karond Kar to launch a counter-invasion deep into the homelands of those who dared sully Dark Elf soil with their presence.

Into the wastes stormed an army of vengeful Druchii, flanked on either side by the war-beasts of Karond Kar. The nomadic tribes that prowled the Shadowlands were drawn by the promise of battle, but they were not prepared for the Beastmasters and their monstrous charges. Serpentine Hydras ploughed into the trundling Warshrines of the barbarian tribes, hurling them backward into the ranks of the foe and melting the flesh of the survivors with blasts of roaring flame. Manticores plunged out of the clouds to tear apart the leaders of the Chaos armies, Sorceresses on Dark Pegasi devoured the souls of those below like the choicest of sweetmeats. When the slaughter was over, a mile-wide trail of bloody slush stretched all the way back to Karond Kar, for Malekith had ordered that any survivors should be dragged to their death. Thus was the wrath of the Druchii visited upon the tribes of the north.






sacrifice. Famously, Duke Bastintaal of L'Anguille returned from crusade to discover his castle stripped of its finery, every chamber knee-deep in congealing blood, and the dismembered body parts of his household strung from finial and architrave. Tilean dukes paid massive ransoms in order to guarantee their cities' safety, then died alongside their subjects as the Dark Elves reneged. Elsewhere, the great temple-cities of the southern continent were defiled, and their timeless treasures ransacked.

The most notable successes were by Laithikir Fellheart, latest in a long line of Black Ark commanders and as cunning a she-Elf as was ever born. Laithikir had learnt to follow the High Elf ships, her Black Ark swathed in shadow and storm, tracking their ever-increasing journeys to the lands of the orient. By shadowing the fleets of Ulthuan, she was able to raid the busy seaports and convoys that traded with the High Elves. As word of her success grew, Laithikir sold her charts to other captains, and within a decade dozens of Dark Elf fleets were attacking the settlements of the mysterious far east and bringing back tens of thousands of slaves and holds full of exotic wares such as witch jade, ivory, tigerfire, silk and spices. Ever-eager to show off their wealth and power, the Dark Elves prized these stolen wares highly and their value soared. Competition for

the Witch King's permission to raid these lands fuelled a period of infighting and politicking that saw Malekith's coffers swell with gold and silver.

In the Temple of the Goddess of a Hundred Eyes, Corsairs crucified a hundred red-robed priests and took a dozen golden statues, which were presented to Morathi as a gift. The Black Ark Citadel of Desolation sank untold fleets of unsuspecting nations and its raiders sacked entire cities. From hidden coves, Dark Elf raiders looted gold convoys and slave-traders, and brought back the riches of kings to adorn the palaces of Malekith.

As the wealth of barbaric lands flooded into the Witch King's treasury, the Dark Elf fleets expanded once again, ultimately eclipsing the all but forgotten glories of yore. At Malekith's command, they recommenced their raids upon Ulthuan's shores, wreaking whatever woe they could. Advantage was also sought in subtler ways: Dark Elf ships shadowed Ulthuan's merchant vessels as they plied their trade, learning the location of the High Elves' closest allies. This information in turn allowed the Dark Elves to infiltrate the courts of such realms. Some they struck bargains with, others they set about undermining in order to deny aid to the High Elves in the war that was sure to come.

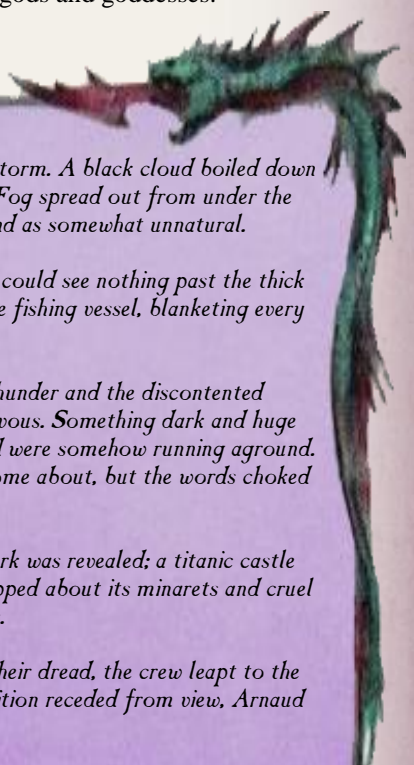


Over the course of centuries, many realms experienced both the cold embrace and the wicked betrayal of Dark Elf diplomacy. Yet few who had been bloodied by Malekith's claws were entirely reluctant to welcome him as ally afterward. Bitterness had done little to dull the Dark Elves' allure. When they wished it, the Witch King's ambassadors could speak charmingly enough to soothe even the rawest of grudges, and they were wealthy enough to awaken the most closely guarded avarice. It helped also that Malekith's emissaries were steeped in the most sinful and hidden of desires, and they used this knowledge to unlock many a heart that would otherwise have been fixed against them. Only in Athel Loren did their honeyed words fall upon deaf ears. The Wood Elves listened politely for a time, then bade the Dark Elves leave, and never return.

The Witch King himself once travelled to the farthest reaches of the world, and personally led many attacks. At one eastern capital, mystics called up strange illusions and beastly apparitions to assail the Dark Elves as they stormed the towers protecting the city. Malekith unleashed his own sorceries, driving the mystics insane and boiling the blood in their veins. The city was little more than a ruin when Malekith left, and as a last contemptuous act, he summoned up a great wave to drown the remains. The broken domes of shrines and the walled steps of the great pyramid temple still break the waves at low tide, an ominous reminder of the Witch King's power.

To the east, the sea patrols of the High Elves were sorely beset by ever-increasing raids by wild Norsemen and the raiding fleets of Naggaroth made great sport along the coasts of the Empire, Bretonnia, Estalia and Tilea. Shades from the Tower of Oblivion stole into the town of Anducci in Tilea's southern lands and crept into the houses of the local people, snatching all the children of the town from their beds. The commander of the Tower of Oblivion, Ranelle Doomwhisper, then offered to ransom the children back to the townsfolk. After the terrified Tileans had gathered up all of their wealth and stores, the Dark Elves stormed ashore and slaughtered everybody. The captives were taken back to Naggaroth; to whatever unholy end none can say.

The Empire, for a time, had guarded its shores well, but division and civil war had split the people of Sigmar. In the confusion and anarchy of the following centuries, the Dark Elves found rich pickings. They even grew so bold as to raid the port of Marienburg. Under the cover of night, the raiders unleashed a storm upon the city. Their Helldrakes glided effortlessly through the tossing seas and their crews cut out seven merchantmen from under the guns of Rijker's Isle, the port's keep. The Dark Elves unloaded what they wanted and then set fire to the ships and sent them back into the harbour, destroying dozens more vessels. By the light of the burning ships the Corsairs laughed and offered sacrifices to their evil gods and goddesses.



The fishing boat Bonadventure rose and fell on the immense swell that preceded the coming storm. A black cloud boiled down from the west at surprising speed and the wind grew into a gale ahead of the thunderhead. Fog spread out from under the black cloud, thickening rather than dissipating in the winds, which struck Arnaud Ferond as somewhat unnatural.

The ship's captain eyed the storm suspiciously as he called to the masthead, but the lookout could see nothing past the thick fog except the flicker of lightning. Within minutes, the heavy bank of cloud had engulfed the fishing vessel, blanketing every direction in gloom.

The only sounds were the slapping of waves against the hull, the occasional rumble of thunder and the discontented murmuring of the crew. Trapped in the cloying mists, Arnaud began to grow even more nervous. Something dark and huge reared up in the shadows and at first the captain thought that they had been turned about and were somehow running aground. The cliff towered higher than anything he'd ever seen. He was about to call for the ship to come about, but the words choked in his throat.

The Bonadventure had broken through a bank of cloud and the full majesty of the Black Ark was revealed; a titanic castle soaring into the storm clouds, floating atop a massive granite outcrop. Winged creatures flapped about its minarets and cruel figures in scaled cloaks leered down from savage battlements.

Out of instinct, Arnaud hammered at the warning bell and bellowed out orders. United in their dread, the crew leapt to the sheets to haul the ship onto a new heading, away from the floating citadel. As the fell apparition receded from view, Arnaud let out an explosive sigh of relief.

Their reprieve was short-lived. Water spurned as something burst to the surface ahead of the ship. A gigantic, serpentine beast fully four or five times larger than the Bonadventure surged out of the water. Atop its back was a slender castle, water foaming from its battlements. Arnaud watched in horror as the monster bore down on him, its many eyes alight with a greenish glow.

The crew were screaming and shouting and some burlled themselves from the deck in terror. Arnaud's last dread-laden vision was of a jaw filled with dagger-like teeth lunging down and the crash of splintering wood. The interloper dealt with, the Black Ark crashed on through the waves, its course set for L'Anquille.

At one unfortunate port, the Dark Elves encircled the town and barred all escape, before the Witch Elves were unleashed to wreak havoc within the walls. The Khainites named the town Khairith Irlean – the Place of a Thousand Bloody Delights. When the armies of the Dragon Emperor arrived, the Dark Elves had already returned to sea. In their wake, they left a town empty but for heaps of dismembered and charred corpses, writhing with flies and disease. The stones of the buildings were stained red with blood. So disturbing was the scene that the town was razed utterly and all mention of it was stricken from maps and records.



From beneath the Blackspine Mountains, the Dark Elves ventured further and further into Lustria to the south. They constantly assailed the High Elf settlement of Arnheim on the eastern coast of the New World and the city is now in a state of almost constant war.

Deeper into the ancient jungles, the Dark Elves discovered the soaring temples and hidden treasure vaults of the Slann and their Lizardmen servants. Laden with gold and strange artefacts, these expeditions were greeted with celebration upon their

return. The raiders' tales of cities paved with gold and immense, prehistoric ziggurats filled with riches beyond counting lured more and more Dark Elves into the rotting jungles and raids into Lustria now take place every few years. For centuries the Lizardmen have launched retaliatory attacks against Naggaroth in attempts to retrieve their treasures, and the enmity between the two races remains particularly bloody.

Malekith watched with grim pleasure as the tendrils of Dark Elf influence spread across the globe. By this time, the Witch King had so many informers and cat's paws in other lands that he often received word of a High Elf fleet arriving at its destination before the Phoenix King did. Better still, with but a careful stroke of his puppets' strings, Malekith could assail his hated foes with the armies and fleets of other lands, with his involvement secret to all but a few easily disposed of pawns. For more than two hundred years, the Witch King revelled in this new method of war. Indeed, so much cruel delight did these manipulations elicit, that Malekith could well have continued upon this path for many centuries more, had his spies not brought unwelcome tidings: despite their woes, the High Elves had not lost heart. If anything, Finubar the Seafarer, the newly crowned Phoenix King, had succeeded in uniting his people to a degree unseen since the days of Aenarion.

This indeed was news that could not be borne. Summoning Morathi and his closest councillors to his side, the Witch King swept from his throne room and into the storm-wracked night. It was time for the armies of Naggaroth to vent their full fury upon Ulthuan once more – the Age of Vengeance had begun...



An eerie stillness hung over the blasted plain between the two armies. Mounted on his scrawny warhorse, the general of the rebel slave army looked across the bleak wasteland at the Dark Elf force and his heart fell. He knew that this was the day he would die. An oppressive atmosphere shrouded the rebel army. Hargan knew what it was: a tense feeling of anticipation. Anticipation and fear.

Before them, the Dark Elf horde stretched out across the plain as far as any of them could see to the north and south. Hargan could hardly take in the number of Dark Elves ranged against his ill-matched army, such was the size of the implacable force. The enemy's black armour gleamed dully in the hazy light of the watery sun and here and there pinpricks of light glinted off sharply honed blades.

The army of the oppressors stood ranged before the slaves like a mighty, immovable wall. Directly in front of them was the infantry: lithe and sinuous Dark Elf men and women, fighting side by side, armed with deadly repeating crossbows, all ready for battle and almost goading the slaves to attack them by their mocking expressions. Behind the crossbowmen were the spearmen, the tips of their weapons visible above the warriors. Along with the armoured bodies of the Dark Elves the effect they had was to make the unit look like some enormous spiny-carapaced, many-legged horror.

Just the view of these regiments was enough to instil a knotted feeling of fear in the stomachs of the rebels, but there was worse still. Ranged between the units of the infantry were huge torsion-powered ballistas, loaded with heavy, steel tipped bolts — the notorious repeater bolt throwers. Powerful weapons, one bolt fired by such a machine could penetrate several ranks of troops, easily passing straight through a warrior's body. The bolt throwers could also fire volleys into the enemy ranks with equally devastating effect.

Beyond the regiments of crossbowmen and spearmen, to both north and south, were serried ranks of Dark Elf warriors, all intently staring towards the slave army. Behind them, Hargan could make out great lumbering green-skinned reptiles being ridden by magnificently armoured champions.

The creatures' heads swayed lugubriously from side to side, nostrils flaring as they sniffed out the enemy, identifying them through their scent: a combination of sweat and fear. The Dark Elf Knights, mounted upon these cold-blooded monsters, stared directly ahead of them at the pitiful ranks of the rebel slaves, their chillingly handsome angular features made even more dreadful by the fixed expressions of cruel determination and ruthless dedication. Nothing would stop them once they had chosen their victims.

A distant screeching cry cut through the stillness and Hargan spun round, his heart pounding. Circling high above the battlefield were a number of bird-like silhouettes. From their terrible screams Hargan knew that they were harpies, ready to pick off the wounded and the dying.

Hargan's steed snorted, impatiently pawing the ground. Despite its emaciated condition, the warhorse had a fiery temperament and was eager to feel the bones of the enemy breaking under its hooves. Hargan suddenly became aware of another raucous howling joining the screams of the harpies. The noise was coming from the ranks of the Dark Elves and could mean only one thing: the Witch Elves were preparing for battle.

Hargan could see the blood-lusting warrior-women emerging from between the regular troops. Bearing no shields, but carrying long venom-edged knives, the Witch Elves were beginning to foam at the mouth, drugged into a frenzy by the hallucinogenic herb-laced blood which they all imbibed before battle. The warrior sisterhood of the Lord of Murder were rightly feared as the wildest and most bloodthirsty of the Dark Elves.

As the Witch Elves screeched and howled the rest of the Dark Elf horde began chanting to Khaine. The slaves all knew that there was no hope for them now. This was the end. Not one of them would leave the battlefield alive. But even though they knew it was futile, they had to try. They had come too far to give up now.

If they were going to die, Hargan thought, there was no better way than to die fighting — and to take as many of their evil oppressors with them as possible. At least that way it would be

less likely that they would end up as tortured and degraded living sacrifices to the accursed Dark Elf god, and nothing could be worse than that.

We may be malnourished and ill-prepared, and certainly no match for the forces of the Witch King, Hargan thought, but we have right on our side, and the knowledge that we have nothing left to lose. With a grim expression of resigned resolution on his face, Hargan hefted his weapon and prepared to end his days fighting.

Dark Lord Ruerl of Har Ganeth looked over the heads of his forces at the pitiful slave army that faced him and allowed himself a cruel smile of satisfaction. Ten days before, he had received the intelligence from his scouts concerning the whereabouts of the slave army hiding in the Blackspine Mountains. The Dark Elves had long known about the clandestine contingent of slaves. Over the years, slaves from Naggaroth's great plantations had at times evaded the watchful gazes of their overseers and escaped into the unforgiving wilderness.

This concerned the Dark Elves little as the Land of Chill was a harsh enough place to live anyway and out in the open, at the mercy of the elements, not to mention the marauding tribes of Ores and their Goblin kin, it was unlikely that any escaped slave could survive for long. But in more recent times, rumours had reached the great cities of the Dark Elves that a large number of renegade slaves were hiding out in the Blackspine Mountains that ran the length of Naggaroth, and that they had a leader.

Ten days had been ample time to mobilise Har Ganeth's army. Every single Dark Elf could be called upon to fight if necessary and many welcomed the opportunity to do so, being able to leave the claustrophobic confines of the city for a time and indulge in one of their greatest pleasures — that of killing. Lord Ruerl knew that the slaves were no threat to his force but he was happy to treat the battle as a training exercise for his army. The warriors of Naggaroth had to be always ready in case the Witch King sent forth the long-awaited command that the Black Arks would

sail once more to reclaim the island continent of Ulthuan. Ruerl smiled in pleasant anticipation of the coming slaughter...

Bravely, Hargan's troops readied themselves to face the Dark Elves' onslaught. A shower of black-fletched bolts, darkening the heavy grey sky, rained down into the massed slaves. Many fell around Hargan, the slaves' only protection being scraps of stolen armour which proved too scant to be very effective against the crossbowmen's weapons. Hargan yelled out over the screams of the Dark Elves and the moans of the dying for his warriors to put all feelings of fear from their hearts. Theirs was the side of right and they had nothing left to lose. Hearing their leader's words the rebels, filled with the courage of doomed men, took the initiative and surged forward to meet their foe.

With a dreadful whistling sound, the first volley of steel-tipped darts from the repeater bolt throwers flew into the front rank of the slaves. Many of the deadly missiles did not stop at the front line but continued through the men's bodies into those unfortunate troops behind them. Undaunted, and with the momentum of their charge carrying them past their fallen comrades, the slaves ran forward now even more driven, determined to avenge the deaths of their friends.

The infantry from the two sides clashed in the centre of the plain with a mighty ringing of steel upon steel. Headless human bodies fell to the left and right while the now enraged slaves cut down equal numbers of Dark Elf warriors. Giving their bloodthirsty battle-cries, the Cold One Knights urged their cold-blooded steeds forward into the flanks of the slave regiments. Usually slow and sluggish in their movements, as soon as the Cold Ones had tasted the blood of the humans falling before them, bellowing loudly, the great beasts no longer needed any encouragement from their riders. Their monstrous steeds striding into the melee, the Knights transfixed their enemies on their lances.

At the same time the frenzied Witch Elves cut a bloody swathe into the other side of the rebel army. Yelling insanely, the intoxicated murderers

dealt out death to all those around them, fighting with evil glee, each drop of blood they spilt being for the glory of Khaine. With a whining roar, a bolt of black fire burst from the Dark Elf ranks and smashed into a unit of slaves, scattering their charred bodies in an explosion of dark magic.

Caught between a contingent of Cold One Knights on their reptilian mounts and the frenzied Witch Elves, a regiment of slave warriors turned in panic and fled from its attackers. Loping after the fleeing slaves, the Cold Ones easily caught up with the desperate humans, allowing the Knights to drive them into the ground while the great beasts themselves tore the wretches limb from limb with their mighty jaws.

However, as the dread Knights cut down their companions, some of the slaves still managed to make good their flight, avoiding the lances of the Dark Elf champions. With siren screams, the black-winged harpies swooped down out of the sky and plucked these survivors from the ground in their flesh-rending talons. Screeching in the wild ecstasy of bloodlust, the harpies rose into the air, tearing apart the bodies of the humans, the screams of the slaves mingling with those of the demented monsters.

The embittered slave general stared out in dismay at the carnage taking place before him. In a momentary break in the fighting close to him, Hargan saw the slaves' standard fall as a Witch Elf sliced the bearer's head from his shoulders.

A second volley launched from the bolt throwers hurtled through the quickly-falling rebel lines. The remaining slaves fought on desperately. Another conjured missile of dark power slammed into the magically defenceless slaves to devastating effect.

Hargan knew that they could not take much more of this. Maybe he should order a retreat. There was no way the slaves could defeat the Dark Elves, with their great numbers and military precision. But then again, there was nowhere for them to go. The Blackspine Mountains held no hope for them. There was no way they could escape from the accursed continent and now that the Dark Elves knew of

their existence, it would only be a matter of time before their one-time captors followed them into the mountains and finished them off. Resignedly, realising that there was absolutely no hope for the slaves, Hargan urged his steed into the fray.

He was only dimly aware of what happened next. The first thing he was conscious of was the assassin's dagger forced up to its hilt between his ribs, and then the pain hit him. As the poison took excruciating effect, the slave general felt his horse fall beneath him as it was struck from the side by a charging Cold One and its rider's lance. Hargan's eyes briefly met the cold-hearted stare of the Knight before he toppled to the ground under crushing hooves and razor-edged claws. As he succumbed to the fumes of the poisonous slime of the beast's skin, Hargan felt the foetid breath of the reptilian monster on his face and gagged. The last thing he saw was the gaping, fang-lined maw as it closed around his skull.

The battle was over. It had been won swiftly and decisively by Lord Ruerl's mighty force and Dark Elf casualties had been minimal. The slaves' battle standard now lay trampled and torn on the rocky plain, as did their general. Virtually all the slaves had been killed or mortally wounded, and those left were now being herded up.

The wretched humans probably thought that they would now be returned to the plantations but Lord Ruerl had decided that they could not be trusted and that he would have to make an example of them. They would all be executed in a manner that was suitably slow and agonising. Ruerl looked across the wasteland now stained red with blood and heaped with the bodies of the slaves, here and there muddled with the corpses of Dark Elves and the occasional Cold One.

The Witch Elves were already excitedly smearing themselves in the still warm blood of the fallen, renewing their pact with their master, Khaine. The warriors of the Witch King had been victorious, of course. Ruerl thought to himself. Yes, the suppression of the slave revolt had been a most entertaining spectacle.



DARK CLOUDS OVER NAGARYTHE

The Black Dragon soared above the clouds, invisible to the world below. Massive muscular limbs beat slowly to steer it along its course. Once airborne, Dragons used their massive leather wings to glide on the thermal currents. Their immense size belied their agility; they were skilled flyers capable of the most articulate turns which they could perform with a grace that could match even the smallest and nimblest of birds. Fast, agile and powerful, the Dragon was truly the master of the skies.

A single Dragon was capable of striking terror into the hearts of entire armies. High above the oceans that surrounded the mystical isle of Ulthuan not one but five of these monsters soared in the bright blue skies. At the front of the spear-shaped formation, Malekith the Witch King, cruel master of the Dark Elves, gave the signal to dive. Peeling off in a downwards spiral, one by one the Dragons folded their immense wings and plummeted towards the ground below.

As they pierced through the lower cloud level, the isles of Ulthuan came into view, a hollow ring of massive snow-capped mountain peaks surrounded by clusters of small islands. Four to five miles from the north-east edge of the mainland, approaching the barren broken shore of Nagarythe, several immense black rocky spires protruded from the ocean. Surrounding the sinister vessels, gigantic sea beasts writhed in the waters. Each of these monsters were hundreds of feet in length but from the Dragon rider's perspectives they appeared as small dark shadows hidden deep beneath the foaming ocean surface.

The Witch King stared at the island before him. This land had once been home to Malekith, and the thought sent a bitter flash coursing through his mind. He had reveled in his time spent here as a youth, mastering swordplay and the art of war. Nagarythe had been a cruel realm to grow up in. Unlike the kingdoms that were protected by the impassable mountain ranges, Nagarythe was open to invasion. A child had to quickly learn to defend himself as a warrior or would die before reaching maturity. Many millennia had passed since those childhood days, but the hatred he felt at having been exiled from his own land had not lessened.

The Dragon continued its ferocious descent. To the Corsairs on the Black Arks it seemed as though their roaster was intent on a suicidal dive into the cold waters, but at the last moment the Dragon arched its horned back, opening its wings to their full extent and soared across the surface of the ocean. The tip of its wings touched upon the waves as it flew Malekith on a direct course to the shores of Ulthuan. Once more Malekith was intent on taking back his kingdom, but this time a host of Dragons would lead the assault. For over a millennia his plan had been slowly coming to fruition, and finally the time of conquest had arrived.

Malekith thought back to the day he began his scheming. Rakarth, the most skilled of his beast handlers, had been the first to report the incredible find. A clutch of over a dozen

Dragon eggs had been located within the Spiteful Peaks. Instantly Malekith's twisted mind had begun to plan how he could use the find against his hated enemy. It had been many centuries since his Black Dragon Kaliphon had been slain by a lance which had pierced its dark heart. In his rage at the death of his steed, hundreds had perished. Malekith had not been able to bring himself to ride another Dragon, though many nobles had offered him theirs as gifts. Instead he had ordered the construction of a terrible scythed chariot, pulled by Cold One beasts. In his spite he had ordered that he alone could ride a chariot to battle. All others were to be destroyed.

The discovery of the eggs had brought a rare moment of pleasure to Malekith. Now he would be able to hand rear a Dragon to serve him as he saw fit. He and a select few of his finest and most favoured nobles would, over the coming centuries, train these monsters to carry them into battle and wage a war upon Ulthuan like none other.

As the dark beaches of Nagarythe came into sight Malekith glanced down at his Dragon's fearsome horned head. Seraphon had been the first to hatch and, as such, Malekith had laid claim to him. The firstborn was the strongest and the ruler of the Dark Elf people would ride nothing less. It had taken many centuries for the Dragons to hatch and even longer for them to grow to maturity, but their training had begun immediately. Malekith had assigned Beastmaster Rakarth himself to the task, demanding that Seraphon be trained to the highest level.

The other nobles were commanded to remain with their beasts whilst they underwent training. The many decades of hardship as beast grew to understand its master and master learned to control beast were now about to pay off. From the saddle Malekith spied a small coastal town. Pointing towards it, each of his Dragon riders knew instantly their objective. Keeping their flight path low they veered off, still in formation, towards the unsuspecting settlement.

Netariah's eyes felt heavy. He had been on watch since sunrise, and his shift was nearly over. He longed to catch some sleep before joining in the village festivities, as today was the Festival of Light, and the streets of Caldor were lined with ribbons of all colours. It was a tradition for the young Elves to run free through the town, throwing small bags of coloured dye at any passers-by. As a result, everybody wandered through the town with their clothes spattered in a mass of bright hues. Tonight there would be much fine wine drunk to celebrate the anniversary of the glorious defeat of the Witch King and his exile from this fair land. For the moment, Netariah was content to watch the festivities unfurl in the dusky light.

He smiled at the thought of the tales that his children would greet him with on his return. The image of their wide grins was broken by a shout

from the relief watch who stood waiting at the foot of the ladder. It was the welcome signal that his shift had finished. As he turned to climb down the ladder, the sky above him darkened. An immense black shadow soared past the tower and the following blast of wind caused Netariah to lose his balance, sending him tumbling to the ground below. The Dragons flew into Caldor without the alarm having been raised.

On the ground below, Malekith spotted the unwary townsfolk gathered in the market square. The other riders had now split off from the formation, but it no longer mattered. He directed Seraphon down towards the packed festivities. Laughing as he saw the first of the people scream in horror as they spied the terrible forms above them. Seraphon let out a ferocious screech and together the townsfolk realized too late the menace that was upon them. What moments earlier was a happy scene of Elves dancing in the open turned into a frenzy of fear. Tables were upturned and Elves trampled upon each other in their desperation to flee. Hovering above the panic-stricken High Elves, Malekith whispered a command to his beast.

Seraphon drew in a deep breath, holding it momentarily before exhaling. A cloud of black gas poured from the Dragon's mouth immersing nearly the entire square. One by one the villagers fell to their knees clutching at their throats as they vainly tried to draw breath. Again the Dragon let out its deadly noxious cloud, and as it did so Malekith scanned the skies above the village roofs. The other four Dragons were coursing up and down the streets mimicking his own Dragon's actions. Within minutes the brightly decorated streets were enveloped in a deathly black mist. Those who managed to escape the gases were quickly chased down by the Dragons. A lone brave but foolish warrior thrust his long spear at one of the monsters as it hovered above him. His face was swathed in a rag in an attempt to stop himself from inhaling the poisonous acidic gas. Malekith mused to himself, the gas was the least of this fool's worries. The Dragon bit at the spear snapping it as though it were a twig. As the warrior turned to run, the long neck of the mighty beast extended and its massive jaws tore the fleeing warrior clean in two.

Seraphon remained hovering above the village for a few minutes until the mists slowly cleared. Malekith smiled at the carnage below, the bodies of hundreds of Elves lay sprawled where they had fallen. Already the corrosive acid had begun to eat away at the brightly colored clothing and flesh of the dead. Ordering his Dragon to land, Malekith looked around the square. Amongst the mayhem he could not spy a single survivor.

"Such a waste," he uttered to Seraphon, who was panting heavily after his extraordinarily long flight. "They would have made such fine slaves. Still, what are a few hundred captives here or there. Soon the whole of Ulthuan will be mine to command."

THE AGE OF VENGEANCE

When the Dark Elves took ship to Ulthuan, they did so alongside a host nearly as great as their own. Black Arks beached across Nagarythe and black-bannered hosts swiftly besieged and overwhelmed the defences of Phoenix Gate and Griffon Gate. While the fur-clad Northmen sated their desire for carnage in the lands of Ellyrion, Tiranoc and Chrace, Malekith led his own host deep into the sacred forests of Avelorn.

Ancient groves burned with dark fire as the Witch King's host pressed onward in search of the Everqueen. The Witch King sought Alarielle's death more than that of any other, for he knew it would spread unquenchable dismay. Thousands of High Elves were slaughtered in battle, or else cast onto sacrificial pyres in praise to Khaine and Anath Raema, yet the Everqueen evaded the Witch King's gaze. Too late, Malekith learned she had escaped his onslaught – rescued by the upstart Prince Tyrion.

Furious, Malekith drove his armies all the harder. His generals, eager to outdo one another and so gain their lord's favour, loosed a tide of bloodletting and destruction not seen for thousands of years. Soon, all of Ulthuan was ablaze. Only at Lothorn and the Tower of Hoeth were the Dark Elf armies checked in their advance. The Witch King cared not for these bastions of resistance, but gloried in the carnage wrought at his command. The one blight upon Malekith's triumph was the knowledge that the Everqueen remained at liberty, having somehow evaded all who sought her. Losing patience, the Witch King loosed four of his deadliest Assassins, promising boundless wealth in exchange for the Everqueen's death. Ulthuan's destruction now seemed only a matter of time.

THE WITCH KING'S VENGEANCE

With his power and glory restored, Malekith once more turned his vile attentions to the Phoenix Throne of Ulthuan, and launched a war that rages on to the present day.

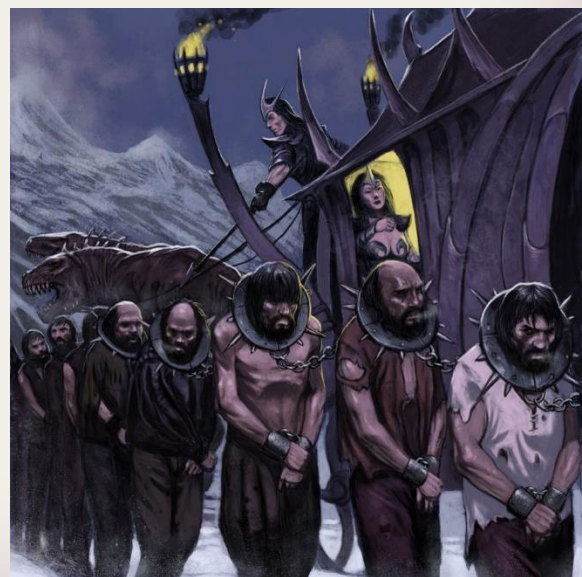
As the Dark Elves extended their terrifying raids to the remotest regions of the world, the augurs of Ghroind began to see stark changes within the Realm of Chaos. The shifting inner energies of Chaos swelled with power, straining and boiling as they built up like a tide. Waves of despair and anger flowed through the miasmatic vortices of raw magic, bringing scenes of death and destruction that both thrilled and chilled the onlookers. War was coming; Chaos was coming.

Such import was placed on these visions that Malekith and Morathi travelled to Ghroind to witness the unfolding scenes of slaughter and misery for themselves. Snow-swathed fields were awash with blood, strange onion-domed towns burned with magical fire and shambling, shapeless beasts fed on

mountains of bloody flesh. Over and over the images emerged from the coruscating energies, each time a little different, a small detail or event somewhat changed as the flowing threads of Fate intertwined and unravelled, changing the future.

Malekith sensed that dark times would soon be at hand and he would be ready to strike at the hated High Elves. With the power of Chaos strengthening, more tribes of northern Marauders tried to breach the cordon of the watch towers. The danger of invasion from the north vexed Malekith greatly, as he could not launch an invasion of Ulthuan while the borders of Naggaroth were unsafe. It was Morathi who turned consternation into opportunity. In a great caravan, a hundred laden wagons drawn by a thousand Cold Ones, the Hag Sorceress led an expedition into the north. With her she took ten thousand slaves, the riches of distant kings and a coterie of Sorceresses. Messengers were sent to the east and west, declaring that the Queen of the Elves would handsomely reward any who would fight for her.

The first tribe met Morathi with suspicion, but once they saw her cold beauty they were utterly bewitched. Pleasured by concubines and given gifts of gold, silver and gems, the chief of the tribe quickly swore an oath of fealty to the 'Elf Queen'. The same happened at the next encampment, and the next, and the next. As word spread, tribes travelled hundreds of leagues to seek out Morathi, and she created a palace of frozen ice and jet black rock to welcome her visitors. She lavished lustful attentions on the tribesmen and gave them jewellery and slaves. This continued for many months, until she had mustered a horde of tribesmen tens of thousands-strong. A year earlier, these vicious warriors had been intent on pillaging the cities of the Dark Elves; now they were pawns of Morathi ready to fight for the Witch King.



Slaves in the shipyards at Clar Karond laboured through bleak winter days and nights, building immense ships of timber and iron to carry the army of northmen – the Marauders were terrified of the Black Arks, and were too clumsy to sail upon the backs of Sea Dragons and Helldrakes. Guided by Dark Elf steersmen, this flotilla crossed the Sea of Malice to await its human cargo. West of Mar Ganeth, the tribes gathered under the shadow of the Black Pillar – a towering shrine to the Chaos Gods carved from obsidian and studded with the skulls of sacrifices. From here they embarked upon their fleet and followed the Black Arks across the Sea of Chill.

The size and fury of the combined Dark Elf and Chaos attack swept aside all resistance. Black Arks beached across Nagarythe and the armies of darkness smashed through Phoenix Gate and Unicorn Gate. While the Marauders were left to burn and plunder as they saw fit, the vanguard of the Dark Elves speared into the woodland realm of Averlorn – the home of the Everqueen of Ulthuan. Malekith's aim was twofold: to sow panic and dismay with the Everqueen's death and

to corrupt the powerful magic that she wielded. Though the Witch King's forces stormed through Averlorn and surrounded the camp of the Everqueen, she escaped with the aid of Prince Tyrion, who cut his way through the Dark Elves and fled with the Everqueen into the deep forests. The Dark Elves burnt Averlorn, razing woodland and meadow as they hunted for the Everqueen and her companion.

Elsewhere, the armies of Naggaroth advanced without pause, Malekith's generals eager to outdo their rivals. The Blighted Isle swiftly fell and once again the Naggarothi held the Altar of Khaine. In Ellyrion, the horsemasters sought to fight back, but the sorcery of Malekith destroyed their army and scattered the survivors. Dark Elf ships broke through Lothorn into the Inner Seas, and victory was within Malekith's grasp.

While Ulthuan burned, the Witch King demanded that the Everqueen be found, or that her body be brought to him as proof of her death. Four Assassins of Khaine pledged their lives and souls to bringing Alarielle to Malekith and then set out on their quest. In the blasted lands of Averlorn, they played a deadly game of cat and mouse with the Everqueen and her guardian. Despite coming close on several occasions, the Dark Elves always found their prey had eluded them, but the net grew ever tighter.

In the following weeks, Malekith strove to drown his doubts in blood. The fortress of Tindalor he assailed with Dark Magic, and he watched with satisfaction as

ANETHRA HELBANE

When the Sundering tore apart Tiranoc and Nagarythe, those who had remained loyal to Malekith used their sorcery to save their castles, and created the Black Arks. One of these was the fortress of Athil Khairn, which was renamed the Temple of Spite when it took to the oceans. The ruler of Athil Khairn was Anethra Helbane, one of Morathi's closest allies.

She had been raised amongst the cults of excess and her husband, Kedhron Helbane, travelled with Malekith in his journeys across the world and fought beside the prince against Phoenix King Caledor I. When Kedhron was slain during the Second Battle of Nagar, Anethra fought off attempts by Kedhron's brother, Hirsunor, to take control of Athil Khairn. Anethra eventually triumphed when she demonstrated her brother-in-law's involvement in a plot to poison Morathi – a plot that Anethra had engineered.

With the aid of her only son, Nurekh, Anethra went on to found a powerful dynasty that has members in positions of power throughout Dark Elf society. Once, Anethra lived in Ghond and was instrumental in the founding of the Dark Convent. By aiding Morathi, Anethra learnt many pacts and rituals with which to sustain and prolong her wicked life and she is just as ruthless and determined now; nearly five thousand years later. She lives in a great mansion with her son in Clar Karond, a city built upon her wealth and prestige, from where she controls the destiny of her extended family. From raiding fleets to armies, sorcerous artefacts to the temples of Khaine, the Helbanes are a dominant power that must be appeased or negotiated with by all of the lesser families of Naggaroth.





daemonic tentacles tore the citadel apart stone by stone. In Eataine, he watched as Kouran led the Black Guard to storm the temple of Lileath and fed its priestesses to voracious War Hydras. The Witch King personally captured Adran, High Commander of Caledor, and oversaw his sacrifice to dread Hekarti. But through it all, Malekith was ill at ease – never had he been so close to ultimate victory, yet countless defeats had made him distrustful of beneficent fate.

Only at Lothorn and the White Tower were the Dark Elf armies checked in their advance. Besieged, the desperate defenders held out, praying to the gods for salvation. Malekith gloried in the destruction and carnage and mercilessly crushed every army raised against him. He would strangle all hope from his enemies, and then finish them forever.

Yet a glimmer of hope remained for the High Elves, despite the darkness that had engulfed their lands. The Everqueen still lived, even if in hiding, and tales were heard of a young mage from Saphery who wielded magical power that was the match of the Witch King's sorcery. He brought down storms of lightning upon his foes and engulfed armies with conflagrations of white flame. He was Teclis, brother to Prince Tyrion, and soon Malekith and his followers would curse his name.

The Assassins seeking the Everqueen came upon their prey one night, almost by chance. Prince Tyrion fought with savage skill and defiance, and slew all four hunters. Yet with his dying breath, the last Assassin

sent forth a daemonic familiar to bring word to the Witch King of the Everqueen's location. When the impish, bat-winged creature arrived in the camp of Malekith, the Witch King revealed his masterstroke. With unholy pacts of blood and depravity Malekith had struck a bargain with a Greater Daemon of Slaanesh, a depraved and wicked creature called N'kari. The Witch King had little desire to do such a thing for even an immortal Elf had no wish to draw the Dark Prince's gaze, but he rightly perceived that the Everqueen and her protector were beyond the abilities of his mortal servants. N'kari readily agreed to the Witch King's terms. The soul of an Everqueen was a sweetmeat to be valued beyond all others, and the Daemon had long sought revenge on Tyrion for an ignominious defeat some years earlier. In return for sacrifices and dark favours, N'kari would hunt down Alarielle and devour her soul. With chilling shrieks of joy, N'kari set off on the hunt, speeding through the charred forests of Averlorn in search of the Everqueen. As the Daemon departed, the Witch King felt a chill cross his heart, and questioned, too late, the wisdom of his bargain.

The Greater Daemon descended upon Tyrion and Alarielle in the last twilight hours of the night. For all his power and skill, Tyrion was wounded and easily smashed aside by N'kari. As the four-armed Daemon of Chaos loomed over the Everqueen, lightning suddenly erupted from the darkness, hurling N'kari back. In the starlight stood an emaciated figure, a sword wreathed in crackling magic in his hand. It was Teclis, Magelord of Saphery. With a bellow of hatred N'kari attacked, but a great coruscation of energy engulfed Teclis. At its touch, the shimmering sphere broke the magical aura binding N'kari to the world of mortals, casting it back into the Realms of Chaos. When voices upon the Winds of Magic brought news that N'kari had been banished the Witch King took it as an omen that his invasion was in jeopardy.

THE BATTLE OF FINUVAL PLAIN

Enraged that Alarielle still lived, Malekith turned all of his fury upon the High Elves. Rage and hatred exhorted him to press on, to ignore the Everqueen's perplexing survival and obliterate his accursed kin. The Witch Elves kept the fires of Khaine burning day and night, as they heaped captives by the hundreds onto the pyres. Ulthuan's rivers ran red with blood as wanton slaughter engulfed the isle. It seemed for all the world as if the High Elves would be obliterated by Malekith's vengeance.

In a final act of defiance, the army of Ulthuan drew what little strength remained at Finuval Plain. Here, High Elves from every kingdom and from beyond the seas were gathered to fight their last battle. The Witch King was unimpressed by the ragtag army of Tiranoc charioteers, Ellyrian cavalry Sapherian mages and the weary militia regiments. From across Ulthuan, the hosts of the Witch King marched to Finuval Plain to crush the last resistance. The host of Malekith dwarfed that of the High Elves. Beastmasters goaded gigantic War Hydras into the battle line, while Witch Elves

screamed obscene oaths to Khaine. Corsairs clad in cloaks made from the scales of Sea Dragons bared their wicked blades and hurled abuse at their hated enemies. Sorceresses and Hag Queens cavorted in dark rituals to summon their power. Nearly a quarter of his host were Warriors of Chaos, the battle-scarred survivors of the invasion who now flocked to Malekith's banner and the promise of glory. And beside Malekith stood Urian Poisonblade, the most deadly warrior to have ever been raised in Naggaroth.

He was the Witch King's personal champion, a mighty fighter of awesome ability, skill and cunning. It was rumoured that he had been bred for battle by the Witch King himself to be the destroyer and relentless slayer of his enemies. Urian's cruelty was as legendary as his skill. His foes said that he had the heart of a daemon, and that if you were captured by him it was better to swallow your own tongue and choke to death than survive and face the horrors the following hours or days would bring. When Urian learnt of this he made sure that in future his prisoners had no tongue to choke on.

DURIATH HELBANE

Power and wealth are there for the taking; such is the creed of the Dark Elves. So it has been with Duriath Helbane, commander of the Black Ark Temple of Spite. In his seven hundred years as a Corsair, Duriath Helbane has raided cities of Ind, despoiled villages in the Southlands, fought ferocious lizards on the Dragon Isles and waged war against the armies of the Empire. His exploits have met with great success, yet he is still searching for the crowning glory to his career that will fix his name in legend.

To that end, Duriath has embarked upon an extremely hazardous yet potentially very profitable venture. He has assembled a fleet of more than two dozen ships and ten thousand Dark Elves. He has promised bloodshed and riches beyond compare to lure the bravest and most ferocious Corsairs to his cause.

With this force he plans to invade the High Elf colonies in the Isles of Elithis.

Of course, there is a chance that he will meet his death in battle on those distant shores - or be cast astray by a storm, consumed by a sea monster or sunk by the fleets of the High Elves before he even reaches his target.

Yet Duriath Helbane, like those who follow him, is willing to dare anything for the prize that awaits them. If Duriath and his army can overthrow the effete rulers of the isles, he will burn their settlements to the ground and build a towering Dark Elf city in honour of the Helbanes. From here he will be able to control the mutes from the Boiling Sea and have a virtual monopoly on the flow of exotic spoils to the courts of Naggaroth.

Fame, fortune and power await if Duriath is victorious - a worthy prize indeed.

In battle he was all but unstoppable. He had been taught by the greatest masters of the fighting arts in Naggaroth. He let his teachers know that he would slay them once he had learnt all he could from them, unless they could kill him first. This he did, slaying each of his teachers in turn as he outgrew them in skill and ability. The techniques he learnt made him the most deadly of fighters. It was said he knew more than 10,000 ways to kill an opponent, and 10,000 more ways to cripple them and leave them at his mercy. He could kill a bull with one blow of his bare hands, and deflect an arrow in flight with a sweep of his blade. He was death incarnate.

With such ability went pride and vanity, Urian was even heard to boast that he could slay Khaine himself in single combat. It may be that the Bloody Handed God heard this and decided to pay Urian back, in which case his hubris cost him dear, for it was Urian's fate to meet the only warrior who was greater than himself.

It was at the battle of Finuval Plain that Urian met his nemesis. The Witch King's forces were poised, expectant of final victory over their hated High Elf enemies. The two armies clashed like a tide of black engulfing a white rock. Malekith channelled ungodly energies to bring down fire and ruin upon his foes whilst wrestling with Teclis' counterspells. Daemons howled and gibbered as the titanic magical forces opened breaches into the Realm of Chaos, while upon the field, Dark Elf and High Elf blood matted the grass and transformed the ground into a crimson quagmire.

Urian, as proud and arrogant as ever, strode forward and called out a challenge to single combat. Was there anyone in the High Elf army who dared fight him? First Arhalien of Yvresse and then Korhian Iron glaive, captain of the White Lions, accepted the challenge. Urian cut them down as if they were children. Then Tyrion stepped forth, who in turn had claimed dozens of Dark Elf lives with his runeblade, Sunfang.

The struggle between these two masters of the warriors' craft, so alike in skill and yet so deeply different in character, was awesome to behold. For fully an hour the two mighty heroes fought in grim silence, first one gaining an advantage, then the other, but neither able to land the final telling blow before their opponent evened the odds. Then Tyrion slipped, and fell heavily to the ground. Urian leaped forward, his blade held high, but before he could land his death blow, Tyrion struck. A quick thrust of his blade found Urian's heart and the fight was over, its end so sudden and abrupt that watchers could hardly believe it was finished. Urian slid slowly to the ground. "The simplest of tricks," he gasped to Tyrion as he fell. "You killed me with the simplest of tricks..." And with that he died, receiving no answer from Tyrion other than a cold, pitiless stare.

Meanwhile, seeing that the strength of Ulthuan could not prevail against the might of Naggaroth, Teclis sought to destroy the Witch King. Thus far, Teclis' raw talent had given him the advantage, but Malekith had



learned his black art over thousands of year, and he now brought the full weight of that experience to turn the tide. In that moment, however the Elven Mage whispered a prayer to Asuryan and drew on the power of his staff, gifted to him by Alarielle, and unleashed a terrible curse. With all of his prayers behind it, Teclis unleashed a bolt of energy directly at the Witch King. Realising his peril, Malekith turned all his art and power to deflecting the deadly blast, but was too slow to divert it entirely. The bolt struck the Witch King and engulfed him with its energies. No ordinary spell, the magical blast awakened the vengeance of Asuryan that still lingered within Malekith's soul and had burnt within the breast of Malekith for nearly five thousand years. That wound of old, the hideous burning that would never leave him, raged anew through Malekith's body, searing his flesh and mind. Tormented by the god's judgement, Malekith summoned the last of his power and hurled himself into the Realms of Chaos to escape the crushing agony where Asuryan's vengeance could not follow.

With their lord seemingly destroyed, the Dark Elves fled the wrath of Tyrion and Teclis, leaving their erstwhile allies to fare however they could against the vengeful High Elves. Many Naggarothi abandoned their armour and weapons in the speed of their flight, and these the High Elves pursued mercilessly. Others maintained their discipline, or fought on out of sheer hate. Kouran Darkhand of the Black Guard led the core of Malekith's army to Nagarythe with a ruthless determination. Any who could not keep to his brutal pace was left to die in the dust. Three times, High Elf princes brought Kouran to battle, and three times he hacked their armies to red ruin, even though his own warriors were weary unto death. Yet these were small victories to set against a massive defeat.

As news spread across Ulthuan, the High Elves rallied to the call while the Dark Elves melted away into the shadows and returned to their vessels. In Caledor great Dragons were roused from their slumber, while armies of High Elves marched to the relief of Hoeth and Lothern. While the northmen fought ignorantly against the resurgent High Elves, over the following years the Naggarothi slipped away with their spoils, back to their chill cities in the north.

THE YEAR OF BLADES

Kouran returned to Naggarond to find the capital at war; Morathi imprisoned and no fewer than eight Dreadlords attempting to claim Malekith's seemingly vacant throne. However; Kouran refused to countenance such disloyalty. He decreed Malekith's Black Tower to be forbidden ground, and enforced the order with the blades of the Black Guard. Shortly thereafter; Morathi's agents contacted Kouran. They informed him that their mistress had gone willingly into confinement rather than grant her foes the satisfaction of an execution. The Hag Sorceress now watched the current confusion with amusement. She was icily certain that the Witch King would return, but determined that Naggaroth would not tear itself apart in his absence. Morathi had a deep treasury, and her chains had not prevented her disbursing it to Naggarond's various Assassin cults. Prison bars could do little to restrain the Hag Sorceress' malice.

A month later; Kouran invited the eight vying Dreadlords into the Witch King's palace. They could bring whatever weapons they wished, he said, but must come alone. The Dreadlords passed through those black gates with paranoia burning bright, each bearing the scars of failed assassinations. They gathered in silence at the foot of Malekith's throne, before a huge

banquet that none of them would touch for fear of poison. As the Dreadlords took their seats, Kouran spoke. It was entirely fit, he said that the new ruler of the Dark Elves ascend only after proving his strength and determination. He went on to alert the pretenders to the fact that the room was now sealed, and would remain so until only one occupant remained alive. If he, Kouran, were that occupant, he would maintain the throne and the kingdom in preparation for Malekith's return – what another chose to do in the wake of victory, he cared not. At this, the pretenders took angrily to their feet, their quarrels with each other forgotten in the face of Kouran's arrogance. For his part, Kouran simply strode over to the Witch King's throne – taking care not to turn his back on the assemblage – and reclaimed his halberd, which he had left resting in shadow.

An hour later; the doors to the throne room were unbolted to allow the Captain of the Black Guard to exit the room. Behind him, Kouran left a chamber stained with blood and gore, yet he himself remained strangely unmarked, save for a scratch high upon his left cheek. That night, the Black Guard issued forth from the palace and flooded into the streets of Naggarond where they wrought great slaughter upon the families and supporters of the erstwhile pretenders. Kouran personally freed Morathi from captivity, and received incomparable reward in exchange.

For six months, Morathi and Kouran cleansed Naggarond. Hundreds of nobles were taken in chains to Har Ganeth or cast upon the sacrificial pyres. Only when every last conspirator had been routed out did Morathi head northward to Ghrend leaving Kouran to serve as regent to the empty throne.



THE BATTLE OF TOR DRANIL

Following a string of great victories in the Season of Despair, Tullaris Dreadbringer led a force to the shores of Nagarythe. He sought to reclaim the Chalice of Khaine, lost thousands of years ago during Tethlis' destruction of Anlec. For Tullaris, this was a holy mission and could be accomplished only with Khaine's blessing. Dark Riders and Executioners roamed the hills, taking prisoners to sacrifice to the Lord of Murder. Rite by bloody rite, Khaine led Tullaris' army on a path of slaughter westward through the Nagarythe lowlands. Finally, Tullaris stood atop the Sundered Strang but there Khaine's visions ceased.

After a further two weeks of fruitless searching Tullaris' gorge was rising. Shadow Warriors had raided nightly, killing his warriors in twos and threes, and still the chalice would not be found. Now, even Tullaris' dread reputation could not contain his soldiers' discontent – twice in one evening he stilled dissent by decapitating those who questioned him. Finally, on the fifteenth night, the Dark Elves found their prize. Alas, that same eve, the Sundered Strand came under attack once more, not from Shadow Warriors this time, but from a glittering army under the command of the Princes Tyrion and Eldyr.

Chariots crashed into ranks of Witch Elves, but the adepts of Khaine cared not. Driven mad by the sight of their own blood, they hacked and clawed at the charioteers even as they died. Tullaris' Executioners counter-charged, their every draich-blow drawing fresh blood. Seeing the slaughter; Prince Eldyr of Tiranoc spurred his own chariot into the fray, his spear levelled at Tullaris' black heart. Ducking low under the spear; Tullaris cut upward with the First Draich, slicing effortlessly through the chariot's carriage and sweeping the prince from his fighting platform. Eldyr tried to clamber to his feet, but Tullaris sprang forward, hacking at the fallen prince with a madness borne of bloodlust. Eldyr was dead after the second blow – after

KHELTHRAI

The word Khelthrai means Bloody Death, and it is the only name by which this deadly warrior is known. Though Anethra Hellbane has had slain all but a few of the Elves who know of his true origins, Khelthrai's history is one of secret pride to the Hellbane family. Youthful and ambitious, seeking more powerful allies than his own family could provide, Khelthrai killed his own mother to prove his loyalty to the Helbanes. His ruthlessness and dedication were quickly recognised and in return Anethra had her granddaughter Ylandria induct the young Dark Elf into the cult of Executioners in Har Ganeth.

Now a highly skilled killer, the threat of Khelthrai's lethal attentions has quelled opposition to the Helbanes for many centuries, and his blade stands ever ready to dispatch those who would move against his adopted family.

the tenth, his corpse was unrecognisable. Seeing Eldyr fall, Tyrion let loose a bellow of rage and charged towards Tullaris.

Faced with a new threat, Tullaris ordered his warriors to form up behind the wall of dead and dying charioteers. It was in that moment that the Lord of Murder spoke to him, whispering through blood that caked Tullaris head to foot. Khaine told his disciple to forget victory that day – reclaiming the chalice was all that mattered. The Lord of Murder commanded that Tullaris abandon his companions and return home with his prize. And so Tullaris did.

In the moments before Tyrion's charge struck home, Tullaris turned and left the battlefield. No Elf neither High nor Dark, saw him go, for Khaine's battlelust clouded their sight. As Tullaris' ship slid unseen through the waves, he looked back to see Tyrion's army tear through his erstwhile companions. Khaine had fed well this day – that he had done so at the hands of the High Elves mattered not to Tullaris Dreadbringer.

PLUNDER IN THE JUNGLE

Having spent much of a century fruitlessly searching for a sign of Malekith's survival, Morathi resolved to tempt Khaine's favour with uncommon gifts. Thus did she offer great reward to any who brought her unusual sacrifices from the Lustrian jungles. Naggaroth's nobility scrambled to fulfil the Hag Sorceress' wishes, for they had no illusions as to who would choose a new

ruler should the Witch King prove lost forever. So it was that ships beyond counting hastened to the Lustrian coast and the dense jungles of the interior. They launched with their decks crammed with ruthless warriors, and those few that returned did so with holds full of caged beasts. Skinks and Saurus Warriors were common prizes, rendered somnolent and docile by chill sorcery. As time wore on and competition flared, ever more daring raiders seized ever larger prey. Soon Coatl, Bastiladons, and even larger creatures fed Morathi's sacrifices – though after a Carnosaur ran bloody riot at the height of a ritual, destroying much of the temple in the process, the Hag Sorceress forbade another such beast be brought before her.



For twelve years, this went on. Thousands of Dark Elves perished to bring Morathi her treasures, but the sorceress had eyes only for Khaine and her desperate quest. Then, one dark night in the Season of Savagery, Morathi offered up her greatest prize: a Slann Mage-Priest, seized from Tlanxla and lobotomised by an Assassin's dagger. As the bloated creature's lifeblood oozed out across the altar, the sky blazed with fire and the walls of Ghroind bled with daemonic ichor. The next day, Morathi ordered the Lustrian expeditions to cease. The Hag Sorceress had her answer – all she need do now was wait.



THE WITCH KING'S RETURN

Though Malekith was not slain by Teclis' spell, it seemed that he wandered the Realm of Chaos for an eternity. He has never spoken of what he endured, not even to his mother, but eventually Malekith clawed and fought his way back to the world of mortals and was found by a patrol of Dark Riders not far from the northern watch towers, his body broken, his armoured skin rent with savage gashes and dents. Morathi nursed her son for a year, pouring all of her vile magic and malice into his soul to revive him. In the ranting of waking nightmares, the Witch King spoke of castles of bones and forests of eyes. When he awoke from his fever, Malekith's eyes burnt with a new light. Gone was the raging anger, replaced now by a harsh coldness that pierces the soul of any who looked upon the Witch King. Morathi feared that some part of her son was still trapped in the world beyond the world but the Witch King would not be drawn into discussion. The Hag Sorceress' only clue was a broken tip of Daemonthorn the Dark Riders had found at Malekith's side.

THE FALL OF TOR ELASOR

At the Witch King's command, Lokhir Fellheart led a great fleet of vessels against the far-flung High Elf colony of Tor Elasor. At dawn, the Black Arks Tower of Blessed Dread and Immortal Agony breached the shoreward walls with a barrage of sorcerous shot, allowing Corsairs to ransack the city beyond. Though the High Elves within fought valiantly, they could not



match their attackers' ferocity. By the time dusk fell, Tor Elasor was a blood-wreathed ruin. Fellheart nailed its still-breathing warden, Prince Datherion, to the uppermost wall of the central keep. So swift had the attack been that no word escaped to reach Ulthuan. When Sea Lord Aislinn led a fleet to discover the cause of Tor Elasor's silence, he found the colony a charnel place of rotting flesh and rampant decay.

SEA LORD AISLINN'S DOWNFALL

After several weeks shadowing the Black Ark Tower of Blessed Dread through the Sea of Serpents, Sea Lord Aislinn signalled his fleet to attack. Alas for the admiral, his trap was not all he thought. Though Aislinn's mages could conceal the High Elf vessels from sight, they could not mask the telltale ripples they caused in wind and wave – to Lokhir Fellheart, they could scarcely have been more obvious had their ships been afire. So it was that as Aislinn's ships moved in for the kill, the great portal at the rear of the Black Ark burst into life. Sorcerous black fog flooded from its depths and slicked across the ocean, and with it came a dozen Doomreavers – iron-sided war towers bound to the scaled backs of gigantic Helldrakes.

Cries of warning rang out across the approaching Hawkships, and the swift vessels scattered – but Fellheart had timed his counter-attack perfectly. The three hindmost Hawkships were smashed apart by a hail of bolt thrower fire, and the hull of a fourth was snapped like matchwood by a Helldrake's tail. With a thin smile, Fellheart ordered the Tower of Blessed Dread to come about and engage Aislinn's flagship – the mighty Dragonship Kalendirian.

Aislinn should perhaps have broken off his attack at that point, but pride goaded him on. Ordering the Eagleship Isha's Mercy to battle the Doomreavers, he set the Kalendirian upon a broad arc intended to cross the Black Ark's bows and then loop abaft. As the Dragonship cut effortlessly through the water; Aislinn watched as the enchanted bolts of his Eagle Claws rained down against towers and battlements, unseating stones and shattering fortifications.

On the Tower of Blessed Dread, Fellheart laughed. Aislinn was a daring foe to bring his vessel in so close, but it would not save him. Upon the highest point of the Black Ark's central tower; a coven of Morathi's most skilled sorceresses awaited Fellheart's command. For days they had planned this moment, offering countless slaves in blood sacrifice to ensure Hekarti's favour. At Fellheart's signal, they reached into the roiling Winds of Magic, conjured a bladed cloud of crystallised hate, and sent it against the Kalendirian.

Across the water the Dragonship's mages saw the sorcerous attack, almost as soon as it was launched and wove their counterspells – but not quickly enough. Whilst the Doomreavers duelled with the Aislinn's fleet, they had seeded Assassins amongst the flotsam. Many had perished in the chill of the seas, but others had survived long enough to latch onto the

Kalendirian's hull as it surged past. Using scaling claws, they climbed the ship's alabaster flanks, vaulted its gunwales and fell about the mages with wicked determination. Too late, Aislinn saw the murder upon his decks – even as he led warriors of the White Lions and the Lothorn Sea Guard against the Assassins, the last mage's tongue was stilled. With a burst of light, the counterspell collapsed Moments later, the cloud of blades engulfed the Dragonship and the decks ran red.

Hundreds died as dark magic washed over the ship. Many Assassins died also, swept into oblivion's embrace with mad laughter upon their lips. Aislinn, though cut and bloodied had found shelter in the lee of the bridge, and he swore that the battle was not yet done – he had many more soldiers safe on the lower decks, and the Kalendirian was still a formidable vessel of war. Then he looked up and saw that the Dragonship's sails were all but gone, torn apart by the dark magic that had engulfed his ship. With a hollow heart, he turned his gaze to the Tower of Blessed Dread. The Black Ark's weapons now lay silent, but its decks were thick with scale-cloaked warriors. As the rough waves dragged the Kalendirian to a halt directly before the Tower's Dragon-skulled prow, scores of grapnels arced high from the Black Ark's decks and drew the two ships into a lethal embrace.

Lokhir Fellheart was the first to reach the Kalendirian's deck, his Red Blades flashing to disembowel and decapitate before his boots had even found purchase on the rolling decks. In his wake came scores of his Dreadblades – the most savage and merciless of his Corsairs. With their ruthless captain at their head the Dreadblades scythed through the mustering ranks of Lothorn Sea Guard, their wicked swords flashing as they drove the High Elves back. Here and there, the Sea Guard held firm, their nerve steadied by one of the Dragonship's officers, but one by one, these anchors of resistance were silenced. The surviving Assassins now passed through the raging battle like shadows, effortlessly evading the attacks directed their way and striking out with bloody precision in return.



With Sea Guard to his port side and his bodyguard of White Lions to starboard, Sea Lord Aislinn charged into the Corsairs, never once slowing his pace nor losing his footing to the heaving deck. Aiming to sever the Dark Elves' foothold he fought his way through to where the grapnels bit into the Kalendirian's flank. An Assassin sprang from a hiding place below the gunwale, only to be cut in two by a mighty two-handed strike from Aislinn's long sword. The admiral's Sea Guard were dying now, cut down by curved blades or pierced by repeater handbow bolts. Protected by thicker armour and their heavy cloaks, the White Lions fared better; but they were too few to make a lasting difference. Little by little, Aislinn's warriors were whittled away, and soon, the Sea Lord stood alone. The Corsairs pressed in, undaunted by Aislinn's quick blade or the pile of dead at his feet, but shrank back instantly at Fellheart's barked command – the Tower's black-hearted captain sought the admiral's life and would permit no other to take it.

So began a duel of legend. For nearly an hour; Aislinn and Fellheart fought, insensate to the screams of the dying. The Kalendirian caught ablaze, yet neither gave the fires any heed. Scarce a league distant, the Isha's Mercy and her entire crew were dragged to the inky depths by a tentacled beast, yet its fate did not merit even a glance. Blow and counterblow, the defeat of the upstart foe at close hand these had become all that mattered. Both let fly with every feint at their command but still neither could claim victory.

Aislinn struck one of the Red Blades from Fellheart's grasp. The Corsair merely laughed as the sword's magic returned it to his outstretched hand, and he cut back with a double sweep that nearly sent Aislinn tumbling into the water below. Regaining his footing the Sea Lord hacked down with all his might, cleaving Fellheart's Kraken helm and slicing deep into the Dark Elf's skull. The wound healed in moments, leaving not even a scar behind and the metal of the Kraken helm rippled back together. Aislinn cut down again. This time his blade shattered into three pieces, but the admiral at least had the satisfaction of seeing his opponent knocked to the ground.

Taking up the axe of a fallen White Lion, Aislinn advanced but before the Sea Lord could take advantage, Fellheart hamstringed a Corsair and cast the wretch into Aislinn's path. Now it was the Sea Lord's turn to be knocked off balance, and he was given no chance to recover. The Red Blades whirling, Fellheart knocked Aislinn's axe aside and plunged both swords to their hilts into the Sea Lord's chest. Fellheart laughed with joy as the axe fell from Aislinn's nerveless fingers. Bracing one foot against the Sea Lord's ribs, the Corsair heaved the admiral's body off his blades and over the gunwale.

An hour later, the Tower of Blessed Dread was underway once more, its holds full of slaves destined for Naggaroth. Of the High Elves only scattered wreckage remained, of Aislinn, there was no trace.



THE TAMING OF BRETONNIA

Having observed the realms of Ulthuan and Bretonnia making common cause on several occasions, the Witch King determined that the human kingdom should be punished. Sending emissaries to the Beastmen of the Forest of Arden and the greenskins of the Massif Orcal, Malekith stirred up such carnage that King Charlen was forced to leave many coastal fortresses undefended to quell the tumult in his heartlands.

With the armies of Bretonnia distracted the Dark Elves rampaged across its northern coast. Towns and villages burned by the score, their defenders were slaughtered, and their peasants were shipped north to slave in Naggaroth. L'Anguille, greatest of Bretonnia's ports, was left in ruins, the mutilated dead splayed across its streets. The Witch King was pleased – it would be some time before the knights of Bretonnia would have strength to spare in a cause not their own.

NIGHT OF PLEASURE AND PAIN

At the height of the Season of Decadence, when the Rites of Atharti, Goddess of Pleasure, were at their excessive peak, the Witch King brooded in his tower. Desire for vengeance had long ago burnt away his desire for gratification, and Malekith spent the eve plotting his next masterstroke. However, as the minutes passed, the Witch King became aware that something was amiss. The screams were now somehow more desperate, the laughter darker and even more tormented. Walking to his chamber's iron balcony, the

Witch King looked down into the tangle of dark streets and saw what he had suspected – the anarchy was no longer that of revelry, but of battle.

Daemons were loose in Naggarond, drawn by the night's indulgences. No, that was not quite true, the Witch King corrected himself, catching sight of a broken-horned Keeper of Secrets. This was an attack borne not of opportunism, but of revenge, for none other than N'kari led the host. The Witch King drummed his fingers on the balcony's edge and watched the unfolding battle with interest. Hordes of Daemonettes capered in the Greater Daemon's wake, laughing merrily as their wicked claws lashed out, but now there was slaughter on both sides, for the city guard had mobilised Daemonettes tumbled to the cobblestones, ichor gushing from spear- and bolt wounds. Only where N'kari strutted did the Dark Elves know defeat, for no shield could offer defence against this elegant brute. Malekith watched with approval as, little by little, the Dark Elves yielded the streets, seeking more favourable ground. Each withdrawal left a tidemark of dead and dying where a spearwall had made its stand.

There was still no end to the Daemons, the Witch King saw – though he could not determine from where the reinforcements came. Presumably, the mansion of some foolish wretch whose observances to Atharti had gone too far, Malekith supposed. The spearwalls now held the entrances to the grand concourse directly below the Black Tower, and Malekith noted with



approval that Kouran had taken command minutes earlier; the Captain of the Black Guard had been praising Atharti with as much joyous abandon as any of Naggarond's folk, but this would have been impossible to guess from his clear-eyed demeanour. At Kouran's order, the spearwalls threw the Daemonettes back from their shields then turned and fled into the concourse. Sensing victory, the Daemonettes let loose a shriek of pure joy. The Daemons dashed forward into the concourse, only to be scythed down in their hundreds as the war machines upon the palace walls opened fire.

Now, the Daemons flooded into a three-sided trap. On the far side of the concourse, the spearwalls reformed, their ranks thickened by fresh troops. Along the concourse, from the nine gates of the city, rode Dark Riders and Cold One Knights, their spears and lances gleaming darkly under the stars. Down the great basalt steps of the Witch King's tower swept the Black Guard of Naggarond.

Daemonettes were skewered by lances and beheaded by halberds, but still they came on. Fiends skittered across the concourse, only to be obliterated by doombolts cast by sorceresses hidden in the serried ranks. Mounted Daemonettes, too swift to target, vaulted over the ranks of the Black Guard and onto the steps beyond. As they did so, Assassins appeared amongst the Black Tower's colonnades to end the Daemons' threat with poisoned blades. Yet still the Daemons came on. N'kari hung back, but two other Keepers of Secrets now joined the battle, scattering the Dark Elves like broken dolls. High above the fray, Malekith's fingers ceased their play. He had allowed this charade to continue out of amusement, and so that the weaklings might be purged from his warriors' ranks, but it was now well past time that he intervened. Gathering his cloak, he stalked from his chamber and began the long descent to the streets. He did not run. Bad enough that the Witch King was forced to intercede – he would not also be put to the indignity of haste.

Malekith did not so much as break stride as he joined the battle. With a flick of his fingers, he sent a wave of black fire through the Daemonettes who beset the spearwalls, filling the air with the rancorous stench of charred Daemon-flesh. After another few steps, Malekith pointed his arm towards a Keeper of Secrets and clenched his iron fist – the beast bellowed in agony as every bone in its unholy body snapped at once. With that, the momentum of the Daemons' attack was broken, and the Black Guard pushed deeper into the concourse. There, they trapped a second Keeper of Secrets against a statue of Khaine and hacked it apart.

It was then that N'kari bellowed and charged directly at the Witch King. The Daemon cared not for the outcome of the battle – he had engineered this slaughter merely to claim Malekith's corrupt soul. Without a word the Black Guard moved to block the Keeper of Secrets' onset, but N'kari was the mightiest of his kind and would abide no obstacle. A glancing blow sent Kouran flying; other Elves were trampled to bloody ruin beneath the Daemon's hooves or pulverised by the impact of its monstrous fists. With a triumphant howl, N'kari pushed on through to personally confront Malekith on the steps of the Black Tower. As the Greater Daemon closed with him, Malekith laughed for the first time in many long centuries. When he had last fought N'kari, it had been beneath the walls of the Marcher Fortress in the Realm of Chaos. There, the Daemon had been at the peak of its powers, whilst the Witch King had been near death. Now the tables were turned, and Malekith was determined to take his own revenge.

THE SUNKEN ISLES

The war over possession of the ancient realm of Nagarythe, now a shattered series of isles, waxes as strong now as it did five thousand years ago.

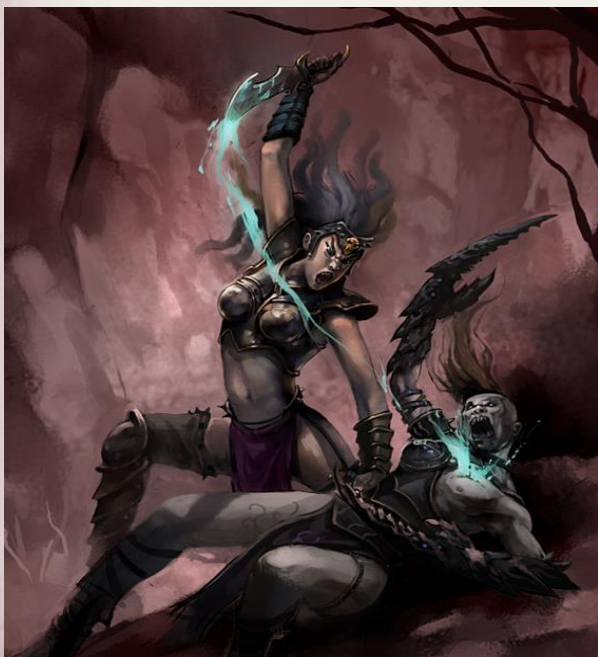
In an attempt to wrest control of these lands from the Shadow Warriors of Ulthuan – descendants of Nagarythe renegades who would not swear fealty to Malekith – the Witch King has moved several Shade clans to the Shadowlands to fight against the interlopers defiling the ground of Nagarythe.

Malekith has promised these Shades clans possession of any Nagarythe lands that they can wrest from the High Elves, and rewards them for every head of a Shadow Warrior sent to him in Naggarond. There is now sporadic but vicious guerrilla fighting between the Shadow Warriors of Ulthuan and these emigre Shades – sometimes called the Sundered Clans or Reaver Shades. Malekith hopes that this fighting will sap the strength and morale of the Shadow Warriors, so that they will be swept away when the time for full invasion comes again.

The Keeper of Secrets did not slow as he approached Malekith, but lowered his head and charged; seeking to impale the Witch King on his remaining horn. In response, Malekith sent dark fire to startle and blind the Daemon. As N'kari thundered past, Malekith darted to one side, a savage backswing from the Destroyer cutting deep into the Daemon's flesh. N'kari bellowed in pain and turned to face his prey, claws slashing out. Malekith retreated across the steps, the Destroyer flashing as he parried each strike. Again and again, he sent black flame against the Greater Daemon, but this time N'kari was prepared and the fire spattered off hastily raised magical defences.

Malekith now fought with his back to the colonnade. N'kari struck out once more, but the Witch King ducked low. The blow shattered the ancient stonework behind, sending rubble flying in all directions. Taking advantage of N'kari's momentary confusion, the Witch King hefted the Destroyer's black blade and pressed the attack with a flurry of knife-quick blows. With each strike, the Destroyer glowed dully as it sapped the Daemon's magical lifeblood. Weakened, N'kari stumbled and bellowed in pain as the Destroyer lunged to pierce his shoulder. With one last effort, the Greater Daemon rose to his feet. His lower arms whipped out once more, and this time Malekith was too slow – N'kari's vice-like hands clamped about the Witch King's shoulders, pinioning his arms, and the Destroyer, to his sides.

N'kari leered with sadistic joy as he heaved the strutting Witch King from the ground. His serpent tongue flickered out to caress his captive's armoured cheek, leaving a trail of foul-scented drool in its wake. When a handful of Black Guard charged up to the steps to their master's aid, N'kari gestured lazily with a claw and sent a cloud of magical shards to tear the flesh from their bones. As their lifeless bodies crumpled, the Greater Daemon brought his other claw up and clamped it around Malekith's armoured throat.



With a last, lingering smile, N'kari began to squeeze, but the Witch King was not yet done. For the last few moments he had marshalled his sorcery, and now he unleashed it in a single display of devastating power. A bolt of black lightning arced from the sky and smashed into the Greater Daemon, shattering his defences and wreaking ruin upon his flesh. As N'kari stared with the impact, Malekith burst free of his grasp. Before the Daemon could recover; he brought the Destroyer around in a mighty two-handed blow that severed N'kari's foul head.

Thus did Malekith deliver Naggarond. Though the Daemonettes would surely have fought on, N'kari's death upset the balance of magics that allowed their reinforcements to reach the mortal world. Seeing their foes' numbers slacken, the Dark Elves found fresh strength. Shouting praises to Khaine and to Malekith, they swept through the bloody streets and did not rest their blades until all the Daemons were slain.

At the battle's end, Malekith stood before the Black Tower and proclaimed that, in victorious celebration, the Rites of Atharti would continue for another day and night. The Witch King then strode to the temple and gave N'kari's headless corpse as offering. He could think of no greater tribute to the Goddess of Delights than the body of a vanquished pleasure Daemon.

THE CRUSADE OF BLOOD

In this year Crone Hellebron proclaimed a holy war of slaughter in Khaine's name. With Tullaris Dreadbringer as her champion, she set out from Har Ganeth at the head of a great host of Witch Elves and travelled through each of Na Aaroth's chief cities. Murder followed in her wake and, with every day that passed, more Khaine-touched Elves flocked to her grim banner. When Hellebron returned to Har Ganeth and took ship to the primitive eastward lands, her army boasted thousands of warriors from all walks of Dark Elf society.

UNDER THE BLADE

Kyal Bloodblade, Dark Elf noble and renowned adventurer, was lazily dropping off to sleep in the sultry night of the Lustrian jungle. The humming bugs and night creatures were making a hard day's pillaging seem far away. Suddenly a scream pierced the night! Kyal burst through the flaps of his tent and into the wet heat of the jungle. His guard lay dead with a poisoned dart embedded in his neck. Kyal's consort was nowhere to be seen. Looking frantically, he stumbled across the silken shawl that the girl had been wearing. A fresh trail had been pounded into the muddy earth by small scaly feet. The path seemed quite easy to follow. Kyal called to his warriors and assembled a rescue party. "They will pay, by Khaine. They will pay."



By the time the ships made landfall on the shores of Bretonnia, Hellebron's crusade had shrunk to near half its initial size. The voyage had been long and Khaine ever-thirsty, so each night, the weakest on each ship had been sacrificed to maintain the Lord of Murder's favour. Undeterred Hellebron drove her army southward, slaughtering all who stood in her path. At the Battle of Nouvionne, she crushed the army of Duke D'Bastalle, and that night, the Cauldrons of Blood were filled to the brim with the life essence of Damsels and Grail Knights. Onward they drove, through the Border Princes and the Badlands, and there was never a shortage of blood to fuel the rites. Indeed as soon as the crusade crossed into the Badlands, Orc tribes for leagues around swarmed to test their might, but their primitive gods were not as strong as Khaine. One by one, each Waaagh! Was broken, and the vile blood of its warriors pledged to the Lord of Murder.

Before long Hellebron wished to return to Naggaroth, her ships laden with the spoils of victory. However; Tullaris Dreadbringer sought to carry his master's name through other lands and to fresh glories. Some of the crusade's followers took ship with Hellebron once more, but most pledged themselves to Tullaris' side and headed south into the dead land of Nehekhar.

At first, Tullaris' army met with success, and for weeks, defeated every desiccated army the Tomb Kings sent forth. But whilst Nehekhar was a land rich in many things, fresh blood could not be counted amongst them. Starved of sacrifice and worship, Khaine withdrew his blessings, and the tide of the battles swiftly turned in the Tomb Kings' favour. Too late, Tullaris turned his army north, harried every step of the

way by burrowing constructs and relentless charioteers. Finally, the exhausted Dark Elves reached Nehekhar's northern border and the prospect of respite. Ala, the Tomb Kings were hard on their heels, and Tullaris needed to win one last battle if he was to have any hope of escape.

Thus did Tullaris Dreadbringer make one last, glorious, dedication, sacrificing half of his army so that the survivors would once again know Khaine's blessing. Caked in their comrades' blood, and chanting praise to the Lord of Murder, the last of the crusade's warriors went down into the sands of Nehekhar to claim one more victory in Khaine's name.

BATTLE OF BLOOD AND GOLD

Seeking to further her understanding of the Old Ones' power Morathi forged a pact with the Vampire pirate Luthor Harkon, and together they launched an attack on the temple-city of Chokablox. As Harkon's undead hordes held back Chokablox's ferocious defenders, Morathi's warriors ransacked the sacred cloisters, recovering not only wondrous artefacts of impossible age, but enough conventional wealth to fill three Black Arks. Alas for Harkon, he argued too strongly for possession of one of the artefacts – a chest of black pearls, each glimmering with barely-contained power. Displeased by the Vampire's peremptory demands, Morathi double-crossed her ally and left him sealed in one of Chokablox's treasure vaults – an unexpected gift for the temple-city's outraged inhabitants.

A GAME OF REAVERS

In this year; the Corsair captains Lokhir Fellheart and Dastan Coldeye challenged one another to a contest of plunder. Each chose a province of the Empire – Ostland in Fellheart's case, and Nordland in Coldeye's – and had a year to claim whatever bounty they could. Coldeye swiftly took the lead, thanks largely to the presence of an Empire fleet, its holds bursting with stolen Nehekharan treasures, at anchor in Debneitz when his Corsairs descended. Fellheart was not so easily bested, however, and drove his trows mercilessly until there was neither village nor town in northern Ostland that had not learned to fear his crews. Nonetheless, as year's end approached, Fellheart still luffed behind, so he did what any Dark Elf does in his situation – he cheated.

Fellheart sent word to King Akkateph of Zandri, informing him of the stolen Nehekharan treasures that now lay in Coldeye's possession. Akkateph's reaction was everything Fellheart could have wished for, and soon, Coldeye's Black Ark was pursued, harried, and ultimately sunk, by a fleet of Zandrian war dhows. Coldeye survived that battle, but with his vessel gone and his treasure taken by Akkateph's fleet, had to cede the contest. At the next high moon, he and his immediate family were sacrificed to Mathlann and Loec, for Fellheart knew full well his victory could not have been achieved without the consent of the god of the sea and the god of deception.



A DRAKWALD BETRAYAL

Acting on information from the Witch King's spies, Draxor Bloodscar, Dreadlord of Kassna Km; intercepted an army of High Elves as it marched to aid the Emperor Karl Franz against the Drakwald Beastmen. Having successfully ambushed the High Elves several leagues short of their destination, Bloodscar ordered a glamour woven around his warriors so that their appearances matched those of their most recent victims.

Three days later Bloodscar's warriors took the field alongside Karl Franz. To begin with, the Dark Elves bided their time, slaying Beastmen as was expected of them. Only when the Reiklanders were fully committed did Bloodscar order the veil of illusion dropped and the Dark Elves to turn upon their erstwhile allies. Within moments, the Empire lines were in anarchy. State troops who, moments before, had thought their flank held by White Lions, died as Executioners descended hungrily upon them. Knights Panther fought desperately against Phoenix Guard whose robes had turned black as ash even as their faces grew malevolent.

Betrayed savaged and surrounded, the Empire army turned tail and fled. Karl Franz sought to restrain the rout, but his Reiksguard captain judged the battle to be lost and draxed the Emperor from the field. Laughing at the monarch's undignified retreat, Bloodscar turned and ordered his warriors to break the Beastman horde. Slaves were slaves, after all, and there was no reason a beast of the Drakwald could not labour as well as a man of Reikland.

THE DAWN OF A NEW AGE

For the last two hundred years Malekith has plotted, conspiring with seers and Daemons, seeking the time for his retaliation against Teclis and his kin. Bloated on their victory at Finuval Plain, the confidence of the High Elves grows strong, and their daring with it. An expedition led by Eltharion of Tor Yvresse attacked Naggarond itself – with stolen clothes Eltharion and a small group of warriors sneaked into the Witch King's capital and opened one of the gates for Eltharion's army to enter. Fires burnt as the High Elves ran amok, killing and razing what they could before stealing away into the pre-dawn shadows.

Where before Malekith would have flown into a berserk rage, now he calculates the demise of his enemies with chilling ruthlessness. His revenge against those who continue to defy him will be long and agonising. Now the Witch King sits within his chamber atop the highest pinnacle of Naggarond and gazes out upon the world. He senses great doom and death will soon come and he stands ready to unleash his legions once more.

After long years of preparation, the Witch King now plans to unleash the full might of his armies against Ulthuan once again. For centuries, he has undermined and harried the High Elves, breaking their colonies overseas and isolating them from potential allies. Now, Malekith deems it is time for his works to bear bitter fruit. All through the Season of Blood, the moons had shone with the light of slaughter, and there was no truer sign of Khaine's favour. All along the Naggarothi coast, Black Arks slip their moorings and sail east. The hour of the Witch King's triumph is finally at hand.



Thick smoke rose from the twelve sacrificial temples of the city of Naggaroth, imbuing the entire city with its rich sweet odour. Today was the Harvest of Souls, one of the many festivals of dedication to their god Khaine. Each noble family would try to better their neighbours by sacrificing the most slaves. Those families who were generous in their donations would be blessed by the sisterhood and spared their wrath on Death Night. The Dark Elf children eagerly waited at the temple doors where the priestesses would hand them the severed heads of those slain. The young Elves would then race each other to stick their trophies upon spikes that bristled on the parapets of the high city walls.

Inside the temples, after disembowelling their victims and placing their hearts and entrails on the sacrificial pyres, the Witch Elves would remove their flesh and sew it together in large sheets. A family's status was measured by the size of these macabre decorations which would be draped along the length of the city walls. Blood flowed through the city streets but high above the frenzied debauchery Malekith sat, oblivious to the festivity below. He had witnessed countless celebrations of death and cared little about such matters.

From a window in the tallest tower of the city, the highest point in the whole of Naggarond, he turned his gaze towards the east. Naggarond was his land to



do with as he chose. Each and every soul belonged to him and should he choose he could crush them at will, but it was not enough. Whilst his people revelled in their own self-indulgence his enemies grew stronger. Even now in Ulthuan the pathetic warriors of Eltharion boasted about how they had successfully led an army to the shores of Naggarond then no mortal had set foot on his land without permission. This was a sign that his people were growing weak, decadent in their self-belief.

Some blamed this on the growing influence of the underground cults. Even today whilst the people rejoiced through slaughter in the name of Khaine, there were those who preferred to place their faith with other gods. He cared not for such affairs; the backstabbing and internal politics of the Dark Elves served to strengthen his people. Amidst the poison and plotting, the weak would die in order that the strong prevail. Whilst such treachery thrived and blossomed, his race's hearts grew colder and harder, it was as he wished it to be.



Malekith turned from the window and strode over to his throne. Carved from the bones of those whom the Witch King had slain, blood flowed from the open sockets of skulls at the base of the dais. To the left of the throne rested a long sword with wicked barbed edges. It had been too long since he had wielded his weapon. Malekith felt his hatred of the High Elf race surge; his anger flared, raging like a wild fire it grew in intensity. Destroyer, his magic blade, would tonight taste blood again. As the fury coursed through his body it numbed the pain of his burns. His body had been horribly mutilated when he had attempted to pass through the sacred flame of Asuryan and even now Malekith found swamping his emotions in hatred was his only escape from the burning anguish. The bitter memory of his injuries intensified his desire to kill.

He strode purposefully to the balcony where his Black Dragon sat, woken from its sleep as it sensed the rising malice that was growing inside its master. Malekith mounted the steed and, without any word of command, the great beast launched itself off the balcony, plummeting to the ground like a hawk diving for prey, invisible through the thick smoke to those below. Master and beast let out a wrath filled howl that sent a shiver of fear down the spine of even the Hag Queen herself. Each Dark Elf in the city knew that the Witch King was seeking vengeance. In the midst of festivity their master had declared that war was at hand and, as his people, they were bound to join him.

DARK ELF TIMELINE

The Dark Elves timeline is separated into multiple Ages, listed to the left of each entry. For ease of reference, all dates are also marked using Imperial Calendar to the right.

THE AGE OF ENDLESS GLORY

I. 40 -4461
Aenarion, the first of the High Elf Phoenix Kings, rescues the witch Morathi from a Slaaneshi warband. They make their court in the fortress of Anlec.

I. 43 -4458
Birth of Malekith. Morathi bears Aenarion a child; Malekith. The seers of Nagarythe foretell he will know long life and a glorious reign.

I. 82 -4419
Aenarion is slain at the Battle of the Isle of the Dead. The princes of Ulthuan refuse Malekith his birthright, and appoint Bel Shanaar as the new Phoenix King in his place.

THE AGE OF BETRAYAL

II. 255 -4164
The foundation of the first colonies in the New World, on the east coast. Malekith defeats the Orc warlord Gritok Redfang and saves the city of Athel Toralien.

II. 422 -3997
Malekith fights alongside the Dwarf High King Snorri Whitebeard, against a horde of Beastmen besieging Karaz-a-Karak.

II. 1000 -3419
Worship of the Underworld gods, the Cytharai, begins to spread in Nagarythe. Over the coming centuries these grow into dark cults that spring up across Ulthuan.

II. 1580 -2839
Malekith is made ambassador to the Dwarfs.

II. 1630 -2789
Malekith begins his great period of wandering around the world in search of magical artefacts of elder times. In the northern wasteland Malekith finds the Circlet of Iron in the ancient ruined city of Vorshgar.

II. 1645 -2774
Malekith returns to Ulthuan and denounces his own mother as a lackey of the Chaos gods and traitor to the kindred of Elves.

II. 1668 -2751
The massacre at the Shrine of Asuryan. Malekith announces the suicide of Bel Shanaar and seeks the Phoenix Crown for himself. He is hideously burnt by the sacred flame of Asuryan. Later that year a band of Naggarothi assassins attempts to slay Prince Imrik, chosen successor to Bel Shanaar, but are foiled by Cbracian hunters. Civil war erupts across Ulthuan. Imrik passes through the flame of Asuryan to become the Phoenix King, taking the name Caledor.

II. 1670 -2749
Nagarythe Rises. Civil war erupts as Malekith's armies march in their prince's name. They occupy Tiranoc and much of Ellyrion. The eastern kingdoms hesitate, whilst Caledor I fights a series of desperate battles to stall the Naggarothi advances.

II. 1672 -2747
The Battle of Dark Fen. Naggarothi princes loyal to the Phoenix King fight against the army of Morathi and are defeated. They become exiles under the leadership of Alith Anar, the so-called Shadow King.

II. 1677 -2742
War breaks out in Saphery between mages loyal to Caledor I and wizards corrupted by the powers of darkness. The lands are desolated by their magical battles.

II. 1679 -2740
The Dark Elves, as the Naggarothi are now called, are pushed from the Inner Kingdoms back into Tiranoc and Nagarythe.

II. 1680 -2739
The renegade wizard princes flee Saphery and join Malekith. Hotek, a heretic priest of Vaul, steals the sacred hammer from Vaul's Anvil and makes his way to Nagarythe. Sorcerers loyal to Nagarythe flee the Sapherian mages.

II. 1683 -2736
With the aid of the renegade Sapherians and Hotek, Malekith's Armour of Midnight is forged and the prince of Nagarythe becomes known as the Witch King. The intensity of the war increases.

II. 1684 -2735
Led by the Witch King atop the Black Dragon Sulekh, the Naggarothi armies push into the Inner Kingdoms once more.

II. 1695 -2724
Malekith and Caledor I finally meet upon the field at Maledor. Sulekh is slain and the Witch King is forced to retreat. He decides to implement his master plan.



II. 1696 -2723
The Sundering. Malekith attempts to harness the power of Chaos trapped within the vortex of Ulthuan, to unleash an army of Daemons. As a result of his interference much of northern Ulthuan is sunk. The renegade wizards raise the feared Black Arks and depart to the cold north to found the Dark Elf kingdom of Naggaroth. There is little the High Elves can do to stop them at this point. Nagarythe and Tiranoc is lost beneath the tidal waves and the cataclysmic unleashing of energies devastates the land. The Elves begin to rebuild their shattered land. Contact is lost with the Old World colonies.

THE AGE OF RESTLESS SPITE

III. 1 -2722
The Witch King founds the city of Naggarond upon the western shore of the Sea of Malice and creates the kingdom of Naggaroth. The Dark Elves begin to raid the shattered lands of Tiranoc for slaves to build their new city.

III. 93 -2630
A Dark Elf expedition returns to Ulthuan and hostilities resume. Caledor reorganises the High Elf army for defence and begins the building of the gateway fortresses across the mountain passes of the Annulii.

III. 123 -2600
A Conclave of Dark Magic. Morathi creates the Convent of Sorceresses and construction begins on the great citadel of Ghronn.

III. 124 -2599
Griffon Gate, the Unconquered Fortress, is finally completed. It is the first of a series of massive strongholds that will eventually guard the approaches to the Inner Lands. The war rages on unabated as the Dark Elves seek to gain access to the Inner Lands and conquer the Holy Shrines. The High Elves resist them.

III. 298 -2425
The Dragonship Indraguir, armed with a mighty starblade ram, sinks the Black Ark Palace of Oblivion near the Blighted Isle. This comes as a great blow to the Dark Elf fleet and marks the beginning of High Elf naval supremacy for many centuries to come.

III. 380 -2343
The Dark Elves start exploring the caverns below Hag Graef. The first expedition enters the caverns and never returns. Further expeditions report finding numerous caverns and tunnels that appear to stretch deep under the Black Spine Mountains. This new realm is named the Underworld. The explorers also bring back the first Cold Ones to be captured by the Dark Elves.

III. 404 -2319
Dark Elf knights mounted on Cold Ones and chariots pulled by the reptilian beasts are used in battle for the first time, smashing a High Elf army. The Witch King rides to war atop the Black Chariot. Despite the impact of these new troops, the organisation and numbers of the High Elves prove insurmountable.

III. 504 -2219
The High Elves finally succeed in pushing the Dark Elves from the northern coast of Ulthuan and begin to sweep the northern seas clear of Naggarothis ships.

III. 522 -2201
Army commanders fearing for their lives after their defeat take refuge in the port of Hag Graef, which will eventually grow into a mighty city.

III. 523 -2200
The High Elves take the Blighted Isle. Caledor does not draw the Sword of Khaine even though it would give him the power to defeat the Witch King. On his way home a great tempest separates his flagship Indraguir from the rest of the fleet. Sails torn, driven to the very coast of Naggarothis, the ship is overwhelmed by Dark Elf reavers. Caledor throws himself into the sea rather than be captured.

III. 598 -2125
The dragon ship Indraguir, armed with the magically forged Starblade ram, sinks the Palace of Oblivion near the Blighted Isle. This is the first time a Black Ark has ever been sunk and marks the beginning of the High Elves' naval ascendancy over their dark kindred.

III. 707 -2016
The city of Karond Kar is founded in the eastern wilderness of Naggarothis.

III. 718 -2005
Dark Elf raids begin against Dwarf trading caravans, disguised as their kin from Ulthuan. The raids are part of a cunning plan which eventually turns the Dwarfs against the High Elves, further heightening the growing tensions between the Elves and Dwarfs. Elven arrogance and Dwarf stubbornness pitch the two races into a long and bitter war. This will eventually exhaust the strength of both empires and lead to ages of bitter feuding.

III. 755 -1968
Dark Secrets in the Desert. A group of sorcerers and sorceresses from Ghroind are shipwrecked upon the north coast of Nehekhara and are tortured by the priest Nagash until they teach him the secrets of Dark Magic. He eventually imprisons them within the Black Pyramid and goes on to become the Great Necromancer.

III. 978 -1745
Har Ganeth becomes the centre of the cult of Khaine, ruled over by the Hag Queens.

III. 1057 -1666
The Battle of Despair. A huge Chaos army sweeps across the Chaos Wastes and invades Naggarothis. Ghroind is besieged but holds out with Morathi's sorceries until an army led by the Witch King arrives and defeats the Chaos army. Dark Elf casualties are high, but the Chaos army is completely wiped out in the fighting.

III. 1124 to 1224 -1599 to -1499
The Black Arks Citadel of Damnation and Jade Palace of Pain are beached to become the core of the fortress of Anlec in the Shadowlands. This will provide the Dark Elves with a base from which to launch many massive attacks upon Ulthuan. Caradryel orders the recall of the Elf armies from the Old World to combat this new threat. For the next hundred years the Dark Elves launch an invasion from Anlec that drives back the High Elves, but is held by the great gates of the mountains. Demoralised by the long war against the

Dwarfs, the Elves are in no position to deal with the resurgent Naggarothis. Intermittent war rages across Ulthuan once more as the Dark Elves consolidate their hold on the northern lands, but they are unable to breach the defences of the Inner Kingdoms.

III. 1737 -986
Tethlis the Slayer, the 6th Phoenix King, launches the Scouring, a great drive north that will culminate in the slaying of every Dark Elf in Ulthuan.

III. 1777 -946
Dark Elf counter-offensive reaches Griffon Gate and is caught in a carefully prepared trap. Dark Elf forces fall back to Anlec.



III. 1801 -922
The Battle of Grey Canyon. A massive army of Dark Elves is caught by surprise and destroyed while camped in a hidden valley in the Shadowlands.

III. 1946 -777
Dark Elf scouts trap Tethlis close to Phoenix Gate but the Phoenix King and his bodyguard fight their way free, slaying their attackers.

III. 1991 -732
Blood on the Snow. In a last ditch attempt to win the war the Witch King launches a desperate winter offensive across the Shadowlands. Protected by spells against the cold his army advances. They take several Elf fortresses and precipitate the most bitter fighting ever seen between the Elves including the infamous Siege of Tor Lehan. After this battle there were no survivors on either side.

III. 1993 -730
The siege of Tor Lehan, which sees both sides wiped out to the last Elf.

III. 2027 -696
The Dark Elves are driven from the shore and Anlec is destroyed. Even the stones are obliterated.

III. 2030 -693
A great armada sails for the Blighted Isle and Naggarothis. The Battle of the Waves is fought on the Blighted Isle. The armada is forced to turn back. Tethlis dies in the Shrine of Khaine, his demise shrouded in mystery.

THE AGE OF HATEFUL PEACE

- IV. 454 -238
The great Dark Elf Scout and explorer Kaledor Maglen discovers the Black Way, a series of water filled caverns in the Underworld Sea that lead westwards into the Boiling Sea. This allows the Dark Elves Black Arks to pass under the Black Spine Mountains to the Broken Land on the west coast of the New World. The Dark Elves capture Heldrakes and Sea Dragons and fashion new sea-craft pulled by these monstrous beasts.
- IV. 605 -87
Dark Elves begin to raid further westward towards Ind and Cathay.
- IV. 868 176
Following numerous small incursions by Chaos warbands, the Witch King orders a series of watch towers to be built along the border of Naggaroth and Chaos Wastes.
- IV. 903 211
The watch towers are completed, and almost immediately prove their worth when a Chaos army is detected and defeated before it can penetrate deeply into Dark Elf territory.
- IV. 1143 451
The Black Ark Ultimate Oblivion and an Undead fleet under the command of Seam the Tomb King mount a combined raid on Tilea. The Tilean city of Sartosa is besieged and captured, and every single inhabitant – man, woman and child – is taken off by the attackers. This is the first in a long series of allied raids by Dark Elf and Undead fleets on the human kingdoms of the Old World.
- IV. 1191 499
Aethis the Poet becomes Phoenix King. The Witch King's agents in Ulthuan rekindle the cults of excess and begin to recruit members from the nobility.
- IV. 1246 554
A Dark Elf corsair fleet is dragged beneath the waves by an onslaught of submersible craft that appear to be half ship and half kraken. Only one of the Druchii corsairs survives, and his tales of needle-fanged warriors from the depths are dismissed as salt-madness.
- IV. 1311 619
The Battle of Mount Fireheart. Prince Elliriad of Ulthuan leads a host of High Elves against the dark tides of his half brother; Vengril the Cruel. The battle covers every acre of the volcanic slopes of Mount

Fireheart. Thousands die with every passing hour; and rivers of blood hiss like hydras as the red-hot magma underfoot boils away the remains of the fallen. The air is filled with the crack-boom of gigantic wings as High Elf lordlings and Dark Elf princes duel for supremacy upon Manticores and Star Dragons, their sinuous shapes writhing like a living mosaic that covers the sky. The battle is won when, stirred from his millennial slumbers by Vengril's dark sorcery, Malificent the Ancient emerges from his fiery lair in a great rage. The High Elf host is driven into the sea in terror before him.

- IV. 1445 753
Dark Elf ships raid far and wide across the globe, bringing back entire tribes and the populations of whole cities to labour in Naggaroth in chains.
- IV. 1552 860
The Black Ark Talon of Agony is overturned and sunk by a gigantic magical tidal wave off the coast of Cathay.

IV. 1795 1103
Laithikir Fellheart shadows High Elf fleets around Cathay and Nippon and begins a century of merciless raids that see the Fellheart family rise to great power. With her charts, other Dark Elf fleets maraud with much success along the rich coasts of Ind and Cathay.

IV. 1812 1120
The Witch King's Revenge. Posing as chancellor to the Phoenix King, Girathon assassinates Aethis at Malekith's command and then escapes.

IV. 1814 1122
The Day of Blood. A High Elf punitive expedition sails to Naggaroth to avenge Aethis, but the attack is foreseen by the Sorceresses of Ghron and utterly annihilated by the Dark Elves as the forces try to land, aided by a screaming horde of drugged slave warriors.

THE AGE OF BLOOD

V. 2 1125
The Dark Elves retaliate and invade the Shadowlands again. In a series of lightning battles, the High Elves are driven back until only scattered bands of Shadow Warriors inhabit the Sunken Lands. So begins a long guerrilla war from hidden camps in the mountains between the descendants of Alith Anar and the Dark Elves.

V. 8 1131
The Blighted Isle Falls. The Dark Elves rebuild the citadel of Anlec in the Shadowlands and begins a fresh assault on the High Elf mainland.

V. 10 1133
Griffon Gate is besieged by the Dark Elves. The Phoenix King Morvael appoints Mentheus of Caledor as his military commander. Citizen-militia are trained to keep the garrisons of the gates at full strength.

V. 11 1134
Malekith begins to visit horrific nightmares upon Morvael, driving him ever deeper into paranoia.

V. 18 1141
The siege of Griffon Gate continues. The fortress is completely encircled by triple rings of immense Dark Elf siege-works and pounded by war machines and sorcery, but still holds against assault.

V. 23 1146
Siege of Griffon Gate finally lifted by Mentheus leading an army mainly composed of spearmen and archers from Cothique and Chrace, overwhelming the weary Dark Elves with their numbers.



V. 379 1502
Mentheus is slain as he assaults the Dark Elves at Anlec. Upon his death, Mentheus' Dragon Nightsfang goes berserk and routs the Dark Elves. Phoenix King Morvael, finally driven mad by the nightmares visited upon him by the Witch King, throws himself into the sacred flame of Asuryan and perishes.

THE AGE OF GLORIOUS TORMENT

VI. 280 1783
Dark Elf scouts discover a way through the Underworld which leads to the High Elf colony of Arnheim in the New World. Until now the High Elf colonists have been shielded from the Dark Elves by the Black Spine Mountains to the west and the impassable Doomglades to the north. An army led by Yrtain Nightwind assaults Arnheim. Caught completely unprepared, many outlying High Elf farmsteads are destroyed before a proper defence can be organised and the Dark Elf raiding parties driven back into their mountain strongholds.

VI. 353 1856
The Dark Elf Lord Maranith takes to the air mounted on the Black Dragon, Wrath. He attacks the fleets of Ulthuan from the Black Ark Fortress of Eternal Torture. Never bested in aerial combat, he slays several Dragon Princes above the waves of the great ocean. The High Elves name him Caledor's Bane and the title is carried by his deadly lance ever after.

VI. 404 1907
Lokhir Fellheart inherits command of the Black Ark Tower of Blessed Dread. His first act is to have his father's officers sacrificed to the Dark Elf gods in return for their divine favour.



VI. 471 1974
The Beast lord Rakarth leads an attack on the Bretonnian city of Brionne. War Hydras tear down the gates and the city is sacked.

VI. 485 1988
Soldiers from the Elector Count of Nordland's army find the coastal town of Debneitz in ruins, its inhabitants' flayed corpses nailed to nearby cliffs.

VI. 502 2005
An attempted assassination of Morathi is foiled. The Assassin dies before interrogation. Hellebron is suspected by the Hag Sorceress but nothing can be proven.

VI. 584 2087
Lokhir Fellheart butchers the priests of the Temple of Gilgadresh and has the Red Blades forged from looted statues.

THE AGE OF VENGEANCE

VII. 1 2301
The Great Chaos Incursion. Morathi strikes bargains with the northern Marauders and turns their armies upon Ulthuan rather than Naggaroth. The Dark Elves invade the isle of the High Elves alongside the barbaric hordes. Malekith sends the Daemon N'kari to slay the Everqueen, but the Keeper of Secrets is defeated by Tyrion and Teclis. At Finwul Plain, Teclis unleashes the power of Asuryan against the Witch King, who casts himself into the Realm of Chaos to avoid death. Without their leader, the Dark Elves are defeated and driven from the Inner Kingdoms.

VII. 3 2303
The Dark Elves are driven out of Ulthuan after two years of relentless warfare.

VII. 4 2304
Morathi forges Heartrender in the fires of the Burning Mountain.

VII. 7 2307
The Assassin Gloreir leads a coterie of Dark Elf killers into Lotbern to slay the Phoenix King Finubar. The Phoenix King is saved by his White Lions bodyguard led by Korhil. A swirling battle takes place across the rooftops of the city.

VII. 76 2379
Corsairs from Karond Kar are shipwrecked close to the pirate isle of Sartosa. They steal several ships to escape and with the aid of local sellswords attack the cities of Luccini and Remas. They are betrayed by the mercenaries and enslaved by the pirate captains whose ships they had taken.

VII. 87 2387
Lokhir Fellheart raids the town of Tor Canabrae on the Ulthuan coast.

VII. 102 2402
A band of Shades sneaks ashore on the coast of Chrace, biding out in the forests, raiding villages and ambushing patrols. It is a full year before a force of White Lions manages to bring them to battle, riding them down with their Lion Chariots. Nevertheless, a handful of the Dark Elves escape and are never found.

VII. 103 2403
The Witch King's Return. Having wandered long through the Realm of Chaos, Malekith finally claws his way back to the world of mortals.



VII. 105 2405
Vengeance Renewed. Finally recovered from his travails, the Witch King begins drawing new plans for Ulthuan's destruction. Summoning his Corsair captains, he orders them to focus their raids on the High Elves' far-flung colonies and those realms with which they traded.

VII. 115 2415
A Lineage Ended. Takon Draak, last noble scion of Har Kaldra, was finally hunted down and slain by Malekith's Assassins.

VII. 116 2416
Alondir Deathshard, Assassin Master of Har Ganeth, is slain by his best pupil, Shadowblade.

VII. 118 2418
The corpse of Ernezio Porcurlo, mercenary captain of Luccini, is found inside a windowless basement beneath his castle, the cellar firmly locked from the inside. No trace of the killer is found.

VII. 122 2422
Lokhir Fellheart loots the sunken ruins of the Lizardmen city of Chupayotl and finds the Helm of the Kraken.

VII. 123 2423
Eltharion, son of Moranion, leads a daring raid against Naggarond itself. It is the first time High Elves have entered Naggarond and returned alive. The Witch King swears revenge on his hated kin. He commands the ruling families to recruit fresh troops, appoints commanders from the most favoured lords, sends word to the raiding fleets to set sail, and launches a new invasion of Ulthuan.

VII. 125 2425
The Sack of Yvresse. Outraged by Eltharion's sacking of Naggarond the Witch King orders reprisals against Yvresse. With its heartland under attack by Waaagh! Grom, the realm can muster only a token defence. By the time aid arrives from Cothique, the Dark Elves has withdrawn, leaving ruin in their wake.

VII. 194 2494
The Siege of Barak Varr. No fewer than five Black Arks sail down the Black Gulf and blockade the Dwarf hold of Barak Varr: Outnumbered and overmatched, King Grundadrakk orders his folk and their vessels of war to retreat behind the great sea gates. On this occasion, however, the Dark Elves do not seek the hold's destruction. Indeed they are well content with their tithe of prisoners, who will soon be put to work in Naggaroth's mines.

VII. 218 2518
The Withering of Cothique. With the High Elves distracted by Tullaris Dreadbringer's newest assault on the Blighted Isle, Shadowblade leads a coterie of Assassins through Nagarythe and Chrace, coming at last to Cothique. There they poison the rivers with a noxious brew of Manbane and daemonic ichor. Before long Cothique is in the grip of a crippling plague for which no cure can readily be found.

Almost imperceptibly, the shadow slipped over the outer wall of the Dark Lord's residence and dropped silently to the ground on the other side. Shadowblade was frequently called upon by Hellebron to dispose of her political opponents or those who had wronged her in some way, however slight their indiscretion.

He had no opinions about the murders he committed for his mistress, only that he had been ordered to carry them out and that he enjoyed nothing more. He liked the way a body went limp as a poisoned dagger was slipped between its ribs. He took pleasure in the contorted expressions of indescribable pain his victims exhibited under the effects of the agonising Black Venom.

Quite simply, he loved his work. And he was loyal. The only thing he valued more than being able to kill was loyalty, a quality indoctrinated into him from childhood during his harsh upbringing in the Temple of Khaine, ever since he was stolen from his parents' home on Death Night many, many years ago.

In the Temple he had learnt the deadly martial arts of the assassins of Khaine, studied the power of poisons, learnt how to move without making a sound and slip through shadows unseen, and that there was none more important than the Hag Queen, except the Witch King himself.

As Shadowblade sank his dagger up to its hilt into the back of the guard at the entrance to the tower he did not even have to think about his action. It was second nature to him and he did it automatically. The guards further into the tower likewise gave him no trouble, only becoming vaguely aware of his presence as he killed them.

The guard shifted at his post by the archway, uneasily. He peered along the well-lit passage and saw nothing and yet he was sure that when the torches guttered he had seen something. What, he didn't know. There was certainly nothing there now. He must have imagined it.

Like a great black spider, the Master Assassin lowered himself on his strong arms from his perch within the vaulted space below the ceiling of the corridor. In a sudden pincer movement, he swung his legs around the guard's neck and squeezed. The Dark Elf's spear clattered to the floor as he flung up his hands to try and free himself from the crushing grip. Shadowblade pulled himself up slightly, his smooth movement belying the strength he was using, and raised the struggling guard onto the tips of his toes. With a sharp twist Shadowblade heard the satisfying crack of the guard's neck breaking.

Quickly, Shadowblade hauled the Dark Elf's inert body onto his perch, and only just in time. The very next second, a second Dark Elf appeared through the archway. Having heard the noise of the falling spear, he was creeping forward cautiously, crossbow raised, to investigate what was going on. Shadowblade watched as the guard passed beneath the beam on which he was crouched and then lowered himself into the passageway again, directly behind the Dark Elf.

It was not because he heard anything but some other inner sixth sense screaming a warning that made the guard spin round and come face-to-face with the masked assassin. With lightning fast reactions, even before the guard could fire the crossbow, Shadowblade grabbed his weapon and with a yank, wrestled it from his grasp. Spinning the crossbow round, the assassin fired it, at point black range, into the Dark Elf's heart. With a bewildered expression and strangled gasp, the guard slipped to the floor.

Bring it to my bedchamber directly, and be quick about it," Lord Corvass snapped, clouting the servant across the back of his head. Unbegrudgingly, the mute shambled away towards the cellars. Taken as a child of only four years by a Dark Elf raiding fleet, the poor wretch's master had first had his tongue cut out and then lamed him in one leg.

Sensible precautions Corvass thought, so that the human could never betray him or easily leave his service, not unless the Dark Lord deemed it, in which case it would be with the assistance of a dagger in his throat.

There was nothing Corvass liked more than a glass of the finest Clar Karond wine upon retiring, and after today's events at court he felt even more ready for it. He was in a foul mood, even worse than normal, and he needed a nightcap to help settle his nerves and put aside his anxieties.

Corvass turned and strode away towards his personal quarters.

From his hiding place, Shadowblade eyed the two well-armed, and heavily-armoured, elite guards standing outside Corvass's bedchamber. The antechamber was well-lit and he knew that he would be spotted should he enter. Although an accomplished swordsman, Shadowblade preferred to kill with subtlety and, if possible, avoid direct confrontation. As a master of disguise, he would have no trouble impersonating one of the guards but to do so he would have to eliminate the other. Also, if he could help it, Shadowblade did not want Corvass's death to be discovered until well after he had left the scene of the crime. No, he would have to try something else here.

The two guards stood to attention as their Lord entered the antechamber. Corvass walked haughtily passed them and opened the double doors. He suddenly paused on the threshold and turned to one of the armoured Dark Elves. "You may leave me now," he said dismissively.

"Are you sure, sire?" the guard enquired, mystified by the Dark Lord's command.

"Of course I'm sure, oaf!" Corvass retorted. "I just gave the order didn't I?"

"Yes, sire. At once, sire."

Without another word, the two guards left their post and disappeared down the corridor.

The limping mute froze in horror. In front of him, in the silent passageway, a pool of blood was coagulating on the cold marble floor as it dripped from the shadows above. Nervously, the servant looked up at the vaulted ceiling. Slumped over a cross-beam, like a puppet with its strings cut, was the body of the Dark Elf guard. The mute fled back towards his master's chambers as quickly as it could. He had to warn Lord Corvass.

Corvass stopped in the ante-chamber. Where were the guards? How dare the impudent fools leave their posts! He would have them both handed over to the Witch Elves, but it would have to wait until morning. Now he just needed to sleep.

Corvass entered his bedchamber and, in the almost total darkness, made his way over to the bed. Instantly, a black shape flew at him, pushing him onto the bed. Corvass found himself being held down by the assassin who had one hand over the Dark Lord's mouth. The Lord stared with frightened eyes into those of Shadowblade, murderer supreme.

"You thought you could insult the Hag Queen of the Witch Elves and live?" the Master Assassin hissed.

Corvass struggled to free himself but then froze suddenly as the poison-tipped blade lodged in his heart. His body was immediately wracked with the most terrible pain, as if white-hot knives had been forced into every nerve-ending.

"Now look upon the face of death," Shadowblade growled and, taking his hand from Corvass's mouth, removed his mask from his face.

"You!" Corvass gasped, incredulously, with his dying breath and was then still.

A satisfied smile formed on Shadowblade's lips. Another mission successfully completed. But now it was time to leave.

Puffing and panting, the servant turned the corner in the passageway and found himself looking into the face of the Master Assassin. In the last few seconds of his life, the mute was confused as to what exactly happened. Shadowblade swept past him, his flapping cloak making him look like some great bird of ill-omen and it was only as the servant looked after the fleeing assassin that he realized that he had been stabbed. In less than a minute, the lame mute had died a swift but agonizing death as the Black Venom took its course.

Shadowblade paused for a moment to savour the death of the helpless wretch. The mute would have been no threat to the Master Assassin being unable to protect himself against the trained killer or even tell anyone what he really looked like but it was the principle that mattered.

Grimly, Shadowblade replaced his mask. No-one saw his face and lived. No-one. And then he was gone, into the night.





THE MERCILESS HOST

Dark Elves are no strangers to war; their heartless credo is that the strong take whatever they wish, and that the weak choke on their own blood.

There is no realm that has not suffered the predations of their corsairs, or the bloodmad march of Khaine's worshippers. Every victory against the barbarians of primitive lands strengthens the battle against the hated High Elves, whether by an influx of fresh slaves, the honing of battle skill or simply the culling of the weak from the Dark Elves' ranks.

In this section you will find details for all the different troops, heroes, monsters and war machines used in the army of the Dark Elves. It provides the background, imagery, characteristic profiles and rules necessary to use all the elements of the army, from Core troops to special characters, and from the Lore of Dark Magic to the magic items used by their most notorious heroes.

ARMY SPECIAL RULES

ELVEN GRACE

Models with this special rule have the Dodge (6+) special rule in close combat. However, this cannot be used against enemies that attack before the model with Elven Grace.

MURDEROUS PROWESS

Dark Elves are bitter, vicious killers that detest all other creatures – even other Dark Elves! Druchii warriors love nothing more than to see their enemies screaming in pain, and take pleasure from spilling blood and spreading misery. They are relentlessly aggressive in battle, shouting praises to their black gods as they cut down their foes.

Models with this special rule may re-roll all To Wound rolls of 1 when making close combat attacks.



ETERNAL HATRED

The Dark Elves reserve their deepest enmity for the High Elves of Ulthuan, who they see as treacherous usurpers. For over five thousand years, the armies of Naggaroth have waged war upon their kin. Battles between Dark Elves and High Elves are exceptionally bloody, as the Dark Elves hurl themselves at their foes with unending ferocity and the warriors of Ulthuan stoically stand their ground despite the terrifying beasts and merciless agonies unleashed upon them.

Models with this special rule have the Hatred special rule, but may re-roll failed To Hit rolls every round of close combat, not just the first.

HEKART'S BLESSING

All practitioners of the Dark Arts are incredibly adept at manipulating the Winds of Magic in their rawest form, channelling energies that would disintegrate lesser beings.

Models with this special rule add +1 to all attempts to cast spells.

KHAINITE

Some Dark Elves are utterly dedicated to Khaine, the Elven god of murder. They are merciless killers who have no qualms about shedding Dark Elf blood as much as any other kind. Consequently, they are the least-trusted warriors in all of Dark Elf society.

Characters who are Khainites (except models deploying using the Hidden special rule) may only join units which are also Khainites, and characters who are not Khainites may not join Khainite units.

REPEATER CROSSBOW

Used almost exclusively by the Dark Elves of Naggaroth, the repeater crossbow is a lighter, less powerful type of crossbow that has a sophisticated magazine of bolts and loading mechanism which allows a single bolt to drop into place ready for firing as the string is drawn. A repeater crossbow can fire a hail of shots in the time it takes to shoot one ordinary crossbow bolt.

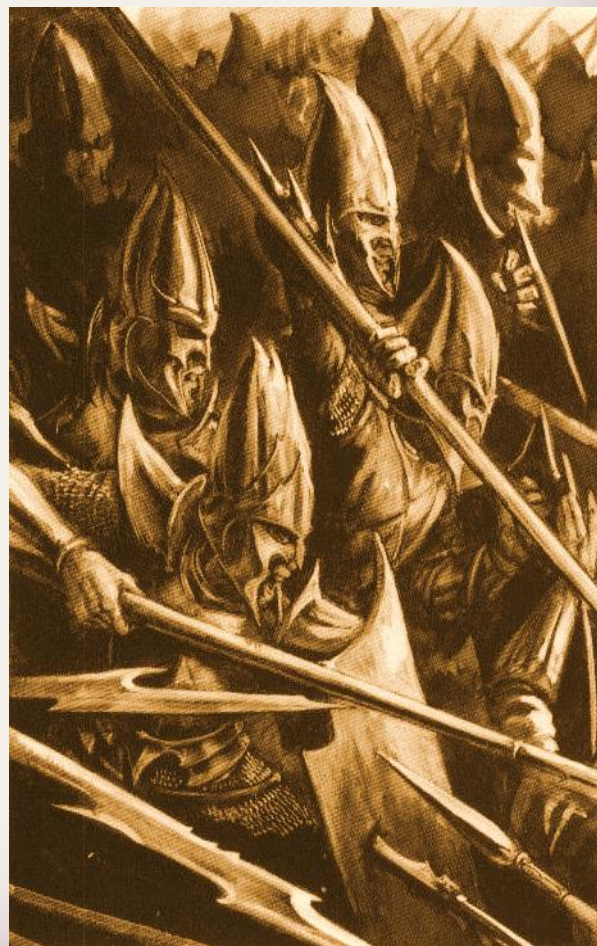
Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
24"	3	Armour Piercing (1), Multiple Shots (2)

SEA DRAGON CLOAKS

The Corsairs of the Dark Elf fleet invariably wear long heavy cloaks fashioned from the scales of the mighty sea dragons which accompany the ships, as a sign of their position in their twisted society. These scaled cloaks are light, flexible and incredibly tough. They can be drawn tightly around the body when being fired at, acting as shield against missile fire.

Sea Dragon Cloak have the following armour profile:

Combat:	Missile:	Special Rules:
-	+2/5+	-



TYRANTS OF NAGGAROTH

Dreadlords and Masters are the so-called noble-born rulers of Naggaroth. They range from sycophantic schemers to masterful strategists who have waged war across a hundred battlefields. Though all such nobles pursue their own unique enthusiasms and ambitions, they are without exception selfish individuals, possessed of an arrogance matched only by their martial prowess, honed over centuries of unceasing war. Dark Elf commanders seldom lead through personal ample, preferring to rely on bloodshed and intimidation; in Naggaroth, respect counts for nothing unless it is backed by fear. Amongst the lower-born Dark Elves, it is thought better to die at the hands of an enemy than to face the wrath of a disappointed Dark Elf lord. The enemy, at least, will grant a swift death and have little prospect of making your family pay a bloody price for the failure of their kin.

Dark Elves are sustained by the misery they inflict upon others, and noble-born offspring have no special protection. Those striplings that manage to survive to adulthood are sent on a year-long raiding expedition. It is a chance for the Dark Elf to prove his ruthlessness and establish his reputation. Dark Elves abhor weakness of any sort, so those youths that fail to make their mark during this time do not endure long thereafter. Some are slain by ambitious rivals; others are murdered by their own families, who can neither tolerate nor risk a weakling's presence. No Dark Elf attains rank, or retains it for long, unless he is utterly without mercy. In this way only the strongest and most ruthless survive for any duration. Should the stripling acquit himself well during this rite of passage, he begins his ascent through Naggarothi society. However, this is a ladder with very greasy rungs, and more nobles perish in the climb than ever reach the heady heights of becoming a Dreadlord.



The Druchii are a murderous race and the risk of an Assassin's blade is a constant threat. To alleviate the understandable paranoia engendered by the Dark Elves' treacherous society, a rigid code of etiquette has evolved. The lowborn classes may not approach within three sword lengths of a noble without being summoned. A retainer may stand as close as two sword lengths whilst a trusted retainer, such as a bodyguard, may stand just outside a single sword's length: The closest, most intimate space is served for lovers, playthings and mortal foes (the latter king far more trustworthy within reach than not). A Dark Elf lord is well within his rights to execute any who disregard this code.

Many Dreadlords owe their positions of power to their bloodlines, cruel and daring exploits or the Witch King's mercurial favours. Others are granted temporary power by means of a writ of iron – an edict granted by one of the six rulers of the great cities of Naggaroth or, occasionally, by the Witch King himself. A Dark Elf who bears a writ of iron carries the power and authority of his sponsor – a powerful tool for the ambitious. Any who question the iron edict are subject to the wrath of his patron. However, should a Dark Elf fail in his appointed task, or show cowardice whilst acting in his sponsor's name, the writ is melted down and the molten remains poured down his throat. Such is the price of failure in Naggaroth.

Druchii lords wear the finest suits of armour and carry a lethal assortment of blades with which they carve a bloody path through their hated foes. Dark Elf nobles command the lower classes that comprise their armies through fear and bloodshed. Amongst the lower-born Druchii it is viewed as better to die at the hands of an enemy on the battlefield than to face the wrath of a disappointed Dark Elf lord.

Almost every Dark Elf follows an army standard into battle. The standard is carried by a Dark Elf champion who has proved his skill and ability in battle. Before and after each battle bloody and horrific sacrifices are performed before the army banner, which quickly becomes splattered with the blood of the mutilated victims. Terrifyingly, the blood is absorbed by the banner and disappears without a trace, as if the banner itself were drinking the blood of the sacrifices that are made to it.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Dreadlord	5	7	7	4	3	3	8	4	10
Master	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess.

"Pluck out their eyes, burn their flesh, flay the skin from their backs; I want to hear them scream before we cut out their tongues."

*- Koureth Blackheart,
Dreadlord of Har Ganeth*

SORCERESSES

Elves are magical beings with a natural affinity for guiding and channelling the shifting winds of magic that stream from the Realm of Chaos. The High Elves are the greatest wizards in the whole world, and the Dark Elves are also touched by magic. Whereas the High Elves have always taken great care to protect themselves from dangerous magical energies, especially Chaos Daemons, the Dark Elves long ago embraced dark magic in all its evil majesty.

In the ancient days of their race, the Elves learnt the secrets of manipulating this mystical power from the Slann, the most powerful servants of the ancient creators known as the Old Ones. Steeped in magical lore, the Elves honed their powers in the long wars against the Daemon hordes that attacked their realm after the coming of Chaos.

The magic energy used for Dark Magic is undivided: it contains all of the eight types of energy in a seething mass. The High Elf Mages knew of the power of Dark Magic but for long ages turned their back on its possibilities, regarding it as too dangerous to use. For all the control and expertise of the Elven mages of old, there was always a limit to the amount of power they could harness – the risk of madness, daemonic attack and spiritual corruption prevented the Elves from delving deeper into the power of Chaos.



However, the temptation eventually proved too much for some Elves, who started to experiment with Dark Magic secretly. The first of the Elves to venture into this forbidden territory was Morathi, the mother of the Witch King. With dark rituals and bloody sacrifices, she wielded the raw power of Chaos, moulding it to her bidding. With this sorcery – the unrefined power of magic – Morathi soon began to weave enchantments of foretelling and spells of destruction whose raw power far outstripped anything the Elves had previously known. The experiments drew many evil things into the world and corrupted its practitioners, twisting their minds and turning their hearts to evil. Thus were born the Dark Elf sorcerers.

When Nagarythe raised war against the other realms of Ulthuan, Morathi had already corrupted several of the Mages of Saphery. Tempted by the power of sorcery, they turned against their fellow wizards and magical war raged. Eventually, the sorcerers were forced to flee, and sought protection and tutelage from Morathi and Malekith. To this day Dark Elves study the sorcerous arts, seeking to increase their power and influence. The natural magic powers of Elves and the unnatural vitality of evil are mated together in the Dark Elves, so that they have become the ultimate masters of dark sorcery.

Chief amongst the wizards of Naggaroth are the 'sisters' of the Dark Convent of Sorceresses, who are gathered in the great fortress of Ghroind. Competition for positions in the Dark Convent are bloody and fierce, and only the most powerful and ruthless Sorceresses

Only by the divine will of the Witch King is a Druchii allowed to study the high art of magic. It the vitality and power of our magic which sustains us, destroys our enemies and empowers our Black Arks.

Those who succeed in the twelve tests of a Sorceress are found worthy and embrace the Dark Art in all its majesty. They become members of one of the six Convents of Sorceresses, ever ready to serve the Witch King. Those who fail and yet survive will serve the cause of Lord Malekith in more menial ways as mindless slaves.

Sorceress must walk the dark paths of the Realm of Chaos, the deep pits of the oceans, and the raging bowels of the fiery mountains in her quest for knowledge. The channelling of the raw Winds of Chaos and the binding of these forces give the Sorceress her power. The creatures of the Chaos Hells will bow to her will in the end. Such power is vast but dangerous, and the aspirant to the Dark Convent of the Sorceresses must be courageous and strong. She must be wedded first and foremost to the great Witch King and so may never take a husband nor sire children. Thus also, the Witch King is alone among our fathers and forefathers able to wield the powers of the Darkest Abyss.

- From the Sixth Book of Secrets by Kaladhtoir of Clar Karond

THE PROPHECY OF DEMISE

"And lo, he shall rule with a dark band and his shadow shall touch upon every land. Steel will be his skin and fire will be his blood, in hatred will be conquer all before him. No blade forged of Man, Dwarf or Elf shall endure him fear. Though will it come to pass that the firstborn son of noble blood shall rise to power. The child will be learned in the darkest arts and he will raise an army of terrible beasts. Thus will the Dark King fall, slain by neither blade nor arrow but by a sorcerous power of darkest magic and so shall his body be consumed in the flames and for all eternity burn."

As Aenarion drew the Blade of Khaine, Caledor was gifted with a prophecy that spoke of the tragedy that would befall Elvenkind. Part of the prophecy talks of a great warrior cast from his home by a sorcerer, and Malekith believes it is he to whom the prophecy refers. As a result, male Dark Elf wizards are regarded with disdain, fear and superstition, and they cannot be admitted to the Dark Convent. There are those in Naggaroth, however, who will employ such sorcerers to avoid owing a debt to the Convent of Sorceresses.

survive the initiations. Those that succeed learn some of the most powerful magic in the world. They can call upon ancient daemonic entities to devour their enemies, hurl storms of wicked shards at their foes or engulf them with bolts of dark energy. Most significantly, sorcery allows a wizard to tap into an almost limitless supply of magical energy to fuel their spells when the Winds of Magic blow fitfully.

Though Dark Elves of both genders are capable of mastering the art of Dark Magic, male sorcerers are regarded with disdain, fear and suspicion – a situation only exacerbated by the generous bounties Malekith offers for such a being's severed head. The Witch King knows of the Prophecy of Demise, whose ancient stanzas foretell how a great warrior will one day be cast from his home by a sorcerer. Malekith – ever given to a cautious mind-set in such matters – believes it is he to whom the prophecy refers, and he is determined to cheat that destiny – one severed head at a time. Nonetheless, there are still those who would rather risk the Witch King's wrath than incur a debt to the Convent of Sorceresses, so some sorcerers yet survive.

Should a Dreadlord's need be great enough to secure aid from the Dark Convent, however, he will find himself in proxy command of a magical mastery as well-rounded as it is ruthlessly wielded. Their magical prowess will blight the warriors of the opposing army, scorch their souls from their bodies and bring ruination and curses aplenty upon their heads. Dark Elf magic users do not commune with the magical energies of the Winds of Chaos and attempt to use them in harmony; instead they use sheer force of will to bend the Winds to their dark intentions. Dark Magic spells are incredibly destructive and capable of shattering almost any defence. However, this power does not come without a price. If the Sorceress's will falters even a little the unstable power of Dark Magic will turn back upon the caster with a powerful backlash.



The Dark Magics of sorcery are but one of the disciplines studied by the Sorceresses of Ghroind, and they can call upon the Lore of Battle Magic with just as much skill as the stiff-souled mages of Ulthuan. Enemies can be immolated by whirling fire storms, turned to crystal by swirling purple energies, torn limb from limb by elementals, blasted apart by lightning or transmuted into solid gold. All the while, the sorceress laughs with wicked delight, her castings becoming wilder as the joy of battle overtakes her. Yet no matter how absorbed she becomes in the destruction. The sorceress always has one eye on her putative employer, her mind ablaze with the possibilities of how she will exact payment if none is voluntarily forthcoming.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Supreme Sorceress	5	4	4	3	3	3	5	1	9
Sorceress	5	4	4	3	3	2	5	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

MAGIC: Sorceresses are Wizards who use spells from the Lore of Fire, Metal, Heavens, Beasts, Shadow, Death or Dark Magic.

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Hekarti's Blessing, Murderous Prowess.

"An army of Druchii does not fight with silvered steel alone, for there are other powerful forces which can be bent to the will of a brave army general. Call upon the Convents of the Sorceresses and entreat their aid, for their magical prowess will blight the warriors of the opposing army, scorch their souls from their bodies and bring ruination and curses aplenty upon their heads. Be careful in your dealings with these beautiful creatures though, for there is always a price to pay for their aid... always!"

- *Furion of Clar Karond*

BEASTMASTERS

Since the distant days of Nagarythe, the Dark Elves have been experts at bending beasts and animals to their will. However, some show exceptional aptitude in this, and can command even the unruliest beasts with a single word. They are the famed Beastmasters. When a child shows talent for taming animals he is sent to the city of Clar Karond to study under the masters who dwell there.

The Beastmasters are also in charge of the slaves, for humans, Orcs and their like are no more than beasts themselves. Beastmasters are experts at getting the most out of their stock, and are always chosen from amongst the most robust and resourceful of the Dark Elves.

The Beastmasters of Clar Karond and Karond Kar can command even the unruliest creatures to do their bidding. In part, this mastery springs from their unflinching dedication to the tormentors' craft, but brutality alone would be worthless without a Beastmaster's innate empathy. All Elves share a mystical attunement with the natural world, but while most embrace this bond to gain greater wisdom and fellowship with other living creatures, Dark Elves, and Beastmasters in particular, employ it as another weapon in their arsenal of torment. It matters not whether the beast is a raging Manticore, a cunning Harpy or the wisest of all Caledor's ancient Dragons: eventually, all submit to the Beastmaster's will, or perish under his lash.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Beastmaster	5	5	5	4	3	2	6	2	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess.



Beastslaver: At the start of each of your turns, choose a friendly monster within 6" of the Beastmaster. That monster has +D3 Attacks until the start of your next turn. A monster can only be affected by this special rule once in each turn.

SCOURGERUNNER CHARIOTS

Beastmasters are always eager to find fresh subjects, for the many perils of battlefield, gladiatorial arena and neglect ensure that stables suffer a high rate of attrition. Small bands of Beastmasters roam the wilds in Scourgerunner Chariots, searching fen, crag and cave for suitable prizes. Armed with barbed nets and harpoons attached to strong chains, they snare and immobilise their prey. Once captured, the beast is trussed securely, yoked to the back of the chariot and dragged many miles back to Clar Karond where a life of slavery and torment awaits it – if the creature survives the journey at all.

Scourgerunner Chariots are a common sight on the battlefield, where they search for suitable 'recruits' amongst the enemy ranks. If no fitting candidate presents itself, the Beastmasters vent their frustration as best they can, cutting down foemen with lash, blade and harpoon before claiming the twitching bodies as fodder for their hungry charges.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Scourgerunner	-	-	-	4	4	4	-	-	-
Beastmaster Crew	-	4	4	3	-	-	5	1	8
Dark Steed	9	3	-	3	-	-	4	1	-

TROOP TYPE: Chariot (Armour save 6+).

SPECIAL RULES: Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess.

EQUIPMENT:

Ravager Harpoon: This is a bolt thrower that can be fired even if the Scourgerunner Chariot moves.

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
30"	5	Armour Piercing (1), Multiple Wounds (D3)

If a Monster is Hit by this weapon but survives, it must turn and move towards the Scourgerunner Chariot as fast as it can (charging if possible) using its normal Movement value in its next Movement phase.

THE CONTEST OF CLAWS

Beastmasters can be found all over Naggaroth, for they are drawn to wherever potential pets can be found. However, there is a traditional rivalry between the rulers of Karond Kar and Clar Karond, who each claim to have dominion over the most accomplished Beastmasters of all. This claim is settled, once each year, in the Contest of Claws – a formal battle between whichever Beastmasters from the two cities are prepared to put their lives, and those of their charges, at risk for the fleeting honour of their city. The Contest of Claws is always a closely fought affair, with both sides arranging 'accidents', assassinations and as many other forms of skulduggery as possible to ensure their rightful victory.

DISCIPLES OF KHAINE

The devotees of this unique cult can trace their origins to the Dark Elf city of Clar Karond. According to legend, the Noble houses of this decadent city would offer members of their own families to the blood-slicked alters of Khaine in hopes of garnering their war god's favour before setting out to sea on raids. Some of these would-be victims were set aside to learn the arts of assassination, while others were singled out for enigmatic purposes known only to the Hag Queens of the Witch Elf temples.

Dark Elf Disciples have been marked by the touch of Khaine, the bloody handed god. His chosen dark priests, the Disciples of Khaine can be found on the frontline of any Druchii assault. They carry out Khaine's will whenever they enter into a fight, reaping the soul essence of their opponents with wicked ritual swords and chalices. Trained in the dark rites of Khaine, a Disciple can steal the strength of a soul with just a nip of their razor-sharp blades. With the essence of souls taken from their opponents, the Disciple can enact dark rites, calling upon Khaine's favour to bless Druchii warriors. A Disciple is also a consummate fighter and skilled torturer for Khaine, relishing the essence taken from a slow agonizing demise over that of a quick well-placed deathblow.

The Disciple of Khaine is a true master of murder. Using wicked ritual blades, a Disciple harvests the essence of their enemy and offers it to Khaine in exchange for fell blessings and dark powers. These dark gifts allow the Disciple to tend to the needs of the Dark Elf host, mending bones, suppressing pain, and even raising critically injured warriors to fight again. The Disciple of Khaine is the shepherd of war,



ensuring the bloody slaughter can continue in the name of their dark god.

The powers utilized by Disciples of Khaine function on a principle of "balance," skewed to an extreme that only the twisted mind of a Dark Elf can appreciate. Each death caused and each wound inflicted is done in supplication to Khaine, the Dark Elf god of Murder. Should the Disciple wish enhanced strength, alacrity, or endurance, his god must be bartered with. To the dismay of the Disciple's victims, the only payment Khaine has ever been known to accept is suffering and death.

The Disciple of Khaine must be in close range of their opponent as they require the blood of the enemy to enact their dark rites. As such, a Disciple is trained both with the blade and the dark arts, capable of weaving the two into a staggering blend of offensive and defensive power. In combat, the Disciple is a master of shifting the balance of a fight, for what they reap from their enemies they give to their allies – what was once your strength will soon become their own. They wear wickedly barbed armours made of heavy leather and steel, and high collared gorgets with partial facial masks. They either wield twin ritual blades, or carries a single blade and ritual chalice used to drain the blood of their foes.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Disciple of Khaine	5	5	5	4	3	2	6	2	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Khainite, Murderous Prowess.

Blood Rites: A Disciple of Khaine knows the three Blood Rites listed below. Blood Rites are innate bound spells (power level 3). Blood Rites are **augment** spells that target the Disciple and their unit.

For each unsaved Wound caused by Disciple in close combat, they gain +1 to cast in their next Magic phase, to a maximum of +3.

- **Restore Essence:** The Disciple and their unit gain the Regeneration (5+) special rule until the start of their next Magic phase.
- **Fist of Khaine:** The Disciple and their unit may re-roll all failed rolls To Hit and To Wound in close combat until the start of their next Magic phase.
- **Rend Soul:** One enemy unit in base contact with the Disciple suffer D6 Strength 3 hits and suffer -1 to their Strength until the start of their next Magic phase.

"Few are the select chosen that survive the reveries of the Death Night. Fewer still are those who leave the Cauldron with eyes of molten brass, burning with the hatred of our Dark god. These true chosen are taken into the cult and trained in the most secret of rites, emerging as masters of death second only to Khaine himself."

- Haridar of Har Ganeth

KHAINITE ASSASSINS

Amongst the most powerful weapons of the temple Khaine are the Assassins. Little is known of this highly secretive organization, whose identities remain hidden to even the Witch Elves themselves. During the revelries of the Death Night, the Witch Elves roam the streets of the Dark Elf cities, and all who cross their path are offerings to Khaine. While young Dark Elf girls taken by Khaine become Witch Elves, male children raised in the temples of Khaine are destined to be Assassins, trained from infancy to be the chosen warriors of Khaine. For them murder is a way of life.

Assassins are the most deadly and evil Dark Elves of all, masters of subtle and murderous magic. The neophytes are raised in the blood fields of the temples, learning the arts of war and death. As they grow they learn the dark secrets of Khaine: the deadly martial arts, the power of poisons, how to move without sound and how to slip through the night unseen. The merciless and deadly few that survive the first ten years of this training, killing their fellow adepts in face-to-face fighting or by more devious means, go to the great temples of Naggarond and Har Ganeth, where they learn the deepest mysteries of Khaine. None outside the cult know all of the secrets of the temples, save perhaps Hellebron and Shadowblade, and each Assassin will learn the particular skills and techniques of his master. By the time they are ordained as an Assassin there are few who can match their martial prowess, the victim hardly seeing the knife that kills him; such is the speed of a trained Assassin.

All Assassins follow one of the aspects of Khaine, the thousand-faced god of murder, and under his patronage their powers grow unrivalled by mere mortals. They become masters of the martial arts and learn the power of poisons. They are one of the most potent tools in the armoury of the Witch King, and those lords foolish enough to question their loyalty to Malekith disappear swiftly.



Each Assassin strives to become more like their god. The rivalry between Assassins is fierce, and all of them are constantly developing new killing techniques. There are no greater warriors amongst all Elvenkind than the Adepts of Khaine. They move silently and with a precision that surpasses even the standards of other Elves. Blindfolded, an Assassin can walk sure-footedly across the spears of an embattled phalanx, or strike a precise flurry of blows so that each cut exploits a different weakness of armour or flesh. They are murderers supreme, the most deadly agents of the Hag Queens.

The cult of Khaine hires out the services of its Assassins to Malekith and the other rulers of Naggarond, in exchange for sacrifices, wealth and political favour. Although strictly speaking it is forbidden to pay for the service of Assassins, generous donations to the coffers of a temple may result in the mysterious death of the patron's foes. They are a deadly adversary and should anyone fall foul of the devotees of Khaine, they can be sure that their death will come swift and unseen. Though the price is high, the Assassins' skills are such that there is a constant demand for their services. Many Assassins ply their deadly trade in the Dark Elf cities, eliminating their employer's competitors and aiding in coups against the ruling families. Some are hired by admirals of Black Arks to train Corsairs or sow terror amongst the targets of their raids.

Assassins are also employed to keep discipline and loyalty amongst the troops of an army captain. The skill and guile of these deadly warriors is such that the troops they accompany usually do not know that there is an Assassin within their ranks. The fear and uncertainty this causes helps to keep seditious talk and rebellion to a minimum, for no Dark Elf can be absolutely certain with whom he is conspiring.

Assassins are masters of using poison and coat their weapons with a variety of venoms – some of which are deadly, others which paralyse or stupefy their victim so that they can be captured and tortured for information or pleasure. One scratch from some of these poisons is enough to send a man into agonising paroxysms as his nerves burn, his heart explodes or his bones crack and shatter. The Assassins take great pleasure in the awful demises of their victims, and are adept at keeping prisoners alive for many days. Often they can extract confessions and information from captives much more quickly than the crude tortures used by other Naggarothi interrogators.

Dark Elf Assassins have few equals in combat. They are master swordsmen and their weapons are rendered even more deadly by being tipped with Black Venom. In battle they are secreted amongst the other Dark Elves and hunt down enemy leaders, wizards and other vulnerable characters, pouncing upon them unexpectedly as regiments clash in combat.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Khainite Assassin	5	9	9	4	3	2	10	3	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Dodge (4+), Hatred (High Elves), Hidden, Immunity (Psychology), Khainite, Murderous Prowess, Poisoned Attacks.

DARK ELF WARRIORS

The Dark Elves are descendants of the brave warriorfolk that dwelt in Nagarythe during the reign of Aenarion. They are raised from birth as soldiers and raiders, learning early on in their lives that they have only that which they can take. Though their natural mistrust and selfishness occasionally undermines discipline, Dark Elves make up for this with heartfelt bitterness and are united by their mutual loathing for all other creatures.

Dark Elf warriors are cruel and fierce fighters. Many of them are women and it is common to find both women and menfolk fighting side by side. Like all Elves, Dark Elves are lithe and sinuous, their muscles are strong and their reactions every hit as quick as their agile minds. Despite their deathly pallor and cruel faces they are savagely beautiful and highly intelligent, although they treat other creatures with contempt and place no value on the lives of lesser races.

Dark Elf armies are formed around a core of utterly merciless soldiers, schooled in slaughter by a lifetime of survival amidst the twisted streets of Naggaroth's cities. Most such warriors are conscripted into service, but a few muster willingly, having identified some manner in which the battle will play to their personal advantage. In times of war almost the entire Dark Elf population can be called to arms, even though the total number of Dark Elves is very small compared to the other races that inhabit the Warhammer world.

Dark Elf warriors wear distinctive and highly ornate armour. They carry cruel swords and many are armed with the deadly



repeater crossbow which shoots a hail of small barbed arrows. Dark Elves are deadly and extremely dangerous fighters, equally adept with sword, spear or their famous repeater crossbow.

Regiments of Dark Elves are made up of warriors, both male and female, drawn from the same city, and often the same extended family. Such formations are usually agreed upon not long before battle, as shifting politics and sudden promotions or executions make any kind of formal army structure impossible. Dark Elves sworn to a particular lord or ruling house will fight under the banner of their masters, though this has been known to change over time, and some regiments may even shift loyalty within the course of a battle! The commanders of the army instill a semblance of control by appointing leadership of the regiments to lesser family members, usually younger siblings or bastard offspring with very little standing in the circles of power.

Dark Elf armies are normally raised by the lords of Naggaroth, in some cases by the Witch King himself and rarely without his leave; nobles that gather large bodies of troops without Malekith's permission tend to incur his fatal suspicion. Such forces are usually gathered for a specific attack, or to bolster the crew for a particular raiding voyage. Dark Elf fleets are continuously sailing across the world to loot the settlements of other races, stealing the treasure they can find and imprisoning the inhabitants to be taken back to Naggaroth. The Witch King also requires huge numbers of Druchii soldiers for the ongoing war with the High Elves of Ulthuan. When fighting these most hated of foes, the Dark Elves are intent only upon wholesale destruction.

DREADSPEARS

The principle weapon of a Dark Elf soldier is the heavybladed spear known in the Druchii tongue as the Drannach – the Sky-Piercer. The role of these warriors is to defend against enemy counter-attacks threatening the flanks of other formations, and to protect the army's war machines and missile troops. All Elves are swift, and Druchii spear regiments can march quickly to seize ground or respond to the enemy general's plan. These spear troops provide a solid cadre of soldiers that allows the more unstable warriors in the army to roam freely, slaughtering at will.

Dreadspears consider themselves to be true soldiers, and look down upon the Bleakwords as brash adventurers unsuited to the proper business of battle. Through blood spilt and shed, they have learnt the strength of discipline, of the locked shieldwall bristling with wicked spearpoints. Dreadspear regiments are therefore the reliable bastions around which a Dreadlord can form his battle-plan. Whilst the army's wilder warriors roam freely to slaughter at will, the Dreadspears hold key positions and repel counter-attacks.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Dreadspear	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8
Lordling	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess.

DARKSHARDS

Many Dark Elves forsake melee weapons in favour of delivering death from afar. A proportion of a city's warriors train in the use of the lethal repeater crossbow known as the Uraithen – literally translated as the Deathrain. These magazine-fed weapons are capable of unleashing blistering hails of bolts allowing these Darkshards can take positions at the rear of the battlefield firing storms of iron-tipped bolts against approaching foes, or move forwards to weaken the enemy line with a withering volley before the Dark Elf attack charges home. In particular, the repeater crossbow is favoured by warriors sent to garrison the northern watchtowers, as it is deadly against the lightly armoured tribesmen that foray south in large numbers from the Chaos Wastes.

Though often scorned by other warriors for their distaste of close quarters battle, the Darkshards are unflinchingly proud of their marksmanship and are certainly no less cruel than their fellows. It is not uncommon for a Darkshard to forgo a killing strike to eye or heart in favour of a gut shot or other debilitating blow which, while ultimately no less lethal, guarantees that the enemy's last moments will be spent in mewling agony.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Darkshard	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8
Guardmaster	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess.

BLEAKSWORDS

All Dark Elves are arrogant beyond tolerance, but Bleakswords far outstrip even other Naggarothi in this regard. Each believes himself to be the greatest warrior of his age, needless of aid and heedless of danger. Bleakswords forsake the spear and the repeater crossbow, deeming the former a peasant's weapon and the latter a craven armament. Instead, they wield slender duelling blades that flash past an enemy's guard to slit his throat or pierce his heart.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Bleaksword	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8
Lordling	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess.

CITY GUARD

The Dark Elves live in six heavily fortified cities of black iron and steel that tower over the icy land of Naggaroth like gargantuan stalagmites. These forbidding places are filled with bitter hatreds and heinous evils, their dungeons racked with prisoners in extreme agony, whose wailing shrouds the land with unearthly terror.

Each of the Dark Elf cities is garrisoned by a mighty army of warriors. Their primary duty is to protect the city from enemy attack, but they can also be mobilised by the Witch King in times of war. The core of each great garrison is its Guard.

Dark Elves relish battle, and it is considered to be a great honour to serve in the City Guard. From the tall towers of their cold cities the City Guard keep watch over the land and ready themselves for war.

Most do not dare assault these bastions of doom, yet there are those brave enough, or perhaps foolish enough, to take on such a task. When this happens, the elite City Guard is called forth to protect their cities and outposts, using their spears and repeater crossbows with exceptional proficiency, and slaughtering their enemies without mercy. Those attackers unfortunate enough to survive become tortured slaves for the rest of their meaningless lives.

Half of the Dark Elves in a City Guard unit are armed with spears, while the other half carry the ubiquitous Dark Elf repeater crossbow. This means that they are equipped to battle any foe, even if they are operating on their own without support from other Dark Elf troops. On the battlefield City Guard units form up in a unique mixed formation, with the crossbowmen in the first ranks and the spearmen in the following ranks. This is an excellent defensive formation which is almost impossible for most enemy troops to attack frontally.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
City Guard	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8
Guardmaster	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess.

Mixed Formation: All City Guard armed with Repeater Crossbows must be placed in the first ranks of the unit, with the City Guard armed with spears being placed in the following ranks. Models armed with Repeater Crossbows and shields cannot make Parry saves. Casualties are removed from the back as normal.

"Much of your army is raised from the population of our cities. Amongst our ranks march our wives and sisters: beautiful but deadly maidens who fight with the fury of daemons. Above all other weapons the guard favour the repeater crossbows known as Uraithen (the Deathrain) and the Drannach (the Sky-Piercer), a long, heavy-bladed spear. The long years of discipline and war have honed these guard into the finest warriors in the world.

Do not scorn these citizen-soldiers, for they have won many a battle – and their lives are expendable should an occasion arise when you must sacrifice part of your army to achieve a victory in the name of King Malekith. Lead your army with conviction and brook no interference, but also do not overlook the pettier leaders who serve under you. Make your orders well known to the nobles and lordlings who bow to your command, that they may more effectively take to the field and execute your strategy.

Fight well and bring victory to the Druchii and you shall know how great are the rewards for good service under the inspired rule of Malekith. Waste his soldiers, bring dishonour and shame upon our people and you shall know that as our chosen King can be grateful, so too shall he avenge himself on those that fail him."

- Fury of Clar Karond

BLACK ARK CORSAIRS

The Dark Elves prey ruthlessly on other realms, believing their strength and cunning to be the only justification they need for their predations. Yet there are those who have perfected such wicked deeds to a form of art, so single-mindedly do they pursue the slaughter of weaklings.

When Malekith attempted to destroy the vortex of Ulthuan, the magical explosion caused most of Nagarythe to topple into the seas. To save what they could from the devastation, Malekith and his wizards cast enchantments upon their citadels so that they rose up above the crashing waves. Some of these became the foundations of the cities of the Dark Elves; many still wander the oceans and seas, manned by reavers seeking fresh slaughter and loot.

The Black Arks of Naggaroth are mighty floating fortress-palaces capable of carrying thousands of warriors and slaves, kept aloft and propelled through the water by powerful spells of Dark magic. The Black Arks scour the seas of the Warhammer World, performing mysterious errands for the Witch King, or raiding the coasts for slaves. Their sorceresses summon beasts up from the deep which fortifications are then built on. These 'living ships' always travel with a Black Ark, and drive fear into the hearts of all the Dark Elves would prey upon.



These Black Arks are home to thousands of Corsairs, hardened fighters who have spent their whole lives plundering the lands of others. These Corsairs also form the crews of other vessels, fighting from towers built upon the backs of the Sea Dragons and Helldrakes that have become popular in the ports of Naggaroth.

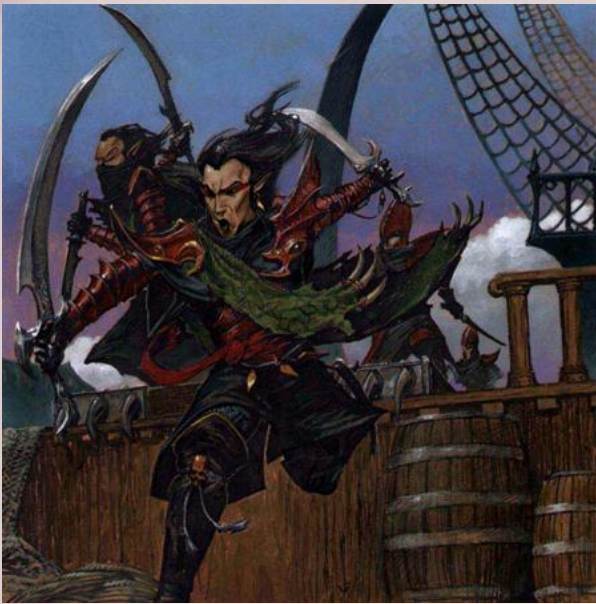
Black Ark Corsairs are notorious reavers, having spent their entire lives pillaging distant lands. They are the lionised darlings of Naggarothi society, lauded for their daring and bravery. The crews of the Black Arks embody the drive for a Dark Elf to earn riches and glory, no matter the cost. To be a Corsair is a great honour amongst the Druchii, and it is a chance to win riches and fame and capture slaves during their raids, for one tenth of the loot captured by a Corsair belongs to him. Four tenths go to his captain and the remainder is the possession of the Witch King.

The Corsairs ply their bloody trade across the seas, seeking to return to the adulation of their peers, with enough slaves and wealth beyond the dreams of most city-dwellers to set themselves up as princes. It is not uncommon for a Corsair fleet to spend years ransacking foreign lands, returning home only when their holds are bursting with slaves and plunder. It is a hard, dangerous life in the raiding fleets, but a successful voyage of a decade – a comparatively short time in the centuries-long life of an Elf – can see the captain and his crew return with enough wealth and influence to buy a position in Malekith's court or to marry into one of the powerful dynasties that rule the six cities of Naggaroth.

When a Dark Elf fleet reaches the coast of a foreign land and disgorges its invading army, one or more regiments of Black Ark Corsairs will always be well to the fore. These deadly warrior-knights are sworn to carry out the orders of the Black Ark's ruler without question, no matter what foul deed or heinous crime they are ordered to commit. They are renowned for their dazzling and ferocious skill, and revel in blood soaked close combat, seemingly taking pleasure in their foes' pain.

"To sail with a Black Ark is one of the greatest honours that any Druchii could ever aspire to. I trained long and hard to earn my berth upon the Wind of Damnation, slaying several undeserving rivals to the post along the way. It is a worthy life. I get to regularly practice my skills upon our many enemies and one tenth of the plunder that I seize is mine to keep. Slaves, gold, and fame, these too can be yours if you are bold."

- Teilancharr, Druchii Corsair



Corsairs prefer to use equipment that is light and does not impede their movement in any way, as they are often called upon to take part in boarding actions if the Black Ark is attacked at sea. Black Ark Corsairs often fight on the decks of ships or through the twisting streets of a coastal town, leaping from mast to mast or roof to roof in stunning displays of fearless acrobatics. For this reason, Black Ark Corsairs prefer fast weapons that give them an edge in one-on-one fights. Corsairs arm themselves with a wide variety of vicious cutlasses punch daggers and barbed knives, which they can use equally well in either hand or two at a time. Some Corsairs prefer to use a handbow; a compact, one-handed version of the repeater crossbow, which lacks the range of the larger weapon but is equally lethal at close quarters. They do not like to use shields, which they consider bulky and can get in the way in the wild and disorganised combats that they are normally called upon to fight. Instead, they rely for protection on the tough but remarkably light cloaks made from the scales of the sea monsters used by the Dark Elf fleet. They also carry a vile array of nets, grapples and barbed chains. Such tools are not only useful for getting a grip on the slippery flank of a ship, but also for ensnaring fleeing victims and drag them screaming back to be sliced apart or borne away to a terrible fate.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Corsair	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8
Reaver	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Ambushers, Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess.

Repeater Handbow: Repeater handbows are missile weapons with the following profile:

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
12"	3	Multiple Shots (2), Quick to Fire

"Kill them with swords, kill them with lances and spears, kill them with the bolts of your crossbows. Kill their warriors, kill their women and their children, their elderly and their sick. Kill their hounds, cattle and their livestock. But above all, kill with pleasure."

- Captain Daerkhil of the Black Ark Bringer of joyous Oblivion prior to the punitive Dark Elf raid on the coast town of Bergsburg. There were no survivors.

BLACK ARK FLEETMASTERS

Fleetmasters command the mighty Black Arks that make up the marauding Druchii fleets. It takes decades of hard-bitten villainy to earn (or usurp) command of a mighty Black Ark and its attendant fleet. Little wonder is it then that Black Ark Fleetmasters are amongst the most intemperate and ruthless of their race, and must always have one eye on their 'loyal' warriors. They are swordsmen of exceptional prowess who prefer nothing more than challenging rival heroes to personal combat.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Fleetmaster	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Ambushers, Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess.

At Them, You Curs!: If a Black Ark Fleetmaster joins a unit of Black Ark Corsairs, they may both re-roll failed To Hit rolls of 1 in close combat.

Show no Weakness: A Fleetmaster must always accept challenges. While fighting challenges, the Fleetmaster may re-roll all failed rolls To Hit, and each unsaved Wound counts as two Wounds when calculating combat resolution.



SLAVES

The Dark Elves are viewed by other races as one of the most evil and certainly the cruellest people in the whole of the Warhammer World. They think nothing of murder and bloodshed, indeed they revel in it. For even when the Dark Elves win a battle, any of the opposing side left wounded or too weak to fight will not be dispatched quickly, but will be tortured to death or even worse, taken as prisoners who, once back in the Land of Chill, will either be sacrificed in the name of Khaine or doomed to work in the quarries and mines of the Witch King. These slaves are forced to work day and night, chained together, they mindlessly hack at the rocks. Many of the slaves die of cold or of starvation. Of course the Dark Elves love to see this awful spectacle and particularly enjoy beating any slaves who are not thought to be working hard enough.



Slaves are terribly treated by their Dark Elf mentors, and occasionally they even try to get away from their Dark Elf captors. It has also been known for them to revolt and desperately try to escape. However, this



nearly always lead to their demise as they ultimately get ridden down by Dark Riders, shot in the back with crossbow bolts, or torn apart by harpies as they run.

Often, when a battle arises, the Dark Elves will take slaves onto the battlefield and make them fight against the enemy in the front line, even though a large quantity of the slaves is too weak to even stand. Many of these wretched slaves are a pathetic shadow of what they once were. Once perhaps they were proud High Elf spearman or fine Empire Halberdiers ready to do battle in the name of Sigmar. Now they hope for nothing but a swift death.

A tactic the Dark Elves use often is to feed slaves to their Cold Ones before the battle. The taste of blood sends the Cold Ones into a state of blood lust and stops them from behaving stupidly. As well as this it's also fun to see the slaves getting ripped to shreds by the Cold Ones.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Slave	4	2	2	3	3	1	3	1	4
Slave Master	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: **Elven Grace** (Slave Master only), **Expendable**, **Hatred (High Elves)** (Slave Master only), **Mixed Unit**, **Murderous Prowess** (Slave Master only), **Vanguard**.

Slave Master: *The slaves are led by a Dark Elf Slave Master. He is an expert at leading the slaves. A Slave unit must be led by a Slave Master, without him they will not perform in the right manner. Slave Masters are placed behind the unit of slaves.*

The Slave Master follows the rules for normal unit Champions; with the following exceptions: the Slave Master is always placed in the rear rank of the unit, and may be the only model in that rank.

"It was dusk when they struck. Those pale-skinned daemons appeared from nowhere, slicing through the thick fog like a keen edged knife. The fishermen were bringing in their last catch of the evening. Those poor souls didn't stand a chance; they were the first to be snared in the wickedly barbed nets. Then the screaming women, who fought to reach their loved ones. They were taken too.

Those who could fight gathered together what weapons they could: fishing spears, gaffs and bare fists, but the elven invaders were too strong, too skilled in the arts of warfare and fear. If only the men from the nearby town could have gotten here in time..."

- Unknown survivor of a Dark Elf raid

DARK RIDERS

In the grim days when armies of Daemons besieged Ulthuan, the daemonic hordes could attack at any place, at any time. Able to appear from the Realm of Chaos at will, the armies of the Chaos Gods could strike without warning. Aenarion's hosts stood ready to repel any attack, and across Nagarythe and the other realms keen-eyed watchers kept guard for any daemonic intrusion.

These scouts rode upon black steeds from Nagarythe – fast and hardy mounts that could gallop for a day without tiring. The riders wore cloaks of raven feathers, enchanted with spells of shadow to keep them hidden from the eyes of the enemy, and so were known as the Raven Heralds. When armies of the Daemons appeared from the Realm of Chaos, these scouts would ride to warn the Phoenix King, so that the army of the Elves could march forth and battle the Daemons. The sight of one of these heralds galloping across the hills and along mountain passes became a familiar sight in those troubled times and they were hailed as heroic guardians of Ulthuan.

During the civil war, these riders earned a more sinister reputation. They rode ahead of the hosts of Nagarythe, spying out the positions of the Phoenix King's armies and locating sites for ambush or attack.

Not only this, but the Naggarothi Dark Riders would also sow terror and confusion amongst the populace of the other kingdoms, burning villages and towns and driving their people into the wilds where they could be hunted down. The Dark Riders gloried in the thrill of the chase, and thought nothing of running down innocent victims. The Dark Riders have continued in this vein to the present day, as well as fulfilling the role of swift messengers between the ruling families of Naggaroth's six cities, or else riding deep into other lands as harbingers of destruction.

The horses of the Elves are renowned for their beauty and speed, and all breeds of horses known to man are descended from Elven steeds. Most High Elf steeds are grey or dappled, but the Dark Elves prefer pure black horses. These fearsome creatures are said to have evil tempers and a hatred of all living creatures that is only matched by their Dark Elf riders.



When the armies of Nagarythe invaded the rest of Ulthuan, they captured many of the famous horses of Ellyrion. The finest of all Elven steeds, these beasts were taken back to Anlec, and there they were bred with the native horses and corrupted with Dark Magic to turn them into black-flanked killers. No longer truly a horse, a Dark Steed can outrun the steeds of other races, galloping for days without tiring. When Malekith was cast out of Ulthuan by the Sundering, many of these steeds were slain, but a few were taken upon the Black Arks. In the dark, chill forests of Naggarond, the Druchii had their slaves cut pastureland for their mounts, and flogged thousands of slaves to death to till the soil for food to give their prized creatures. The Dark Steeds fed upon the bones and flesh of fallen captives, so that dead slaves were as useful as living ones. However, no sooner had the number of Dark Steeds begun to flourish than the Cold Ones were discovered in the Underworld Sea and the nobles of Naggarond chose to abandon their old mounts in favour of the new bestial reptiles of the caves. These days, Dark Steeds are almost exclusively used by Dark Riders to patrol ahead of the army, and by heralds and messengers as they ride from city to city.

Many of these fierce dark steeds are taken from the stables of Ellyrion, reared and brought to heel by the Beastmasters. There is a poetic justice to this; where the Ellyrian weaklings dilute the natural fierceness and spirit of their steeds, the Dark Elf Beastmasters bring it out with their whips and hot brands. Once pureblood steeds of Nagarythe, their horses are now so twisted by magic and torture that they have become something altogether more malevolent and ravenous.

Heralds of the armies of Naggaroth, the Dark Riders spread fear before them as they burn and pillage. Mounted on black horses with glowing red eyes, these fell riders range ahead of the main army, spying on the enemy and spreading mayhem and confusion. They are the eyes and ears of the Dark Elf army commander, reporting back with vital information about the position and strength of the enemy's forces. Dark Riders are expert horsemen, spending most of their lives in the saddle, using long cavalry spears and wickedly curved swords, and are deadly shots with the Dark Elf repeater crossbow. They are masters of sudden attacks and daring raids, scouring the land in search of the foe, laying ambushes for their supply trains and attacking with deadly speed against their reinforcements.

When called to take part in a pitched battle they are usually deployed ahead of the main Dark Elf army so that they can slow down and harry the enemy as they try to deploy for battle. If they are attacked they will normally fire off a quick volley of crossbow bolts and retreat, relying on the speed of their fleet-footed Dark Steeds to outdistance any pursuers. Dark Riders take delight in skirting the enemy flanks to attack war machines and cut lines of supply, skewering their victims upon their barbed spears. They revel in the prospect of running down terror-stricken victims, dragging out every moment of wild panic as long as possible before delivering the final heart-seeking strike. Many Dark Riders carry repeater crossbows so that they can hunt their prey from afar, cutting down enemy light cavalry and skirmishers with a hail of black-fletched bolts.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Dark Rider	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8
Herald	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8
Dark Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5

TROOP TYPE: Cavalry.

SPECIAL RULES: Hatred (High Elves), Fast Cavalry, Murderous Prowess.

BLACK GUARD OF NAGGAROND

The Black Guard guards Naggarond, the Tower of Cold, where dwells the mighty Witch King himself. These warriors are marked by Khaine for the service of their grim master, and willingly do they lay their lives upon the altar of battle.

Dark Elves are selfish and power-hungry, ever seeking to claw their way to power over the corpses of their kin. As ruler of such an iniquitous people, Malekith trusts none of his fellow Druchii, except occasionally his mother, Morathi. Though no Dark Elf could be described as truly loyal, the Black Guard are the Witch King's favoured warriors, given the sacred task of acting as his personal enforcers and bodyguards. To be allowed so close to the Witch King, these Dark Elves must prove their loyalty to him. Those that endure and survive the strict regime of the Black Guard earn themselves great privilege in the court of Naggarond.

The Black Guard of Naggarond are the favoured warriors of the Witch King Malekith, and are given the sacred task of not only serving as his personal bodyguard, but as his heartless enforcers on the field of battle. The Black Guard are Malekith's personal army, answerable to no other save he. They are recruited from the offspring of families high in the Witch King's favour, taken at birth from their mothers who are soon thereafter put to the sword. With no family ties to distract them, these children of hatred and war are raised from infancy steeped in battle and blood within the barracks of the Black Guard and taught the myriad skills of death and destruction that are required of Malekith's foremost elite.

As soon as they are able, these young warriors are pitched against each other in murderous fights to the death, so that only the strongest, quickest-witted and most merciless killers survive. Over the years as they mature, these fledgling fighters are regularly visited by the Witch King, who rewards those who show great cunning and bloodthirst. This violence is not restricted to the training fields and arenas. An intake of recruits can lose up to half number as the incautious, injured and unpopular are



disposed of by their fellows. As they mature, these fledgling fighters are regularly visited by the Witch King, who lavishly rewards those who show great cunning and bloodlust.

When the aspirants finally come of age and their training is completed, they are brought before the Witch King and kneel at his feet to swear their undying devotion. It is this oath that lights the fires of hatred and scorn deep in their hearts, for no warrior can be greater than the one chosen by Malekith himself. It is then that Malekith promises each of them great wealth and lands, which is to be theirs if they serve him well for two hundred years. Those Black Guard that survive their arduous tour of duty go on to become rulers of cities, leaders of armies and favoured members of the Witch King's court. However, this promised generosity seldom requires fulfilment, for there are many ways to perish in Malekith's service – not least as scapegoat for his frustrations. Yet if the risks are great, then the rewards are greater still, and so every member of the Black Guard serves without faltering until death claims him. They are a bulwark of grim steel on the battlefield, holding their ground where all others have fled, fighting with a determination fit to transform defeat into victory, and victory into a glorious massacre.

The barracks of the Black Guard are divided into twenty Towers, which compete against each other in contests of war and torture. The Witch King grimly encourages competition between the Towers, and each year, at the beginning of the Season of Blood, a tournament is held to determine which Tower will hold dominance over the others for the coming year. The leaders of these factions are the Tower Masters, veterans of the Black Guard so inculcated with death and battle that they choose to continue in Malekith's service after their two centuries of duty have been completed. These hardened warriors rule their underlings with a will of iron, determined that their Tower shall not be shamed by a lack of discipline – or worse, a glimmer of mercy – on the part of their charges.

Living a life of constant battle the Black Guard are psychologically incapable of believing anyone can defeat them, and they take a personal grievance against any foe who stands under their brutal assault. These elite warriors do not let this hatred consume them, instead they embrace and focus their rage, allowing them to lash out with even greater force against their foes. A Black Guard is resolute in their duty unyielding to any force be it physical or arcane. It is for this reason that even the most powerful of assaults will always break against the shield of hate that each Black Guard wields.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Black Guard	5	5	4	3	3	1	6	2	9
Tower Master	5	5	4	3	3	1	6	3	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Eternal Hatred, Immunity (Psychology), Murderous Prowess, Stubborn.

HAR GANETH EXECUTIONERS

Har Ganeth is the spiritual centre of Khaine's worship, with many shrines to the Lord of Murder, dominated by the towering edifice of the great temple. It is from Har Ganeth that Hellebron rules over the Witch Elves, and countless victims are brought here to be sacrificed upon Khaine's altars. It was in Har Ganeth that the first ceremonies of execution were held. In the wake of a great victory over the High Elves, the guards of Har Ganeth led thousands of captives to the pinnacle of the temple and beheaded them with full ceremony and ritual. Such was the Dark Elves' delight when they beheld the bloodied heads tumbling down the steps that, from that day forth, executions became a regular feature in Har Ganeth society and a punishment for all manner of diverse crimes.

So adept have the guards of Har Ganeth become at their bloody art, they are now notorious throughout Naggaroth as the Executioners. They are the wardens of Har Ganeth's temples, whose keen blades are always ready to spill blood in the rites of Khaine. Each Executioner spends half his waking day in his duties as sentry, and the other half practising with his blade. This occasionally takes the form of ritual sparring between different Executioners, but more often involves the honing of deathblows upon luckless captives and miscreants. The Executioners are not frenetic butchers, but rather coldblooded killers who take pride in dispatching their foes with the minimum of effort. It is said that a fully-trained Executioner knows the way to kill any creature with but a single blow, whether by decapitation, disembowelment or a

single thrust through the heart. The Executioners are not frenetic butchers, but rather are cold-blooded killers who take pride in dispatching their foes with the minimum of effort. They are heartless murderers, who see their role as a sacred one and, unlike other Dark Elves, do not make sport of their victims, killing them swiftly and cleanly. It can take decades for an Executioner to perfect his chosen strike, to judge precisely the angle of the blow and how the blade might be deflected or otherwise cheated by splinters of bone.

Every Executioner carries a draich, the ceremonial weapon of his calling. In fact, the word 'draich' represents the act of execution itself, and the skill of the bearer as much as the specific blade used for the ritual. Each draich is forged by its wielder under the supervision of the armourers of Khaine's great temple. As an Executioner learns his bloody skills, he also refines his weapon so that the two are as one. Some Executioners prefer a heavy axe-like blade, others a slender sword, depending upon their own abilities and preferred method of killing. Regardless of design, these weapons are fearsome in battle, able to cleave through armour, flesh and bone with but a single, flawlessly placed strike.



They are the cruellest of the cruel, these Executioners, who sing the praise of their bloody god as they go about their business. The Executioners of Har Ganeth wield their deadly blades with murderous skill and grim determination. They laugh to hear the groans of their enemy as blades bite deeply into flesh, and rival warriors compete to collect the greatest number of cleanly severed heads. As they hew their enemy the Executioners cry out their praise of Khaine, a piercing wail that chills the blood of all who hear it, a reminder of the City of Executioners where blood once flowed through the streets in a scarlet torrent.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Executioner	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	1	8
Draich-master	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Khainite, Killing Blow, Murderous Prowess.

STANDARD OF HAR GANETH 35 points

Just the sight of the grim standard of the Har Ganeth Executioners can strike terror into the hearts of the enemy. This is the first and only banner the Executioners have had. It has never been captured in battle and is now several thousand years old. The banner depicts Khaine in his executioner's aspect, with the crossed axes of the Har Ganeth Executioners in the background. The rune is a corrupted version of the High Elf rune Thalia, which signifies hatred or vengeance.

Magic Standard. The unit carrying this banner causes Terror.

SHADES

While most of the Dark Elves live in the security of their fortified cities, one of the is a notable exception. The Shades are a silent and deadly brotherhood of warriors who guard the mountain passes to the west. They live apart from the rest of Dark Elf society, waging an endless war against the enemies of Malekith.

The Shades are a group of Dark Elves who eschew life in the cities of Naggaroth and instead lead a savage existence in the grim Blackspine Mountains. This is a terrible country: the mountains are harsh, relentless and jagged with rocky and precipitous peaks, while the caverns below the mountains are gloomy, dank and fraught with peril. It is a perfect natural arena for the wars of sniping and ambush practised by the Dark Elf Shades.

Dark Elf Shades are tall, sharp-eyed warriors, keen as hawks and cruel as leopards. They are scouts without compare, able to move as swiftly and silently as ghosts through thick forest, across razor-sharp rocks and along the twisting caverns of the Underworld Sea. Their lives are vicious, even by the harsh standards of Dark Elves. Every day is a battle for survival with the dread beasts of the mountains; every night a gauntlet of drum-driven kin-sacrifice and death duelling.

The Shades were once city-dwellers like other dark Elves and formed the ruling elite of Clar Karond. It was nobles and warriors from the Shade family that were keenest to explore the Underworld Sea, seeking a passage to the western coast.



As their explorations took them further and further into the dark, unknown chambers, their enemies in Clar Karond gathered against them. Eventually they were ousted from power, and rather than serve as slaves to their usurpers, they chose voluntary exile in the harsh mountains. For a score of centuries the Shades have lived in the mountains, learning the secrets of survival in one of the fiercest climates in the world. The rulers of Clar Karond fear that one day the Shades will return to stake their claim to the city, but this is unlikely, for the clans of the Shades now seem more at home on wind-swept mountain ridges and in shadowy canyons.

Even amongst the vicious Dark Elves, the Shades are considered feral, for they practice all manner of strange, unforgiving rites. Animal sacrifices are made to the beating of drums liven the cold nights whilst the Shades drink fermented blood, and the tents of the Shades are made from the skins of their prey – whether Elf, Man, Orc or other beast. Their children are abandoned outside the camps on midwinter's eve and are expected to survive and find their way home. Only if the children survives the night they are considered to be worthy enough to be Dark Elf Shades. It goes without saying that the experience does much to foster the extreme self-reliance and pathological distrust of other creatures that is so characteristic of all Dark Elf Shades.

The Shades' hardiness makes them valued additions to any raiding fleet, and many Dreadlords expend much wealth in enticing them to his cause. Companies of Shades disembark from the fleet under cover of darkness, before moving inland to locate targets for the Dark Elves' raids. From hidden positions, they spy on the opposing forces, determining their location and strength, and ambush enemy pickets and outriders to conceal the presence of the Dark Elf army.

In battle the Shades prefer to rely on their skill with their repeater crossbows rather than risk direct confrontation. They will move out on their own well before the battle lines have been drawn up, choosing a well-concealed location from where they can harry and snipe at the enemy while remaining under cover themselves. When the warriors of the fleet attack, the Shades use their skills to infiltrate behind the enemy battle line, from which position they can harass the foe with volleys of dark-fledged bolts as they advance, or strike out and slay the crew of war machines with glinting blades. Although they consider it foolish to engage in hand-to-hand combat unless the foe is surprised or his back turned, their ability with the short but deadly sharp swords that they carry should not be underestimated. Many an over-confident opponent has learned to his cost that a Dark Elf Shade is at his most dangerous when cornered and forced to fight. Hardened to the harsh climate of the Blackspine Mountains and locked in an eternal battle with the ferocious creatures of Naggaroth, the Shades are well-armed and canny fighters. All carry repeater crossbows that they use for hunting, while many carry extra swords and daggers, or heavier blades.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Shades	5	5	5	3	3	1	5	1	8
Bloodshade	5	5	6	3	3	1	5	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess, Scouts, Skirmishers.

COLD ONE KNIGHTS

Cold Ones are ancient green skinned reptiles that live in the dark caves and tunnels in the mountains underneath Hag Graef, and the ones living there have darker skin and are rather lither in appearance compared to those that hunt within the Lustrian jungles. Cold Ones are extremely stubborn beasts, and not at all intelligent. Their cold flesh is almost immune to pain and their bodies exude a poisonous slime, the stink of which can overwhelm their opponents. Dark Elves can withstand small quantities of this slime and tiny amounts are used to make the poisons and intoxicating brews used by Assassins and Witch Elves of Khaine. Other races succumb much more readily to the poison and creatures fighting Cold Ones are as likely to be overwhelmed by this as killed by the Cold One's brutish claws or razor sharp teeth.

Cold Ones are rapacious predators, fuelled by a savage blood-lust that drives them to attack any warm-blooded creature that comes near. Cold Ones hunt in packs, and are perfectly capable of bringing down creatures many times their own size. As soon as they become aware of their prey the pack will surge forth, some of their number harrying and snapping at their quarry, while

the rest of the packs swings forwards to left and right. Once surrounded, the unfortunate victim will quickly be dragged down and consumed.

Cold Ones have superior senses to help them track their prey. A superior sense of smell and taste allows them to detect the scent of warm-blooded prey, even over the powerful stench of their mounts. Drawn to the scent of blood, packs of Cold Ones can spend days trailing the enemy, keeping downwind of their quarry.

Where the Cold Ones truly excel, however, is in service as war steeds for Naggaroth's knights. Cold Ones can be broken to the saddle, and are used cavalry mounts by the Dark Elves. However, breaking them in this way tempers their normally savage nature, and although still ferocious compared to most mounts, it leaves them dull-eyed and sullen compared to their wild cousins. Though single-minded when hunting, Cold Ones are extremely stubborn and very stupid, and even when broken for a rider are notoriously truculent. It takes great physical strength and immense willpower to master such a steed, and those Dark Elves that do so earn fear, if not respect, from their fellow Naggarothi nobles.



Cold One Knights count themselves amongst the finest warriors in Naggaroth. They are nobles of great wealth and ambition, whose warrior instincts elevate them far beyond the upstart cavalymen of lesser races. The knights' weapons are the finest that can be bought in the great cities: long swords enchanted in such a manner as to never lose their edge, and tall lances sharp enough to pierce the hide of a Dragon. Their mounts, too, are superior to those of other lands; no horse, no matter how well-trained or carefully bred, could ever hope to match the savagery of a Naggarothi Cold One.



It is a daring Dark Elf who takes a Cold One for his steed, for the lizards savagely attack all who come near them, recognising warm-blooded creatures as prey by the smell alone. This is dangerous in itself, and no few strutting nobles have been savaged by their own mounts, much to the amusement of their rivals. To avoid this, the Dark Elf must anoint himself repeatedly with the Cold One's own foul-smelling slime so that the beast will accept him. There is a great price to pay for the Dark Elf, though, for the fumes of this noxious balm are extremely potent, burning the nostrils, numbing the skin and destroying taste buds, so that the rider can no longer smell or taste food, or feel the touch of a lover. So it is that a Cold One is both a fearsome war-mount, and also a declaration of bravery and ambition on the part of the knight. For many Dark Elves, this heavy price is considered one worth paying, for in doing so a warrior proves his dedication to the Witch King and can earn great political as well as physical reward.



A fully armed and armoured Cold One Knight carries a long lance known as a Kheitain, or 'soul eater', wears a reinforced helm and full-length armour, and on his arm is slung a shield carrying the device of his house. His mount is protected by layers of scaled skin and tears apart its victims with curved claws and dagger-long fangs. Though they are few in number, the ferocity of the Cold One Knights is such a decisive weapon that they can win a hard-fought battle at a crucial moment with a single devastating charge.

Considered by many to be the most fearsome of all the Dark Elves' dreaded warriors, the Cold One Knights form a devastating shock elite. The skill of the knights and the viciousness of their mounts sets them above the cavalry of lesser races. They are often found at the forefront of the attack, smashing into the enemies' most deadly regiments.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Cold One Knight	5	5	4	4	3	1	6	1	9
Dread Knight	5	5	4	4	3	1	6	2	9
Cold One	7	3	0	4	4	1	2	2	3

TROOP TYPE: Cavalry.

SPECIAL RULES: Hatred (High Elves), Fear, Murderous Prowess, Natural Armour (6+), Stupidity.

THE BLOOD BANNER

25 points

The Blood Banner is a horrific sight which constantly oozes blood and fills the air around it with a charnel house stink. The sight and smell of the Blood Banner has worked the Cold Ones into a frothing frenzy before the battle starts.

Magic Standard. A unit of Cold One Knights that has the Blood Banner may ignore the effects of the Cold One's stupidity for the entire battle.

In the lands of Naggaroth, it is only the bravest and most reckless hunters that dare the undertunnels, seeking to steal Cold One eggs or to capture the beasts for mounts. These warriors are often from the Shades clan and can be distinguished by the plethora of hunting gear they carry and by the horrible injuries they bear from their dangerous trade. It was the Shades that first discovered that Cold Ones could be captured en masse by using the correct bait and by taking advantage of the blood-mad tendencies of the beasts. Notoriously fierce, Cold One packs will chase any creature that flees from them and they have been known to pursue prey with such single-minded fury that they can be led into pit or net traps. A single Dark Elf covered in blood (horse or human is best) serves as the best bait and will attract a large pack of hungry Cold Ones.

COLD ONE CHARIOTS

Amongst the Dark Elves it is a symbol of great prestige and favour to ride into battle upon the magnificent chariots of Naggarond. These are given as gifts to warriors who have pleased Lord Malekith with their devotion, bravery and prowess in battle. To possess such a machine is a symbol of great prestige, and is ranked amongst the highest stations in battle, even though the Cold Ones' truculent nature can often bring the chariot to a jarring halt at the most inopportune moments. Should the crew retain mastery of their chariot, they thunder across the battlefield like gods of war, wicked spears levelled and Cold Ones roaring fit to freeze the blood. In the last moment before impact, the crew goad their steeds to one last effort and the chariot crashes into the enemy ranks, crushing foes with the weight of its impact and opening flesh to the bone with the blades upon its flanks. A chariot smashing into the enemy is a sight magnificent to behold for the Dark Elves, after which the Cold Ones tear apart those that survive the barbed tips of the crew's long spears and the chariot's scythed wheels.



On occasion the Witch King himself rides to battle upon the legendary Black Chariot and, such is the fickle nature of Dark Elf loyalty, this is often followed by a clamour from other nobles to show their support and possess such a war machine for themselves. Of course, the armour-clad Witch King can no longer feel or smell as a mortal, so is immune to the stench of the Cold Ones – something that comes as a great shock for a noble seeking to make a mark for himself by emulating his ruler in this fashion.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Cold One Chariot	-	-	-	5	5	4	-	-	-
Knight Charioteer	-	5	4	4	-	-	6	1	9
Cold One	7	3	0	4	-	-	2	2	3

TROOP TYPE: Chariot (Armour save 6+).

SPECIAL RULES: Hatred (High Elves), Fear, Murderous Prowess, Natural Armour (6+), Stupidity.

Since their discovery, Cold Ones, known in the Druchii tongue as Nauglir, have become ever more popular as mounts for the so-called nobles of Naggaroth. The natural viciousness of these fearsome beasts resonates with the Dark Elf love of violence. Both rider and mount share a mutual lack of mercy for their prey, which has resulted in many bloody and ferocious slaughters upon the battlefield.

The first Cold Ones were ridden by Amarekh Khail and his companions, who shattered the High Elves' line at Athel Oreirian. These riders became infamous amongst the High Elves for decades, and were easily recognisable by the banner they flew - a macabre standard made from the bones and thins of those slain in their first battle.

The Cold One chariot regiment known as the Bloodscythes were equally lauded amongst the Naggarothi some three thousand years later. With their distinctive red-lacquered weapons and armour they became a familiar sight amongst the hosts of Hag Graef and were instrumental in many victories until their leader Asdrual Severain, fell to an Assassin's blade. The remnants of the regiment slew each other in the ensuing power struggle, before the survivors finally disbanded and went their separate ways.

Such infighting is commonplace amongst the arrogant princes who ride these beasts. Two brothers, Venien and Hurien, became renowned generals and jointly led the hosts of House Heghlin in several decisive triumphs during the most recent campaigns in Nagarythe. Despite their success, ultimately they were unable to share the glory. Hurien took the cloak of his brother and soaked it in the blood of a mountain boar. When Venien came to attend his mount, the scent, which Venien could not smell due to the sensenumbing elixir he had applied, the Cold One went wild and tore the Dark Elf lord to pieces. Hurien ruled House Heghlin for another fifteen hundred years, never admitting that his brother's death was anything more than an unfortunate accident.

The oldest Cold One, as far as the Dark Elves know, was named Kintearer and lived for seventeen hundred and thirty two years after it was captured. During this time it served as the mount of three different generals, including Anglan Arheirain, the infamous slayer of Loremaster Menthrith of the White Tower.

SISTERS OF SLAUGHTER

There are many venues of malign entertainment to be found in Naggaroth, but few are so enthusiastically patronised as the gladiatorial arenas. Every city has at least one such amphitheatre, where battle is fought to the death for the amusement of a bloodthirsty crowd. Here, amidst the bone strewn sands, gladiators do battle with traitors, monsters and hordes of drug-addled slaves. For those warriors who ply this trade as a profession, rather than as a punishment, it is a wild existence, where survival and glory are victory's reward.

The Sisters of Slaughter are first amongst the gladiatorial guilds, the undisputed queens of the arena. Once they numbered merely a dozen – the outcast daughters of a disgraced house who pledged their lives to Eldrazor, Lord of Blades, so that he might look favourably upon their quest for revenge. Now, with their vengeance long ago carved into the bones of their family's betrayers, the Sisters have thousands of experienced fighters spread amongst enclaves in all the great cities, and a legend that has reached even the shores of distant lands. As for Eldrazor, he is greatly satisfied with the results of his patronage – ever the half-forgotten outcast of the Elven pantheon, his power has grown much with the Sisters' rise.



The Sisters fight as they live, moment to moment, with every gut-spilling swipe and viper-quick slash going unplanned until the second it is unleashed. Those who have not seen the Sisters of Slaughter at their quicksilver trade mock their talents, refusing to believe that mere instinct – however finely honed – could replace discipline and training. Such doubts last only until the naysayer witnesses a lone Sister hack her way through a trio of captured Daemons, or sees a handful of gladiatrixes fell a raging Chimera with an attack pattern that is as sublimely artistic as it is impossible to predict.

Most Sisters live their entire lives in the arena, performing bloody deeds of battle for the baying crowds. There comes a time for many, however, when the ritual of arena combat becomes staid and unfulfilling. Thus, a fortunate Dreadlord can find himself approached by a band of Sisters seeking to test their skills on a real battlefield. Few commanders find it possible to reject such an offer, for the Sisters demand no plunder in return for their services, only the promise of a foe that will truly test them.

So it is that many a Dark Elf raid is headed by gaily laughing warrior-women who dance into battle with ferocious grace. Most foes, trained for the battle of regiments and shieldwalls, are easy prey. The Sisters do not slow their approach as the enemy looms, but vault sure-footedly over the locked shields to throw themselves, weapons swinging, into the formation's heart. Moments later, the surviving foes cast down their weapons and flee, their will to fight broken. The Sisters of Slaughter are no longer concerned with them. Eyes glittering with battle-joy, they run towards the next foe, eagerly searching for opponents worthy of their skills.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Sister of Slaughter	5	6	4	3	3	1	6	2	9
Handmaiden of Shards	5	6	4	3	3	1	6	3	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess.

Dance of Death: Models with this special rule have the Dodge (4+) special rule against Close Combat attacks. In addition, at the start of each round of close combat, each unit of Sisters of Slaughter chooses one enemy unit in base contact. That unit gains no Rank Bonus and cannot make Parry saves this turn.

The Trial of Blades: Models with this rule receive +1 To Hit and To Wound (a roll of 1 still fails) if at least one enemy model in base contact with the unit has a higher Weapon Skill or Strength characteristic (before modifiers for weapons).

DOOMFIRE WARLOCKS

Dark shapes hurtle through the fog, shrouded from sight until they burst forth at speed. Masters of misdirection and hit-and-run attacks, Doomfire Warlocks encircle the foe, whittling them down with sorcery before goading their steeds to charge in for the kill. The Doomfire Warlocks harass foes with blasts of arcane flame, worrying the enemy's flanks and slaying unprotected targets. As the main Dark Elves formations become engaged, these swift riders will charge in, scimitars drawn, to help overwhelm and finish off their distracted victims. Up close, Doomfire Warlocks are gaunt and pallid, their black eyes haunted and lacking any emotion save spite. Emblazoned upon their brows are hateful runes that cause them great pain, yet are also vital to keeping them alive. They are, quite literally, a cursed lot.

When Malekith first learned of the Prophecy of Demise, his initial wrathful blow fell against the Doomfire Warlocks of Hag Graef. Fearing that they would rebel, the Witch King cursed them with hollowness, and their souls have teetered between the mortal world and the Realm of Chaos ever since. Thus, whilst other Elves fear Slaanesh as a potential fate, Doomfire Warlocks feel the Dark Prince's grasp on their souls grow with every passing day. As the grip tightens, dark runes blaze into life on their flesh, an unholy fire that creeps slowly across the skin. If this process is not arrested before the Warlock's entire body is swathed in flame, his soul snuffed out and consumed by the Dark Prince. This fate of be thwarted, for no mortal can long deny rapacious Slaanesh. It can, however, be stalled if the Warlock sacrifices others in his stead – the purer or mightier the soul, the better.

Doomfire Warlocks descend upon villages in the dead of night, seeking victims to slake Slaanesh's thirst. Cloaked in ow, they pass like phantoms through defences, stealing prey from their beds before vanishing into the night. When Dark Elf army musters,



the Warlocks gather, hoping to capture mighty warriors to fuel their rites. To aid this cause, they infuse their scimitars with numbing curses that strip a foe of his senses with a single scratch. Alive but mindless, the victims are led from the battlefield to the rituals that will keep Slaanesh at bay for a few days more.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Doomfire Warlock	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8
Master of Warlocks	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	3	8
Dark Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5

TROOP TYPE: Cavalry.

SPECIAL RULES: Fast Cavalry, Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess, Poisoned Attacks (Riders only).

Cursed Coven: A unit of Doomfire Warlocks is considered to be a Level 2 Wizard that knows the spells *Soulblight* (Lore of Death) and *Doombolt* (Lore of Dark Magic). This doesn't stop other Wizards from knowing those same spells. The unit receives an additional +1 to cast for each rank of 5 or more models in the unit, after the first, to a maximum of +3. Each time the unit casts a spell, you must nominate one Master of Warlocks or Doomfire Warlock as the caster for the purposes of line of sight, range, etc. In the event that a Doomfire Warlock unit rolls a miscast, do not roll on the Miscast table. Instead, the unit suffers D3 Wounds which Ignores Armour saves. If the unit is targeted by a rule that affects a Wizard, your opponent must choose one Master of Warlocks or Doomfire Warlock as the target.

Prey of the Dark Prince: Models with this special rule have a Ward save (4+), except against Wounds caused by models with the Daemon of Slaanesh special rule or models that have the Mark of Slaanesh.

THE TAINTED STONES

In ancient times, before the sundering of the Elven race, two mighty Wizards created artefacts of great power for the Elven captains and Admirals. These were known as the Crystals of Power, and many survive to this day. However, during the civil war some of these crystals fell into the hands of the Dark Elves, through deceit, theft or betrayal. The original subtle and non-aggressive abilities of these items have been malevolently warped over the centuries, so that they suit the needs of the Dark Elves better. Some have been seized by the Beast-Lords and aid them during their summoning and spellweaving, while others are used by Captains to enhance their ships.

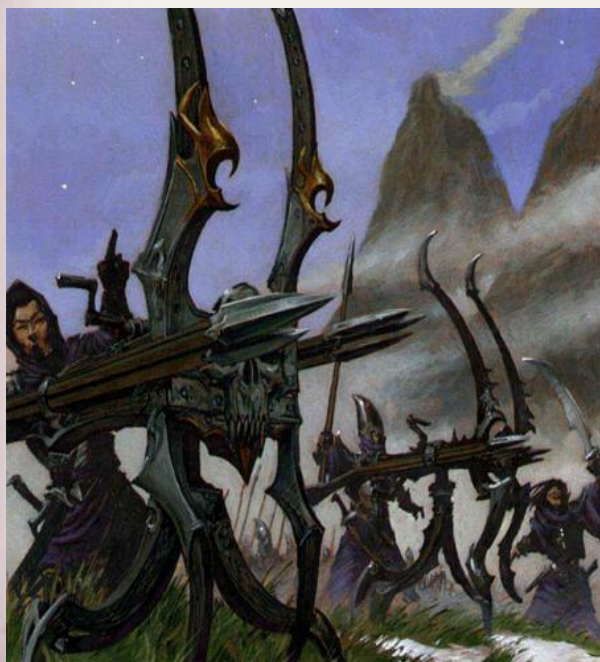
REAPER BOLT THROWERS

Neither the High Elves of Ulthuan nor the Dark Elves of Naggaroth have ever developed gunpowder technology. Indeed, they have never needed to do so as their marksmanship with the bow is superior to that of lesser races. Centuries ago they created torsion powered and counter-weighted devices which are their equivalent of cannons, perfecting them to such a degree that they are in many ways superior to crude gunpowder weapons of other races.

The repeater bolt thrower is the most outstanding example of the Elves' expertise in this field. It is a machine that shoots long, steel-tipped bolts or darts. It can shoot either a single dart or a whole volley. However, when a volley is fired, the energy of the weapon is divided and the bolts are less effective. The repeater bolt thrower is therefore ideally adapted to engage large, tough targets by means of a single shot, or multiple weaker targets with a volley of darts.

Reaper bolt throwers are used at sea to clear the decks of enemy vessels, and on land to scythe down ranks of enemy warriors. A mechanism of counterweights and cords allows the Reaper to shoot a hail of bolts, or a single missile with force enough to pierce a Dragon's hide. A Reaper's bolts are barbed and difficult to remove from the wounds they inflict without causing greater injury and torment for those unfortunate enough not to die. Those injured – but not slain – by such a shot often suffer such horrendous maiming on the bolt's removal that they are worthless as slaves, and are therefore left to bleed to death or given over to the bloody caresses of the Witch Elves.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Reaper Bolt Thrower	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-
Dark Elf Crew	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8



TROOP TYPE: War Machine (Bolt Thrower).

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess.

Repeater Bolt Thrower: The Reaper can fire either as an ordinary bolt thrower or can instead fire six smaller repeating bolts, with the profile given below. Repeating bolts do not pierce ranks.

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
48"	4	Armour Piercing (1), Multiple Shots (6)

The tolling of an alarm bell rang out over the rooftops of the squalid coastal town. As Alandriakh watched from amongst the trees upon a nearby hilltop, smoke and flames wreathed the human hovels. He fondly imagined the terrified shouts, the wild eyes of the clumsy humans as they dashed about in panic; their cries of torment as Meurlith's Corsairs cut them down or bound them in barbed nets.

With a wistful sigh, the Dark Elf returned to the Reaper bolt throwers stationed in the copse of trees overlooking the road from the east. Following its course inland, Alandriakh could just about see the squat towers of the castle supposedly protecting this stretch of the shore. He knew that what they did was important, but still it chafed his pride to be so far from the true fighting.

"Let us offer prayers to Khaine that we shall see some blood today," Alandriakh said and in reply received cruel smiles from the crews of the other two Reapers. It was not long before Alandriakh's keen ears picked up the jingling of harnesses and the thud of hooves on the muddy road. He hissed a warning to his fellows and stepped beside a tree so that he could better see the riders' approach. They came into view soon enough, rounding a bend at the base of the hill. Twenty knights trotted along the rutted roadway, their armour painfully dull, their banner hanging limply from its pole. Pathetic, thought Alandriakh.

The Dark Elves waited until the knights had almost passed before pivoting their machines upon their target. Alandriakh brought his arm down as the command to fire and the air was filled with hissing bolts. The shouts of men and the whinny of horses greeted the fusillade, which scythed down half a dozen knights with the first salvo. The survivors were thrown into anarchy by the surprise attack, their horses rearing, the riders' bellowing to each other in confusion. More bolts quickly silenced them and soon the road was littered with armoured corpses and the bloodied remains of their steeds.

Alandriakh watched as a few of the knights struggled to rise despite their wounds, while others crawled desperately for the cover of their comrades' bodies. He drew a curved dagger from his belt and set off down the hill. Perhaps Khaine smiled on him after all.

WITCH ELVES

The Dark Elves worship many dark and forbidden gods, but by far the most prominent is Khaine, the Lord of Murder. His is the largest cult in Dark Elf society, ruled over by priestesses known as Hag Queens, the mistresses of the Brides of Khaine – the Witch Elves. Khaine demands bloody, agonising sacrifice, for he is a god of death and suffering. Every Dark Elf city has at least one temple dedicated to Khaine, and there is a shrine to the Lord of Murder within every Black Ark. By far the largest temple is found in Har Ganeth where, day and night, constant sacrifices are made to the Bloody-handed God.

Witch Elves are the maiden-elves who are wedded to Khaine, the Lord of Murder, in midnight rites of blood sacrifice and cruel abasement. When the temple fires grow hot and the night is black and cold, Khaine takes new brides and blood flows in torrents down the steps of his altar. The decadent, fragile looks of the maidens of Ulthuan are nothing compared to the intoxicating beauty of the Witch Elves. Many are willing to die (and, indeed, often do) to see but a smile on the blood-red lips of the Witch Elves.

The Witch Elves live only to serve Khaine's malevolent demands for bloody, agonising sacrifice, and their observances to the Lord of Murder are blood-slicked affairs. They drive themselves into an ecstatic fervour during their brutal ceremonies as they rip still-beating hearts from chests and fling them into iron braziers, daub gore-red runes of Khaine onto their writhing bodies with their victims' blood and decorate the altars of their bloodthirsty master with bones and entrails of dying captives. Yet ceremonies are but a part of the Witch Elves' worship – their truest observances take place upon the field of battle, where they are no less vicious.

Only the strongest and most graceful are chosen to honour Khaine in this way. Their cadaverous beauty is legendary even amongst the fair Elves of Ulthuan. Their unblemished skin is pale as milk and their hair is white like ice. Their disdainful eyes are pale and their full, red mouths are quick to laugh at another's pain. When their master calls the Dark Elves to battle the Witch Elves sharpen their blades.

Witch Elves are the cruellest of all their heartless race, and the most bloodthirsty, eager to prove themselves in the eyes of their god. To the Brides of Khaine the battlefield is but another temple and, and the screams of the dying are praises sung in honour of the bloody-handed god. Combat is another chance to taste the blood of sacrifice. On the eve of war, Witch Elves drink blood laced with poisonous herbs, which cause nightmarish hallucinations and send them into frenzied dancing and obscene revelries. Whilst in this god-touched state, Witch Elves give no thought to their own defence, and seek only to hack foes apart in a blood drenched orgy of slaughter.

"Do not desire the touch of a Maibd, a bride of Khaine, for her life is wholly given to the Lord of Murder, and he is a jealous god, unwilling to share his chosen ones."

- Ruerl Blackhand, Lord of Har Ganeth

The brides of Khaine are fanatical fighters, caring nothing for their own protection. Wielding sharp swords and long sacrificial daggers whose edges are dipped in venom and vile poisons, these incredibly quick and agile fighters race across the battlefield leaving blood and destruction in their wake.

Once battle begins, the Witch Elves hurl themselves at their foes, ripping apart their enemies with a storm of poisoned blades. Mad-eyed they fall upon the enemy; showing them the foolishness of opposing the Druchii, howling with lust they eagerly sate their thirst for slaughter. There is little grace to such an assault, merely a whirling storm of venom-coated blades that slash at the foe with maddened fury. They laugh as bones break and flesh is torn, and their own pale bodies are smeared with the red blood of battle. The more blood they spill, the greater their fervour for battle. Those foes unfortunate enough not to succumb to their wounds are rounded up by the Witch Elves after the battle is over. These poor souls are torn apart in wild victory celebrations, their blood used as grateful libations to the ever-thirsting Lord of Murder.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
With Elf	5	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	8
Hag	5	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Frenzy, Khainite, Murderous Prowess, Poisoned Attacks.



DEATH HAGS

As the years pass many Witch Elves die in battle and also during the dangerous bridal rites of Khaine, but some live for many centuries. The highest-ranking priestesses are the Hag Queens, the leaders and mistresses of the Witch Elves, with memories of battles and bloodletting that span five thousand years. They are the greatest of their kind, the guardians of Khaine's mysteries and are privy to the innermost secrets of the cult. It is they who wield the crooked knives of slaughter and light the flames of Khaine's altars. It is a Hag Queen who plucks the beating heart from the breast of each sacrifice and tosses it to the young Witch Elves who tear apart the raw meat and gulp it down hungrily. It is they who mix the noxious potions that drive the Witch Elves into their battle rage and they who craft the poisons with which they taint their blades. They carry ancient weapons from the vaults of the temples and know the secret names of their god that can befuddle their foes or strike them down. The war-skills of these priestesses have been honed over centuries of fighting, and their battle-lust knows no limits.

Once a year, the Witch Elves descend on the streets of their cities in unbridled celebration of their bloody lord—this is Death Night, a time of terror for all in Naggaroth. The boulevards and alleys echo with manic drumming and shrill pipes, while thick clouds of blood-red incense drift around twisted mansions, across squares, and down alleys in thick clouds that swathe Khaine's beloved hunters. Through the smoke prowl roping bands of Witch Elves, murder in their hearts. Under the direction of their Hag Queens they steal away any Dark Elves they find, often breaking into houses to drag the petrified inhabitants to their bloody altars for sacrifice.

On Death Night all doors and windows are barred and Elves hide in terror from the servants of the God of Murder, for on his night the god shows no mercy, not even to his most faithful worshippers. Hundreds of Dark Elves are dragged to the altars and sacrificed, young and old, and their blood fills the cauldrons for the Hag Queens



to bathe in. Amidst great revelry the Witch Elves feast upon raw flesh, drink blood mixed with wine and dance naked long into the night. After many hours, intoxicated and exhausted by the dance they fall into a stupefied sleep and do not awake for many days. The Witch Elves howl with pleasure to see beating hearts torn from living breasts by the knives of the cackling Hag Queens.

On Death Night the Hag Queens bathe in cauldrons of warm blood to restore themselves, renewing their dark pact with the Lord of Murder. As they bathe in the sacrificial blood the life-energy of their victims passes into their shrivelled bodies which renewed once more in the warm cauldron, and they emerge reinvigorated with the power and beauty of youth, at which time they become the most enchanting and voluptuous of all Elves, their strangely cadaverous beauty more powerful and captivating than any magic. For that one night, they are wanton avatars of lustful slaughter – true daughters of Khaine. As they grow old they must bathe more and more often in the blood cauldrons, for if they do not their lithe and lustful bodies become bent and cold, beauty turns to foulness, and laughter to a thin and ugly cackle of madness and withered lust. Over the year they revert into the haggard crones they really are, until Death Night comes round once more and Dark Elves hide in their homes, listening to the revelry and evil laughter of the midnight celebrations of the Witch Elves.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Hag Queen	5	7	5	4	3	3	8	4	10
Death Hag	5	6	5	4	3	2	7	3	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Frenzy, Khainite, Murderous Prowess, Poisoned Attacks.

Fear was not a common emotion amongst the inhabitants of Ghroind; Dark Elves were more familiar with inflicting pain than experiencing suffering themselves. One night was different, though. On Death Night they were all rendered equal by the knowledge that death could strike any one of them, at any time. An equality of dread unified the city in a way no other event could.

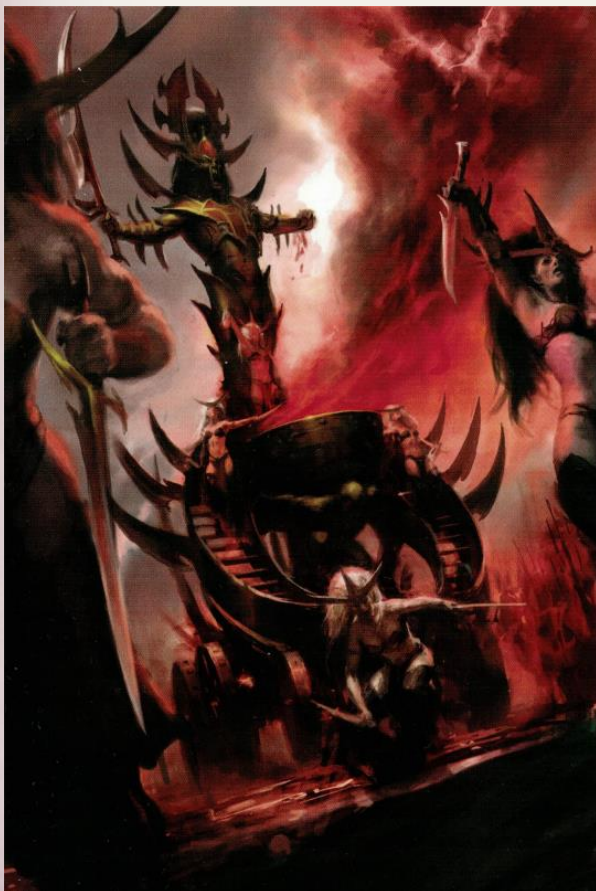
The inevitability of Death Night hung over the life of Ghroind like a blot, a pall of blood and cruelty that stained the souls of Elves that lived there. Even the architecture of the city reflected this time of darkness: doors were thick and barred with bands of iron, windows were such tiny narrow slits that no intruder could ever climb through them.

For ten long sleepless hours, the Dark Elves would cower in their homes, listening to the screams as the Witch Elves dragged their captives away. The following morning, those who had survived this lottery of death would celebrate their escape in the time-honoured fashion. Each family would sacrifice one of their own household - usually a slave or an elderly relative - as thanks to the Lord of Murder for sparing the lives of them and their children.

CAULDRONS OF BLOOD

A Cauldron of Blood is an ancient artefact of the long gone days when the gods walked the earth. Cauldrons of Blood are rumoured to be wedding gifts from Khaine, who bestowed them upon the Witch Elves as rewards for their single-minded dedication to his cause – at least that was Morathi's claim when she gave the first of these brass cauldrons to the Cult of Khaine. It is redolent with magic and the power of blood sacrifice, and within it lies the secret of eternal youth and beauty. Each Cauldron takes the form of a huge pot made of solid brass, covered with arcane runes that flicker and glow with a magical light. The Cauldron is kept filled with the blood of countless victims sacrificed by the Witch Elves. Curiously it never over-fills, and always maintains the same level no matter how many gallons of the unfortunate victim's life-blood are poured into it, as though the very metal of the cauldron thirsts.

Each Cauldron of Blood lies heavy with dark enchantments and with the proper knowledge, a Death Hag can access these to unleash the many blessings of Khaine. Chief of these is the cauldron's ability to restore youth and vitality to those bathe within it. As Morathi kept the innermost secrets of the cauldron for herself, all others who utilise this blessing must frequently repeat the bathing process or soon find themselves in their old and withered states once more. In this way, the Hag Sorceress ensures the Witch Elves' loyalty – with the irresistible lure of eternal beauty.



The Cauldron is attended by an especially decrepit Hag called the Keeper of the Cauldron. She is accompanied by two Guardians who fanatically defend the relic against all attackers. The few Cauldrons of Blood that have survived the millennia are ordinarily kept safely secured within the great temple of Khaine in Ghron, guarded by the High Priestesses of the Cult. One is occasionally brought forth, but only in times of great bloodshed when a great host of Witch Elves marches to battle. Drawn to the cauldron by the prospect of slaughter, the Lord of Murder's baleful spirit goads nearby Dark Elves to a feverish war-lust that will be spent only when there is no longer any blood to spill, while its magical properties serve to sustain and protect them.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Cauldron of Blood	5	-	-	5	6	5	-	-	-
Keeper of the Cauldron	-	4	4	3	-	-	6	2	8
Guardians	-	4	4	3	-	-	6	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Shrine (Armour save 6+).

SPECIAL RULES: Hatred (High Elves), Frenzy, Khainite, Large Target, Murderous Prowess, Poisoned Attacks, Terror.

Bloodshield of Khaine: The Cauldron of Blood has a Ward save (4+), and models in the same unit have a Ward save (6+).

Fury of Khaine: *As the blood in the cauldron boils and bubbles, Khaine drives bloodlust to a fever pitch and stokes hearts with a violent fire.*

Innate bound spell (power level 3). Fury of Khaine is an **augment** spell with a range of 12". The target gains the Frenzy special rule until the start of the Cauldron of Blood's next Magic phase. If the target already has the Frenzy special rule, that Frenzy grants +2 Attacks to every model in the unit instead of just +1 until the start of the Cauldron of Blood's next Magic phase. Fury of Khaine is not cumulative with Witchbrew.

Strength of Khaine: Friendly models with the Murderous Prowess special rule within 6" of the Cauldron of Blood re-roll all failed To Wound rolls.

"The weak Elves of Ulthuan fear us, for our ways are the true ways. They fear what they cannot understand and instead cower behind the lies of their false history. Fools and cowards, it is but a matter of time before we wipe them from Ulthuan and regain our rightful place as masters of that isle. And from there, we shall take the world."

- Keress, Witch Elf

BLOODWRACK SHRINES

Thousands of years ago, the Bloodwrack Medusae were Sorceresses of Ghrond who used their magics and bloodfeasting rituals to become more beautiful than even the gods. In so doing, they came to the attention of the goddess Atharti, who is vain beyond measure and suffers no mortal competition. In retribution, the Goddess of Pleasure stripped the upstart mortals of their beautiful forms and caged them in pain-wracked, serpentine bodies. Even this punishment she deemed insufficient, and so she reduced their minds to be little more than those of beasts. Atharti left only one sliver of awareness to her victims, enough that they might always remember with torment the beauty and power they had once possessed. Morathi, who alone had accounted her comeliness in no need of magical enhancement, drove her former sisters from Ghrond's walls. She then gave thanks to Atharti for delivering a punishment well-earned, and set about replenishing the Dark Convent's ranks.

Now, the Bloodwrack Medusae are bent to serve Morathi's needs once more, though in a manner entirely different to that of their former lives. When a great campaign beckons, the Hag Sorceress sends warriors into the caverns below the Spiteful Peaks and the squalid lairs therein. Those who survive return to Ghrond with prisoners in tow – Bloodwrack Medusae, their claws bound and their faces masked. At Morathi's direction, the captives are chained to Atharti's great Bloodwrack Shrines and propelled by dark magic to the very forefront of the assembled armies.



A Bloodwrack Medusa's gaze is a fearsome weapon; should a victim's eyes lock with hers for even a second, his lifeblood violently rebels, flooding from every pore until his body collapses into a pool of its own gore. It is to guard against this that the shrine keepers – priestesses so beguiled by their goddess that the act of worship has become their chief pleasure – wear masks polished to a mirror-like sheen. Worse still, all who fight near a Bloodwrack Shrine find their minds twisted by an echo of the Medusa's endless despair. All save the Dark Elves, that is; to them, the scent of suffering is akin to the finest perfume – a heady brew when mixed with the tang of fresh-spilt blood.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Bloodwrack Shrine	5	-	-	5	6	5	-	-	-
Shrinekeeper	-	4	4	3	-	-	5	1	8
Bloodwrack Medusa	-	5	5	4	-	-	5	3	-

TROOP TYPE: Shrine (Armour save 6+).

SPECIAL RULES: Hatred (High Elves), Large Target, Murderous Prowess, Terror.

Aura of Agony: Friendly models within 6" gain a +1 bonus to their Leadership. All other models within 6" suffer a -1 penalty to their Leadership.

Avert Your Gaze!: At the start of each Close Combat phase, before challenges are issued, enemy models in base contact with this model must pass an Initiative test or suffer a Strength 4 hit with the Killing Blow special rule and no armour saves allowed. This is a magical attack.

Bloodwrack Stare (Bloodwrack Medusa only): This is a shooting attack with the following profile:

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
12"	4	Ignores Armour saves, Killing Blow, Multiple Shots (6)

When rolling To Wound, substitute the target's Toughness with its Initiative value. This attack does not suffer any To Hit penalties.

BLOODWRACK MEDUSAE

Not all Bloodwrack Medusae are goaded to war atop monolithic shrines. Some emerge willingly from their lairs and follow the scent of blood to war. They are unreliable allies who pay no heed to any battle plan, seeking only to share their own torment with their luckless victims.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Bloodwrack Medusa	7	5	5	4	4	3	5	3	7

TROOP TYPE: Monstrous Beast.

SPECIAL RULES: Avert Your Gaze!, Bloodwrack Stare, Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Frenzy, Murderous Prowess.

AVATARS OF KHAINE

Crime in Naggaroth is punished immensely harshly. Look upon a Dreadlord with disdain and you would get your eyes poked out, say something slanderous and lose your tongue, steal something and lose a hand (or both). However, nowhere the laws are harsher than Har Ganeth, where execution by beheading is the normal form of punishment for most crimes. However, for those who would commit murder against another Druchii outside of Death Night, there is something worse.

Murderers are taken and fused alive into giant statues of bronze and steel, which are then enchanted by Malekith to do his bidding in the name of Khaine. While the fusing into the statue will always cause a painful death for the punished, his soul will remain trapped within the statue's husk, with his murderous soul being the driving force that gives it a life of its own. Placing any Druchii or slave would not do, rather it has to be the soul of someone who in cold blood has taken the life of someone close to him or her – only this murderous lust is enough to power these Avatars of Khaine.

These Avatars can be controlled, though only barely. Once they are in combat, they hack and slash with reckless abandon against their foe, their steel skin being near impervious to common swords and axes. However, as these statues are held together by magic, they can still crumble to pieces if faced with great adversity – if they are not able to continually satisfy their murderous hunger, they will eventually fall apart. Because of this, Avatars of Khaine are held in a dormant state through magical shackles in the temples



of Khaine when not in battle, only awakened once they are needed. When the words of power are spoken, the Avatars of Khaine stride out to fight the enemies of the Druchii, hewing down foes with their blades, or engulfing them in jets of boiling blood.

To all who see it, the Avatar is a terrifying sight - the manifestation of the rage and bitterness of an entire race. Battlelines buckle beneath his fury and most enemies will turn and flee rather than face his fiery wrath. As long as the Avatar of Khaine have foes to kill to sustain its murderous hatred, it will attempt to slaughter anything in its path with its huge wicked blade.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Avatar of Khaine	6	6	0	6	6	5	3	5	10

TROOP TYPE: Monster.

SPECIAL RULES: **Animated Construct, Hatred, Killing Blow, Magic Resistance (2), Unstable.**

Sustained Fury: For each successful Killing Blow scored (before any saves), the Avatar of Khaine immediately gets to make an additional Attack.

Stefan wrapped a piece of ripped shirt around the small wound on his arm. He had heard of the legendary martial prowess of the Witch Elves and considered himself lucky to walk away with but a small scratch. The wound was beginning to itch but Stefan thought nothing of it; he was exceptionally tired and though he fought to stay awake his eyes closed and he slowly slipped from consciousness. As he slept his dreams turned to haunting nightmares. Small black, sprite-like beings surrounded him tearing at his body, entering his mouth as he breathed. They attacked him, surrounding his prone body in a dark swarm of menacing lights. Try as he might, he could not fight them, they were too fast and there were too many of them. He tried to run from his attackers but his feet would not respond. Slowly the swarm suffocated him and he was helpless against them.

Johann stood at Stefan's doorway. He desperately needed fresh air to repress the nauseous feeling that had taken control of his entire body. He had been the one to discover Stefan's body. He knew the image of his friend would haunt him forever – it had swollen to twice its normal size and his clawed hands reached out as if trying to fend off some mysterious attacker. Johann had heard of the terrible effects of Black Lotus; he prayed that, when his time came, death would be swift.

MELUSAI

The Melusai were once the souls of Elves devoured by Slaanesh. Ever seeking to further her power and avoid that same fate herself one day, Morathi sought a way of restoring those souls. After many centuries of failure to do so, she finally succeeded – in a way. Upon being freed from that hellish incarceration, the Elven soul energies were portioned off. However, while Morathi could not restore these souls to their former selves, she managed to find other uses for them. In the dungeons beneath Ghroind, these souls were mixed with shadow magic and blood to be reborn and reshaped. The lower half of their body is that of a serpent, scaled and coiling with fierce strength, while the upper torso is indistinguishable from that of a female Elf. The Melusai are cruel, coldblooded and eager to inflict pain – seemingly the ideal Khainites – and now serve as the elite ground-assault troops of many Khainite armies.

Each of the Melusai is imbued with magic and the utmost faith in their mistress, along with a scornful hatred of their former enslaver, Slaanesh. Melusai are allocated to each temple of Khaine, acting not only as elite guard formations, but also as clandestine eyes and ears for the Hag Sorceress, informing upon those that question the order of things, or ask too closely about Morathi's goals. Because of their strange appearance, Melusai stay out of sight, either secreted inside the darkened temples of Khaine or disguised by illusion to appear as other Elves. Although it is rumoured that there might be additional forms, during open battle two kinds of Melusai are regularly seen amongst the Khainite armies.

Melusai are powerful warriors used as bodyguards to the Hag Queens, or as a potent vanguard for the war covens. In them are vengeance and spite made manifest. Each Melusai is



equipped with a heartshard glaive – a heavy polearm ideal for driving through armour and ribs to cut out an opponent's heart. Despite its size, the Melusai wield this weapon with prodigious grace, often carving their opponents apart before they can raise their own blades in defence.

Their fearsome war-masks – crafted to recall Khaine's own terrible visage – are designed to inspire pure terror in the Melusai's prey. Each war-mask is also layered with illusory enchantments that allow the wearer to take the form of a normal Elf, should the occasion require it. Melusai sometimes walk amongst the ranks of the Dark Elf masses, gathering information for their mistress and keeping a predatory eye out for the slightest hint of discontent or blasphemy.

Melusai can also channel the blackness of their tainted souls into a strike known as the 'death touch'. The lightest contact from such a blow can transform the victim into coiling mists, which solidify into an unmoving crystal statue that is still horrifically aware of its own metamorphosis.

As sensualists, the Melusai consider an eternity of sensory deprivation the worst of all possible fates, hence their delight in inflicting it upon others. The ultimate in cruelty is for a Melusai to thrust her glaive quickly enough to slice out a foe's beating heart even while the death touch turns them to crystal. To be trapped forever in a state of unbearable pain is but a small sample of the torment the Melusai themselves have endured. Each Melusai longs to drive their heartshard glaive deep into an enemy's vitals, spilling blood to aid their master's rituals.

Some Melusai act as elite archers, a venomous guard who rain death from afar. Each bears a heartseeker bow, a weapon carved from the wood of the sentient ashdusk tree. The arrows loosed by such bows are blessed by Hag Queens, and imbued with the same enchantments as those that guide Morathi's own spear, Heartrender. With uncanny accuracy, these missiles streak across the battlefield to pierce their targets through the heart.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Melusai	7	5	4	4	4	2	5	2	8
Gorgai	7	5	4	4	4	2	5	3	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (Slaanesh), Killing Blow, Khainite, Murderous Prowess, Swiftstride.

Heartseeker Bows: Heartseeker Bows uses the following profile:

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
30"	4	Killing Blow, Multiple Shots (2)*

**Only applies in turns the model has not moved. Cannot be used to Stand and Shoot.*

KHINERAI

Shrieking harridans of the skies, the Khinerai descend from the clouds upon membranous pinions. They are the winged Children of Khaine, his rage given flight, and nowhere on the battlefield is safe from their vicious, swooping attacks. Similar to their kin the Melusai, the Khinerai are the twisted offspring of daemon-tainted Elf soul, blood, magic, and vengeance itself. All Khinerai are formed in Ghron, where their broods can be found upon the soaring spires. On each Death Night, Morathi chooses flocks to send to each temple across Naggaroth.

The Khinerai sweep out of the skies, dark streaks that cut swiftly through low clouds. With streams of vapour still clinging to their bodies, the winged Elves pull up, using their forward momentum to help launch cruelly barbed javelins with great force. These spike-ridden spears travel with such velocity that they can skewer both a mounted warrior and their steed, and still maintain enough impetus to embed themselves deep into the ground. The Khinerai do not stop to watch, however, and are instantly flapping away to another part of the battlefield, new javelins materialising out of the mists into their hands. Constantly in motion, they quickly dart out of range of any return attacks, all the while their hawk-sharp eyes scanning for their next victims. Should a tempting enough target present itself, the Khinerai will forgo their missile assault and dive straight into combat.

Tucking their wings close, the Khinerai plummet downwards at high speeds. At the last moment they spread their leathery pinions, snapping their descent as they swing their sickle-blades with maximum force. Foes that survive this devastating assault can strike back, but any who fight the Khinerai must be on guard, for they are masters at using their claw-like heartpiercer shields to not only parry blows but to puncture vital organs. Even as nearby enemies rally to pin the Khinerai in combat, they rise above the melee in a flurry of beating wings, looking for the most vulnerable target to strike next. For such unfortunates, the last thing they will hear is a sudden rush of wind before the Khinerai's deadly assault reaps its toll.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Khinerai	5	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	8
Shryke	5	4	4	3	3	1	6	3	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Ambushers, Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Fly, Murderous Prowess.

Heartpiercer Shield: Shield. Each time you make a successful Parry roll of 6, a Khinerai Heartreuder pierces her assailant's heart with her shield – the attacking model suffers a Wound with the Killing Blow special rule.



HARPIES

Harpies are particularly loathsome beasts, winged creatures with a body that is a parody of that of a human woman. From a distance they may appear lithe and shapely, even darkly alluring, yet as they close their true nature becomes clear. A Harpy's face is distorted and twisted, nothing of humanity or intelligence in its eyes, only instinctive cruelty. Its lips are not those of a woman, but are twisted and leering, pulled back to reveal needle-like teeth dripping with blood and saliva. The creature's limbs are not soft or shapely, but hard and possessed of steel-like tendons that lend it preternatural speed and agility. Their wings are leathery, resembling those of a bat, though their forms often sprout black feathers. Their lower bodies end in scale-covered bird's legs and jagged talons. It is their torsos that likely cause such speculation about Harpies, for they have the upper body of a voluptuous female, though with a savage and feral beauty. Their appearance has led to many arguments among scholars; some concluding that they are little more than mere beasts, others that they are touched by Chaos.

The other tales of Harpies are of an entirely different nature. There are sailors who swear that Harpies can sing with beautiful voices, belying the thought that they are nothing but beasts. Their songs can supposedly drive a man mad with longing, enough so that he will risk his life to get to them. The Elves of Ulthuan speak not of the Harpies, often quietly refusing to discuss them at all, though this may be due to the number of Elven warriors that were torn to pieces by the beasts.

They are scavengers and opportunists who prey upon the sick, the wary, the battle-worn and dying. They are bestial and savage creatures that flock in large numbers over the Northern Wastes. Harpies can be seen circling over battlefields, waiting for the chance to dive clown upon those too weak to defend themselves. There is no order amongst them, no more than amongst the most savage of beasts. Their screeching cries cleave the air and cast a shadow of dread on those below.

"They are beasts, nothing more or less. The apparent similarity to feral Elvish maidens is a cruel hoax, perpetuated no doubt by one of the twisted Gods of Chaos, or perhaps the Lord of Murder. Harpies have neither the ability to reason nor the capacity to engage in any sort of battle tactics. They simply sweep down on their prey and rip it to pieces. Their occasional collections of treasure from their victim's bodies are not unlike a bird's fascination with a bright or shiny object. They follow the ships of the Dark Ones because they know the pickings will be good, not unlike the great gulls that follow the vessels of the Marienburgers. Do not be beguiled by their looks, kill them when you can for their voracious nature will lead to them harrying a ship for days."

- Wolfqanq Aldhelmson, Witch Hunter

Harpies are vicious and spiteful, displaying only the meaning glimmerings of intelligence and, even then, only malicious, purpose. Innately cowardly creatures, Harpies band together in great sky-borne flocks, which roam high above the mountainsides and valleys in search of prey defenceless enough to risk attacking. Filth and well-picked bones are piled beneath a Harpy's foul roost, yet those brave enough to scavenge can sometimes find cast-off treasures – for Harpies value only meat and leave the rest to fall where it may.

Harpies care little where their next meal comes from and will as happily steal eggs from a Great Eagle's nest as raid farmstead for cattle, isolated villages for the old and infirm or battlefields for meagre scraps of flesh from spent corpses. This is not the say harpies will not attacked larger or better-armed creatures than themselves, but it can take many hours for the flock to work up sufficient courage to put themselves at risk. If the flick considers the advantage of numbers to be on their side, they will descend to the fray, screeching and howling as their claws tear at the beleaguered foe. Yet there is no loyalty in such a fight – should a Harpy be slain in the battle, its fellow will devour it as surely as they will the enemy.

These wild and savage creatures originally came from the Mountains of Mourn, far to the east. A single outcast tribe settled in Naggaroth near Karond Kar, the City of Despair, where they make their nests in the uppermost spires. In the city of Karond Kar, Dark Elves can pay witness to a bloody spectacle that fills them with elation and fear in equal measure, as the





Harpies soar upon the thermals of the sacrificial pyres. Some claim they are the souls of slain Witch Elves given physical form, others that they are a manifestation of Khaine. They are certainly vicious enough for either to be true.

In Naggarothi lore, Harpies are considered to be an omen of good fortune, and it is claimed that if they ever deserted Karond Kar, the city would fall to the enemy within ninety days. Other Harpies make their lairs in the mountains and cliffs of the Land of Chill but always near the sea, where prey is more readily available. Harpies are similar in temperament to the Dark Elves, for they delight in tormenting their victims and feast upon raw flesh. Hunger drives them to follow raiding fleets for months on end, soaring patiently in the skies until battle begins.

At no time are Harpies more dangerous than when Morrslieb burns fully in the sky. Under the tainted moon's eldritch, Harpies are wilder and more vicious than at any other time of the year, and far more likely to brave dangers in their perpetual search for food. Mountain villages and trade caravans double their watches when Morrslieb is full, lest their loved ones and chattel are spirited away on a cackling wind.

"They are gorgeous, are they not? I suspect that they are indeed the favoured daughters of Khaine. For myself, I cannot speak to their connection with the Witch Elves, but I can tell you with certainty that they are not mere beasts. I once saw a flock of Harpies torment a sailor for several hours, savouring his terror and pain before they finally ripped him to pieces in an orgy of blood. A beast cannot delay its pleasures in such fashion."

- Lakroth Mal, Druchii Corsair

Harpies will frequently try to attack from surprise and in large numbers. They put their wings to good advantage, using hit and run tactics on land bound foes. They will swiftly retreat to a high location where they cannot be readily followed if injured. Flocks of Harpies circle over the battlefield, swooping down to rip apart their foes with their sharp fangs and talons. They attack like wild beasts, screeching and howling as they swoop to the attack. As the flock descends on his fellows, the individual stands entranced and immobile, unable to tear his eyes from the sight of them even as they tear his compatriots' limb from limb and feast upon their entrails. At the last, so the legend warns, the beguiled one will be carried away to the Harpies' eyries, there to serve as a plaything for the creatures until such time as they should grow bored, or hungry.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Harpy	5	3	0	3	3	1	5	2	6
Harpy Queen	5	3	0	3	3	1	5	3	6

TROOP TYPE: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES: Expendable, Fly.



WAR HYDRAS

The Blackspine Mountains that lie upon Naggaroth's southwestern border are riddled with natural caverns that extend over many hundreds of miles. In many places these caverns are flooded, and there are entire islands beneath the ground where creatures live in perpetual darkness. The tunnels are home to many ancient cold-blooded creatures and the Dark Elves value these strange beasts - some yield valuable skins, bone or horn, whilst others are pitted against each other as part of the Dark Elves' death games. The Hydra are amongst the most dangerous of these creatures. It is a titanic many-headed beast of the Blackspine Mountains, whose ill-tempered and ravenous nature has proven the doom of many an unsuspecting morsel. Indeed, so ferocious is the Hydra that campaigning armies often make wide detours to avoid intruding on such a beast's bone-strewn lair. Those that march on regardless do so either out of confidence in their battle-provess or ignorance of the Hydra's savagery.

Hydras are fierce, disturbing creatures whose unnatural appearance can permanently unhinge foes, causing them to recoil from snakes for years afterward. They are wholly unnatural reptilian monsters, from their multiple heads to their capacity to breathe fire. A Hydra's heads resemble those of a Dragon, though their snouts usually end in sharp beaks more reminiscent of a bird of prey. They typically have five heads, though the number varies by the beast. They are very difficult to slay, for not only are their scaly bodies incredibly well armoured, but Hydras also have the ability to heal any wounds that manage to penetrate their thick scales at a frightening rate, even re-growing a severed head – a new one pushing itself outwards from the stump to rejoin its fellows. However, they seem to function just as readily with missing heads. A foe's only chance is to sever all the monster's heads in quick succession – if even a single one remains, the remainder will swiftly grow back and devour the impudent attacker for his troubles.

Their scaly, reptilian bodies are low and squat, heavily muscled and covered with thick scales which are as hard as iron. Hydra scales are said to be even harder than dragon scales, and are much sought after to make suits of armour. They are all fearsome beasts with thick, uniquely-patterned scales, and their heads belch smoke and fire and rend men with their sharp fangs. Hydras are also known to coil their serpentine necks around larger prey, constricting them, as do the giant snakes of the jungle lands. A Hydra will attack any creature that dares confront it, the many heads striking out to deliver vicious bites while the beast moves forwards, using its bulk to crush opponents. Hydras are dangerous foes, but not particularly intelligent combatants. They generally breathe fire once, and then wade into melee. They are easily distracted and sometimes just cease fighting and walk away for no apparent reason.

Hydras are restless and aggressive beasts, seldom sleeping and almost always on the hunt for prey. The Hydra is a deathly silent hunter – an unusual trait in something so large and vicious – and can track quarry across all manner of terrain without once giving itself away. Unfortunately, this subtlety is abandoned the moment the Hydra comes within striking distance, so a quick-witted prey can often escape if it reacts the moment the roaring begins.

Hydras are rampaging and voracious monsters. No matter how much they consume, they seem to always be hungry for more. Their presence will swiftly level most natural surroundings, reducing them to barren waste within a month or so of their taking up residence which forces them to move on or starve. While Hydras are mighty beasts their continual destruction of their environment inevitably leads to their death as more and more enemies oppose them.

All Hydras are ill-tempered and solitary creatures that lair underground, favouring dark caves or noisome pits. Hydras are widespread and can be found stalking the slopes of the World's Edge Mountains or hunting the ashen wastes of the Dark Lands. The multi-headed monstrosities are especially numerous beneath the Black Spine and Iron Mountains in Naggaroth. The Dark Elf Beastmasters of this land have learned to capture and breed these enormous reptiles, calling them War Hydras and driving them into battle, controlling the beasts with sharp goads and cruel whips. Hydra eggs are sometimes found in the Chaos Wastes to the north of Naggaroth, or hidden on the islands that are part of the Boiling Sea. The Hydras hatched from these eggs can be trained by Dark Elf Beastmasters and used in battle as a potent part of a Dark Elf army.



For centuries, the Beastmasters of Clar Karond have broken creatures of all descriptions to their will. Of these beasts, it is the War Hydra that has become the most common monster seen on battlefields alongside Dark Elf armies. Since ages past the Dark Elves have trained the Hydras to be used in war to break the lines of the enemy troops with their massive bulk and fiery breath.

Nobody is sure of the origins of the Hydras – whether they were creatures of the world before the Old Ones came, or are some offspring of Chaos brought about by the warping effects of the Winds of Magic. They first came into the armies of the Naggarothi from the magical Annulii Mountains on Ulthuan, and can be found throughout the Iron and Black Spine ranges in Naggaroth. Since the start of the civil war, the Dark Elves have trained War Hydras to break the lines of enemy troops with their massive bulk and fiery breath. In vast dungeons beneath the cities, Beastmasters continually experiment with different breeding techniques and cast enchantments upon the Hydra's eggs to raise the ferocity of successive generations to new heights.

Only creatures as twisted as the Dark Elves would look upon the Hydra's vicious glory and deem it insufficient for the task at hand. But ever since the Witch King's Beastmasters first tamed the creatures, the Naggarothi have continually experimented with breeding techniques and enchantments to raise the raw ferocity and power of successive generations of these beasts to new heights. The War Hydras of Naggaroth's are therefore a far more daunting foe than those the Elves first encountered many long centuries ago in the Annulii Mountains, and there are now a number of Hydra variants in the Witch King's bestiary. Some get sent as rewards to Dark Elf generals who have distinguished themselves on the field of battle, others stay hidden beneath the Blackspine Mountains, only to be brought forth by Lord Malekith's personal decree. There are even some, it is said, that have been to so



many battles with the same team of Beastmasters, that they have formed a special bond. These War Hydras are among the most feared for they have learned, over time, to obey special commands and are said to possess an uncanny (and terrifying) intelligence. War Hydras are notoriously difficult for their handlers to control, and a Beastmaster must be quick with his lash lest he be devoured in the enemy's stead.

There are many ways to be slain by a Hydra: torn apart, swallowed whole, crushed underfoot, immolated or even skewered by arrows as they ricochet off its scaled hide. Generals often see even their finest troops pulverised by just a single War Hydra and are then left to watch with horror as the beast emerges unscathed from the carnage, vents forth an ear-splitting roar, and then charges forwards with thundering strides to trample another regiment into ruin.



The bulk of the War Hydra makes a great shield for the Beastmasters that drive it, protecting them from arrows and other missiles. The Beastmasters of Clar Karond use vicious whips and goads to train and steer their monstrous creatures, and the pain they inflict is enough for even the brutish beasts they lead into battle to feel.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
War Hydra	6	4	4	5	5	5	2	8	6
Beastmaster Apprentice	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Monster.

SPECIAL RULES: **Elven Grace** (Beastmaster only), **Hatred (High Elves)** (Beastmaster only), **Mixed Unit**, **Murderous Prowess** (Beastmaster only), **Natural Armour (4+)**, **Regeneration (4+)**.

Loss of Heads: For each Wound the War Hydra has lost during the battle (after any Regeneration rolls are made), it loses one Attack.

UPGRADES:

Fiery Breath: A War Hydra with this upgrade has a Breath Weapon with the Flaming Attacks special rule. The Strength of this attack is equal to the War Hydra's remaining Wounds.

Spit Fire: A War Hydra with this upgrade can make a shooting attack with the following profile:

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
12"	*	Flaming Attacks, Quick to Fire, Multiple Shots (*)

**The Strength and Multiple Shots value of this attack is equal to the War Hydra's remaining number of Wounds.*

KHARIBDYSS

The Kharibdyss is a loathsome beast of the uncharted depths, a bottom feeding monster that hunts the ocean floors. Its kind is seldom seen on land save when the Dark Elves goad one to war. Untold numbers of these primeval horrors churn the murky deep off Naggaroth's western coastline. Kharibdyss are noted for their ferocious appetites, and their voracious eagerness to attack and consume any creature that crosses their paths. Occasionally, a Kharibdyss can be sighted upon the broken isles of Naggaroth's western coast, tentacles writhing with slime and sea-spray as the beast hunts for tasty morsels. The beasts can sometimes be seen on or near the surface, often following in the wake of a vessel. Fiercely territorial, packs of the creatures are known to congregate near sources of food – large schools offish, beached Black Krakens, and shipwrecks become irresistible feasts that draw in monsters from many miles away.

If there is enough food to tempt it, the Kharibdyss can wade through the surf and spend indefinitely long periods on land. Eternally hungry, a Kharibdyss is never sated, but will continue to eat until there is nothing left to catch. Smelling of fish innards and salt-ridden rotten meat, The Kharibdyss' digestive juices are ferociously efficient, and can dissolve flesh, metal and bone in a matter of minutes. The same cannot be said of enchanted artefacts and a few precious gemstones, which are curiously resistant to the attentions of the monster's gullet. Indeed, the belly of a slain Kharibdyss is often something of a treasure trove, full of whatever magical possessions adorned its victims at the moment of digestion. Such items provide some solace to a Beastmaster who is unfortunate enough to lose his Kharibdyss to battle. If he is lucky, the value of these treasures will at least partially offset the expense of acquiring a new plaything.



The Beastmasters of Clar Karond covet the Kharibdyss as a prize beyond treasures, and only the very wealthiest can hope to acquire one. Even an army of Dark Elves would be easy prey for such a creature in its own environment, and only by employing a Sorceress to lure a Kharibdyss to the surface can a Beastmaster hope to capture one and break it to his will.

Many Beastmasters make great fanfare of having tamed a Kharibdyss, but in truth, the creature needs little forcing into battle. It is a brutish and slow-witted beast at heart, and simply rampages wherever hunger leads it. This course of destruction must occasionally be altered by a timely swipe of the Beastmaster's scourge, lest the beast feast upon Dark Elves rather than their foes. This is not to say that unfortunate accidents do not occur if the creature is not properly trained. More than one Beastmaster has met bloody reprisal from his fellows after a Kharibdyss has eaten its way through the Naggarothi ranks – but such occurrences are few and far between.



Once broken, a Kharibdyss can be counted amongst the most formidable weapons at a Beastmaster's command. Its slimy body, adapted to resist the fantastic pressures of the ocean, is unstoppable once on land, possessing colossal strength and incredible fortitude. It will wade through a storm of arrows to reach its prey, its many serpentine necks weaving back and forth. Smaller foes are plucked from the battlefield and swept into the Kharibdyss' maw by its crown of flailing tentacles; larger ones are entangled and held fast whilst razor-sharp teeth feast upon their succulent flesh.

With its great variety of mouths, the Kharibdyss is suited to feeding on multiple targets or perhaps one enormous one, such as a beached fangwhale. In battle these mouths can stretch out and swallow smaller sized prey whole. Larger victims are gnawed upon, the beast using its crown of horns to help scoop food into those ever-gnashing mouths. If this isn't dangerous enough, the Kharibdyss secretes a poisonous slime – its claws and teeth and rasping scales all capable of killing prey with just a scratch.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Kharibdyss	6	4	4	6	6	5	4	5	6
Beastmaster Apprentice	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8

TROOP TYPE: Monster.

SPECIAL RULES: Aquatic, Elven Grace

(Beastmaster only), **Hatred (High Elves)** (Beastmaster only), **Mixed Unit**, **Murderous Prowess** (Beastmaster only), **Natural Armour (4+)**, **Poisoned Attacks**.

Abyssal Howl: Enemy units that are in base contact with a Kharibdyss must re-roll successful Leadership tests. This has no effect on models that have Immunity (Fear/Terror/Psychology).

Feast of Bones: Each To Wound roll of 6 from the Kharibdyss regular Attacks results in that attack inflicting Multiple Wounds (D3).

DARK PEGASI

There are enclaves of Pegasi scattered about the world. Several of them, especially those in the Land of Chill, are deeply tainted by Chaos resulting in the beasts known as Dark Pegasi. The Dark Pegasi have leathery wings instead of the feathered ones normal Pegasi sprout and they often have misshapen horns that they wield with surprising accuracy. Dark Pegasi actively crave the flesh of men and they're avid hunters.

Dark Pegasi are favoured mounts of the Sorceresses, found amongst the peaks of the highest mountains. They are ferocious hunters in the wilds, a trait which can easily be turned to useful propose in our armies.

The Dark Elves trap and enslave a wide range of strange creatures from the Chaos Wastes and amongst these is the feral Dark Pegasus. Dark Pegasi are bat-winged denizens of the Chaos Wastes that migrate south to make their nests in the highest peaks of the Iron Mountains in Naggaroth. It is from these eyries that the Dark Elves steal young Pegasi to serve as steeds – a fully-grown beast is too savage to be trained. The majority of these young Dark Pegasi are sold in Ghrond, for such beasts are favoured as steeds by the Sorceresses of the Dark Convent.

A Dark Pegasus moves swiftly upon its bat-like wings and is able to patiently soar above the mountains, shadowing its quarry for hours at a time. When it spots an opportunity to attack, it folds its wings and drops into a swooping dive, directing its long horn towards its target to impale it with deadly precision. Although all Pegasi are formidable fighters at need, only the Dark Pegasi seems to revel in combat. They are aggressive and kick out their front hooves in an effort to intimidate their foes.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Dark Pegasus	8	3	0	4	4	2	4	2	6

TROOP TYPE: War Beast.

SPECIAL RULES: Fly.

Impale: Dark Pegasi gain +1 Strength to their Impact Hits.



MANTICORES

Dark Elves hold no creature in higher esteem than the Manticore, for they believe it is one of the thousand incarnations of their most powerful god, Khaine. Like many of the world's monsters, Manticores are born amid the swirling energies of the Chaos Wastes. Some still roam the changing lands, although most Manticores fly south to less ruinous climes. So it is that the northern mountain ranges of the world have become the hunting grounds for Manticores beyond counting.

Manticores have the body of a gigantic lion, larger than any of the predators of the mountains. They fly upon wings like those of a huge bat, and have whip-like tails tipped with a vicious barb. A single strike of this poisoned spur can fell even the toughest warrior. They are adept and devastating fighters, attacking with raking claws and their long sharp teeth. Manticores are a Chaos breed, mutable and terrible with uncountable variations. Some have barbed tails like a scorpion's that bear bitter poison. Others are armoured in scales and covered in thorny projections that bleed ceaselessly. Manticores are cunning fighters. They are swift to retreat to the relative safety of the air when a battle goes against them.

Once fully-grown, Manticores fly south, to where they reign supreme in the Iron Mountains, hunting lions, bears and other dangerous beasts. Manticores are the fiercest, most aggressive creature in the world, and will attack anything that they perceive as food or a threat. Even for creatures of Chaos, Manticores are particularly ferocious, possessed of an innate stubbornness that propels them to fight for their territory against even the most overpowering odds. Occasionally a



Hydra, Chimera, Basilisk or other monstrous interloper will stray onto a Manticore's territory, with cataclysmic consequences.

A Manticore's response always the same; to launch itself roaring into a bloody and brutal conflict from which there can be but a single victor. The valleys and peaks echo to the roars and hisses of the battling monsters, causing avalanches and landslides. The two beasts rend skin and flesh, goring and biting each other with titanic ferocity. The fact that this victor is almost always the Manticore (providing the enemy isn't too much larger), having ripped the head bloodily from its foe, or stabbed it repeatedly with its poisoned tail, stands as harrowing testament to its savagery and determination. The Manticore will then drag the bloodied carcass of its defeated enemy back to its lair, to feast and restore its spent strength. With a fury to match that of Khaine himself, Manticores reign supreme in the mountains of Naggaroth's northern border.

Oddly perhaps, for such a vicious and ill-tempered beast, the Manticore has become a common heraldic device in the Old World. This is not to say that a great many Manticores are encountered in the lands of Bretonnian, Tilea and Estalia – nor that a great many are slain there. Its prevalence upon shield and banner is merely an indication that many nobles, having heard tales of the beast's legendary battle-prowess and resolve, simply wish to be associated with it. That most such men would run screaming in terror should they encounter a real life Manticore is normally left unspeaken.

Manticores are highly prized as mounts, despite their immensely ferocious nature. Particularly daring Dark Elves, usually from the Shades clan, venture into the Iron Mountains and as far north as the Chaos Wastes in search of young Manticores to bring back to the cities of the Dark Elves and sell at auction. Many of these expeditions do not return, either slain by the elements, or torn apart by the creatures that they hunt.

Manticores are sacred beasts, reared and trained by the Beastmasters as steeds for the lords of Naggaroth. Though wild and dangerous, Manticores can be tamed enough to take a rider, though they remain highly feral. Even if his monstrous steed occasionally ignores his commands and pitches him into unfavourable fights, a Dark Elf considers this a minor risk compared to the fear and respect that having such a mount brings, for in battle they can unleash the fury of the Bloody-handed god upon our enemies. Beastmasters often ride these majestic beasts themselves, as proof that they can break the will of these most unruly of creatures.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Manticore	6	5	0	5	5	4	5	4	5

TROOP TYPE: Monster.

SPECIAL RULES: Fly, Frenzy, Killing Blow.

"The rage of a Manticore is legendary and to behold such a creature in its wrath is nothing short of awe-inspiring. Its roar alone can cause warriors to flee the battlefield."

- Korhil, Captain of the White Lions

BLACK DRAGONS

Dragons once ruled the skies of the world, before the coming of the Old Ones. These majestic reptiles soared across the icy plains and upon the thermals of prehistoric volcanoes, the kings of the air. Now, their race is but a shadow of its former power and majesty. When the Old Ones arrived, the greatest Dragons found the world too warm for their liking and hid from the bright sun, while more still stole into caverns and the ocean deeps with the coming of Chaos.

These massive beasts slumber still, undisturbed by the passing millennia, all but impossible to rouse. Younger Dragons, still tremendously powerful monsters, sometimes rise from their sleep at the call of the Elves, or when other events disturb their aeonslong dreams. Most of these rest in the realm of Caledor on Ulthuan, friends to the Dragon Princes who are descended from the great archmage Caledor Dragontamer, ally of Aenarion.

Like all intelligent creatures, Dragons are prone to acts of good or ill depending upon their disposition and the nature of their upbringing. When Malekith first began his plotting to usurp the Phoenix Crown, his agents stole many Dragon eggs from their nests in Caledor. These were secretly nurtured in Nagarythe, and enchanted with dark spells to corrupt the unborn dragons within. The fiercest Black Dragon from this first clutch was Sulekh, the mount of the Witch King, a fearsome monster of ferocious power who was slain only by the combined efforts of three High Elf princes and Caledor the Conqueror. Since Sulekh's death at the hands of the High Elves, her children have continued to fight alongside the Dark Elves, seeking vengeance for their slain ancestor.



The great wyrms that slumber under the peaks of the Blackspine Mountains are dark in their hue. A Black Dragon is capable of slaughtering entire armies with its claws, horns and fangs. With expulsions of noxious gas from its maw, it can wither the lungs of its victims and desiccate their flesh. The thick hide of a Black Dragon protects it from even the weightiest blows of its enemies. Perhaps the greatest weapon of all is the overwhelming wyrm-dread that fills the enemy upon sighting such a bloodthirsty and destructive monster.

Black Dragons were always ranked amongst the most malevolent of creatures, even before they were waped by the dark sorceries of the Witch King Malekith. They are indiscriminate murderers, revelling in slaughter for its own sake. Only the greatest lords amongst the Dark Elves ride to battle atop one of these monsters which, even alone, have the power to break the back on an army.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Black Dragon	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8

TROOP TYPE: Monster.

SPECIAL RULES: Fly, Natural Armour (3+).

Noxious Breath: A Black Dragon has a Strength 3 Breath Weapon. All models in a unit that has suffered one or more casualties from the attack suffers a -1 penalty to their Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill until the end of the following turn.

MALEKITH'S DRAGON RIDERS

Seraphon is the terrifying Black Dragon that the Witch King rides to battle. After a band of Shades found a clutch of unguarded eggs, deep within the Spiteful Peaks mountain range, Malekith ordered that the eggs be brought back to Naggarond. There they were ritually tended by the priestesses of famine for almost a century until they hatched. Seraphon was the first to emerge and before the Witch Elves could stop him, he had destroyed many of the other eggs. Malekith was impressed by the Dragon's ruthless instincts and decided that he would take the Dragon as his own mount.

The few remaining Dragon hatchlings were all given to Malekith's most favoured generals. These nobles have spent many decades training to fight with these monstrous beasts in preparation for the Witch King's next assault on Ulthuan. Now Malekith feels the time is right for his people to wage war once again. The Witch King and Seraphon will fight at the fore of a highly trained flight of Black Dragons, whose surprise strike attacks will ravage the shores of the Old World and the cities of Ulthuan.



MALEKITH

The Witch King of Naggaroth

Malekith was the son of Aenarion, the first of the High Elf Phoenix Kings, and the mysterious and beautiful seeress Morathi. He grew to be a great warrior, a great sorcerer and a mighty general, a ruthless leader who had proven himself in the harsh war-torn lands of Nagarythe. When Aenarion died there were many who doubted that a child reared during the cruel days of Aenarion's court in Nagarythe would make a suitable Phoenix King, and so Malekith was passed over and Bel-Shanaar became the second Phoenix King.

Hiding his resentment and frustration, Malekith vowed to wait until he could make the throne his own. None suspected his evil intentions or his unquenchable thirst for power. Malekith bitterly accepted their decision and took on the role of commander of the Ulthuan army while he bided his time. He proved to be a brilliant young general, for many decades gaining power and allies with his glorious victories, until he worked himself into a position of power second only to the Phoenix King's. Then one dark winter he made his move to usurp the throne. Claiming that the Phoenix King was a follower of Chaos, he secretly assassinated him by means of an undetectable poison.

Malekith was confident that he could endure the ordeal as his father had done before him, but he was proved horribly wrong. Believing that all he now had to do was crown himself as the new Phoenix King, Malekith marched into the sacred flame of Asuryan, the final test that each Phoenix King has to pass to prove their worthiness for the crown. The flame of Asuryan would not suffer his polluted body to pass through it. Instead they engulfed his soul, casting him out and leaving his mortal body terribly scarred onto the side of the platform he had entered from.



Believing Malekith to be on the verge of death, his discouraged followers took their leader's body and fled north to Nagarythe. But Malekith did not die, as Morathi nursed him back to health over many years. He slowly recovered his strength and then called his armourers to him. With their aid he forged a great suit of black armour and had it fused to his own withered and fireblasted body in order that it would lend him its magical strength. To the brow of its great horned helmet was welded the Circlet of Iron, a talisman of awesome sorcerous power. The armour was covered in vile and evil runes which baffled the eyes of all those who looked on them. After that day all those who looked upon Malekith shuddered, for he was a figure of dread. He set about waging a civil war and, although he was forced into exile after defeat within the lands of Ulthuan, he travelled west and discovered a new continent which he claimed for himself naming the kingdom Naggaroth.

For over five thousand years he and his followers have continued to wage war against the Phoenix Kings. Countless numbers of Elves have been slain in the bitter civil war, and Malekith has come close to claiming the throne that is rightfully his many times, but each time he has been thwarted at the last moment by cruel fate or the incompetence of

THE BLACK COUNCIL

Malekith's inner circle always numbers exactly one hundred lords and ladies of Naggaroth – though not all are living. Claiming a seat at the obsidian table is one of the highest honours, but also one of the most dangerous. The Witch King is nothing if not mercurial in his favours, and it is not unusual for fewer Dreadlords to leave the chamber than entered it.

Down the ages there have always been nobles clever enough to avoid falling victim to the Witch King's explosive temper, and it is no different now. Closest of all Malekith's councillors is his mother, Morathi. This honour is not granted out of filial regard, but because the Hag Sorceress can be trusted only when kept in plain sight. Kouran, Captain of the Black Guard, is a different matter entirely, for his loyalty to the Witch King is without question. The third most influential seat on the council belongs to the cadaverous noble known only as Ezresor – a particularly cold-blooded individual widely assumed to be Malekith's spy master, though this has never been officially confirmed.

Venil Chillblade, latest incumbent of a seat that has become almost a hereditary privilege, holds sway over fleets that plough the seas east of Naggaroth, whilst the darkly beautiful Drone Brackblood directs the plunder of westward realms. Command of Naggaroth's armies is split between several nobles, of whom the heavily-scarred Emir Soulflayer is most prominent. His is perhaps the most tenuous seat on the council, for he earns glory for every victory and blame for every defeat. So far, Soulflayer has managed to shift any blame to other, now dead, council members, but this game can only be played for so long.

craven underlings. His last incursion into the land of Ulthuan was only repulsed after two years of relentless warfare by the combined powers of Tyrion and Teclis, but even these mighty heroes were not able to slay the Witch King himself.

In the decades since then the Witch King has rebuilt his forces, and is now preparing once more to make war against the High Elves. Now the Witch King has a new weapon with which to cast a shadow over the realm of the High Elves. Over thousands of years he has been secretly hoarding a clutch of Dragon eggs. Now the first of the hatchlings have matured. Trained by the skilled Beastmasters over a period of many centuries, the young Dragons have grown strong and are at last ready for battle. Malekith now rides Seraphon, the strongest of the first batch. His finest Knights have been tutored to ride these terrible beasts into battle, and with them Malekith plans to unleash a deadly assault upon the forces of Ulthuan.

The day is at approaching where old debts and insults will finally be repaid, and Malekith will do anything within his power to hasten its arrival. With both spell and blade he destroys all that oppose him. His burnt and scarred body is bound within the protective plates of the Armour of Midnight, and few face the wrath of the Witch King and survive.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Malekith	5	8	7	5	4	3	8	4	10
Seraphon	6	7	0	6	6	6	3	6	8

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character). Malekith may be carried into battle by his Black Dragon Seraphon (Monster).

MAGIC: Malekith is a Level 4 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Dark Magic.

SPECIAL RULES: **Eternal Hatred, Elven Grace, Fear, Hekarti's Blessing, Immunity (Psychology), Murderous Prowess.**

Absolute Power: *Malekith is the unchallenged ruler of all the Dark Elves and all bow to his authority.*

If you take Malekith, he must be your army's General. Malekith's Inspiring Presence has a range of 18" (or 24" if riding Seraphon).

Black Guard: *Malekith's personal bodyguards are the Black Guard of Naggarond.*

If your army includes Malekith, units of Black Guard are taken as Special Units instead of Rare units.

SPECIAL RULES (Seraphon): **Fly, Noxious Breath, Natural Armour (3+).**

"We shall strike down our foes with sharp steel and cold hearts. The weak die so that the strong prevail and none shall be spared. Then and only then will our enemies know the true meaning of fear."

- Malekith, the Witch King of Naggaroth

"Take their gold, burn their homes, kill their families and enslave their souls. Show them no mercy."

- Malekith, the Witch King of Naggaroth

MAGIC ITEMS:

Destroyer (Magic Weapon)

Destroyer is an awesome weapon forged with Dark Sorcery by the Witch King of Naggaroth himself in ancient Ulthuan. This blade is a symbol of the Dark Elves' determination to destroy the Elves and all their works. The Destroyer's merest touch can unmake enchantments or even drain knowledge from the minds of unwary wizards – a fine joke which appeals to the Witch King's sardonic sense of humour. It has been the bane of hundreds of heroes and wizards from all the races of the world – but especially the High Elves.

At the start of every Close Combat phase, all enemy models in base contact with Malekith must reveal their magic items. Furthermore, if Malekith scores one or more hits against a model with any magic items, roll a D6; on a 4+, one randomly determined magic item is immediately destroyed and cannot be used further in this game. Do not include Magic items that are mounts, magic items that contain bound spells that miscast earlier in the game, or any magic items labelled as 'one use only' that have been used. In addition, if Wizard suffers one or more unsaved Wounds from Destroyer, roll a D6; on a 4+, the Wizard immediately loses a Wizard level.

Hand of Khaine (Magic Weapon)

Malekith's armour incorporates the Hand of Khaine, a magical gauntlet which can tear off limbs and crush the skulls of his foes.

The Hand of Khaine gives Malekith an extra Attack at Strength 6 which Ignores armour saves.

Armour of Midnight (Magic Armour)

Malekith's rune-armour is forged from the hardest meteoric iron from the mountains of Naggaroth. Malekith's armour is near impenetrable to mortal weapons and covered in runes which make it difficult to look upon.

Full plate armour. The Armour of Midnight grants Malekith a Ward save (2+) against all non-magical attacks and Immunity (Killing Blow/Multiple Wounds).

Supreme Spellshield (Magic Armour)

The Supreme Spellshield is inscribed with a rune that absorbs mystical power and then unleashes this captured energy back at the enemy.

Shield. This item grants Malekith the Magic Resistance (2) special rule. If Malekith is ever the target of an enemy spell that he successfully dispels, the caster's unit immediately suffers D6 magical Strength 6 hits. In close combat, you must choose whether Malekith uses the Hand of Khaine or the Supreme Spellshield.

Circlet of Iron (Arcane Item)

The Witch King took the Circlet of Iron from the rubble of an abandoned pre-human city. It is said to be older even than the ancient High Elf race, and it is a potent source of magical power.

Once per Magic phase (yours and your opponent's), Malekith can use the Circlet of Iron to add a single bonus dice to any of his failed casting or dispel attempts. This bonus dice can contribute to irresistible force (and a miscast).

MORATHI

The Hag Sorceress of Ghrohd

Morathi is the ancient mother of the Witch King. She is the first of the Hag Queens and a great and powerful sorceress. She lives alone in her dark tower, working her evil sorcery in the darkness. Morathi is said to be as beautiful as she was 5,000 years ago. It is whispered that the great Cauldron of Battle was given to her by Khaine himself, and each year she bathes in its warm blood to restore her beauty.

Morathi has always had the taint of Chaos about her – she met Malekith's father, Aenarion the first Phoenix King, when the Elven lord rescued her from a Chaos warband. It is believed that it was during her time as a captive that Chaos first crept into her soul. It was Morathi who founded the Cult of Pleasure on Ulthuan, which eventually led to bloody civil war and the cataclysm of the Sundering. Morathi also first perfected the Dark Art, opening up gateways to the Realm of Chaos to steal vast and unimaginable powers. Combined with her beauty and intellect, it is Morathi's magical abilities which allow her to hold sway over her enemies.

After the Witch King himself, Morathi is the most powerful Dark Elf in all of Naggaroth, and she rejoices in the evil wrought in her name. Of all the Dark Elves she alone holds any influence over the Witch King. Her entire existence has been one of scheming and manipulation. Who knows how many of Aenarion's darker deeds sprang from seeds she planted within his mind, or how the history of the Elves might have been different if he had not taken her as wife? Yet for all beautiful Morathi's wiles, she was ultimately spurned

by the Phoenix King. Heartbroken, Morathi swore that if her husband could no longer rule the Elves, her son would do so in his place.

Since that day, Morathi has pursued that goal with supernatural determination. She has spent over five millennia teaching Malekith all she knows of statecraft and magic, and works tirelessly to maintain his grip on Naggaroth's throne. When the Witch King has faltered, Morathi has always been ready to fan the embers of hatred in his heart; when he has been betrayed, none have fought so hard as she to restore his rule. Morathi is totally dedicated to her son, as he is to her, and though some would say their relationship is unnatural, between them they rule Naggaroth with an iron grip and bloodied sword.

Morathi is the first Hag Queen of the Witch Elves, and although the sect now follows her rival, Hellebron, many who worship at the Temple of Khaine owe loyalty to the Sorceress. It is also claimed that Morathi brought forth the first Cauldron of Blood, some say given to her by bloodthirsty Khaine himself. Once a year, on Death Night, she bathes in the boiling blood within the cauldron, rejuvenating her old, tired flesh and emerging from the steam as young and beautiful as the day she left the shores of Ulthuan. No other Hag Queen has lived as long as Morathi, and Hellebron, forbidden access to the true Cauldron of Blood, withers and ages with every passing year. It is a source of much bitterness between them.



"A scratch from an envenomed dagger, a sip from a poisoned chalice, a slight to a proud warrior's honour... In time these things may do far more grievous harm than the broadsword or the axe, my love..."

- Morathi, the Hag Sorceress

It is Morathi and Morathi alone of the Witch Elves who is allowed to wield magical power; like her son, Morathi feels no shame in creating laws and traditions for the control of others, whilst ignoring them herself. Morathi prefers to work behind the scenes, twisting events to her favour with a carefully chosen alliance or assassination, yet she is a terrifying force if roused to open conflict. Over the millennia, Morathi has struck daemonic pacts with many vile and disturbing forces, and can unleash the power of Chaos with a thought. She is capable of the most powerful magics possible, and some believe it was her plan to destroy Ulthuan's magical vortex and unleash the hells of Chaos upon the world. There is little doubt that if Malekith is ever slain, she will use that knowledge to see the world destroyed rather than endure it in the hands of another.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Morathi	5	5	4	3	3	3	6	3	10
Sulephet	8	4	0	4	4	2	4	3	6

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character).
Morathi may ride her Dark Pegasus, Sulephet.



MAGIC: Morathi is a Level 4 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Death, the Lore of Shadow and the Lore of Dark Magic. She can choose all of her spells from the same lore, or from two or more of the above lores in any combination.

SPECIAL RULES: **Hatred (High Elves), Hekarti's Blessing, Murderous Prowess.**

Beloved of Khaine: *Morathi is the first of the Hag Queens, and all Witch Elves owe allegiance to her before any other.*

All Khainite models always treat Morathi as the Army's General for all purposes, regardless of what character is actually the Army General.

Enchanting Beauty: *Morathi is possibly the most beautiful woman in the known world, and mere mortals are enraptured by her.*

Any model, friend or foe, in base contact with Morathi at the start of each round of close combat must pass a Leadership test or suffer a -5 penalty to their Weapon Skill (to a minimum of 1) until the end of the round. This does not affect attacks that do not roll To Hit (such as Impact Hits), nor does it affect models that have the Immunity (Psychology) special rule.

The First Sorceress: Morathi adds an additional +D3 to all her casting attempts, roll each time a spell is cast.

Thousand and One Dark Blessings: *Morathi has ancient pacts with many malevolent spirits and daemonic entities, whose unnatural energies protect her from harm.*

Morathi has the Ward save (4+) and Magic Resistance (2) special rules.

SPECIAL RULES (Sulephet): **Fly, Impale.**

MAGIC ITEMS:

Heartrender and the Darksword (Magic Weapon)
The Heartrender's blade is a wicked thing, laden with vile enchantments to seek an opponent's heart. Such is Morathi's skill with the lance-like Heartrender that she can pluck a victim's heart from his chest with a single, well placed blow. The Darksword too is bewitched, but with spells of blinding and enfeeblement incanted in the dark tongue by an evil sorcerer that sap a foe of his strength even if he survives the blow.

Lance. Hits from this weapon have the Killing Blow special rule in the turn Morathi charges. In other turns, a monster or character that suffers one or more unsaved Wounds from Heartrender and the Darksword reduces its Attacks, Strength and Toughness characteristics by one (to a minimum of 1) for each unsaved Wound. These penalties are applied at the end of the round of close combat in which the Wounds were suffered, and last for the remainder of the game.

MALUS DARKBLADE

Scion of Hag Graef, the Soulless One

The tale of Malus Darkblade is one of greed, treachery and much bloodshed. Born of one of the noble families of Hag Graef, Malus was the pride of his father – ruthless, bloodthirsty, cunning and ambitious, even by the lofty standards of Hag Graef's warring families. For long years, he played the deadly game of politics and assassination and played it well, but finally his thirst for power led Darkblade into the clutches of a being darker even than he. Rumours of a great power hidden in the distant north set Darkblade on a quest that led him deep into the Realm of Chaos.

It is testament to Darkblade's determination that he not only survived his journey, but at last came before the temple of Kul Hadar, in which his prize could be found. Alas for Darkblade, the great power within the temple was something not easily bent to mortal wilt. Long centuries ago, the Daemon Tz'arkan had been bound within Kul Hadar, and Darkblade now unwittingly presented it an opportunity for escape. Blinded by avarice, Darkblade was possessed by the Daemon. In that instant, his life and

soul were forfeit. He had but one way of escaping his fate – to find five unholy artefacts of power which could be used in the ritual to free Tz'arkan for eternity and restore Malus' soul. He had but a year and day to succeed, or else remain in the Daemon's thrall for eternity. Long and hard was his quest for the five treasures, and many were his battles along the way. Many foes fell beneath his blade; foul Minotaurs, Orcs and a mighty Dragon Ogre lie dead in his wake. Such was Malus' determination and ruthlessness that he slew his own father for possession of the Dagger of Torxus, one of the artefacts needed for his salvation. For this, the Dark Elf bards also call Malus the Kinslayer.

Though the search took every waking hour of the allotted year, Darkblade finally succeeded in his quest. Upon the eve of his doom, he returned to Kul Hadar with the artefacts, and performed the ritual that would set the Daemon free. But Tz'arkan had tricked the Dark Elf – upon escaping from Malus' body, the treacherous daemon took his soul as well, and thus Darkblade became known



as the Soulless One. From that moment on, the fates of Darkblade and Tz'arkan were forever intertwined. Caught between life and death, Malus wandered the Chaos Wastes for a decade, fighting and killing for others. He cared not whether he lived or died and so fought in battle like no mortal creature. Armed with the Warsword of Khaine, the only artefact not destroyed in the ritual to free himself Malus was unstoppable and, though he craved death, there was none skilled or strong enough to defeat him.

It was during this time that Malus learned of the new lair of Tz'arkan from a sorcerer. The magic user knew of Darkblade's treacherous nature and hoped to forestall any betrayal by having the map tattooed to his back. Malus cared not, and flayed the map from the sorcerer feeding the rest to his Cold One, Spite. Once more Malus travelled many leagues and fought against many creatures of the Four Powers and his own enemies from Naggaroth before locating the daemon who had stolen his soul.

Unfortunately for Malus, the resting place of Tz'arkan was within the realm of the Screaming God-Child, a twisted being sworn to Chaos Undivided; a hell place at the heart of the Realms of Chaos from which it was claimed that no mortal could pass back. But Malus, the master of cunning tricked the Screaming God-Child and managed to escape. Upon realising the devious Malus had eluded him, the Screaming God-Child cursed the Dark Elf and as punishment once more imprisoned Tz'arkan within him.

In the years since, Darkblade has become legendary in Naggaroth, as a great warrior and leader whose hatred can overcome any opposition. Malus can call upon Tz'arkan to imbue his body with unholy power, but the source of the



Druchii's greatest strength is his limitless reservoir of hatred. Malus firmly believes that with hate, all things are possible. Now, after many years of journeying, Malus has returned to his home city of Hag Graef. None can foretell his true intentions, but he has lost none of his thirst for power.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Malus Darkblade	5	7	7	4	3	3	8	4	10
Spite	7	3	0	4	4	1	2	3	4

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character).

SPECIAL RULES: **Elven Grace, Eternal Hatred, Murderous Prowess.**

Tz'arkan: *Malus succumbs to Tz'arkan's possession when asleep, and drinks a magical potion to keep himself awake. When he needs the power of the daemon, he imbibes a dark elixir which immediately causes him to lose consciousness, allowing Tz'arkan to take control.*

Malus Darkblade may unleash the power of Tz'arkan at the start of any friendly Movement phase. Once the Daemon is released, he cannot be bound back during the battle. If Malus releases Tz'arkan, the following rules apply for the rest of the game:

- Malus Darkblade immediately gains the Frenzy and Ward Save (5+) special rules, but loses Elven Grace, Eternal Hatred and Murderous Prowess.
- Malus Darkblade gains +1 Weapon Skill, +1 Strength, +2 Toughness and +1 Initiative. However, friendly units can no longer use his Leadership.
- Each time Malus Darkblade makes a To Hit roll of 1, a friendly model in base contact (of your choice) is struck by Malus attack instead. Roll to Wound as normal.

SPECIAL RULES (Spite): **Fear, Natural Armour (6+).**

Not Just a Dumb Brute: Any unit of Cold One Knights joined by Spite (we know who is really in charge!) are also not subject to their normal Stupidity.

MAGIC ITEMS:

Warsword of Khaine (Magic Weapon)

This is one of the five fabled treasures that Malus had to retrieve in his quest to rid himself of the Daemon that possesses him.

The Warsword of Khaine allow Malus to re-roll failed rolls To Wound and Ignores Armour saves.

*"I am Malus! Malus Darkblade! Kill me if you dare!
Kill me if you can!"*

- Malus Darkblade, the Scion of Hag Graef

CRONE HELLEBRON

The Blood Queen of Har Ganeth

Of all the Hag Queens, Hellebron is the most ancient, save only the mother of the Witch King, Morathi, the first of the brides of Khaine. However, while the youth and beauty of Morathi never fades, that of Hellebron is now almost expended, for the Hag Sorceress deliberately withheld from her the deepest secrets of using the Cauldrons of Blood. The power of the blood no longer refreshes this ancient Hag Queen as it once did. Therefore, ever more sacrifices are needed to fill Hellebron's cauldron each year, and yet the rejuvenating effects last for less and less time. Once beautiful beyond measure, the Blood Queen must now endure many dark months with the visage of an old and ugly crone for each stolen day of vibrant youth. It is chiefly for this reason that Hellebron hates Morathi, and her wrath at the deception is only deepened by the knowledge she would have performed the exact same betrayal had their positions been reversed.

So it is that for many nights of the year, Hellebron holds court hooded and cloaked to conceal her haggard appearance. Only her closest attendants are permitted to see the full horror of her aged and withered form, and they are sworn to silence under pain of death. It is only on the days following Death Night, where her flesh and form are renewed to full vigour, that Hellebron walks the world unveiled, revelling in the power and sensations of youth. Those who wish a boon of her are well advised to seek it in this brief window of joy, for at other times her mood is capricious and sour, and an audience with her is very likely fatal.

Ugly and worn as she may be, Hellebron remains the greatest of the Brides of Khaine. Witch Elves kneel before her to take the rites of the god of murder. To entertain their mistress, the youngest she-Elves dance upon the steps of Khaine's altars, whilst Hellebron and the lesser Hags feast upon flesh and sate

their withering lust for warm blood. Hellebron's mastery of the many ways of murder eclipses even that of Morathi – who is often too distracted by her sorcerous pursuits – and far outstrips the skills of the other Hag Queens. It is she who leads the Lord of Murder's unholy rites and dictates the holy creed that all Witch Elves must follow. She is so steeped in the ways of death that her merest touch can kill, and a single whispered word from her withered lips can open up old wounds to bloody life. Wherever Hellebron treads, the gaze of Khaine follows. Inevitably, insane fervour sweeps over all those in her path, driving not only Witch Elves, but Dark Elves of all callings, into a maddened frenzy fit to drown the world in blood.

As leader of the cult of Khaine, Hellebron rules over the city of Har Ganeth. As well as a horde of frenzied Witch Elves, Hellebron can call upon the deadly Executioners of that city, and also raise the populace to arms with promises of Khaine's favour and threats of his bloody displeasure. Hellebron leads this army to battle when flushed with magical youth from the Cauldron of Blood, while the Hag Queen prefers to cloister herself in the great temple of Khaine during her long months of decrepit suffering.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Crone Hellebron	5	7	7	4	3	3	9	4	10

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character, Hag Queen).

SPECIAL RULES: **Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Frenzy, Khainite, Murderous Prowess, Poisoned Attacks.**

Queen of Khaine: If Hellebron is your General, all Witch Elves are taken as Core units rather than as Special units.

MAGIC ITEMS:

Deathsword and the Cursed Blade (Magic Weapon)

The blade of this long, black sword glistens with dark magic and murder. When it is wielded in combat, the sharp tip of the sword leaves a gleaming red trail in the air. Moving with a life of its own, the Cursed Blade deflects the attacks of the enemy.

Two hand weapons. Hits from Deathsword and the Cursed Blade are resolved at Strength 10. If a model rolls a 1 To Hit whilst attacking Hellebron in close combat, it suffers an automatic Strength 4 hit for each 1 rolled.

Amulet of Dark Fire (Talisman)

This amulet wreathes its wearer in a mystical flame that burns magic instead of flesh.

Dispel attempts made against spells that target Hellebron or her unit receive a +4 bonus to dispel.



THE DAUGHTERS OF DESPAIR

The masked Death Hags known as the Daughters of Despair form the ruling council of Har Ganeth. Legend tells that whilst Hellebron's beauty is bought with the lifeblood of her victims, the Daughters of Despair are not so afflicted; they wear masks not to hide their ugliness from the world, but rather to conceal their own youthful appearance from a jealous and wrathful mistress.

RAKARTH

Beastlord of Clar Karond

Rakarth is the most accomplished Beastmaster in the whole of Naggaroth. The Dark Elves have always made use of enslaved monsters, both for their fleets and for their land armies, but although there have been many famous Beastmasters in the past, none have approached Rakarth's consummate skill or expertise. It is said that the dungeons of Clar Karond are filled with creatures that Rakarth has tamed, and that amongst them can be found one or more of all the creatures known in the Warhammer World.

Even as a child Rakarth had an almost supernatural ability to subdue wild creatures. When Rakarth was only eight years old his father had been gifted with a particularly fine Dark Steed. The beast was called Bracchus and was faster and stronger than any other in the Rakarth stables, but it had a vicious temperament and would buck and rear uncontrollably if anyone tried to ride it.

Rakarth's father attempted to break Bracchus, and was quickly hurled to the ground and almost trampled to death under the creature's hooves. Wild with fury, Rakarth's father ordered Bracchus destroyed, but Rakarth strode forward and asked if he might have one attempt to ride the creature, and that if he succeeded he might keep Bracchus for himself. Rakarth's father readily agreed, for Dark Elves love all forms of gambling, even above the safety of their own children.



Rakarth slowly walked towards Bracchus, fixing the steed with his steely gaze. Bracchus was visibly shaken at the young child's ice-cold stare, recognizing instinctively that here was a being that out-matched it in sheer cruelty and ability to inflict pain. Lowering his head, Bracchus allowed Rakarth to jump easily on to his back, and meekly obeyed Rakarth's every command. From that day on Bracchus was Rakarth's faithful mount, serving him well until he was slain at the battle of Finuval Plain some thirty years later. The Black Dragon that Rakarth rides into battle now is named Bracchus in honour of the steed that he rode as a youth.

Since that time, Rakarth has raised a clutch of Black Dragons, and chosen one of them as his own mount, naming the mighty dragon, Bracchus in honour of his dark steed that he rode as a youth. The Beastlord is a close advisor of the Witch King on matters pertaining to the creatures of the wild and is currently planning on spearheading an invasion of Caledor in Ulthuan.

Like a dark thunderbolt of destruction, Beastlord Rakarth of Clar Karond dives from the skies mounted atop his huge Black Dragon, Bracchus. Cutting down his foes with merciless contempt, he lashes out with the cruel Whip of Agony, whilst his fearsome mount breathes choking clouds of black gas over those who oppose the Beastlord. The few survivors of this terrible onslaught are easily caught by Bracchus and are mercilessly slain by this mighty Dark Elf hero.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Rakarth	5	6	6	4	3	2	6	3	9
Bracchus	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8

TROOP TYPE: Monster (Special Character).

SPECIAL RULES: **Beastslaver**, **Hatred (High Elves)**, **Fly**, **Murderous Prowess**, **Natural Armour (3+)**, **Noxious Breath** (Bracchus only).

Beastlord: Any friendly Monster within 12" of Rakarth treat him as having the "Hold Your Ground!" special rule.

MAGIC ITEMS:

Whip of Agony (Magic Weapon)

Belonging to the feared Beastlord Rakarth, the Whip of Agony inflicts damage that even the most thick-skinned and mindless creature can feel.

The Whip of Agony gives Rakarth +1 Strength. In addition, at the beginning of any close combat phase, Rakarth may make a special attack with the Always Strikes First rule. If this attack causes an unsaved Wound but does not kill the target, it is overcome with pain and must roll 6's to Hit in that round of close combat.

Beast Armour of Clar Karond (Magic Armour)

Full plate armour. This armour gives Rakarth +2 to his armour save.

SHADOWBLADE

Master of Assassins, The Death that Walks Unseen

Even though still young by Dark Elf standards (a mere 150 years old), Shadowblade is the greatest Assassin ever to be trained by the Temple of Khaine. His reputation is legendary, and his arrogance is as bottomless as the sea. Fables of his grisly adventures are already used as the basis of ballads sung by Dark Elf minstrels, stories to scare Dark Elf children and bloodthirsty hymns sung by the Witch Elves at their sacrifices, a litany of murder and terror that grows longer and bloodier with each passing day. The mere thought of Shadowblade's murderous attentions is enough to keep all but the most stupid or brave Dark Elf noble from plotting against the Witch King.

Shadowblade's most famous exploit was the slaughter of the entire crew of a High Elf Hawkship, one by one, over a period of several days, each killed in a different fashion. Only the horribly mutilated captain was left alive, so that he could tell of the mounting horror on the ship as the crew desperately attempted to corner Shadowblade – to no avail.

Other stories include the assassination of the Burgomeister of Marienburg. His fleet had attacked and sunk one of the Black Arks on route to Albion. After an initial attempt at his life (by a lesser assassin) had been foiled, over twenty guards were posted to watch his chamber day and night. His most loyal bodyguards were

even posted within his room. Yet his body was found stone cold in his bed with over twenty stab wounds. Not one guard had been harmed, nor had any of them heard a single sound.

Shadowblade's fabled deeds are difficult to substantiate, however, because no-one has seen his face and lived. Not even Hellebron knows for certain what Shadowblade looks like and the master that taught him perished long ago by his pupil's blade. There are many rumours that have circulated as to the identity of this Master of Assassins. Some believe he is the son of Malekith's mother, Morathi. Many who have seen him in combat, liken his skills with a blade to those of the legendary Swordmasters of Hoeth. This has led to speculation that he was once in fact one of these skilled warriors, trained by Belannaer himself. However, those that start spreading stories about Shadowblade tend to come to untimely ends. Whilst the master may take pride in the appreciation of his work, he does not allow wagging tongues to spill his secrets.

Unlike other Assassins, whose loyalties often change at the clink of a purse, Shadowblade reports only to Hellebron and serves as her personal agent. Any mortal who dares cross Hellebron risks a visit from this feared killer, and he has never failed his mistress yet. It is rumoured that she has used him to eliminate a great many of her political opponents. If this is the case, it would seem that only Morathi has so far been left untouched, but it remains to be seen if this is because the Hag Sorceress is a mark even beyond Shadowblade's ability, because the kill order has not yet been given, or because the master Assassin has other loyalties hidden even from Hellebron.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Shadowblade	6	10	10	4	3	2	10	3	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Dodge (4+), Hatred (High Elves), Hidden, Immunity (Psychology), Khainite, Murderous Prowess, Poisoned Attacks.

Master of Disguise: Shadowblade can deploy using the Hidden special rule like an Assassin. If he does so, he can change which unit he is hiding in at the start of any Movement or Close Combat phase – keep a note of where Shadowblade is each time you change your mind. (Clearly Shadowblade is not 'moving' between units, his disguise was simply so good that he was hiding just where he needed to be all along, waiting for the perfect time to strike!). If an opponent has an ability that forces you state that there are 'hidden' models within a unit, you only need to say that Shadowblade is hiding within a unit, but not which unit he is currently within.

GIFTS OF KHAINE: Dance of Doom, Hand of Khaine, Touch of Death.

TOXINS: Black Lotus, Dark Venom, Manbane.

MAGIC ITEMS:

Heart of Woe (Enchanted Item)

The Heart of Woe is a huge red ruby that throbs and beats like a heart. Should the bearer of the Heart be slain, the crystal shatters into a thousand jagged shards, slaying anyone unfortunate enough to be in the vicinity and leaving no remains to be identified.

If Shadowblade is ever slain, centre the small round template over him before removing the model as a casualty. Every model touched by the template immediately suffers a Strength 3 hit. After any damage has been resolved, remove Shadowblade as a casualty as normal.

Potion of Diabolic Strength (Enchanted Item)

This potent magical brew, created from Troll blood, Chimera bile and the heart of a Blackspine Mountain Griffin, is distilled by Crone Hellebron and gifted only to her most trusted servant.

One use only. The Potion of Diabolic Strength can be drunk at the start of any player's Close Combat phase, after any Assassins have revealed that they are hiding in a unit. Shadowblade gains +3 Strength until the end of the turn.



The sharp edge of the blade traced a thin line of blood across the cheek of the captured human. Bound by his hands and feet with black silk cord to the bloodstained altar he struggled in vain. The Witch Elf lifted the dagger to her mouth and, with her delicate tongue, licked the tip of the knife. A small globule of blood trickled slowly down from the lips of the priestess and onto her pale breast. She thrust her head back and with both arms held high, raised the curved ceremonial dagger above her head. Uttering a violent scream that came from deep within, she plunged the dagger down. The Witch Elf screamed out again in an even higher pitch, her gasping shriek mixed with a ritual chant.

"Khaela Furdiekh Mensha Farmiekh Khaine!"

The cries of her captive added to the chorus, the two blending together perfectly in the rite of death. Breathing out deeply, she withdrew the blade, letting it slip from her moist, blood-soaked fingers to clatter onto the temple floor. With a speed that even the most agile human could never match, she jumped up onto the altar, her thin but muscular legs astride the dying man's chest. Arching her back in a sleek curve she slowly lowered her body until her face was inches from the wide-open eyes of her victim. Staring intensely into his motionless eyes for a brief moment, she leant down further, brushing her cheek against his. She pushed her deep red lips against his ear letting her long dark hair fall across his face. In a soft sultry whisper she spoke to him. As she spoke in the native tongue of her victim, her voice lost the sharp tones of the Druchii language, now her voice had changed into a soft purr of satisfied content.

"They say that your brain will continue to function for minutes after your heart has stopped. I can see the spark of life dying in your eyes."

Her wicked smile increased as she ran a finger through the blood dripping from his cut cheek.

"Know this then before you die. Your body will serve to pleasure me long after your soul fades. I will drink from your wounds and when my thirst is quenched I will bathe in your blood. Only when your body grows cold will I throw the empty husk of your mortal shell for the beasts to rip asunder."

She sat back up, squeezing her thighs tighter against the dead soldier. Her long, thin fingers delicately traced arcane runes in blood across his broad chest. Khaine would reward her well for this sacrifice and tonight she would revel in his gift of eternal beauty. She felt herself suffused by the joy of the moment, rapture filling her mind. It lasted only a few heartbeats though, and was soon replaced by the grim thought that Khaine was a capricious god and tomorrow it might be her that was beneath the sacrificial blade.

LOKHIR FELLHEART

Krakenlord of Karond Kar

Some Dark Elves take to the seas in search of plunder or revenge, but many more do so to escape the dangers of Naggaroth. Not so Lokhir Fellheart – he was born to ply the rolling seas, to bring fire and terror to the shores of other lands. It was his great-great-grandfather, Menreith Fellheart, who first commanded the Black Ark *Tower of Blessed Dread*, and the doom-bringing flagship has answered to a Fellheart ever since. Since his great-great-grandfather first fought in the Battle of the Waves, Lokhir's destiny has been set – to rule the *Tower of Blessed Dread* and prove his worth on the dangerous oceans. Lokhir is the latest of his line to rule over that great vessel of war and, by all accounts, the most daring.



Following his father's death at an Assassin's hand (which, unusually, was not a patricidal commission, the Fellhearts being one of the few Naggarothi families who hold blood to be thicker than water), Lokhir inherited command of both the *Tower of Blessed Dread* and its mighty fleet. He acted quickly to ensure both the loyalty of his crew and the favour of Mathlann, by sacrificing the chief troublemakers to the sea god's glory.

Tales soon returned to Naggaroth of ports set ablaze, fleets scoured from the seas and whole cities put to the sword. When Lokhir first took command he led his followers to an attack on the elven port of Tor Canabrae in the kingdom of Eataine. Tor Canabrae, whose Dragonships had long been the terror of Naggarothi Corsairs, fell in a single night once Lokhir Fellheart set his attention to it. In the deepest winter the Black Ark and its fleet crept out of Karond Kar, shrouded by blizzards and storms. Bringing snows and lightning with them, Lokhir's warriors descended upon

THE CREEPING DREAD

One of many corsair reaver-bands crewing the Tower of Blessed Dread, the Creeping Dread survived the battle against Sea Lord Aislinn's with comparatively few losses, greatly increasing their standing in the black ark's bitterly contested hierarchy. Now, they were determined to translate their advancement into further glories by proving their value to Fellheart. To aid in this, the captains of the Creeping Dread broke open the black ark's holds before marching south, freeing several hydras and kharibdysses from the mangled below-decks and drafting the creatures into their ranks.

the town and razed it to the ground as a statement that the Fellhearts had returned. That very night, the decks of the Black Ark still slick with the first officer's blood, Lokhir led his new fleet out onto the open sea and a glorious future. Such deeds, and many more, earned Fellheart not only more glory than that of all his forebears combined, but also wealth beyond measure. When Lokhir's fame from the Tor Canabrae raid began to dwindle, he set out southwards in search of treasure with which to decorate the Fellheart palaces. Past Arnheim he sailed, leaving the High Elf colony to lesser raiders. Along the Vampire Coast he sailed, sinking ships crewed by the dead and fighting off boarding parties of rotted Zombies and animated Skeletons.

Lokhir's target was not the settlements of Pirate's Cove, nor the teeming temple-cities of the Lizardmen. He was intent upon the sunken city of Chupayotl. In southern Lustria, the watery grave of the Old Ones' secrets. Lokhir led his fleet to the coast where the sunken city lay, and anchored his fleet above Chupayotl. With seven sorceresses hired from the Dark Convent, he cloaked his warriors with magic that allowed them to breath underwater. Thus protected, Lokhir led the most daring raid ever, on the drowned city of the ancients.



In the submerged ruins of the city, the Dark Elves battled with aquatic beasts. Gigantic squids and immense manta rays assailed them, and they fought amongst the jagged ruins against the disconcerting aquatic descendants of the ancient rulers of the jungle. Against this adversity, Lokhir triumphed, returning to the surface with chests laden with gold, magical artefacts that would fetch a high price in Ghrond, and ancient stone plaques containing the secrets of the Old Ones. His place in history had been sealed.

Slaves and treasure flow into Karond Kar as never before, earning Fellheart the grudging respect, if not quite the loyalty, of the city's masters. The best plunder he keeps, but there is always plenty more for lavish rewards and bribes. Fellheart is much admired by his Corsairs, not just for his generosity, but also because he fights at the forefront of every battle – a dangerous habit many Dark Elf admirals lose as soon as they can. The burdens of command have done little to blunt Fellheart's swordplay, and he fights as naturally as he reads the oceanic temper, feinting towards one foe before changing direction mid-thrust to cut down another.

Ever aware that his crew's loyalty will last only as long as his reputation, Fellheart strives to slay enemy heroes and add their severed heads to the growing collection festooned about his command deck. He knows full well that every skull adds another tale to his legend and, more importantly, gives mutineers a compelling reason not to cross swords with him.



	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Lokhir Fellheart	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9

TROOP TYPE: Infantry (Special Character).

SPECIAL RULES: Ambushers, At them, you Curs!, Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Murderous Prowess, Show no Weakness.

Daring Leap: Unless fighting in a challenge, Lokhir Fellheart can direct his close combat Attacks against any enemy character model who is fighting in the same combat – even one that he is not in base contact with.

Merciless Slaver: If an enemy unit breaks from a close combat that includes Lokhir Fellheart, all units taking Panic tests as a result of that unit breaking suffer a -1 penalty to their Leadership value for that test.

MAGIC ITEMS:

The Red Blades (Magic Weapon)

When Fellheart sacked the Temple of Gilgadresh, he took a great many treasures, among them a statue of Indan bloodsteel. Upon his return to Naggaroth, he had the metal forged into the deadliest pair of swords on the high seas.

Two hand weapons. Any hits made by the Red Blades re-roll any failed To Wound roll.

Helm of the Kraken (Magic Armour)

This golden helmet pre-dates the civilisation of the Elves, and was recovered by Lokhir Fellheart from the sunken ruins of Chupayotl off the southern coast of Lustria. It is fashioned in the likeness of a terrifying sea beast, and makes the bearer as resilient and dread-inspiring as its namesake.

The Helm of the Kraken grants Lokhir Fellheart a 6+ armour save, as well as the Regeneration (4+) and Terror special rules.

SEA DRAGONS

Once, long ago they were true dragons, ridden by the ancestors of the Dark Elves, but down the centuries they have been infused with the evil magics that permeate the Arks. They have mutated, becoming something less than true dragons and yet more.

The Sea Dragons have grown so gigantic that they have lost the power of flight and have to spend their lives afloat to support their own weight. Even so, they remain capable of ripping asunder the biggest ships of other races' fleets.

Legend has it that in the sundering wars between the Elves and the Dark Elves a Dark Elf Dragon was struck from the sky by a mighty Elf Champion. The Dragon fell into the sea, where the dark, cooling waters bathed his wounds and provided refuge from the battle. It is said that the Sea Dragons are descended from this beast.

KOURAN DARKHAND

Captain of the Black Guard

Kouran Darkhand is the longest-serving member of Malekith's Black Guard, having fought at the Witch King's side for nearly a thousand years. Kouran rose to his exalted position as the commander of Malekith's personal bodyguard with a mixture of cunning and ruthlessness. His rise to prominence was nothing short of meteoric, for he became a Tower Master within his first decade of service. Kouran attained this vaunted position by slaying the previous incumbent, Diathenar, in a duel, choking the life out of his foe with Diathenar's own hair. Kouran had the flesh boiled from his rival's skull, which he keeps as a trophy. Such is the way of promotion in Naggarond.

Kouran then went on to fight across the world in the Witch King's armies, earning renown and infamy through his cruel exploits in the Empire, Bretonnia and Ind. Upon his triumphant return, Kouran sought out the Captain of the Black Guard, Khanaeth, and hurled him to a bone-splintering death from the east wall of Naggarond. Malekith, pleased with Kouran's ruthless nature, granted him command of the Black Guard, a position he has held for the last four hundred years - the corpses of seventeen challengers for his position now adorn the gates to the Tower of Grief.



Kouran is that rarest of things in a land steeped in treachery – he is an honest soul, a warrior utterly loyal to the Witch King. Such traits are little treasured in Naggaroth. Indeed, it would normally be considered a weakness so crippling as to not only prevent ascension to high rank, but also pose a serious threat to survival. Yet Kouran has not only survived, he has prospered. This can be accredited to the fact that however lacking he may be in deceitfulness, he has no qualms over taking swift and ruthless action should he consider his own interests to be imperilled.

Over the long years, many nobles have underestimated Kouran, mistaking his uncomplicated speech for a dull wit, and his dogged dedication for a weak will. Few live to make such mistakes a second time. Some find themselves hauled before Malekith's council, their careful steps to treachery inexplicably uncovered by the captain's bloodhound instinct laid bare before that most merciless of juries. Still more simply vanish into Naggaroth's dark nights, or meet with accidents on the battlefield, their fate a mystery to all save Kouran. Such activities have little endeared Kouran to Naggaroth's nobility, who hold him to be a common-born dog with ambitions far above his station. Yet the combination of Kouran's own sense for imminent treachery, and the Witch King's generous patronage, has thus far preserved the captain from his enemies.

BATTLE OF THE BLOODY DAWN

Kouran staked his bloodiest claim to infamy when he led a host of Black Guard against Tor Artroc, capital of the Kingdom of Tiranoc. Deep is Kouran's loathing for this city, for it was the birthplace of hated Bel Shanaar.

The Black Guard attacked at night, preceded by hands of Shades who had dispatched the patrols and sentries. Unnoticed, the warriors of the Tower of Grief made their way along the spiralling road that led to the centre of the city. They struck without warning, cutting down the guards and forcing their way into the opulent palace. Tapestries burned and every portrait and ornament was slashed or smashed as the Black Guard tore through the building, exacting their master's revenge. Kouran's warriors backed down all opposition and piled the corpses of their victims in the plaza in front of the palace. As the first rays of dawn joined the flames of the burning citadel, the Black Guard fought their way clear of the city. The new dawn revealed another atrocity, for the corpses of the Black Guard's foes had been arranged into one of the runes of Khaine, their departing spirits dedicated to the God of Murder.

Kouran's wits are sharp, but his battle-skills are infinitely keener. One does not rise to his rank – nor survive the constant stream of challengers who would claim the title as their own – without possessing such ability. He has extensively studied the use of both sword and halberd from the finest weapon masters in Naggaroth, many of whom perished during the tutelage. He combines this battle-art with a brand of gutter-brawling so brutal and unseemly that many nobles cite it as proof of Kouran's unsuitability for such a high rank. For him, everything is a weapon, be it a blade, a rock, a fist, an underling or some pulped fragment of a previous opponent. To Kouran, it matters not how you die, only that you are dead.

Kouran is a cunning commander, renowned for taking risks, though always claiming victory in the end. Once he sacrificed half a Dark Elf army to draw the enemy into a trap – caring nothing for the lives of those who served him. He is an extremely efficient leader, and is respected by the Dark Elves under his command. All fear his wrath and, under his merciless leadership, the army of Naggarond has crushed every foe it has faced with him at its head.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Kouran	5	8	6	4	3	2	7	3	9

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Eternal Hatred, Immunity (Psychology), Murderous Prowess, Stubborn.

The Right Hand of Darkness: If Kouran Darkhand is in a unit of Black Guard, he and all models in that unit have the Unbreakable special rule.

MAGIC ITEMS:

Crimson Death (Magic Weapon)

This huge halberd was carried into battle by Dark Lord Khalak of Ghroind, the first Captain of the Black Guard. Each captain since has prised it out of his predecessor's dead hands.

Polearm. Close combat attacks made with the Crimson Death are resolved at an additional +1 Strength.

The Armour of Grief (Magic Armour)

This enchanted armour was first worn by Arnaethron, one of the Witch King's first lieutenants during the Sundering. Those that attempt to strike the wearer will find themselves sharing in the injury.

Heavy armour. Each time a model makes a successful To Hit roll against Kouran Darkhand in close combat, the model that struck the blow immediately suffers a Strength 5 hit.

"Simpleton! You will be crushed beneath my heel! Your faith will not shield you, your magics will not burn me! There is no power than can stand before the burning rage of the Witch King's chosen."

- Kouran of the Black Guard



TULLARIS DREADBRINGER

The Hand of Khaine

Tullaris Dreadbringer is the Chosen of Khaine, Captain of the Har Ganeth Executioners and one of the most murderous war-leaders in the whole world. So notorious has Tullaris become that the rumour of his presence sets an unassailable fear in his enemies' quivering flesh, and the merest glimpse of his blood-encrusted armour has been known to rout foes from the battlefield.

Some Dark Elves recount that Tullaris once had a settlement razed to the ground and its inhabitants butchered simply because he didn't like the name. However, legend tells a darker story: in the midst of an otherwise unremarkable raid, Tullaris suddenly froze on the spot, lips working madly as if in conversation with some unseen party. When Tullaris finally recovered, he ordered the captives brought before him one at a time. Each died a slow and agonised death at Tullaris' hands, the rune of Khaine etched upon their brow and their own whispered name the last sound heard. By nightfall, the village was a charnel ruin that unsettled even the stomachs of Tullaris' followers, and it was they who set the place ablaze once their dread master had taken ship elsewhere.

When Orcs of the Rusty Cleaver tribe tried to ambush Tullaris in the Badlands, he had the flesh boiled from their severed heads and used the skulls to decorate his palace in Har Ganeth. On Ulthuan he is known as Drakiur, the Dread-bringer, ever since he captured a band of Shadow Warriors near to the ruins of Anlec and had their body parts nailed to the eastern gate of the ancient citadel. His life has been punctuated by such bloody behaviour since he first heard the calling of Khaine.

"We dominate the seas of the world because they are ours to do with as we will. Our weak willed cousins once held all the oceans in their grasp, but allowed them to slip away as they declined into decadence. Not so, our forces. We strike where and when we will, leaving no doubt who are the true masters of the seas. We make slaves of the lesser races because they are fit for nothing else. It is only just that they should strive for their betters. What is truly insulting is how seldom any of them realises the honour we do them by enslaving them. Those we take are privileged to join something far greater than they ever would've been able to if we left them to lead their pathetic little lives. To serve the Witch King Malekith is to serve the greatest ruler the world has ever known. It is a shame that the wretches cannot see that, but what can you expect of such animals?"

- Tullaris of Har Ganeth

Tullaris' destiny was forged long ago. Tullaris was but a young Elf when the first great sacrifice of Har Ganeth took place. As he looked up the bloody steps of the great temple, watching the heads of the High Elves bounce towards him, he felt the beckoning of Khaine in his blood. The next day he leapt up to the sacrificial dais, tore the blade from a guard's hand and slew his first captive, showering himself in his victim's blood. From that point on, his future was assured. He became one of the first of the sacred Executioners and spent every waking moment perfecting the art of slaying. So skilled did he become that he could slit the throats of five prisoners at once, all with a single blow. Hellebron took great interest in her talented new disciple, and when the Executioners first formed a bodyguard for the Hag Queen on a journey to Naggarond, she chose Tullaris to lead it.

Unlike Malekith, who claims to be Khaine's mortal avatar purely for the accompanying political advantage, Tullaris is the Lord of Murder's true herald. His dreams and waking hours alike are filled by violent whispers that urge him on to ever greater acts of slaughter. Little by little, the Witch King has become aware of this unfortunate state of affairs, and knows that a reckoning between himself and the god-touched warrior will one day be necessary. Thus far, Malekith has stayed his



hand only out of uncertainty over which of them can most rely on Khaine's blessing. Meanwhile, Tullaris has made no attempt to challenge the pretender, simply because the Lord of Murder has not yet commanded him to do so.

While he has ever remained Hellebron's loyal servant, Tullaris' first devotion is to Khaine, and Khaine alone. He has slain fellow Executioners without flinching when he has thought them remiss in their dedication or sloppy in their blade work. Even Witch Elves are wary of his anger, and no few Brides of Khaine have found their necks upon Tullaris' chopping block.

As the leader of the rightly feared Executioners, it is Tullaris who is responsible for wreaking the Witch King's retribution on those who displease him. He is murderous and savage, delighting in the terror of others. He finds great pleasure in the exquisite moment between the accused lowering their head on the block and the kiss of the blade across their neck.

Under his command, the Executioners have partaken in such devastating orgies of cold-blooded destruction that they have gained a fearful reputation across the world. They care not that their leader hears voices, so long as the ghostly words guide them to ever greater victories. Beneath their banner, they march at the head of the army, eagerly seeking battle. Decapitating and eviscerating in a storm of blades, Tullaris' consecrated killers have slaughtered the best warriors their foes could offer. The merest rumour that they are part of an invading Dark Elf army can cause floods of refugees to flee before the Druchii forces and in battle, enemies rout rather than face Tullaris and his deadly warriors.

With my nails I wrenched the stone from the black heart of the mountain, baptising it in the blood of my own hands. I wrapped the stone in velvet for the journey back to Clar Karond, for if a single mote of the sun's light had touched the stone's surface the enchantments would not have taken, and my five year search would have been in vain.

I had hoped to begin creating the amulet immediately upon my return, but in my absence my own two sons, may their names never soil my lips again, sized my lands and title for themselves. The young fools – how could they hope to best me?

Cloaking myself in the shadows, I stole into the tower using the secret ways and murdered them while they slept, smashing their skulls with the black stone - a fitting payment for their treachery.

Their naked, lifeless bodies now hang in my laboratory, and not until their rotting bodies drop from their heads will I dispose of them. I can now begin my great work – the creation of the black amulet.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Tullaris	5	7	6	4	3	2	7	3	9

SPECIAL RULES: Elven Grace, Hatred (High Elves), Fear, Khainite, Killing Blow, Murderous Prowess.

Khaine's Sacred Slaughterer: *Every ritual execution that Tullaris performs serves as a glorious offering to Khaine, driving the other Executioners he leads to match his skill and devotion with further slaughter.*

Each time Tullaris inflicts a successful Killing Blow, he and his unit gains a +1 bonus to their combat resolution score, in addition to any wounds inflicted by him.

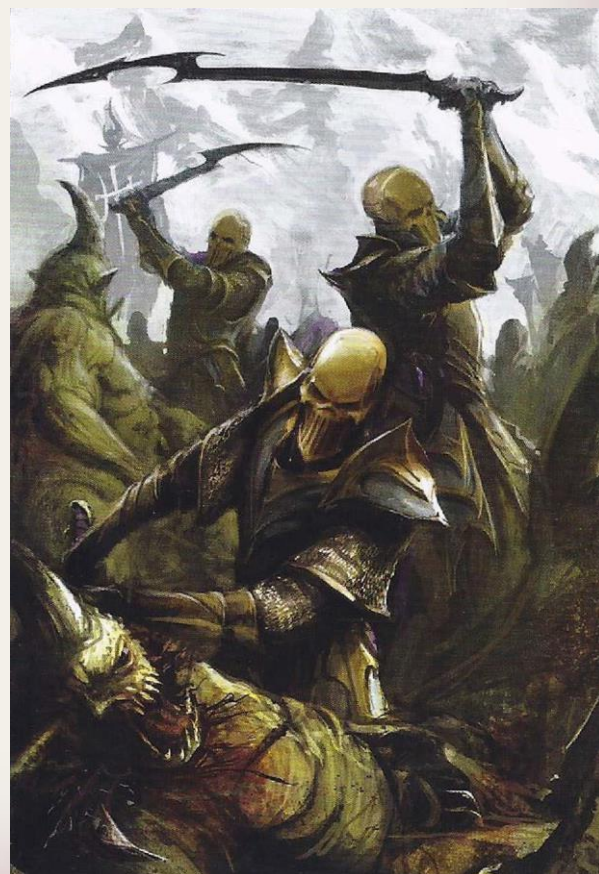


MAGIC ITEMS:

The First Draich (Magic Weapon)

It is said that this weapon claimed the first victim during the great sacrifice that led to the creation of the Executioners, and that it feeds upon the blood of its decapitated victims, imbuing its wielder with magical accuracy. With it, Tullaris has slain thousands of enemies in the service of Khaine, and become a figure of dread across Naggaroth, Ulthuan and beyond.

Great weapon. Tullaris' Killing Blow special rule takes effect on a 5+, rather than a 6.



THE LORE OF DARK MAGIC

SPITEFUL CONJURATION (Lore Attribute)

When a Wizard successfully casts a **hex**, **magic missile** or **direct damage** spell from this lore, and the casting roll contains any double, the spell's target suffers 2D6 Strength 2 hits with the Armour Piercing (1) special rule. If the casting roll contains any treble, the spell's target instead suffers 3D6 hits instead. In either case, the hits are resolved after the spell has been resolved.

POWER OF DARKNESS

Cast on 8+

(Signature Spell)

The caster draws unstable power from the Realm of Chaos to empower their spells as well as their minions. The raw energy of magic can be immensely powerful, but it is highly unstable and can be as dangerous to the wielder as it is to the foe.

Power of Darkness is an **augment** spell with a range of 12". All models in the target unit have a +1 bonus to their Strength characteristic until the start of the caster's next Magic phase. Then add D3 power dice to your power pool. If a natural 6 is rolled when generating these power dice, the caster suffers a Wound which Ignores Armour saves.

DOOMBOLT OF KHARAIDON

Cast on 6+

(Signature Spell)

As the invocation is spoken, the other-worldly beast known as Kharaidon unleashes a bolt of pure darkness upon the Dark Elves' adversaries.

Doombolt is a **magic missile** with a range of 18" that causes D6 Strength 5 hits. The Wizard can instead choose to cast a more powerful version, inflicting 2D6 Strength 5 hits. If they do so, the casting value is increased to 12+.

1. NAGAELYTHE THE CHILLWIND

Cast on 5+

Calling upon the coldness of Nagarythe of the Utterdark, the Dark Elf unleashes a freezing wind against her enemies.

Chillwind is a **magic missile** with a range of 24" that causes 2D6 Strength 2 hits. If the target suffers any unsaved Wounds, all models in the unit suffer a -1 penalty to their Ballistic Skill characteristic until the start of the caster's next Magic phase.

2. CHROESH – WORD OF PAIN

Cast on 7+

Upon uttering the true name of Khaine as the Serpent Lord, an unnatural and unbearable agony suffuses the body of the caster's hated foes.

Word of Pain is a **hex** spell with a range of 24". All models in the target unit suffer -D3 to both their Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill until the start of the caster's next Magic phase (roll once for both). The Wizard can instead choose to cast a more powerful version of the spell that also inflicts the -D3 penalty to their Strength and Initiative (to a minimum of 1). If they do so, the casting value is increased to 14+.

3. BLADEWIND

Cast on 9+

With a plea to the Mistress of a Thousand Cuts, the Dark Elf Sorceress conjures up a storm of magical hungry swords with which to assail the enemy across the battlefield.

Bladewind is a **direct damage** spell with a range of 24". Every model in the target unit must pass a Weapon Skill test or suffer a Strength 4 hit with the Armour Piercing (1) special rule.

4. SHROUD OF DESPAIR

Cast on 10+

At the caster's command, light is driven from the battlefield and numbing darkness rushes to fill the void.

Shroud of Despair is a **hex** spell that targets all enemy units within 12". Until the start of the caster's next Magic phase, the targets cannot benefit from the Hold Your Ground! or Inspiring Presence rules. In addition, whenever a target unit fails a Leadership test of any kind, all target units (including the one that failed) suffer -1 to their Leadership until the start of the caster's next Magic phase (this effect is cumulative with itself).

5. ANCHAN-ROGAR THE SOUL STEALER

Cast on 11+

The Daemon-crawler Anchan-Rogar reaches out from his domain and plucks the souls from the enemy. Tendrils of pure, solidified darkness writhe out from the wizard's outstretched hands, draining the life force from their hapless enemies to renew the caster's own vigour.

Soul Stealer is a **direct damage** spell. Place the small round template anywhere within 18" of the Wizard – it then scatters D6". All models hit by the template suffer a Strength 2 hit which Ignores Armour Saves. Roll a D6 for each unsaved Wound inflicted by *Soul Stealer*. For each roll of 4+, the caster immediately gains a single Wound (to a maximum of 10). The Wizard can choose to extend the range of this spell to 36". If they do so, the casting value is increased to 14+.

6. ARNZIPAL'S BLACK HORROR

Cast on 15+

The caster tears down the walls between realities, and a black cloud of roiling energy sweeps across the battlefield. As the darkness travels, slimy tentacles lash out from its depths, dragging unfortunate victims screaming into one of the infernal regions and an unknown fate.

Remains in play. *Arnzipal's Black Horror* is a **magical vortex** that uses the small round template. Once the template is placed, the player then nominates a direction in which the Black Horror will move. To determine how many inches the template moves, roll an artillery dice and multiply the result by the caster's Wizard level. Any model touched by, or passed over by the template must pass a Strength test or be slain outright with no armour saves allowed.

If the result on the artillery dice is a misfire, centre the template on the caster and roll both a scatter dice and a D6. The template moves a number of inches equal to the result of the D6, in the direction shown on the scatter dice (if you roll a Hit!, use the little arrow shown on the Hit! symbol). In either event, in subsequent turns, the Black Horror travels in a random direction and moves a number of inches equal to the roll on an artillery dice. If a misfire is rolled in subsequent turns, the Black Horror collapses in on itself and is removed. A particularly brave Wizard can infuse *Arnzipal's Black Horror* with more power, so that it uses the large round template instead. If they do so, the casting value is increased to 25+.

GIFTS OF KHAINE

The Assassins and Witch Elves of Khaine have access to many exotic weapons, poisons, abilities and unique artefacts. These are the most well-kept secrets of the Temple, and they are never taught to outsiders. Many of the blades carried by Assassins and Witch Elves have been envenomed, for the lore of poison is well understood in the Temples of Khaine.

These Gifts of Khaine may be taken by certain models as indicated in the army list. Unless otherwise stated, these are not magic items. A model may not have multiples of the same upgrade, but an upgrade can be taken by more than one model in the army.



Rending Stars 25 points

These are a particular type of throwing star, with wickedly curved edges that tear through flesh and leave a deeply lacerated wound.

Assassins only. Rending Stars are missile weapons with the following profile.

Range:	Strength:	Special Rules:
12"	4	Multiple Shots (3), Quick to Fire

Dance of Doom 30 points

The sinuous Dance of Doom can enthrall even the most steely disciplined Swordmaster and be used to dodge the fastest shot or blow.

Model on foot only. Enemies targeting the model must re-roll all successful To Hit rolls with missile weapons and in close combat.

Touch of Death 20 points

The Adepts of Death school the servants of Khaine to learn the points on a body that kill instantly.

The model gains the Killing Blow special rule.

Rune of Khaine 25 points

The Hag Queens burn the rune of the Lord of Murder upon the brow of the most zealous of killers, marking them as one of the Lord of Murder's chosen.

The model gains the Random Attacks (D3) in addition to its normal attacks.

Witchbrew 25 points

Witchbrew is distilled from blood by the Hag Queens. It drives Witch Elves into such an ecstasy of destruction that they will fight on against impossible odds.

Death Hag and Hag Queens only. This model, and all models in the same unit, gain +1 Attack and can never lose their Frenzy for the remainder of the game. However, they will automatically fail any Berserk Rage test they need to take.

Hand of Khaine 20 points

Tracing a complex pattern in the air, the Dark Elf entrances his victim, leaving him vulnerable and open to attack.

One model in base contact (mount or rider) chosen by the Dark Elves player, loses -3 to their Weapon Skill for the remainder of the closer combat phase. This has no effect on model with Immunity (Psychology).

Cry of War 15 points

By screeching one of the seventeen secret names of Khaine, the warrior freezes enemies with horror.

All units in base contact must pass a Leadership test at the start of the first round of close combat. If failed, they will only hit on 6's this round.

TOXINS

Many of these poisons contain mystical ingredients, making them deadly even to creatures not of mortal flesh.

All of a model's mundane weapons may be coated with one type of toxin in addition to its Poisoned Attacks. These toxins have no additional effect against models with Immunity (Poisoned Attacks).

Dark Venom 25 points

Extracted from the poisonous reptiles of the bleak land of Naggaroth, Dark Venom is a deadly toxin. A weapon treated with Dark Venom will cause a mortal wound if it merely scratches the skin, causing the poisoned victim to die in the most grotesque manner imaginable.

A model with Dark Venom gains the Multiple Wounds (D3) special rule.

Manbane 10 points

Manbane is one of the most lethal venoms ever devised, causing even the tiniest wound to bleed openly and profusely.

A model with Manbane will automatically Wound on the To Hit roll of 6.

Black Lotus 5 points

Black Lotus contains a powerful narcotic that has a terrifying effect on living flesh, driving victims delusional and insane.

For each unsaved Wound a character suffers from a model equipped with Black Lotus, that character suffers a -1 penalty to their Leadership for the rest of the game.

THE BLACK ARMOURY

Dark Elves are a race touched by magic, and they are the ultimate masters of Dark Sorcery. Thus the armoury of the Witch King is filled with many blades woven with dire curses and black suits of armour ensorcelled with spells of resistance and protection. On the following pages are magic items available to Dark Elf armies. These can be taken in addition to any of the magic items listed in the Warhammer rulebook.

HYDRA BLADE

50 points

Magic Weapon

The Hydra Blade was carved from a single fang of Akholrak, first and greatest of the War Hydras broken to Malekith's service, and like its many-headed namesake, its keen edge strikes repeatedly against its foes. Though Akholrak is dead now, torn asunder long ago by the talons of the great Caledorian Dragon Incalamir, its malice lives on within this gnarled and twisted sword. Only those of iron will can hope to dominate the Hydra Blade, for it is imbued with an echo of Akholrak's malice and is little inclined to suffer the commands of another. Most wielders discover the blade's wilfulness more than offset by its alacrity, but more than a few have perished needlessly in encounters where skill would have served them far better than speed. The Hydra Blade strikes repeatedly, like its many-headed namesake.

The wielder of the Hydra Blade has the Random Attacks (D6) special rule in addition to their normal attacks.

CHILLBLADE

35 points

Magic Weapon

When Malekith obliterated the northern citadel of Har Kaldra, he offered neither warning nor quarter. The iron-clad fortress was blasted to rime-scarred splinters with a single cataclysmic spell. Ever after, the freezing north wind has wailed with the agonised voices of those who perished that day, and its chill grasp can be held at bay by neither fur nor flame. It was from scattered shards of Har Kaldra that the Chillblade was forged. This sword holds a terrible spell of coldness that seeps into the Dark Elf's victim. Its merest touch freezes not only the physical body but also the soul within, leaving the victim paralysed and easy prey for his attacker's next strike.

Attacks made with the Chillblade wound automatically and have the Ice Attacks special rule. For each unsaved Wound suffered from the Chillblade, the target suffers -1 to its Attacks characteristic until the end of this Close Combat phase.

"We are the most civilised race in the world. We have more exquisite ways to kill than any other."

*- Lord Vraneth the Cruel,
master of Har Ganeth*

ARMOUR OF LIVING DEATH

45 points

Magic Armour

It is claimed that anyone wearing this armour cannot die, sustained by its magical energy. Unfortunately, they cannot remove the armour and are slowly driven insane by its magic.

Heavy armour. The wearer gains +1 Toughness and +1 Wound. However, they also become subject to Stupidity (if mounted on a Cold One, they must re-roll successful Stupidity tests).



THE BLACK AMULET

60 points

Talisman

Carved from the tortured heartstone of a mountain drenched in Dark Magic, the Black Amulet is a lustrous polished stone of midnight hue. It is engraved with a single glowing rune, and into its ebony facets have been poured all the captured malice and spite that emanates from the chill lands of Naggaroth. To behold its darksome shape is to see despair made physical, it is to abandon even the merest memory of hope.

The wearer of the Black Amulet has a Ward save (4+). Furthermore, each time the bearer of the Black Amulet makes a successful Ward save while fighting in a challenge, the Black Amulet inflicts one Wound which Ignores Armour saves on the bearer's opponent.

RING OF HOTEK

50 points

Talisman

Hotek was an outcast priest of Vaul. It was he who forged Malekith's rune-etched armour, and he also oversaw the creation of many of the Witch King's most terrible weapons. Renegade and turncoat though he was, Hotek was no fool. He knew that he lived only at Malekith's fickle pleasure, and so created for himself an armoury of defences – both magical and physical – with which he hoped to blunt the Witch King's wrath long enough to escape. Ultimately, Hotek did not perish at Malekith's hands, but was poisoned at Morathi's order. His armoury was broken up soon after, the scattered pieces changing hands with the ebb and flow of patronage and power. None of the artefacts have known as many masters as the Ring of Hotek, for this trinket of obsidian and black diamond is claimed to be the renegade priest's greatest work.

The bearer has the Magic Resistance (3) special rule. Any enemy Wizard that attempts to cast or target a spell on a unit within 6" of the bearer will suffer a miscast on a roll of double 6, as well as double 1.

BLACK DRAGON EGG

25 points

Enchanted Item

In Ulthuan, the egg of a Dragon is sacred, and harsh punishment awaits any who endanger or disturb a Dragon nest. In Naggaroth, a Dragon egg is naught but a potential source of power, and their nests nothing but cradles to nurture that power. So it is that for every Black Dragon Egg that develops into a hatchling, countless dozens more are taken and consumed, so that their devourers might take a portion of the eggs' strength as their own. When eaten, the properties of the Dragon are temporarily passed on.

One use only. The bearer may consume this item at the start of any player turn. For the rest of that turn, the consumer has Strength and Toughness 6, and the Noxious Breath special rule.



CLOAK OF TWILIGHT

30 points

Enchanted Item

Woven from the hair of innocents and dyed with the blood of sorcerers, the Cloak of Twilight is all but invisible to the mortal eye. The cloak has served many masters well across the long centuries. It was this garb that allowed Morathi to keep a close watch on the Phoenix Court of Bel Shanaar even from Nagarythe. Centuries later, it had passed from the Hag Sorceress' hands and became the tool that allowed the Master Assassin, Venomblade, to stalk the blood-slicked streets of Tor Elyr as he visited his Night of Screaming Death upon the folk of that great city. Ownership of the Cloak of Twilight guarantees an ambitious Dark Elf the success he craves, but is not without risk. However determined its wearer, there is always a more ruthless pretender, his mind set to steal the cloak's power for his own.

The wearer of the Cloak of Twilight has a Ward save (3+) against Wounds caused by enemy shooting attacks and spells.

THE GEM OF SPITE

25 points

Arcane Item

Many Dark Elves feel that a misfortune shared is, if not exactly a misfortune halved, then at least one in which they can take a certain malignant (and possibly posthumous) glee. Such was the goal behind the creation of the Gem of Spite. It was fashioned during a rare civil war in Ghrond, when sorceress fought sorceress in an attempt to claim a place at Morathi's right hand. The Gem of Spite still turns up from time to time, normally in the possession of one who has fallen from the Hag Sorceress' favour.

Whenever the bearer suffers a miscast, the Gem of Spite inflicts a single Strength 6 hit on every enemy Wizard within 24". Each time a Wound is caused by the Gem of Spite, your opponent can discard a dice from their dispel pool. If they do so, the Wound is negated and has no effect.

THE SACRIFICIAL DAGGER

25 points

Arcane Item

This dagger is a tiny splinter of the cruel weapon wielded by Hekarti, Goddess of Dark Magic. It was shivered from her blade during a failed attempt to sacrifice her sister, Atharti, to an older and darker power than she. The shard was flung far and came to rest in the caverns beneath Ghrond. Here, amongst the bleached bones and rubble, it was discovered by Khaeleth the Sorceress. She claimed the dagger as her own and learned how to unlock its power to transmute the soul-essence of living creatures into a raw and hungry magic. So began Khaeleth's rise to the foremost seat of power within the Dark Convent of Ghrond, an elevation marked by blood sacrifice and the darkest of sorceries. Bound with enchantments of bloodletting and spiritbinding, the sacrificial dagger is used to leech the life force from its victims and channel it into raw magic.

Once per casting attempt, after the casting dice are rolled but before a dispel attempt is made, the bearer of this magic item can sacrifice one model in her unit. Choose which model is sacrificed – it is immediately removed as a casualty with no saves of any kind allowed – then roll a D6. On a 4+, the Sorceress gains an extra power dice that must be rolled and added to the casting result; dispel attempts can now be made and the spell resolved. This can be used to allow the Wizard to use more dice than is normally allowed by their Wizard level. On a roll of 3 or less, the sacrifice has not generated enough power – you can either immediately sacrifice another model from the unit and roll again, following the procedure above, or accept the original casting result (if the bearer is the only model remaining in the unit, no further sacrifices can be attempted).

BANNER OF NAGARYTHE

50 points

Magic Standard

During the Sundering, many of Nagarythe's treasures were lost in battle or destroyed by natural disaster. Those that remained were greedily seized upon by nobles of both allegiances. Some fell into the hands of the Aesamar, who hid them away from Malekith's forces, but the most important were taken by the Dark Elves. The Banner of Nagarythe is the greatest of all such treasures, woven through with silver thread and inlaid with pearls and diamonds. For the Dark Elves, the Banner of Nagarythe is a physical reminder of the injustices heaped upon them by the Phoenix Throne. Moreover, it is the personal standard of the Witch King and proclaims his right to rule not only Naggaroth, but the ten kingdoms of Ulthuan as well. For their part, the Shadow Warriors of Nagarythe deem this banner too mired in corruption and betrayal to any longer have any wholesome purpose. They seek not its return, but its destruction.

All friendly models with the Murderous Prowess special rule within 12" of this banner gain the Hatred special rule. Against High Elves, they instead gain the Eternal Hatred special rule.





DARK ELVES ARMY LIST

The army of the Dark Elves is a diverse and flexible force, able to muster regiments of hardened killers, fanatical devotees of Khaine and some of the mightiest sorcerers in the mortal world. With spear, crossbow, fang and dark magic, you will tear your foes to bloody shreds and send the survivors fleeing in disarray.

A Dark Elf army offers many tools for victory, and many ruthless warriors with which to slaughter the foe. As its master, it is your duty to unleash the correct mix of soldiers to win another deserved victory in the Witch King's name.

This section of the book helps you to turn your collection of Dark Elves Citadel miniatures into an unstoppable host, ready for a tabletop battle. At the back of this section, you will also find a summary page, which lists every unit's characteristic profile for quick and easy reference during your games.

USING THE ARMY LIST

The army list is used alongside the 'Choosing an Army' section of the Warhammer rulebook to pick a force ready for battle. Over the following pages you will find an entry for each of the models in your army. These entries give you all of the gaming information that you need to shape your collection of models into the units that will form your army. Amongst other things, they will tell you what your models are equipped with, what options are available to them, and their points costs.

UNIT CATEGORIES

As described in the Warhammer rulebook, the units in the army list are organised into five categories: Lords, Heroes, Core Units, Special Units and Rare Units.

ARMY LIST ENTRIES

Each army list entry contains all the information you need to choose and field that unit at a glance, using the following format:

DREADSPEARS

10 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Dreadspear	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry
Lordling	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess

Equipment:

- Spear
- Medium armour
- Shield

Options:

- One Dreadspear may be upgraded to a Lordling.....10 points
- One Dreadspear may be upgraded to a musician.....10 points
- One Dreadspear may be upgraded to a standard bearer.....10 points

- Name.** The name by which the unit or character is identified.
- Profiles.** The characteristic profiles for the model(s) in each unit are provided as a reminder. Where several profiles are required these are also given, even if they are optional (such as unit champions).
- Troop Type.** Each entry specifies the troop type of its models (e.g. 'infantry, monstrous cavalry' and so on).
- Points value.** Every miniature in the Warhammer range costs an amount of points that reflects how effective it is on the battlefield.
- Unit Size.** This specifies the minimum size for each unit, which is the smallest number of models needed to form that unit. In some cases units also have a maximum size, or can even comprise just a single model.
- Equipment.** This is a list of the standard weapons and armour for that unit. The cost of these items is included in the basic points value.
- Special Rules.** Many troops have special rules that are fully described earlier in this book or in the Warhammer rulebook. The names of these rules are listed here as a reminder.
- Options.** This is a list of optional weapons and armour; mounts, magic items and other upgrades for units or characters, including the points cost for each particular option. Many unit entries include the option to upgrade a unit member to a champion, standard bearer or musician. Some units may carry a magic standard or take magic items at a further points cost.



LORDS

MALEKITH

510 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Malekith	5	8	7	5	4	3	8	4	10	Infantry (Special Character)
Seraphon (Black Dragon)	6	7	0	6	6	6	3	6	8	Monster

Magic Items:

- Destroyer
- Hand of Khaine
- Armour of Midnight
- Supreme Spellshield
- Circlet of Iron

Special Rules:

- Absolute Power
- Black Guard
- Elven Grace
- Eternal Hatred
- Fear
- Hekarti's Blessing
- Immunity (Psychology)
- Murderous Prowess

Options:

- May be mounted on one of the following:
 - Cold One.....10 points
 - May be upgraded to have barding.....free
 - Cold One Chariot (replacing the crew).....100 points
 - Seraphon (Black Dragon).....320 points

Magic:

Malekith is a Level 4 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Dark Magic.

MORATHI

355 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Morathi	5	5	4	3	3	3	6	3	10	Infantry (Special Character)
Sulephet (Dark Pegasus)	8	4	0	4	4	2	4	3	6	War Beast

Magic Items:

- Heartrender and the Darksword

Special Rules:

- Beloved of Khaine
- Enchanting Beauty
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Hekarti's Blessing
- Murderous Prowess
- The First Sorceress
- Thousand and One Dark Blessings

Options:

- May be mounted on Sulephet (Dark Pegasus).....50 points

Magic:

Morathi is a Level 4 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Death, the Lore of Shadow and/or the Lore of Dark Magic.

MALUS DARKBLADE

215 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Malus Darkblade	5	7	7	4	3	3	8	4	10	Infantry (Special Character)
Spite (Cold One)	7	3	0	4	4	1	2	3	4	War Beast

Equipment:

- Heavy armour
- Sea Dragon cloak

Magic Items:

- Warpsword of Khaine

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Eternal Hatred
- Murderous Prowess
- Not Just a Dumb Brute
- Tz'arkan

Options:

- May be mounted on Spite (barded Cold One).....50 points

CRONE HELLEBRON

300 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Hellebron	5	7	7	4	3	3	9	4	10	Infantry (Special Character, Hag Queen)

Gifts of Khaine:

- Cry of War
- Rune of Khaine
- Witchbrew

Magic Items:

- Deathsword and the Cursed Blade
- Amulet of Dark Fire

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Frenzy
- Khainite
- Murderous Prowess
- Poisoned Attacks
- Queen of Khaine

Options:

- May be mounted on one of the following:
 - Manticore.....150 points
 - Cauldron of Blood (replacing the Keeper of the Cauldron).....165 points

LORDS

DREADLORD

125 points

Profile

Dreadlord

M WS BS S T W I A Ld
5 7 7 4 3 3 8 4 10

Troop Type

Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Medium armour

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess



Options:

- May be armed with one of the following:
 - Additional hand weapon.....6 points
 - Spear.....4 points
 - Lance (mounted only).....8 points
 - Great weapon.....8 points
 - Polearm8 points
- May be armed with a repeater crossbow.....5 points
- May replace medium armour with heavy armour.....3 points
- May wear a Sea Dragon cloak.....3 points
- May take a shield.....3 points
- May be mounted upon one of the following:
 - Dark Steed.....21 points
 - May be upgraded to have barding.....6 points
 - Cold One.....24 points
 - May be upgraded to have barding.....free
 - Dark Pegasus.....30 points
 - Cold One Chariot (replacing one of the crew).....100 points
 - Manticore.....150 points
 - Black Dragon.....300 points
- May take magic items up to a total of.....100 points

SUPREME SORCERESS

185 points

Profile

Supreme Sorceress

M WS BS S T W I A Ld
5 4 4 3 3 3 5 1 9

Troop Type

Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Hekarti's Blessing
- Murderous Prowess

Magic:

A Supreme Sorceress is a Level 3 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Fire, Metal, Heavens, Beasts, Shadow, Death or Dark Magic.

Options:

- May be upgraded to Level 4 Wizard.....35 points
- May be mounted upon one of the following:
 - Dark Steed.....21 points
 - May be upgraded to have barding.....6 points
 - Cold One.....24 points
 - May be upgraded to have barding.....free
 - Dark Pegasus.....30 points
 - Black Dragon.....300 points
- May take magic items up to a total of.....100 points

HAG QUEEN

145 points

Profile

Hag Queen

M WS BS S T W I A Ld
5 7 5 4 3 3 8 4 10

Troop Type

Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Two hand weapons

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Frenzy
- Khainite
- Murderous Prowess
- Poisoned Attacks

Options:

- May wear light armour.....3 points
- May be mounted on a Cauldron of Blood (replacing the Keeper of the Cauldron).....165 points
- May take Gifts of Khaine up to a total of.....75 points
- May take magic items up to a total of.....50 points



HEROES

RAKARTH

430 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Rakarth	5	6	6	4	3	2	6	3	9	Infantry (Special Character)
Bracchus (Black Dragon)	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8	Monster

Magic Items:

- Whip of Agony
- Beast Armour of Clar Karond

Mount:

- Bracchus (Black Dragon)

Special Rules:

- Beastslayer
- Beastlord
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Fly
- Murderous Prowess
- Natural Armour (3+)
- Noxious Breath (Bracchus only)



SHADOWBLADE

220 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Shadowblade	6	10	10	4	3	2	10	3	9	Infantry (Special Character)

Equipment:

- Two hand weapons
- Throwing weapons

Gifts of Khaine:

- Dance of Doom
- Hand of Khaine
- Touch of Death

Toxins:

- Black Lotus
- Dark Venom
- Manbane

Magic Items:

- Heart of Woe
- Potion of Diabolic Strength

Special Rules:

- Dodge (4+)
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Hidden
- Immunity (Psychology)
- Khainite
- Master of Disguise
- Murderous Prowess
- Poisoned Attacks



LOKHIR FELLHEART

140 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Lokhir Fellheart	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	Infantry (Special Character)

Equipment:

- Medium armour
- Sea Dragon cloak

Magic Items:

- The Red Blades
- Helm of the Kraken

Special Rules:

- Ambushers
- At them, you Curs!
- Daring Leap
- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Merciless Slaver
- Murderous Prowess
- Show no Weakness



KOURAN DARKHAND

180 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Kouran Darkhand	5	8	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	Infantry (Special Character)

Magic Items:

- Crimson Death
- The Armour of Grief

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Eternal Hatred
- Immunity (Psychology)
- Murderous Prowess
- The Right Hand of Darkness
- Stubborn



HEROES

TULLARIS DREADBRINGER

120 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Tullaris Dreadbringer	5	7	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	Infantry (Special Character)

Equipment:

- Heavy armour

Magic Items:

- The First Draich

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Fear
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Khainite
- Khaine's Sacred Slaughterer
- Killing Blow
- Murderous Prowess

MASTER

60 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Master	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Medium armour

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess

Options:

- May be armed with one of the following:
 - Additional hand weapon.....4 points
 - Spear.....3 points
 - Lance (mounted only).....6 points
 - Great weapon.....6 points
 - Polearm.....6 points
- May be armed with a repeater crossbow.....5 points
- May replace medium armour with heavy armour.....2 points
- May wear a Sea Dragon cloak.....2 points
- May take a shield.....2 points
- May be mounted upon one of the following:
 - Dark Steed.....14 points
 - May be upgraded to have barding.....4 points
 - Cold One.....16 points
 - May be upgraded to have barding.....free
 - Dark Pegasus.....20 points
 - Cold One Chariot (replacing one of the crew).....100 points
- May take magic items up to a total of.....50 points

ARMY BATTLE STANDARD

One Master or Death Hag in the army may carry the Battle Standard for +25 points. The Battle Standard Bearer can have a magic banner with no points limit. However, a model carrying a magic standard can only carry other magic items up to a total 25 points.



SORCERESS

85 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Sorceress	5	4	4	3	3	2	5	1	8	Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Hekarti's Blessing
- Murderous Prowess

Magic:

A Sorceress is a Level 1 Wizard who uses spells from the Lore of Fire, Metal, Heavens, Beasts, Shadow, Death or Dark Magic.

Options:

- May be upgraded to Level 2 Wizard.....35 points
- May be mounted upon one of the following:
 - Dark Steed.....14 points
 - May be upgraded to have barding.....6 points
 - Cold One.....16 points
 - May be upgraded to have barding.....free
 - Dark Pegasus.....20 points
- May take magic items up to a total of.....50 points

HEROES

BLACK ARK FLEETMASTER

80 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Fleetmaster	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Two hand weapons
- Light armour
- Sea Dragon Cloak

Special Rules:

- Ambushers
- At them, you Curs!
- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess
- Show no Weakness

Options:

- May replace one hand weapon with repeater hand bow.....*free*
- May take magic items up to a total of.....*50 points*



BEASTMASTER

45 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Beastmaster	5	5	5	4	3	2	6	2	8	Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

Special Rules:

- Beastslaver
- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess

Options:

- May be armed with one of the following:
 - Additional hand weapon.....*2 points*
 - Spear.....*2 points*
- May wear a Sea Dragon cloak.....*2 points*
- May be mounted upon one of the following:
 - Scourgerunner Chariot (replacing one of the crew).....*70 points*
 - Manticore.....*150 points*
- May take magic items up to a total of.....*50 points*

DEATH HAG

70 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Death Hag	5	6	5	4	3	2	7	3	9	Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

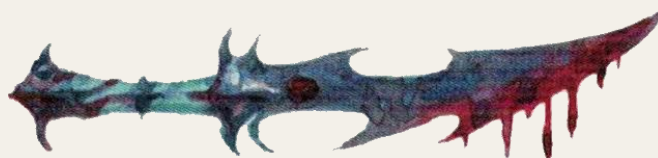
- Two hand weapons

Special Rules:

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Frenzy
- Khainite
- Murderous Prowess
- Poisoned Attacks

Options:

- May wear light armour.....*2 points*
- May be mounted on a Cauldron of Blood (replacing the Keeper of the Cauldron).....*165 points*
- May take Gifts of Khaine up to a total of.....*50 points*
- May take magic items up to a total of.....*25 points*



DISCIPLE OF KHAINE

50 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Disciple of Khaine	5	5	5	4	3	2	6	2	9	Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Light armour

Special Rules:

- Blood Rites
- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Khainite
- Murderous Prowess

Options:

- May take an additional hand weapon.....*5 points*
- May replace light armour with medium armour.....*2 points*
- May take magic items up to a total of.....*50 points*

HEROES

KHAINITE ASSASSIN

110 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Assassin	5	9	9	4	3	2	10	3	9	Infantry (Character)

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

Special Rules:

- Dodge (4+)
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Hidden
- Immunity (Psychology)
- Khainite
- Murderous Prowess
- Poisoned Attacks

Options:

- May take one of the following:
 - Additional hand weapon.....4 points
 - Throwing weapons.....2 points
 - Repeater handbow.....2 points
- May wear light armour.....2 points
- May take Gifts of Khaine up to a total of.....50 points

CHARACTER MOUNTS

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Dark Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5	War Beast
Cold One	7	3	0	4	4	1	2	2	3	War Beast
Dark Pegasus	8	3	0	4	4	2	4	2	6	War Beast
Manticore	6	5	0	5	5	4	5	4	5	Monster
Black Dragon	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8	Monster

Special Rules (Cold One):

- Fear
- Natural Armour (6+)
- Stupidity

Special Rules (Dark Pegasus):

- Fly
- Impale

Special Rules (Manticore):

- Fly
- Frenzy
- Killing Blow

Special Rules (Black Dragon):

- Fly
- Natural Armour (3+)
- Noxious Breath



CORE UNITS

DREADSPEARS

10 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Dreadspear	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry
Lordling	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Spear
- Medium armour
- Shield

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess

- May upgrade one Dreadspear to a Lordling.....10 points
- May upgrade one Dreadspear to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Dreadspear to a standard bearer.....10 points

BLEAKSWORDS

9 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Bleaksword	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry
Lordling	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Medium armour
- Shield

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess

- One Bleaksword may be upgraded to a Lordling.....10 points
- One Bleaksword may be upgraded to a musician.....10 points
- One Bleaksword may be upgraded to a standard bearer.....10 points

DARKSHARDS

13 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Darkshard	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry
Guardmaster	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Repeater crossbow
- Medium armour

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess

- May upgrade one Darkshard to a Guardmaster.....10 points
- May upgrade one Darkshard to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Darkshard to a standard bearer.....10 points
- The entire unit may take shields.....1 point per model

CITY GUARD

9 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
City Guard	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry
Guardmaster	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Spear
- Medium armour

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Mixed Formation
- Murderous Prowess

- May upgrade one City Guard to a Guardmaster.....10 points
- May upgrade one City Guard to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one City Guard to a standard bearer.....10 points
- Half the models in the unit (rounding down) must replace their spears with repeater crossbows.....3 points per model
- The entire unit may take shields.....1 point per model

CORE UNITS

BLACK ARK CORSAIRS

9 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Corsair	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry
Reaver	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Two hand weapons
- Light armour
- Sea Dragon cloak

- Ambushers
- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess

- May upgrade one Corsair to a Reaver.....10 points
- May upgrade one Corsair to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Corsair to a standard bearer.....10 points
 - One unit may have a magic standard worth up to.....25 points
- All models in the unit may replace one of their hand weapons with repeater handbows.....free
- The entire unit may Skirmish.....free

DARK RIDERS

15 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Dark Rider	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Cavalry
Herald	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Cavalry
Dark Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5	-

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Spear
- Light armour

- Hatred (High Elves)
- Fast Cavalry
- Murderous Prowess

Mount: Dark Steed

- May upgrade one Dark Rider to a Herald.....10 points
- May upgrade one Dark Rider to a musician.....5 points
- May upgrade one Dark Rider to a standard bearer.....10 points
- The entire unit may be equipped with any of the following:
 - Repeater crossbows.....4 points per model
 - Shields.....2 points per model
 - Barding.....1 point per model

SLAVES

2 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Slave	4	2	2	3	3	1	3	1	4	Infantry
Slave Master	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 20+ Slaves and 1 Slave Master

Special Rules:

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

- Elven Grace (Slave Master only)
- Expendable
- Hatred (High Elves) (Slave Master only)
- Mixed Unit
- Murderous Prowess (Slave Master only)
- Slave Master
- Vanguard



HARPIES

12 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Harpy	5	3	0	3	3	1	5	2	6	Infantry
Harpy Queen	5	3	0	3	3	1	5	3	6	Infantry

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

Options:

- Expendable
- Fly

- May upgrade one Harpy to a Harpy Queen.....10 points

SPECIAL UNITS

WITCH ELVES

10 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Witch Elf	5	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	8	Infantry
Hag	5	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	8	Infantry

Note: For each Hag Queen or Death Hag included in your army, you may take one unit of Witch Elves as a Core Unit.

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Two hand weapons

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Frenzy
- Khainite
- Murderous Prowess
- Poisoned Attacks

- May upgrade one Witch Elf to a Hag.....10 points
- May upgrade one Witch Elf to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Witch Elf to a standard bearer.....10 points
 - May have a magic standard worth up to.....25 points
- The entire unit may wear light armour.....1 point per model

HAR GANETH EXECUTIONERS

14 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Executioner	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry
Draich Master	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Great weapon
- Heavy armour

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Khainite
- Killing Blow
- Murderous Prowess

- May upgrade one Executioner to a Draich Master.....10 points
- May upgrade one Executioner to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Executioner to a standard bearer.....10 points
 - May have a magic standard worth up to.....50 points

SISTERS OF SLAUGHTER

15 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Sister of Slaughter	5	6	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	Infantry
Handmaiden of Shards	5	6	4	3	3	1	6	3	9	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Shield

- Dance of Death
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess
- The Trial of Blades

- May upgrade one Sister of Slaughter to a Handmaiden of Shards.....10 points
- May upgrade one Sister of Slaughter to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Sister of Slaughter to a standard bearer.....10 points
 - May have a magic standard worth up to.....50 points
- The entire unit may be upgraded to Skirmishers.....free

SHADES

16 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Shade	5	5	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry
Bloodshade	5	5	6	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Repeater crossbow

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess
- Scouts
- Skirmishers

- May upgrade one Shade to a Bloodshade.....10 points
- May upgrade one Shade to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Shade to a standard bearer.....10 points
- The entire unit may be equipped with one of the following:
 - Additional hand weapons.....2 points per model
 - Great weapons.....2 points per model
- The entire unit may wear light armour.....1 point per model

SPECIAL UNITS

COLD ONE KNIGHTS

31 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Cold One Knight	5	5	4	4	3	1	6	1	9	Cavalry
Dread Knight	5	5	4	4	3	1	6	2	9	Cavalry
Cold One	7	3	0	4	4	1	2	2	3	-

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Lance
- Heavy armour
- Shield

- Hatred (High Elves)
- Fear
- Murderous Prowess
- Natural Armour (6+)
- Stupidity

- May upgrade one Cold One Knight to a Dread Knight.....10 points
- May upgrade one Cold One Knight to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Cold One Knight to a standard bearer.....10 points
- May have a magic standard worth up to.....50 points
- The entire unit may upgrade to have barding.....free

Mount: Cold One

COLD ONE CHARIOT

100 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Cold One Chariot	-	-	-	5	5	4	-	-	-	Chariot (Armour save 6+)
Knight Charioteer	-	5	4	4	-	-	6	1	9	-
Cold One	7	3	0	4	-	-	2	2	-	-

Unit Size: 1

Equipment (Crew):

Special Rules:

Crew: 2 Knight Charioteers

- Spear
- Repeater crossbow
- Heavy armour
- Scythes

- Hatred (High Elves)
- Fear
- Murderous Prowess
- Natural Armour (6+)
- Stupidity

Drawn by: 2 Cold Ones



SCOURGERUNNER CHARIOT

70 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Scourgerunner Chariot	-	-	-	4	4	4	-	-	-	Chariot (Armour save 6+)
Beastmaster Crew	-	4	4	3	-	-	5	1	8	-
Dark Steed	9	3	0	3	-	-	4	1	-	-

Unit Size: 1

Equipment (Crew):

Special Rules:

Crew: 2 Beastmaster Crew

- Spear
- Repeater crossbow
- Sea Dragon Cloak
- Ravager Harpoon

- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess

Drawn by: 2 Dark Steeds

REAPER BOLT THROWER

60 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Reaper Bolt Thrower	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	War Machine (Bolt Thrower)
Dark Elf Crew	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	-

Unit Size: 1 Bolt Thrower and 2 Dark Elf Crew.

Equipment:

Special Rules:

Options:

- Hand weapon
- Medium armour
- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess
- Repeater Bolt Thrower

- May take an additional Dark Elf Crew.....8 points

SPECIAL UNITS

MELUSAI

24 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Melusai	7	5	4	4	4	2	5	2	8	Infantry
Gorgai	7	5	4	4	4	2	5	3	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Polearm
- Light armour

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (Slaanesh)
- Khainite
- Killing Blow
- Murderous Prowess
- Swiftstride

- May upgrade one Melusai to a Gorgai.....10 points
- The entire unit may replace their Polearms with Heartseeker Bows.....7 points/model

KHINERAI

18 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Khinerai	5	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	8	Infantry
Shryke	5	4	4	3	3	1	6	3	8	Infantry

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Light armour
- Heartpiercer Shield

- Ambushers
- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Fly
- Murderous Prowess

- May upgrade one Khinerai to a Shryke.....10 points
- The entire unit may take javelins.....2 points/model

BLOODWRACK MEDUSA

50 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Bloodwrack Medusa	7	5	5	4	4	3	5	3	7	Monstrous Beast

Unit Size: 1

Special Rules (War Hydra):

Equipment:

- Spear

- Avert Your Gaze!
- Bloodwrack Stare
- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Frenzy
- Murderous Prowess



RARE UNITS

BLACK GUARD OF NAGGAROND

16 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Black Guard	5	5	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	Infantry
Tower Master	5	5	4	3	3	1	6	3	9	Infantry

Unit Size: 10+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Polearm
- Heavy armour

- Elven Grace
- Eternal Hatred
- Immunity (Psychology)
- Murderous Prowess
- Stubborn

- May upgrade one Black Guard to a Tower Master.....10 points
- May upgrade one Black Guard to a musician.....10 points
- May upgrade one Black Guard to a standard bearer.....10 points
 - May have a magic standard worth up to.....50 points

DOOMFIRE WARLOCKS

22 points per model

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Doomfire Warlock	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Cavalry
Master of Warlocks	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	3	8	Cavalry
Dark Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5	-

Unit Size: 5+

Special Rules:

Options:

Equipment:

- Hand weapon

Mount:

- Dark Steed

- Cursed Coven
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Fast Cavalry
- Murderous Prowess
- Poisoned Attacks
- Prey of the Dark Prince

- May upgrade one Doomfire Warlock to a Master of Warlocks.....10 points
- The entire unit may take barding.....2 points per model

CAULDRON OF BLOOD

165 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Cauldron of Blood	5	-	-	5	6	5	-	-	-	Shrine (Armour save 6+)
Keeper of the Cauldron	-	4	4	3	-	-	6	2	8	-
Guardian	-	4	4	3	-	-	6	1	8	-

Unit Size: 1

Equipment (Crew):

Special Rules:

Crew: 1 Keeper of the Cauldron and 2 Guardians.

- Two hand weapons

- Bloodshield of Khaine
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Frenzy
- Fury of Khaine
- Khainite
- Large Target
- Murderous Prowess
- Poisoned Attacks
- Strength of Khaine
- Terror

BLOODWRACK SHRINE

125 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Bloodwrack Shrine	5	-	-	5	6	5	-	-	-	Shrine (Armour save 6+)
Shrinekeepers	-	4	4	3	-	-	5	1	8	-
Bloodwrack Medusa	-	5	5	4	-	-	5	3	-	-

Unit Size: 1

Equipment (Crew):

Special Rules:

Crew:

1 Bloodwrack Medusa and 2 Shrinekeepers

- Spear

- Aura of Agony
- Avert Your Gaze!
- Bloodwrack Stare (Bloodwrack Medusa only)
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess
- Large Target
- Terror

RARE UNITS

WAR HYDRA

200 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
War Hydra	6	4	4	5	5	5	2	8	6	Monster
Beastmaster Apprentice	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry

Unit Size:

1 War Hydra and 2
Beastmaster Apprentices

Equipment:

- Two hand weapons
(Beastmaster Apprentices)

**Special Rules
(War Hydra):**

- Natural Armour (4+)
- Loss of Heads
- Mixed Unit
- Regeneration (4+)

**Special Rules
(Beastmaster
Apprentice):**

- Elven Grace
- Hatred (High Elves)
- Murderous Prowess

Options:

- May take one of the following:
 - Fiery Breath.....20 points
 - Spit Fire.....10 points

KHARIBDYSS

210 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Kharibdyss	6	5	0	6	6	5	4	5	6	Monster
Beastmaster Apprentice	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Infantry

Unit Size:

1 Kharibdyss and 2
Beastmaster Apprentices

Equipment:

- Two hand weapons
(Beastmaster Apprentices)

Special Rules (Kharibdyss):

- Abyssal Howl
- Aquatic
- Feast of Bones
- Natural Armour (4+)
- Poisoned Attacks
- Mixed Unit

Special Rules (Beastmaster Apprentice):

- Elven Grace
- Murderous Prowess
- Hatred (High Elves)



AVATAR OF KHAINE

225 points

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Troop Type
Avatar of Khaine	6	6	0	6	6	5	3	5	10	Monster

Unit Size: 1

Equipment:

- Hand weapon
- Full plate armour

Special Rules:

- Animated Construct
- Hatred
- Killing Blow
- Magic Resistance (2)
- Sustained Fury
- Unstable



SUMMARY

LORDS	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Dreadlord	5	7	7	4	3	3	8	4	10	In
Hag Queen	5	7	5	4	3	3	8	4	10	In
Hellebron	5	7	7	4	3	3	9	4	10	In
Malekith	5	8	7	5	4	3	8	4	10	In
- Seraphon (Black Dragon)	6	7	0	6	6	6	3	6	8	Mo
Malus Darkblade	5	7	7	4	3	3	8	4	10	In
- Spite (Cold One)	7	3	0	4	4	1	2	3	4	WB
Morathi	5	5	4	3	3	3	6	3	10	In
- Sulephet (Dark Pegasus)	8	4	0	4	4	2	4	3	6	WB
Supreme Sorceress	5	4	4	3	3	3	5	1	9	In

HEROES	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Assassin	5	9	9	4	3	2	9	3	10	In
Beastmaster	5	5	5	4	3	2	6	2	8	In
Black Ark Fleetmaster	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	In
Death Hag	5	6	5	4	3	2	7	3	9	In
Disciple of Khaine	5	5	5	4	3	2	6	2	9	In
Kouran Darkhand	5	8	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	In
Lokhir Fellheart	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	In
Master	5	6	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	In
Rakarath	5	6	6	4	3	2	6	3	9	In
- Bracchus (Black Dragon)	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8	Mo
Shadowblade	6	10	10	4	3	2	10	3	9	In
Sorceress	5	4	4	3	3	2	5	1	8	In
Tullaris Dreadbringer	5	7	6	4	3	2	7	3	9	In

CORE UNITS	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Bleaksword	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
- Lordling	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	In
City Guard	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
- Guardmaster	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	In
Corsair	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
- Reaver	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	In
Dark Rider	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	Ca
- Herald	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Ca
- Dark Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5	-
Darkshard	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
- Guardmaster	5	4	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
Dreadspear	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
- Lordling	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	In
Harpy	5	3	0	3	3	1	5	2	6	In
- Harpy Queen	5	3	0	3	3	1	5	3	6	In
Slave	4	2	2	3	3	1	3	1	4	In
- Slave Master	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	In

SPECIAL UNITS	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Bloodwrack Medusa	7	5	5	4	4	3	5	3	7	MB
Cold One Chariot	-	-	-	5	5	4	-	-	-	Ch
- Knight Charioteer	-	5	4	4	-	-	6	1	9	-
- Cold One	7	3	0	4	-	-	2	2	-	-
Cold One Knight	5	5	4	4	3	1	6	1	9	Ca
- Dread Knight	5	5	4	4	3	1	6	2	9	Ca
- Cold One	7	3	0	4	4	1	2	2	3	-
Executioner	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	1	8	In
- Draich Master	5	5	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	In
Khinerai	5	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	8	In
- Shryke	5	4	4	3	3	1	6	3	8	In
Melusai	7	5	4	4	4	2	5	2	8	In
- Gorgai	7	5	4	4	4	2	5	3	8	In

SPECIAL UNITS (Cont.)	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Reaper Bolt Thrower	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	WM
- Dark Elf Crew	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	-
Scourgerunner Chariot	-	-	-	4	4	4	-	-	-	Ch
- Beastmaster Crew	-	4	4	3	-	-	5	1	8	-
- Dark Steed	9	3	0	3	-	-	4	1	-	-
Shade	5	5	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
- Bloodshade	5	5	6	3	3	1	5	1	8	In
Sister of Slaughter	5	6	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	In
- Handmaiden of Shards	5	6	4	3	3	1	6	3	9	In
Witch Elf	5	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	8	In
- Hag	5	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	8	In

RARE UNITS	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Avatar of Khaine	6	6	0	6	6	5	3	5	10	Mo
Black Guard	5	5	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	In
- Tower Master	5	5	4	3	3	1	6	3	9	In
Bloodwrack Shrine	5	-	-	5	6	5	-	-	-	Sh
- Shrinekeepers	-	4	4	3	-	-	5	1	8	-
- Bloodwrack Medusa	-	5	5	4	-	-	5	3	-	-
Cauldron of Blood	5	-	-	5	6	5	-	-	-	Sh
- Keeper of the Cauldron	-	4	4	3	-	-	6	2	8	-
- Guardian	-	4	4	3	-	-	6	1	8	-
Doomfire Warlock	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	Ca
- Master of Warlocks	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	3	8	Ca
- Dark Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5	-
Kharibdyss	6	5	0	6	6	5	4	5	6	Mo
- Beastmaster Apprentice	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	-
War Hydra	6	4	4	5	5	5	2	8	6	Mo
- Beastmaster Apprentice	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	-

MOUNTS	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Type
Black Dragon	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8	Mo
Cold One	7	3	0	4	4	1	2	2	3	WB
Black Dragon	6	6	0	6	6	6	3	5	8	Mo
Dark Pegasus	8	3	0	4	4	2	4	2	6	WB
Dark Steed	9	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	5	WB
Manticore	6	5	0	5	5	4	5	4	5	Mo

Troop Type Key: In = *Infantry*, WB = *War Beast*, Ca = *Cavalry*, MI = *Monstrous Infantry*, MB = *Monstrous Beast*, MC = *Monstrous Cavalry*, Mo = *Monster*, Ch = *Chariot*, Sw = *Swarms*, Un = *Unique*, WM = *War Machine*.











DARK ELVES

For thousands of years, the Dark Elves have plundered the riches of the world, using the blood and treasure of distance lands to fuel their war against the High Elves. From his iron throne, the Witch Kings musters armies to assail civilisation. Corsairs descend on trading ports leaving only death in their wake, sorceresses conjure the blackest of magics to consume the foe and crazed devotees of the Bloody-Handed God slaughters their way across entire kingdoms. Let the craven cover behind their walls, nowhere is safe when the Dark Elves march to war.

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