

DARK HERESY

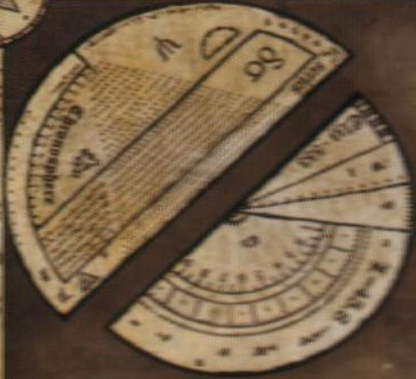
TATTERED FATES



PART I OF THE
HAARLOCK'S LEGACY TRILOGY

WARHAMMER
40,000
ROLEPLAY

Imperator nos regit bo nos totus ~ flagnum ornamentum nunquam defessus



Permissum flamma existo sentio ~ Veritas

Kinward

Pacis est tossor somnium

THE HALO STARS



liberatus est mens ut est quoque negrandis dūbito fides

Astronimicon badum rector nos per li... atis Deus - Imperator misericordia

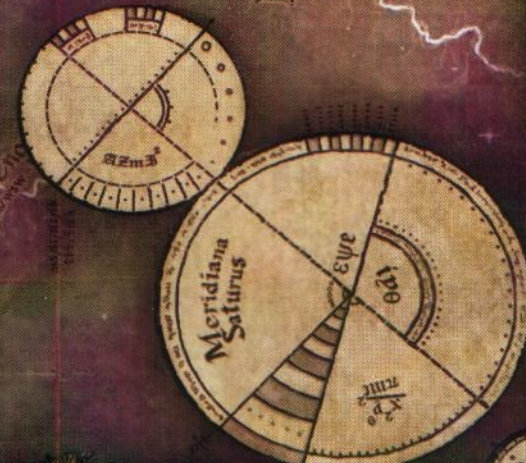
Fides non Altemus, Haereticum, Beneficus

Coreward

Mlorior in Snuus muneris est scio eternus bita



IXANIAD SECTOR



Dotus laus immortalis amperator snper snus rutilus per ~ Rex pro cernam



GHUKKI!

MAKE A WISH!



SKRUTCH!



I am pretty sure I did not wish for that to happen.



And I do not see the pony I wanted either.

TO BE CONTINUED

DARK HERESY

TATTERED FATES



ROLEPLAYING IN THE GRIM
DARKNESS OF THE 4¹ST MILLENNIUM

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FANTASY
FLIGHT
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INTRODUCTION

GAME MASTER'S BRIEFING

TATTERED FATES is an adventure divided into three parts that features a number of different game styles, from survival horror, to intrigue, to investigation and desperate action. It can be played on its own, but is intended to form the first part of the modular Haarlock Legacy Campaign.

The adventure opens with the Acolytes being captured and plunged into a nightmarish experience of psychic invasion, pain, and darkness before waking into a hellish death-trap; to escape, they must fight for their lives. Once free, the Acolytes race to discover what is happening amongst the pageantry of a great and surreal carnival before discovering where they must be and what they must do in order to stop the death of an entire world at the appointed hour of fate and stop a hideous evil from gaining possession of a vital part of the dread Haarlock Legacy.

TATTERED FATES will reward involved and imaginative play, and the adventure itself is intended to take two to six Acolytes somewhere between six and ten sessions to complete,

GM'S ADVICE: INTEGRATING EXISTING ACOLYTES INTO TATTERED FATES

Depending on the kind of campaign you are running, it is quite possible that your Acolytes have accrued all sorts of interesting bits of kit, weapons, and chattels, perhaps even a vessel of their own, which you are, by beginning this adventure as written, going to mercilessly take from them. This divestment is not necessarily a bad thing! After all, **DARK HERESY** is not a game about who can acquire the most toys and spend the most money, but about holding back the nightmare for one more day. However, you need not deprive them permanently of items they have fought and strived for. Their possessions can simply have been left behind when the Acolytes were abducted and now be in the hands of the Inquisition, which is no doubt investigating the Acolytes' disappearance, to be reclaimed later should they prove successful on Quaddis.

Alternatively, you may seed personal items, weapons, and other gear for the Acolytes to find and recover during the closing stages of the Adventure's first part, The Red Cages (see the Vault 13 section on page 22), or their favourite gear might be found in the hands of their abductors. The city of Xicarph itself offers numerous places where replacement kits of a very high standard may be acquired by fair means or foul. However, it is important to note that if you do restore lost possessions to your Acolytes, signs and proof of their Inquisitorial authority or means of escape off Quaddis should be withheld—after all, we don't want to make things too easy for them!

USING DISCIPLES OF THE DARK GODS

This adventure features two villainous organisations: the Pilgrims of Hayte and the Beast House, both of which have been fully detailed in the Dark Heresy supplement **DISCIPLES OF THE DARK GODS**. While the information presented there is not needed to run this adventure, it can help the GM to add considerably more depth and options for these baleful groups, and the adventure The House of Dust and Ash contained within it also forms part of the Haarlock Legacy Campaign and can be played before or after **TATTERED FATES**.

depending on how many of its options are used. The Acolytes played may be of any rank with some modification of the opposition presented here (although ranks four to six are perhaps best), and in fact the context of the opening episode in the Red Cages of Xicarph makes an ideal way to introduce fresh players and novice Acolytes into a **DARK HERESY** campaign.

BACKGROUND SYNOPSIS

Long ago during the birth of the Calixis Sector, the Rogue Trader line of Haarlock brought with them across the stars a servant to protect their secrets. Ancient and terrible, it knew every price the Haarlocks paid for power; it was named the Widower and brought death to any who would try to learn its master's secrets. The Widower was a protean terror, a thing of many shapes and endless masks. It was bound to the strange power of the Steel Clock at the heart of the Haarlock estate in the city of Xicarph and only obeyed the will of a scion of the Haarlock line. Prophecies whisper that it will reappear in the time when the sun above Xicarph turns black and the Light of the God-Emperor is lost. The Pilgrims of Hayte, a nihilistic warp cult, seek to claim Haarlock's Legacy and believe that the Widower can reveal its secrets. So, the Pilgrims have come to Quaddis to claim the Widower through a diabolical plot. They have bought the services of the infamous Beast House slavers to bring them individuals who have been marked by warp spawned prophecies and amongst whom they hope to find one who has the blood of Haarlock and can command the Widower to reveal the Haarlocks' secrets.

The Widower, however, has its own plans. Spiteful and enraged at the Pilgrims' plot, it seeks to manipulate the Steel Clock and the Grand Conjunction to bathe the world of Xicarph in the light of Komus, the Tyrant Star—a sight captured centuries ago by the Haarlocks' power—and lay all to waste.





THE QUADDIS GAZETEER

THE WORLD OF
QUADDIS

•

THE GREAT CITY OF
XICARPH

•

THE FESTIVAL OF
TATTERED FATE

CHAPTER I: THE QUADDIS GAZETTEER

THE WORLD OF QUADDIS

Considered by some that have heard of it to be little more than a myth, Quaddis is a strange world, and one unique in the Calixis Sector both in political structure and history. Quaddis is not a planet eaten up by agriculture or vast and hungry factories, but rather it is bound to the whims and caprices of the elite of many other worlds and is carved up into their private kingdoms. Quaddis is a world isolated and protected, a false paradise of captured wonders and of long buried secrets.

Having only one city, the remainder of this pleasant and temperate world is given over to vast estates known as fiefs. Each fief is used for whatever diversion the owners wish, from cultivating rare vintages to hunting exotic creatures. A fief is the absolute realm of its owners, and within it, they are subject only to their own laws and the lore of the Throne, though “what the Emperor does not know,” they claim, “will not hurt him.”

Quaddis’ star system is also unusual in two ways. The first way is the strange and erratic orbits of its many small planets,

PLANETARY DATA

Population: Unknown/Variable (resident population estimated to be fewer than 5 million).

Tithe Grade: Colonial Exemption (planet not developed to point of tithing)

Climate/Geography/Biosphere: Abundant flora, ideal life sustaining conditions, few hazardous life forms other than those introduced from off-world. Extensive tropical equatorial region, with wild, uncultivated temperate zones and saline seas covering the majority of the landmass. Ice-bound Polar Regions. The only major settlement is in the northern polar region (Xicarph—colonial centre of governance).

Governmental Type: Colonial administration—Central Authority Indefinitely Suspended

Planetary Governor: None (Last Colonial Governor Regent—Thaddeus Haarlock circa 457-690. M41)

Adept Presence: Minor Adeptus Administratum and Adeptus Ministorum presence. Note that due to its unique history, Quaddis is adjudged not to be fully part of the Imperium of Man nor subject to the full weight of its law. Military: None except private vassals of the fief owners

Trade/Economy: None; Quaddis has no industry, has nothing to trade, and has no basis for any economy other than the intrinsic wealth of its masters.



which lead in turn to many strange and unpredictable tidal forces and cosmological phenomena (of which the “Grand Conjunction” is the best known). The second way is that the system is almost alone in its volume of space, far from any other inhabited systems, unattended by trade routes, and not appearing on many star charts.

PLANETARY HISTORY

Quaddis is a world that would not exist if it were not for the peculiar circumstances of its foundation. As the Angevin Crusade swept through the volume that would become the Calixis Sector, it discovered many worlds, some of which were inhabitable and a great many of which were not. Of those capable of supporting life, some were bitterly contested through war while others never felt the footfall of sentient creatures. Quaddis fell into the latter category, discovered by a small expeditionary fleet under the command of Faustino Haarlock, second son of the Haarlock line. Quaddis was then unnamed and unexplored, and the only habitable planet within this volume of largely empty and otherwise unremarkable space. Haarlock was notoriously farsighted and immediately designated the world as a newly founded open colony, dividing it into independent development fiefdoms and giving it the name Quaddis in reference to an ancient Terran force of judgement. Quaddis was graded as possessing great potential. However, because it was completely undeveloped and existed in a near stellar desert, it would require considerable resources to develop, resources and effort that at the time the Crusade could not afford, and so the matter was given little thought by Haarlock’s superiors. During the normal course of events, matters would have progressed until viable settlements were established, at which time governance of them would have passed to the world’s first fully mandated Imperial Commander. At that point, Quaddis would have taken its place in the Imperium and have passed under central authority, and so it would have (albeit slowly) were it not for Faustino Haarlock’s cunning.

Haarlock’s plan was elegant in its simplicity. He reasoned

that if the world were not developed, but kept in its current state with no colony settlements built, then there would be no reason for the system of fief ownership to lapse. The owners then could maintain their exclusive control over their domains indefinitely, and with that control, certain exceptions to the usual run of Imperial law. So it was that with Faustino as their broker and his young nephew Gabriel freshly appointed as first planetary regent, the very wealthiest of the fledgling sector's powers and out-sector noble houses looking for a base of operations divvied-up Quaddis like spice cake. Dubious though it was, it was also utterly legal. Of course, the Imperium could break the mock pre-colony status of Quaddis if it chose, but by the time the central authority over Calixis was truly established, the die was already cast—and why would the great and powerful shatter this useful arrangement when most already had their own fiefs on Quaddis?

Consequently, Quaddis became the private retreat of the very wealthy, a place where they could rest, entertain, plot, bury secrets, and indulge in any way they pleased far from prying eyes. The peace between the powerful was kept by the

wish not to “rock the boat” and bring the wrath of the Lord Sector or, worse yet, the Inquisition down on their heads. So it has remained for centuries.

THE POWERS THAT BE

The power structure of Quaddis is as unique as it is corrupt and farcical. Nominally, the planet is ruled by the Governor Regent, but this office stands vacant, the Administratum's influence is hamstrung by its own laws, and the hand of the other Adepta is barely felt. A small and largely powerless colonial executive serves as caretaker ruler and mediator for the many noble houses and wealthy factions that maintain control of Quaddis' fiefdoms. Within a fief, the authority of its owners is all but absolute, but in the fief of another, they have no power. Mutual interest and the inability of any one party to affect another to any great extent shy of open conflict keeps Quaddis a peaceful if impotent world, just as its rulers desire.

The Office of the Colony Governor Regent

The position of Colony Governor Regent in Imperial Law is routinely one of a caretaker leader who guides a recently settled world through its founding until it takes its place and station in the Imperium. It is not intended as a governmental model to last millennia, but on Quaddis, it has, passed down for generations through the Rogue Trader line of Haarlock. Worse still, Thaddeus Haarlock, the last bearer of the title, is centuries dead and no new Haarlock has stepped forward to claim the title. Nevertheless, the office and its attendant staff remains. Aside from forming the nominal civil government of Xicarph and administering docking and trade, the only other important purpose it serves is the sale and disposition of fiefs on Quaddis in the Regent's name. Although given that it has been over 500 years since a fief was available to purchase, the Regent's absence has caused few difficulties.

The Locus Prefecta

The office of Locus Prefecta is a functional arm of the Administratum charged with the growth of Quaddis as a colony-administering colony settlements as they spring up and maintaining records and making preparations for a planet's categorisation and tithing by the Imperium. There being no colony settlements other than Xicarph worth the title and no prospect of any being ever founded while the rule of the fiefdoms persists, the Prefecta has become an anachronism and its continued existence regarded as a rather poor joke by others. Still funded and mandated by the Administratum, it efficiently continues to tabulate and record, monitor expenditure and mark the passage of time, waiting for a day that will never come.

The Fief Owners

Quaddis would, of course, be nothing without the wealth and influence of those who own the various fiefs that make a patchwork of its surface. The owners are made up of great

VOICES OF AUTHORITY

Due to Quaddis' somewhat unique power structure, the ties that bind the Imperium and the rights and titles of common authority are substantially changed here in ways that can dangerously blindside and shock outsiders.

The Adeptus Arbitres: There is no official Arbitres presence on Quaddis thanks to its status, nor is its authority recognised more than is politically deemed expedient by the fief masters. Often Arbitrators will be politely tolerated at best and made to “disappear” if they become troublesome. Suffice to say, this situation has never sat well with the Arbitres, but in the matter, Imperial law itself ties their hands.

The Departamento Munitorium: Quaddis houses no Imperial military garrison and raises neither PDF nor mites in manpower. To the Munitorium the world simply doesn't exist. Many former Guardsmen and officers can be found in the private cadres of the nobles, however, and those skilled at arms are often in demand.

The Ministorum: The Imperial Creed on Quaddis is kept to a degree by the individual fief owners in their private Temples, and no strong independent Ministorum presence has been allowed to inconveniently flourish to challenge the status quo. Unless one bears noble blood as well, the aquila is no surety of either safety or authority on this world.

The Inquisition: The Inquisition cares little for the “rights” of Quaddis' masters but is mindful enough of the potential repercussions and the possible future destabilisation of the sector to wield its power on Quaddis with subtlety and surgical precision. As a result, its agents move largely incognito, and it uses many spies and intermediaries, preferring to strike beyond this world's borders where expedient, based on what its agents learn here, unless of course it is offered no choice but to strike on Quaddis.

noble families from across the Calixis Sector and indeed far beyond it, with great trade dynasties and even houses of the Navis Nobilitate, Imperial Navy, and Rogue Traders each maintaining some holdings here. Quaddis exists for the fief owners' pleasure, and many fiefs serve their masters both as places of refuge and safety away from prying eyes as well as stately pleasure palaces removed from the grime and squalor of parochial worldly matters. Though the fief owners represent a terrifying level of wealth and power, they are almost exclusively concerned with their own affairs and take little interest in anything outside their own fief, except perhaps the latest fashions displayed in Xicarph or the patronage of the celebrated performers in the city theatres and, of course, the genteel art of subtle vendetta against each other.

Within their fiefs, the owners' word is a law as absolute as that of an Imperial Commander, and as long as their edicts do not publicly flout the High Imperial Law, then they may pass ordinances and mete justice as they see fit. Several such owners consider trespass a most severe crime and mount extensive ground and air defences, all slaved to immediately punish such a crime with death.

THE FIEFS

The bulk of Quaddis' landmass is divided into privately owned fiefdoms. These fiefs vary in size, shape, and design based upon the whims of their owners, being kept largely for recreation and pleasure facilities, bolt holes, and getaways, and many have been held by the same families and houses for thousands of years. It is not uncommon to find large areas of landmass given over to huge hunting grounds stocked with exotic prey, kilometres of sealed environments for rare plant species or artificial domed ecosystems, and all the other diverse "pleasures" money can buy. The hereditary ownership and almost non-existent planetary authority has also meant that several fiefs have become dangerously disused, their villas derelict and their grounds roamed by strange, once-captive, creatures.

THE GREAT CITY OF XICARPH

The only city Quaddis sports is called Xicarph—if indeed it can even truly be called a city. Xicarph, situated at Quaddis' northern arctic pole, is a sprawling vision of grandiose palaces, marble plazas, fecund gardens, and echoing amphitheatres—all bathed in a balmy heat contained beneath a sealed dome of brass and armour crystal that keeps the killing cold of the polar ice flats from disturbing the city's inhabitants.

Xicarph is the planet's legal capitol but has few trappings of government, and even less of industry or production. Instead, it is a setting for all manner of revels and diversions, a sealed and guarded playground and meeting place for the obscenely wealthy and those whose dealings and power stretch across the worlds of the Calixis Sector. Xicarph is a marvel to the eye and a marked contrast to many other Imperial cities, a sprawling riot of white stone, marble, gold and adamantine. A place of open plazas, sumptuous palaces, wide promenades,

THE LOST FIEF OF THE SINDERFEL

No one knows what crimes the Sinderfel committed, for the Holy Ordos need give no reason for their actions, but few can doubt they paid the highest of prices. It is whispered around the private salons of Xicarph that their doom came in the dark heat of the night, in the form of black winged craft and killing shadows, and that the flare of weapon fire could be seen from palace balconies a hundred kilometres away. As one, the Sinderfel were swept away, and their estates, unclaimed and shunned, have been left to moulder and fall into ruin. It is said that halls of the Sinderfel fief on Quaddis have since become overgrown, their brass latticed herbariums broken and the exotic species within seeded amongst the lawns and pools to run wild. Their shattered manse in Xicarph still bears the marks of the Inquisition's swift justice. No room was left untouched, but rumour speaks of secret vaults and hidden follies still rich with the Sinderfel wealth for those desperate enough to claim them.

stately gardens, and clean air, Xicarph's beauty belies its true nature as a product of intrigue, vanity, and the callous abuse of power. Beneath its heavenly exterior, it is as corrosive and deadly as the worst world the Calixis Sector has to offer.

As well as being home to a few thousand functionaries and attendants who can be truly called the city's natives, its population swells and falls dramatically with the movements to and from residences of the city's patrons and their entourages and with the movements of travellers, revellers, entertainers and traders. This transient population is fed by the fact that Xicarph also has the world's lone open starport, and is thus a stopping point for itinerant entertainment troupes and jaded travellers from across the sector seeking Quaddis' pleasures, if they have the wealth to afford the exorbitant landing fees.

Xicarph is both a wondrous construction in itself and a relic of the Calixis Sector's founding days, and like the rest of Quaddis, it is home to many forgotten things and dark echoes of the past. Running for kilometres beneath the city's surface, sunk like roots into the rock below, is a maze of passageways, storage chambers, service ducts, geo-thermal reactors and, above all, secrets best left buried. Part of this shadowy labyrinth of steel and darkness carries the legendary name of the "Red Cages," a network of slaughterhouses, cage-complexes, and containment pens in which savage creatures are kept to fuel the blood sport arenas (and worse) in the city above.

CITY REGIONS AND DISTRICTS

Much of the city is made up of wide public spaces and the private villas and walled estates of the wealthy and powerful, each vying to outdo the other in splendour and prominence, but certain sections either through their use or particular history are worthy of more singular description, as detailed here.

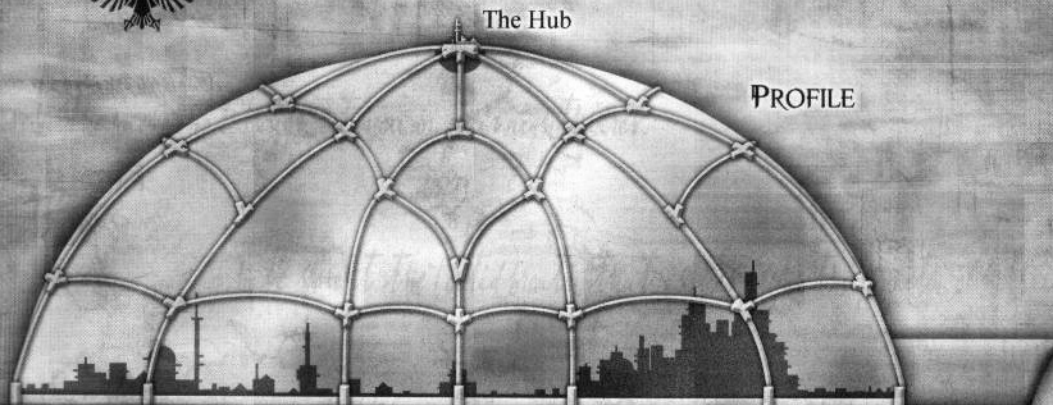
THE GREAT CITY OF XICARPH

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The Hub

PROFILE

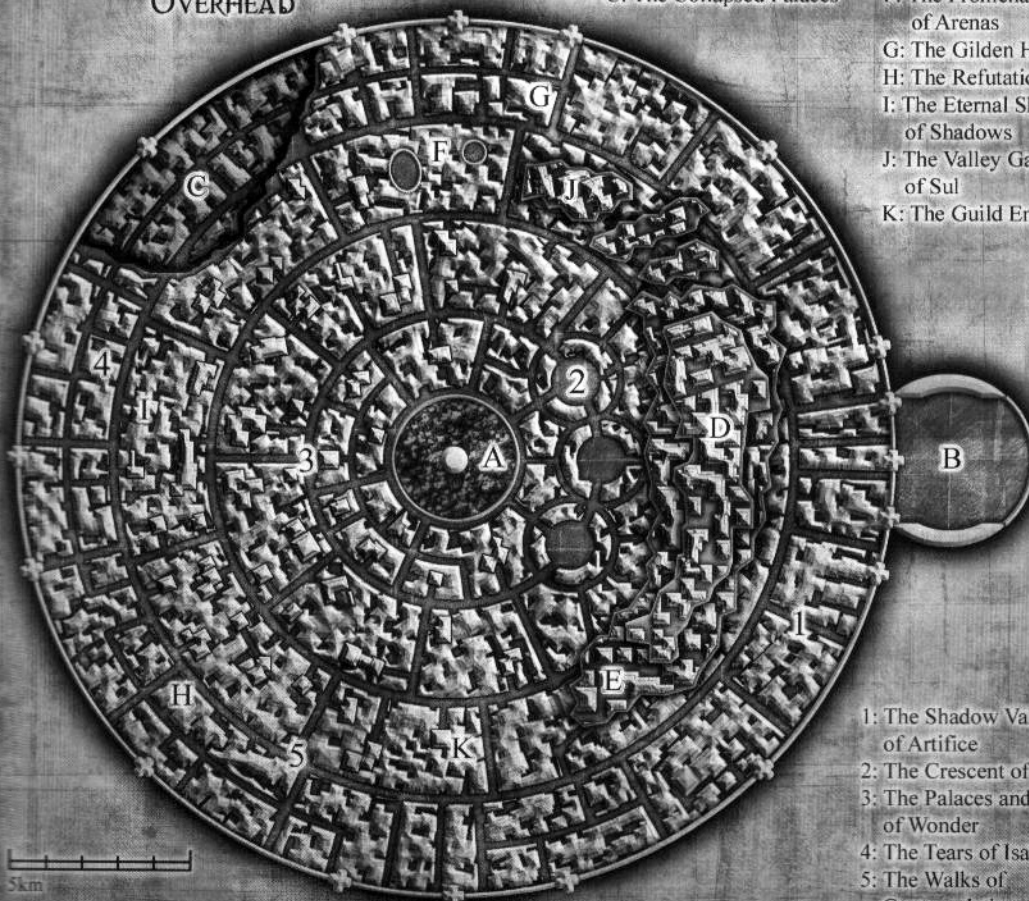


Arctic Plain

OVERHEAD

A: The Great Estate of Gabriel Chase
B: Ashtear Starport
C: The Collapsed Palaces

D: The High Steps of the Pleasure Gardens
E: The Akasen Follies
F: The Promenade of Arenas
G: The Gilden Houses
H: The Refutation
I: The Eternal Show of Shadows
J: The Valley Garden of Sul
K: The Guild Enclave



1: The Shadow Vale of Artifice
2: The Crescent of Visages
3: The Palaces and Structures of Wonder
4: The Tears of Isal
5: The Walks of Contemplation

THE DARK SEASON

Thanks to its geography and the planet's erratic orbit, Xicarph's long bright polar "summers" are punctuated by brief "winters" of twilight and chill. During this dark season, the noble manses are shut up and vacated, and Xicarph becomes an emptied, desolate place. While the few city natives huddle in their domiciles and sluggish trade passes through the starport, silence and shadow have lease in Xicarph's empty plazas and dark arenas. Many strange and sinister tales are spoken of the things that pass in this deathly time; none are pleasant and many are true.

The Hub and Ashtear Starport

Hanging from the apex of the containment dome is the Hub, a blister of crystal and brass that houses the offices of the Governor Regent and the Office of Colonisation. More importantly, it also houses the docking control centre that controls orbital traffic and the city's more than adequate aerial defences, guiding the landing of craft on Ashtear Starport, located on the exterior of the city's dome. Passengers disembarking pass through Xicarph's halls of greeting and descend to the city via mag-rail cars that glide down the inside of the dome, giving mismatched vistas of Xicarph and the ice planes stretching out all around, while cargo and less prominent travellers are ferried through the lightless tunnels of the undercity.

The Promenade of Arenas

This raucous district houses the bulk of the city's public stadia—a mixture of fighting arenas, bestiaries, xenological exhibits, and bloodsport pits—along with their attendant gambling houses, bars, feast halls, and all manner of other entertainments. Like much in Xicarph, even these bloody locales have been constructed in a high style, with the sands of battle surrounded by high tiers of steps and towering marble walls draped in red samite, crowned with ornate statuary depicting the heroes of the Imperium.

Although always active, and a considerable draw for both the city's natives and travellers to Xicarph, the Promenade comes into its own during the time of the great Festival of Tattered Fate when the greatest of houses and power cartels present on Quaddis compete with each other to mount ever greater spectacles of death and glory, and in so doing gain honour and outdo their rivals. At this time, the Promenade of Arenas throngs at every hour with the expectant masses who take their place beside the sector's nobility to bay for blood, human and xenos, and to wager fortunes great and small on the clash of their favoured champions.

The High Steps of the Pleasure Gardens

To define the famed Pleasure Gardens of Xicarph as a single area would be both arbitrary and inaccurate, for extravagant gardens and walled verdant enclosures can be found all across the city in pockets and trails of lush plantings, each designed to surprise and charm those who discover it. However, when most people talk of the Pleasure Gardens, they refer to the

stepped public gardens that form a raised arc that curves around one flank of the cityscape where the most extravagant and strange wonders can be found. Rising at their highest point to almost a third of the dome's height, the High Steps are a mass of artfully weathered stone, tiled staircases, and shaded promenades—all surrounded by the most wonderful exotic plants and flowers. Tended and protected by silent servitors of verdigris-coated brass while strange birds murmur in branches of trees native to planets half a galaxy away, the gardens are ever alive with the heady, almost narcotic scent of flowers and sap. Though for half its orbital cycle Xicarph enjoys almost perpetual sunlight, for some time the polar region has almost no light. During this time, solar lamps burn on the inside of the dome so that the gardens might survive.

The Akasen Follies

Seated at the southern tip of the High Steps, amid an artful arrangement of marble domes, pavilions, and courtyards is the area known as the Akasen Follies. They are the domain of rare pleasures, both subtle and visceral, some purchased only at a cost that would beggar a feudal king. Fabled in half-true tales across the sector both licentious and often sinister, the Akasen-trained companions and courtesans are among the most respected and sought after in the Segmentum. It is said the sip of certain vintages laid down here can kill by their perfection alone.

The Collapsed Palaces

Even though fair Xicarph is dominated by the privileged and their dwelling places, it also has its destitute and despairing poor, some deposited here against their will, the victims of circumstance or ill-fortune, while others the casualties of the intrigues of their betters. The place where these unfortunates gather, and Xicarph's closest equivalent of a slum, is an area of the city known as the Collapsed Palaces. Destroyed and laid low by some ancient disaster or assault whose cause has been long forgotten, this area forms a great irregular rent in the city's surface, several kilometres long and nearly half a kilometre wide and deep, where the marble palaces and private compounds were sundered and cast down into the depths of Xicarph's underworld. Pointedly ignored by the rest of the city, the Collapsed Palaces is the only place the poor and outcast can go, and thousands eke out ramshackle lives in the upper reaches of the collapsed area, forgotten and unaided. Life here in the shadow of Xicarph's opulence is bitter and uncertain, and the depths of the rent swallow up without a trace many who venture there.

The Valley Gardens of Sul

Named for one of Quaddis' more pious nobles of centuries past who founded them, the Valley Gardens are quiet and shadowed places given over largely to sprawling cemetery complexes, mausoleums, and monuments to wars and saints long forgotten.

The Guild Enclave and the Gilden Houses

Given the wealth and influence held by Quaddis' transitory population, it is perhaps only natural that in Xicarph a district is set aside where that wealth can be bartered, traded, and squandered. The Guild Enclave itself is an arrangement of private villas and compounds where most of the prominent commercial enterprises and organisations from across the sector (and indeed beyond) maintain representation. Their presence is maintained both for the prestige it brings them and to avoid the potential disadvantage their absence might create, as much as for any actual business they might conduct. Attendant on the enclave are the publicly open Gilden Houses—a profusion of markets, emporia, and galleries where some of the most highly valued and exotic goods known to man can be found for sale.

The Eternal Show of Shadows

There are numerous play houses and theatres in Xicarph, all hoping to draw the favour of visitors and the patronage of the mobility, but no other has the reputation of the Eternal Show of Shadows, a venue of such status that other playhouses appealing to the elite of Quaddis have clustered around it to form a distinct district. The theatre itself sinks into the ground, and such is the skill of its designers that it appears to be a portion of a ruined city sealed beneath the ground. The seats are the steps of a broken temple, the boxes are the balconies of houses, and the players walk on the cobbles of a street beneath a painted sky. The renown of the Eternal Show has persisted

since the early days of Xicarph's founding, and unsurprisingly, it has become a focus for a realm of legend and folklore all its own. To this day, its performances of both play and opera are greeted with universal acclaim, and it is said that competition for tickets to see the Eternal Show's single performance of *The Mask of Camilla* became the subject of blood feuds between the noble houses and of fortunes changing hands.

The Refutation

This somewhat forlorn district houses many of Xicarph's adepts and their works, built around a series of amphitheatres and decrepit privately sponsored colleges which in recent centuries have been left largely abandoned by the whims of fashion and fate. This area also houses the drab grey ziggurat of the Locus Prefecta (see page 7) and several cathedral-like data-vaults given over to the storage of Quaddis' planetary archives.

The Grand Estate of Gabriel Chase

The one time seat of the Haarlock line on Quaddis, Gabriel Chase is as strange and splendid a place as one can find, even on such a strange world as this. Sitting directly beneath the apex of the containment dome, the estate is the largest walled enclave in the city, and was raised during Xicarph's early days by the aged Gabriel Haarlock to be his private realm. Artificial rivers flow through acres of primal forest and jungle dotted with follies and monuments ranging from artfully ruined



basilica to cruel towers jutting from stone crags. At the estate's centre lies the manse, a great tiered building said to extend down into the bedrock of Quaddis just as it towers above Xicarph. The manse is also said to house the famous Haarlock Collection, which scholars from across the sector regularly (and often fruitlessly) petition to be able to view. The sum of generations of acquisition within and without the bounds of Imperial space, the collection spans works of art, literature, and artefacts, as well as a vast collection of preserved specimens anthropological, xenological, and biological. At the heart of the manse can be found the Theatre of Clocks, a chamber in which a million separate mechanisms are said to faultlessly keep the time of a million worlds across the Imperium, and at its centre sits Haarlock's legendary Steel Clock, a device keyed in some way to the Grand Conjunction, counting down to some unguessed at future.

THE FESTIVAL OF TATTERED FATE

The Festival of Tattered Fate is a tradition as old as Quaddis itself and is seen as one of the most delightful, risqué, and unmissable events to occur in the Calixis Sector by some of its elite, and is wholeheartedly shunned by others. Also known variously as the Grand Carnival of Blood or the Passing of the Black Star, it is a legendary celebration that occurs erratically every five or six decades when the stars are right, an event whose stories and myths, both wondrous and terrible, are retold countless times by the great and the powerful.

Through a coincidence of astronomical alignment, the sun above Xicarph is eclipsed for a prolonged period of time on an irregular frequency by the many erratically orbiting planets of Quaddis' solar system which slide into strange alignments around the sun. This event, called the Grand Conjunction, is viewed as highly portentous and is filled with signs and omens. During it, many strange climatic and spatial phenomena are observed, not the least of which is that for the time the eclipse lasts, Quaddis is cut off completely from Astropathic communication. This phenomenon, in turn, has led to the traditional belief that during the time of the Grand Conjunction, while the eclipse lasts, the city passes "out of the light of the Emperor." It is claimed by most that the festival is held in memorial to the ancient times before the Imperium's rule came to protect humanity and fear still stalked mankind. That at least is the theory; the practise however is somewhat different.

Once it has been determined by augury that a Grand Conjunction is imminent, the city of Xicarph is given over to carnival and festivity. During this time, the various noble houses and the powers-that-be on Quaddis compete in staging countless entertainments, pageants, bloody diversions, and spectacles—both for each other and the masses of those beneath them in the Imperium's social order, numbers of which are (somewhat perversely) routed to Xicarph for this express purpose. These celebrations, which themselves become bywords for excess, are however merely a preparation and a side-show for the main event.

At the height of the Festival of Tattered Fate, when Quaddis'

sun begins to go into eclipse, there is a deathly pause known as "the Passing of the Shadow" that lasts a full 13 hours before total eclipse is reached. This is a time in which the inhabitants of Xicarph must prepare themselves for the deadly zenith of the festival, the Revel of Darkness.

The Revel of Darkness

As Xicarph enters full eclipse, the light of the Emperor is snuffed out, and with it, the flame of order and civilisation. While this darkness lasts, which may be mere seconds or at worst tens of minutes, Imperial law holds no sway and no deed done then may afterwards be punished under Quaddis' rule (although vendetta and the long arm of the Imperium are another matter). This period is called the Revel of Darkness, and it is a time of violence in which scores are settled amongst the noble and the base alike, a time of anarchy, theft, and opportunity, when a man might change his fate by his own hands, or lose more than his life, and any sin might be indulged until the light of the sun once again touches Xicarph.

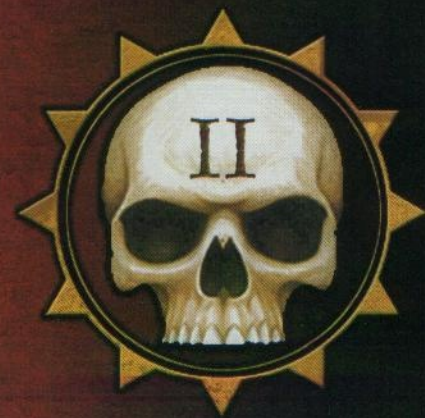
The Steel Clock of House Haarlock

Closely linked to the Revel of Darkness is the Steel Clock of Gabriel Chase striking 13 times. This strange clockwork device was built by a long past scion of the Haarlock line and keeps no regular time that can be discerned. It does, however, always strike 13 times at the moment the Grand Conjunction begins, and the masked balls held at Gabriel Chase to witness the striking of the 13th hour have become a central part of the traditions of the Grand Conjunction. Indeed, so ingrained is the tradition of celebrations of the 13th hour at Gabriel Chase that they persist even in the absence of any known scion of the Haarlock line and with the inheritance of the Haarlock holdings in legal deadlock. No one on Quaddis would dare interfere with them.

KEY DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JACKAL MASK (AKA MARCUS VULPA)

Marcus Vulpa is an up-and-coming operative of the Beast House. He is one of a number of beast masters drawn to Xicarph to feed its revels and arenas with claw and fang in expectation of immense profit. His greed, however, has gotten the best of him, and he has fallen into a bargain with a far greater evil than he—an individual he knows as the Heron Mask. In return for being supplied with numerous savage and mutated monsters for the games, he has unwittingly brought the Pilgrims of Hayte to Xicarph and facilitated their plans and infiltration of the city. Now, left with a dying Inquisitor on his hands and dire suspicions about what is soon to follow, Vulpa is desperate to cover his tracks and eventually seek revenge on Heron Mask.



THE RED CAGES

ESCAPING THE RED
CAGES

•

THE SLAUGHTER PIT

•

VAULT 13

•

THE DREADFUL FATE OF
INQUISITOR KARKALLA

CHAPTER II: RED CAGES

Tattered Fates sweeps the Acolytes up in the gathering storm of the Haarlock Legacy and sets them up as antagonists in an ongoing and deadly game to unlock the Legacy's secrets. The first act of this deadly intrigue, Red Cages, is a literal battle for survival, and its opening is deliberately and shockingly abrupt, both in its situation and in the immediate risk in which it places the Acolytes. Should the Acolytes escape the bloody trap in which they have been caught, they will find themselves on the vaunted and corrupt pleasure world of Quaddis, and face more subtle dangers, but first they must survive the Red Cages and the not-so-tender mercies of their masters.

STRUCTURE

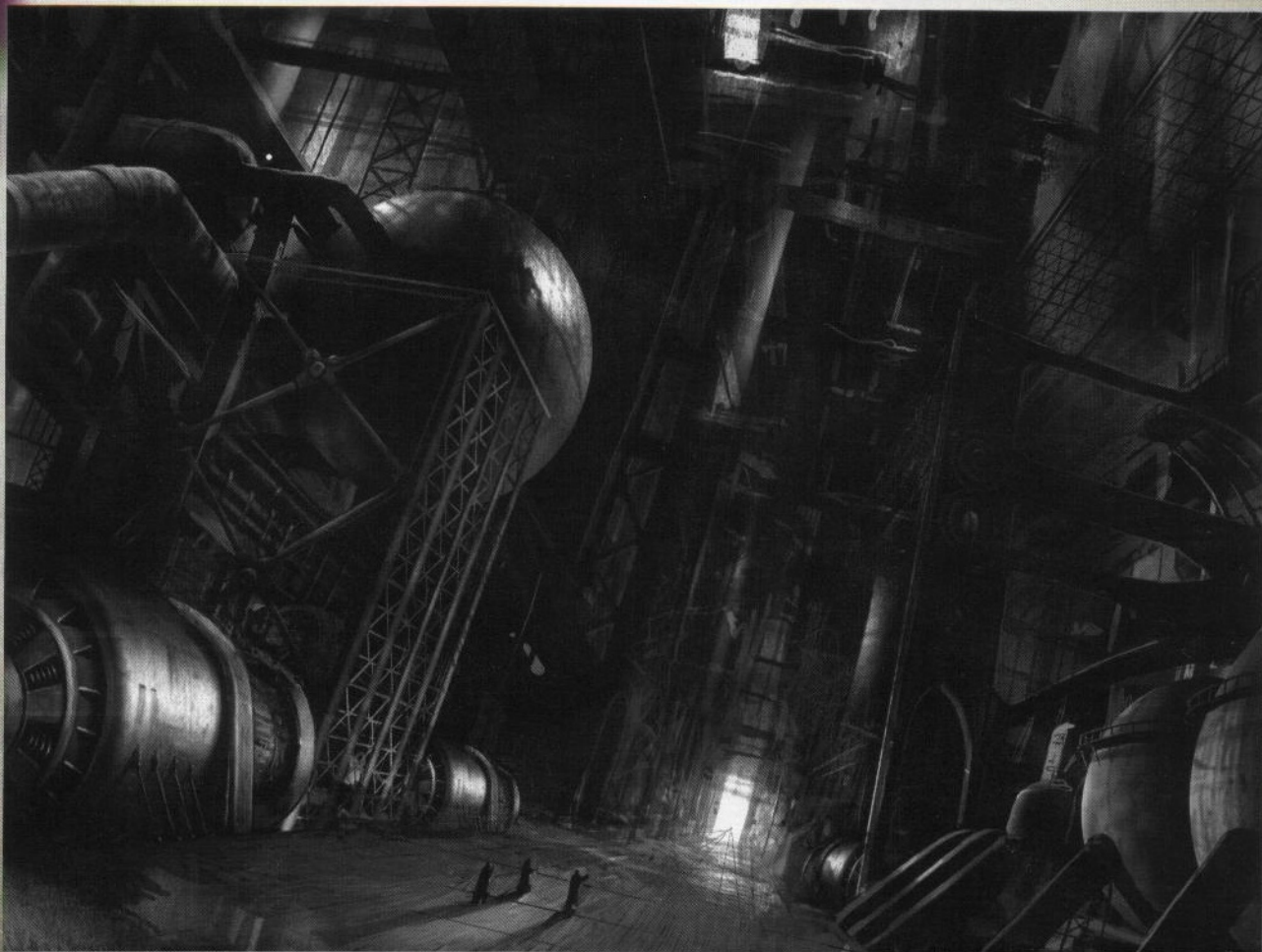
The structure of this part of the adventure is a simple one; it is a race to escape. It begins with the sudden revelation that the Acolytes have been abducted and their minds overcome. As they regain their senses, they find themselves and their fellow victims unarmed and without help in a slaughter pit with ravenous beasts about to be unleashed upon them, while

a mysterious and sinister figure in a heron-faced mask offers them a narrow avenue of escape.

Should they escape from the pit, they find themselves at large in the Red Cages complex underneath the city of Xicaph on the pleasure world of Quaddis. It is then up to the Acolytes to stay alive and either exit the Red Cages as soon as they can or, alternatively, risk life and limb to first investigate their environs further and uncover more about what is going on and what dark power is responsible for bringing them there.

WHAT ARE THE RED CAGES?

The Red Cages are the creature pits, slave pens, and infrastructure that supply the many bloodsport arenas of Quaddis' only city, Xicaph. Physically, they run to many kilometres of storage complexes, livestock pens, slaughter halls, fighting barracks, medicae stations, and the like. The Red Cages are spread out beneath the city in a labyrinthine web that runs parallel to Xicaph's sewerage, ventilation, and power grids, not to mention the cellar-works and sub-levels of the city's many palaces and institutions, to the point where no accurate map can be made of them nor can their beginning or end be easily defined. No one faction or power dominates the Red Cages completely, and many of its dark ways have fallen into disuse or have become the lairs of things that have escaped the pens in years past, but the greatest sway is held by the malevolent organisation known as the Beast House.



The Beast House is a quasi-legal group that hides its true evils behind a mask of tradition and violent entertainment. It is comprised of beast slavers, hunters, smugglers, and purveyors of bloody sport and savagery whose influence reaches scores of worlds throughout the Calixis Sector, and who have become deeply embedded in the sector's underworld over centuries of activity. Each regional "Beast House" is run largely independently—mercenary and beholden only to its own masters and connected to others of its kind through a shadowy network of contacts and contracts, and ultimately to a mysterious figure known as Solkarn Senk, said to be the Beast House's founder.

To the people of Xicarph, the Red Cages are a largely unspoken of thing, a literal underworld of blood-caked ironwork, suffering, and terrors uncounted. For the decadent nobility who hold court in the palaces, they are a necessary evil, uncouth and filled with licentious pleasures; for their servants, they are a fate to be feared; and for Xicarph's children, they are a place that haunts their nightmares and where the monsters are very real.

Fate's Fools

The Beast House on Quaddis is currently engaged in frenetic activity in the build up to the Grand Carnival, providing its own violent spectacle as well as fodder for the private pleasures of many of the palace courts that make up Xicarph at this singular and darkly festive time. Its resources are stretched to the limit, and blood is flowing in its shows at every hour of the day, while in preparation for this hugely profitable time, it has imported strange beasts and terrifying creatures from every corner of the sector and beyond in its struggle to meet the jaded tastes of Xicarph's great and powerful.

In order to answer the demands for ever more exotic horrors, one of the Beast House's chief operators on Quaddis, a beast slaver by the name of Marcus Vulpa (who the Acolytes will first encounter as the man in the Jackal Mask), has entered into a pact with one of the false prophets of the nightmarish Chaos cult known as the Pilgrims of Hayte to provide him with daemon-tainted abominations for the arena games. Vulpa is unaware of who he has truly made a compact with. The price of this deadly bargain was the abduction of a score of individuals from different worlds to Quaddis in time for the grand Carnival, the victims of these abductions including the Acolytes themselves. With murder, kidnapping, and the smuggling of forbidden creatures all well within the scope of the Beast House's activities, Vulpa has readily completed his part of the deal, although he will ultimately gain far more terrible rewards from his bargain than he wished for. The Pilgrims of Hayte have their own reasons for the exchange and for being on Xicarph at the time of the Grand Carnival, for they are pursuing the Haarlock Legacy at a prophesied hour of bloodshed and destruction to come and will murder the world if need be to attain their desires.

As the adventure begins, the Acolytes have been abducted and brought to the Red Cages of Quaddis. They have become pawns in a nightmarish and deadly game of survival and intrigue played by insane and malevolent forces. Alone, friendless, and without power, they must prove their mettle

and take their tattered fates in their own hands, or death awaits them and countless others.

Jackal Mask and Heron Mask

Two characters, which the Acolytes will come to know at first only by the masks they wear, are the principal architects of their current predicament.

The first, the Jackal Mask, is Marcus Vulpa. He is one of the masters of the Beast House on Quaddis and the one who has entered into a pact with the Pilgrims of Hayte to bring the Acolytes and the other abductees to the Red Cages, a pact he is beginning to swiftly regret.

The second, the Heron Mask, is actually a false prophet of the Pilgrims of Hayte who is known to his followers simply as "the Beloved." He is on Quaddis in the guise of one of the Beast House's slaver chiefs. Insidious, duplicitous, and powerful, he leads the Acolytes in a dangerous dance.

AN UNEXPECTED TURN OF EVENTS

This adventure begins "In Medias Res," that is to say the Acolytes are plunged immediately into the action with very little preamble or warning and no time whatsoever to prepare. Through the abduction of the Acolytes, the adventure also quite deliberately strips them of equipment, authority, rank and resources; this is an unashamedly dramatic device that serves two purposes. The first is dramatic; it imperils the Acolytes and puts their lives in jeopardy in a way they are unlikely to have experienced before, and the restriction on their resources serves to help create tension, particularly in the adventure's opening stages, which are very much grounded in the traditions of the "survival horror" genre. The lack of equipment and resources at the outset should also serve to immediately motivate and involve the Acolytes in the situation as well (to make up for their losses if nothing else!). The second reason has to do with the adventure's narrative. Because the abduction isolates the Acolytes and plunges them into the midst of a specific event at a specific time and place, **TATTERED FATES** can be introduced at almost any point in an ongoing **DARK HERESY** campaign. The adventure effectively derails the Acolytes' lives and careers, ensnaring them in the deadly intrigues of the Haarlock Legacy. It also may act as an abrupt and unexpected sequel to an earlier adventure that tangled the Acolytes' fates with that of the Legacy for good or ill.

The Haarlock Legacy itself is a matter of grave import, and those factions involved have powers that go far beyond any local cult, corrupt noble, or petty warp-dabbler. Their influence spans worlds, and they play for keeps. The initial abduction and manipulation of the Acolytes and the seeming ease with which it was accomplished should help get that across to them!

More details on the nature of the Haarlock Legacy Campaign can be found on page 66.

ESCAPING THE RED CAGES: THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

The adventure begins with the Acolytes at the mercy of their captors and enduring a terrifying encounter with the Pilgrims of Hayte. Read aloud **Player Handout I** (See Player Handout I on page 68) before giving each of your players a copy (the experience leaves an indelible impression on the Acolytes' minds). Allow a few moments for their predicament to sink in before moving on to the events described in The Slaughter Pit.

ENCOUNTERS AND LOCATIONS

While in physical terms the Red Cages are a nearly limitless labyrinth of tunnels, chambers, and vaults, only three distinct areas are presented here in detail: **The Slaughter Pit**, **Vault 13**, and the hospital pod where the section entitled **The Dreadful Fate of Inquisitor Karkalla** takes place. These three locations are involved in important events and provide opportunities for the Acolytes to gain vital intelligence about what is going on and their role in the adventure's unfolding intrigues. The rest of the Red Cages is presented rather as a kind of "toolkit" and guide for the GM, which allows you to add additional chambers and encounters as you see fit and to make this section of the adventure as long or short as you desire and tailor it to your players.

Because the Red Cages are meant to be expandable in this way, no overall map has been provided for them and there are no "levels" as such there. This location is a nightmare maze in three dimensions, some parts of which actually move and reform themselves over short periods of time, and literal mapping of them (by the players or the GM) is not advised at all. However, if the GM wishes to create a rough guide to help him keep what's going on straight in his own head, its most useful form is, rather than a literal floor plan, something more akin to a spider diagram that indicates the relative order in which the GM would like to see encounters occur. What this approach allows you to do during play is "fill in the gaps" as you go along, be free with your descriptions of the labyrinthine and crazed makeup of the Red Cages, and most importantly easily respond to your players' actions without being railroaded by a laborious pattern of blank corridors on a sheaf of pages into what happens next!

The Slaughter Pit

The Acolytes recover their senses to find themselves in a large, circular, metal pit, accompanied by other captives.

Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

"You awaken once more to find yourselves in a wide, circular, high-sided pit, perhaps some fifteen metres across, along with a number of fellow captives. The ground is covered with moist, reeking sand and is littered with broken bones and other detritus. Set into the rusted metal walls at irregular intervals are spiked and studded iron grates of varying shapes and sizes and flickering lumen globes recessed behind heavy mesh. Some six metres above you, the walls of the pit are topped with sabre-like, inward-curving blades and loose coils of corroded razor-wire. Beyond that is darkness from which you can hear the distant rumble of heavy machinery."

You should allow the Acolytes just enough time to gather their senses, size up the situation, begin to formulate some sort of plan, and of course discuss just what has happened to bring them here. This opening is something of a freeform situation that you can encourage your players to react against in ways of their own choosing. If however they are utterly at a loss, feel free to take the initiative and go straight on to **Move or Die** rather than let the game flounder.

The State of the Acolytes

The situation is far from promising, and the Acolytes have been left without any gear, body armour, or weaponry. They also feel generally beaten up and a little groggy but are otherwise essentially unharmed. If any Acolytes are, however, either Psykers or Tech-Priests, they are under other lingering adverse effects that hinder their particular abilities.

Psykers: Lingering anti-psy drugs in their system mean that Psykers may not use any Psychic Powers for 1d5+1 hours—more than enough to cover the duration of the Psyker's stay in the Red Cages. The anti-psy drugs will flush out of the Psyker's system once they have completed **The Red Cages** and move on to Chapter III.

Tech-Priests†: Any "active" implants have been deactivated by Beast House Hereteks. These include mechadendrites, MIU interfaces, and scanners, as well as the systems used to create Feedback Screech, Luminen Shock, Maglev effects, etc. Limbs and life support systems, however, have been left with their basic functions. In order to put deactivated systems back online, the Tech-Priest must acquire a multi-tool or similar item to effect activation, take sufficient time in supplication and maintenance rites (2d10 minutes per system), and must pass a **Routine (+20) Common Lore (Tech) Test**.

† (and any other characters with cybernetics)

NPC CAPTIVES: HELP OR HINDRANCE?

There are several angles a GM might take with the Acolytes' fellow captives in the pit in terms of both their portrayal and the role they might play in ongoing events. Of course, there are many more the GM may come up with, and each may have their own story to tell and potentially vital clues about what is going on—if the Acolytes ask the right questions.

THE SLAUGHTER PIT

Imp Rec 1042616



- 1: Winch Controls
- 2: Escape Ladder
- 3: Vent Grate
- 4: Howling Grate
- 5: Pit is 6 Metres Deep

1 Metre Grid

The Walls of the Pit

Any Imperial citizen except one that has led the most sheltered of lives will recognise this as some form of blood sport arena, with all that this fact implies as to the Acolytes' likely fate. The pit itself is designed so that neither man nor beast can easily escape it; climbing the battered and corroded side walls alone and unaided is extremely difficult (–40 to Climb Tests). However, climbing becomes somewhat easier with sufficient aid (the difficulty is reduced to about –20 for two or three others helping a single person climb).

Searching the Pit

The sands of the pit are filthy and moist, reeking of rotten blood, while here and there scraps of detritus of the pit's past victims litter the floor. Shards and chunks of bone (mostly human, and from victims of various ages and genders), as well as tattered clothing, belts, and straps in varying conditions and states of decay, are strewn about the area, and viable (if brittle) improvised daggers, small clubs, and garrottes might be fashioned by enterprising Acolytes given the inspiration and inclination to do so.

The Other Captives

The Acolytes are not alone in the pit; this is feeding time and the Beast House is not frugal in providing for its charges. Just how many captives there are is left up to the GM (see sidebar), as is how he wishes to use them. However, there should be at least enough captives to divert the spindle-maws as the Acolytes make their escape in Move or Die, and more if the GM wishes any to escape with the Acolytes from the pit. About double the number of Acolytes playing is a good starting point for the number of additional captives.

The other captives, while in a similar condition to the Acolytes physically, are not as well recovered, and several are still unconscious and cannot be roused. They run the gamut of Imperial society by their accents and dress, from pampered nobles to underhive scum, but all are dishevelled and battered. Several may be recognisable from the earlier

THE SWIFT ESCAPE OPTION

If the Acolytes are very quick to act and very organised, it's possible one or more of them might succeed in scaling the walls of the pit very swiftly before the events listed in this chapter can occur in their usual order. They should be rewarded for their quick thinking and action by having the opportunity to sneak up on and defeat the slaver (see *Slavers of the Red Cages* on page 58), perhaps distracted while he hacks up some meat on a table near the controls, and lower the ladder themselves to save their comrades. In this case, the GM can simply speed up the spindle-maw attack to coincide with the escape of the first Acolyte from the pit and have Heron Mask either aid them from the shadows, killing another slaver who appears at the door during the Acolytes' struggle with the first slaver, or likewise appear as mysterious saviour elsewhere in the Red Cages when needed, but before the Acolytes encounter Inquisitor Karkalla (see page 27).

incident described in Player Handout I, but others are not, being merely other victims unrelated to the plot, abducted and drugged from the revels in Xicarph and gathered by the Beast House slavers along the way here with their other live cargo.

The NPC captives can be used simply as "beast fodder" for this initial section of the game and this is perfectly acceptable, or alternatively the GM can decide to inject a few of them with a little more detail and have them escape (or at least try to) with the Acolytes. This second option, while requiring a little more effort to track on the GM's part, can be a very rewarding and useful device, both serving to increase tension and helping to drive forward the unfolding adventure.

Move or Die

After a reasonable period of time has elapsed and the Acolytes have come to some understanding of their plight, it's time to inject some immediate threat and get them up and running. This increase in peril should be done first by executing a number of events in sequence to build up some tension and get the Acolytes ready to act. The following events should occur in increasingly rapid order, giving your players time to quickly react between these events should they wish but not dawdle or consider overmuch. You should feel free to embellish, call for tests to determine added details, and have lucid NPC captives react as well (A little fearful trembling and religious hysteria as things worsen is an idea here!).

A distant eerie howling begins to issue from the tunnels, getting steadily closer.

The lamps flicker, cutting off for a few moments and then coming back on to shed a weakened light that seems to slowly pulse like a heartbeat.

One of the cage gratings in the side walls begins to crank upwards, jamming at the halfway point, revealing a smooth tubular tunnel about a metre across descending downwards at a steep angle into darkness.

A vile, hot stench akin to that of gutted animals issues from the open tunnel as the howling grows ever closer.

A figure appears at the top of the pit looking down—half hidden in the darkness, shrouded in a dark leather cloak, face covered by an elaborate heron mask of polished bone framed by a spray of golden feathers. The figure remains entirely impassive and neither moves nor answers.

The howling draws closer and splits into multiple distinct cries, joined swiftly by the sound of pounding movement.

When this build-up has been completed and the Acolytes have made their final dispositions, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

"The inhuman howling becomes a frenzied cacophony of screams as a writhing tide of bone and meat erupts from the darkness of the tunnel. Struggling and tearing at each other in their haste to reach the pit are a pack of hideous creatures, lean, feral things of jutting bone and red-glistening muscle caging organs that pulse and shudder beneath their transparent, membranous skin. The first one leaps from the tunnel mouth and onto the filthy sands of the pit, rearing up on two legs, tail lashing as its blind, equine skull probes the air around it in search of prey. Behind it, its fellows are caught struggling against the half-open grate, none willing to give quarter and allow the others through ahead for the feast."

The Acolytes and their fellow captives are now in a lethal predicament—the spindle-maws left to their own devices will happily tear apart everyone in the slaughter pit and devour them in short order. However, Heron Mask has other ideas, not that he's adverse to seeing a little bloodshed and the weak winnowed out for his amusement along the way.

Running the Spindle-maw Attack

Although it may seem a savage frenzy, the spindle-maw assault is actually being stage-managed by Heron Mask. It is he that has caused the grate to jam, and he is managing the "flow" of ravenous creatures into the pit. He will also provide an undetectable sorcerous "nudge" where needed to divert the leading beast to its chosen targets when he wishes, first among which will be the closest NPC captive who cries out. That victim is soon dispatched in a shower of gore. The spindle-maw uses its long bony jaws to shred the face and neck of its victim while its clawed forelimbs worry at its victim's vitals). The lead spindle-maw attacks anyone else that screams, moves suddenly, or is otherwise picked up by its senses. See the Spindle-maw profile on page 65 for how its senses operate.

If the Acolytes simply cower or fail to act, the spindle-

maw will steadily work through its targets until everyone is dead.

Assuming however that the Acolytes are going to try to prevent this from happening, they have the options of coordinating some kind of attack or effecting a desperate attempt to escape. Note that perceptive players or Acolytes passing a **Difficult (-10) Perception** or **Intelligence Test** or a **Challenging (+0) Beast Lore Test** may try to confuse the spindle-maw by providing it with multiple targets who are shouting or in motion at once. If this is done, the spindle-maw will need to pass a **Perception Test** (with a modifier based on just how much distraction is being provided) or be at a -10 to all actions and tests while the distraction lasts.

If the Acolytes prove their potential by fighting or struggling to survive, Heron Mask judges them potentially worthy of serving his designs and drops the escape ladder. Should the Acolytes succeed in overcoming the first spindle-maw, Heron Mask allows a second to enter (seemingly by its winning the struggle with its fellows, the gate getting pushed upward, etc.). If they seem to have no problem with one, then he will unleash two, and so on.

Escape Ladder

Once two or three (or more) captives have been messily dispatched, Heron Mask makes a show of dashing around the rim of the

KEY DRAMATIS PERSONAE

HERON MASK (AKA THE BELOVED)

The Beloved, as he is known, is a false prophet of the blood-soaked warp cult known as the Pilgrims of Hayte. The Beloved is a true monster in human flesh, a deceiver who truly believes he was born to murder worlds, but his malice is tempered by subtlety and a control that is often absent in others of his calling. Though his true name is long gone, the Beloved was once a Sanctioned diviner, his natural psychic power once at the service of Imperial masters, until he was taken by the Pilgrims of Hayte and shown the error of his ways. This lost life and identity are now dead, his soul hollowed out and replaced with purest spite, while his dominating magnetism and warp-augmented powers make him the ideal overseer of the cult's pursuit of the Haarlock Legacy.

In his guise of Heron Mask, he has fashioned plans and manipulated the criminal syndicate known as the Beast House, a sector-wide pseudo-criminal cartel of slavers, smugglers and tamers with shadowed and sinister origins, in order to gain access to the being known as the Widower and Haarlock's Steel Clock on Quaddis. In doing so, the Beloved is exerting supreme restraint over himself and his followers, as his natural inclination if faced with a problem is to apply violence and terror to force the result he needs. If, however, he is faced with a profound challenge or setback, he will revert to the base nature present in all Pilgrims of Hayte and will unleash a wave of violence and madness, destroying what he cannot possess.



Slaughter Pit and straining at an unseen mechanism. After some effort, a rusted iron stepladder descends down the side of the pit, right beside the half open grate where the beasts are struggling to get in, and halts about a metre off the floor. If a character is not injured or interfered with, he may climb up the ladder at an unhurried pace without a Climb Test; if he is scaling the ladder in a desperate charge or running jump, he must pass a **Routine (+20) Climb Test**. One viable (if immoral) tactic is to use any surviving NPC captives as cover to reach the ladder. If this option is taken, Heron Mask will most definitely approve by applauding briefly from the gallery.

As soon as the first Acolyte reaches the top of the ladder, Heron Mask promptly disappears, and moments later, the grate becomes loose and a dozen spindle-maws bound and roll like a burst dam of fury and bloodlust into the slaughter pit. It takes them 1d5 rounds to get their bearings after their tumble, and any stragglers in the pit are then ripped apart in short order.

The Heron Leads the Dance

The survivors find themselves on a wide circular metal gantry overlooking the frenzy in the pit below. Several wheel-locked pressure doors lead away from the area, one of which has been left ajar. A body lies slumped and dead by a set of crude,

THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF THE RED CAGES

The Red Cages complex is a vast, nightmarish maze of ancient metalwork bulkheads and corroded sheet-plated walls interspersed with mouldering ferrocrete silos, echoing vaults, and wide and abyssal cooling channels. All of these are spliced together by a three-dimensional tangle of gantry-ways, swing bridges, service tunnels, ladder wells, and cargo elevators, with entire structures turning and re-configuring themselves periodically like an immense piece of clockwork as the vast machines that sustain Xicarph turn and operate. This is no dankly silent dungeon either, but a place of endless noise, as machinery clatters and thunders ceaselessly between the walls and sudden gusts of hot wind tear down its passages like the breaths of an unimaginably colossal beast.

The chambers and corridors of the Beast House's domain reek of ordure and rotting meat, with many areas converted into beast pens in which creatures stir, growl, and scream, vermin-infested meat stores, arenas, and stockades. The flickering glow of deep set lumen globes in the walls reveals gouges and scratches patterning the walls and bloodstains aplenty both old and new decorating the floors.

Beyond and between these areas, large volumes of this immense underground space are given over to seemingly endless and trackless catacombs of steel, strewn with dusty wreckage descending down into utter darkness and whatever unknown terrors await in the depths of Xicarph's ancient underworld, where even Beast House slavers do not willingly tread.

INTERROGATING THE SLAVERS

It is possible that despite the Beast House slavers' willingness to fight to the death, one or more might be captured by enterprising Acolytes and put to the question. Unfortunately, even if this can be done successfully, they know little. They are brutish and hard hearted men—the lowest rung of the Beast House's operations, recruited from diverse underhives and feral worlds—whose principal pleasure is in inflicting harm and who obey their masters without question. They came from off world and set up base on Quaddis some months ago in preparation for the Great Festival of Tattered Fates, about which they know little, apart from its celebrants' mighty appetite for spectacle and fighting beasts. They work for Vulpa, the slaver captain who is their master, and they and know that to question, disobey, or cross him or any of the Beast House hierarchy is to die.

blood-drenched controls and a cracked pict-screen spitting static, beside which a scrap of data-parchment has been pinned with a dagger.

The body is a burly man in badly soiled overalls covered in a patchwork of flayed skin, hide, and trinkets. His face is covered by a crudely stitched cloth mask incorporating dirty lensed eye-pieces and a clogged breather mask. He has had his throat slashed from behind with a cut deep enough to sever his spine and nearly decapitate him. The body has on it several unpleasant trinkets and charms, an assessor-key on a leather thong, a meat hook, and a stub revolver loaded with four rounds.

The contents of the note are contained in Player Handout II (See Player Handout 2 on page 69), while the blade that pins it there is a best craftsmanship mono dagger with a sculpted saint's head as a pommel. Characters with the Psyniscience Skill get a fleeting unpleasant feeling while holding the dagger, but Psychometry used on it reveals nothing but a sickening sensation of welling blood. The dagger is obviously very handy in the Acolytes' current predicament, but is a "gift" of the Pilgrims of Hayte and is perilous to possess, as anyone that keeps it will later find out (see page 53).

SELECTED ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS AND ENCOUNTERS WITHIN THE RED CAGES

Exactly how much of the nightmarish labyrinth of tunnels, gantries, and vaults that make up the Red Cages the Acolytes experience before encountering Vault 13 and the main exit to the surface is left up to the GM to determine and flesh out. If your players are particularly into the survival horror adventure aspects of the Red Cages, feel free to turn on the pressure even more, to add more violent encounters and bizarre phenomena, and to ratchet up the fear, but be sure to provide them with sufficient space to recover between combats and the tools and weapons necessary to overcome the encounters thrown at them. If, however, the intrigues of **TATTERED FATES'** later stages are more their thing, you should hustle on to Vault 13,

adding in only a few minor encounters to help set the scene of what is going on (and possibly scaling back the opposition found there if they are badly under-equipped).

The following are some brief examples of the kind of additional encounters GMs can include in the Red Cages, and they are encouraged to come up with a few suitably macabre ones of their own.

As previously mentioned, because of the nature of the Red Cages layout, it is better to use a simple diagram of potential encounters based on the path the Acolytes might take, rather than attempt a literal map of the Red Cages, and simply bridge the encounters with narration of the Acolytes' experiences as they travel.

Pursuit

It is possible that if the Acolytes stir up trouble (or have an inconclusive battle with the slavers in the tunnels), an alarm will be raised and the slavers will begin to scour the tunnels in small hunting parties of two or three attended by cyber-mastiffs or other tracking beasts in search of their prey. This alarm will also mean that the slavers in Vault 13 will be alert for trouble and that tackling them will be much more difficult. The Beast House's slavers, however, are not the only potential hunters loose in the Red Cages, and there are actual beasts in the dark and worse that may have been drawn by the Acolytes' movement, and particularly the scent of fresh blood.

Reconfiguration (Vault Level Encounter)

Hot air rushes around the Acolytes as they cross a metal bridge passing through a vertical, tubular chamber. Up and down the chamber, other, similar bridges can be seen. Once the Acolytes are halfway across the bridge, a siren sounds, the direction of the airflow reverses, and the air becomes icy cold. Moments later, the bridge on which they stand begins to change position, as up and down the shaft, bridges and stairwalks reposition themselves into different configurations

GOING OFF THE MAP IN THE RED CAGES

The hundreds of kilometres of labyrinthine under-workings of the city of Xicarph, of which the Red Cages form a notorious part, are more than 1,000 years old. They form a labyrinth more like the implacable and moving innards of some vast machine envisioned by an insane mind than any parochial catacomb or city sewer system. Xicarph has no underhive in the usual sense, not just because it has little by way of resident population but because its underworld is in some sense alive. Ordered and maintained by some ancient and unknown system with its own unfathomable patterns and devices, it exists beyond direct human intervention or control. Literally anything could be down in its depths, from the blind progeny of escaped predators, to warp-ghost haunted chambers, to hungry alien science, to blasphemous tragedies cast down from the surface and shut away from the light for all time.

and apertures open and close in the walls. There is now no going back the way the Acolytes came.

The Collapsed Gantries (Vault Level Encounter)

After taking a series of metal staircases and access tunnels, the Acolytes reach the base level of a wide upward shaft where several gantries have crashed down from above and are tangled precariously together. Negotiating the shifting wreckage is precarious, but trapped in the most dangerous part is a dead body that appears to have come crashing down with the ironwork. The body is no more than a week old, although already picked to the bone by scavengers. He is wearing carapace armour (one or two location's worth of which might still be retrievable and usable), his holster still contains a loaded and functional laspistol, and a somewhat corroded looking hand bomb (treat as a frag grenade with the Unstable quality) is still attached to his belt.

Optional: Two Canids (Use the Ferocious Creature stats from page 349 in **DARK HERESY**) are feasting upon the corpse. A successful **Routine (+20) Intimidation check** will frighten off the two beasts (at the GM's discretion, other inventive uses of Skills and Talents may also suffice to distract, befriend, or frighten the two creatures), but otherwise they will fight if the PC's approach within six meters of the body.

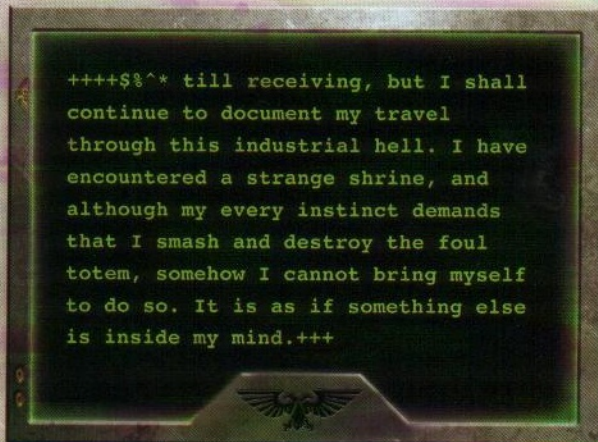


Dark Wings (Vault Level Encounter)

Accessed via an open lift or by traversing a metal bridge, this dim vault comprises a huge open space in which numerous cages, some filled with a scattering of bones, hang from chains that disappear into the darkness above and below. The beating of wings can be heard intermittently in the blackness, and if any of the Acolytes are bloodied or are less than quiet, they will bring the winged predators down on them. (Use the Fury stats from page 352 of **DARK HERESY**, but remove the Daemonic, Daemonic Presence, and Warp Instability traits.) The Ripperwings can be repelled by fire and strong sources of light. Also, they will not go beyond the vault and will be satisfied with one or two bodies on which to feed.

Savage Idol (Deep Level Encounter)

Entering a disused vault filled with broken machinery and debris clearly indicating it was the lair of some predatory creature, the Acolytes discover a makeshift shrine. At the centre of the shrine sits a crude idol of a triple-headed figure fashioned from shards of broken metal and bone, and draped in shreds of skin and tattered ribbons of cloth. There is fresh blood in a bowl before the idol, and slumped in front of it is a recently dead body of a man who appears to have slit his own throat. A data-slate lies just beyond his outstretched hand. The idol is home to an unclean spirit (see page 354 of **DARK HERESY**) that will seek to possess anyone that disturbs the body or stares into the idol's empty eye sockets. The disembodied spirit may not leave the area of the shrine, although a possessed victim may do so, likely to stalk and kill any creature it can. Information on the data-slate (accessed via a successful **Easy (+30) Tech-Use Skill Test**) reveals a fragment of a journal (see below). Destroying the idol will destroy the unclean spirit. Searching the corpse's body will reveal two lamp-packs and an axe.

**The Meat Sump (Vault Level Encounter)**

The Acolytes encounter a huge meat rendering chamber that animal and beast carcasses drop into from the arenas via shafts high above. The corpses fall into great crucibles filled with whirling blades, to be rendered down into an awful red slurry that gurgles into a lake of blood below the mesh-grated floor. The processes seem automated and tended by weird hook-

SCALING THE BEAST HOUSE FORCES

The following forces represent an appropriately dangerous matchup for a party of four Acolytes of fourth or fifth rank who have managed to scabble a few weapons or allies together: two or three times the Acolytes' number in slavers, plus at least one Flenser Heretek (see page 57), who is inside the field hospital pod when any hostilities break out. Additional reinforcements the slavers can call upon if they get the chance might include a combat servitor, an Ogryn Beast Keeper (see **DISCIPLES OF THE DARK GODS**), or a pair of trained sabre-wolves unleashed from cages once battle is joined.

handed servitor creatures fashioned from machine parts and sacks of meat. If the Acolytes get too close, the meat servitors assume they have escaped from the crucibles and attempt to feed them back into the machinery (Use the Servitor profile on page 344 of **DARK HERESY**, but have their attacks inflict 'R' type damage.)

Optional: The Servitors will attempt to Grapple with the PCs (and various hooks and other attachments give the Servitors +10 to their Weapon Skill for doing so). If the Servitor is engaged with his target the round following a successful grapple, the target PC is heaved into the vat below. The PC takes no damage (having landed amongst the meat scraps) but has only three rounds to escape before the grinder switches on and crushes everything remaining inside the vat into pulp. A successful **Difficult (-10) Climb Test** will suffice to climb out, but any PC may render Assistance (see page 185 in **DARK HERESY**).

The Bridle and The Lash (Vault Level Encounter)

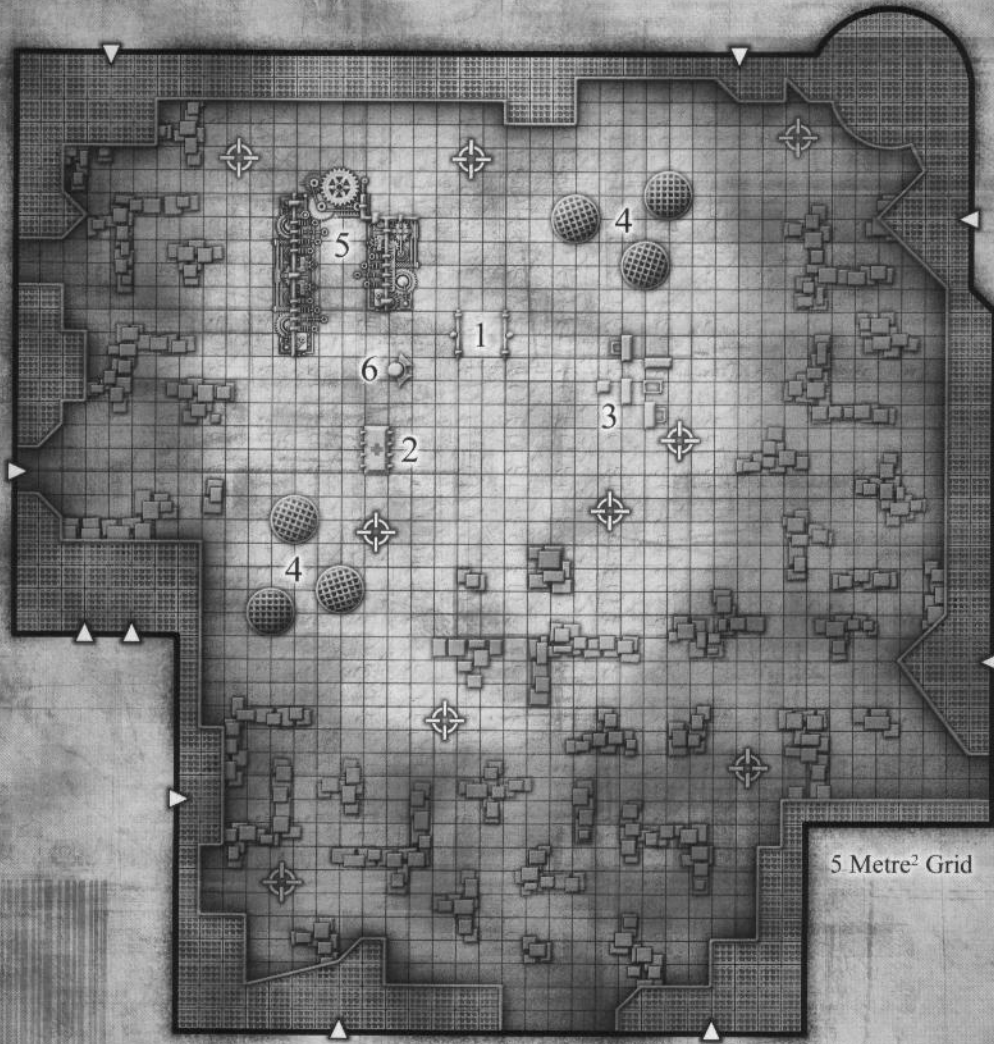
After hearing the sounds of a braying beast, human shouts of displeasure, and the crack of a lash, the Acolytes encounter three Beast House slavers attempting to move a bridled beast through the tunnels to its cage. The creature's drugged stupor has worn off early, and it is taking all the effort of the slavers to keep the thing under control. So distracted, the slavers are perfectly set up for an ambush by the Acolytes if they wish. Use the profile for the Corrupted Hexalid (see page 390 of **DARK HERESY**) for the surly creature or invent one of your own.

The Dead House (Upper Level Encounter)

A strange and sinister sight, this vault opens up to what appears to be a once elegant but now abandoned and decrepit manse set amidst the dead grey soil and withered trees of a garden, all contained within the vault's walls. From above, weak light filters down from a broken lumen sphere set into the arched ceiling. Upon investigating, they find long dead and corroded servitors guarding the gates, and within, they find the vermin-eaten remains of an opulent house destroyed by time. At its centre, a monstrously deformed skeleton draped in a lord's

VAULT 13

Imp Rec 1041083



5 Metre² Grid

- 1: Central Elevator
- 2: Field Hospital Pod
- 3: The Abattoir
- 4: Dome Pits & Cages
- 5: Winch Works
- 6: Viewer Shrine

-  - Doorway/Entrance
-  - Gas Jet Cluster
-  - Cargo

finery sits before a feast gone to dust a century before. There may yet be objects of value and a noble's personal arms in the melancholy house, hidden beneath the funerary shroud of dust, if the GM desires, and the heraldry of the manse may belong to a recognised noble house still active today.

VAULT 13

The core of the Beast House operations are a series of vast chambers which serve them as hubs, distribution centres, and control nodes in the shifting and dangerous fabric of the Red Cages. The nearest of these to the slaughter pit in which the Acolytes awaken is Vault 13, at the centre of which can be found the Beast House slavers' operations hub, the mutilated and dying Inquisitor Karkalla, and most importantly, a guarded access elevator that leads to the surface levels above.

Getting to Vault 13 should be a comparatively easy task, as it is the central hub of this part of the Red Cages complex. Entering the vault likewise poses no problem; it is a vast space, and the Acolytes are unlikely to be noticed by the occupants unless they draw close to its centre without caution. Direct frontal assault on the slavers in the Acolytes' largely unprepared and unarmed state is a suicidal move that all but the most foolhardy Acolytes will hopefully avoid. Employing stealth and attempting to pick off the slavers piecemeal is a much better solution. Additionally, the vault's periphery is ringed with numerous tunnels, chambers, and passageways, such as the one the Acolytes must enter the vault from, and they may well be tempted to try to find other ways out first (see *Going off the Map* in the Red Cages on page 21).

When the Acolytes first enter Vault 13, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

"The passageway turns sharply before you, you are greeted by a blast of humid air, and the echoing thunder of great machinery grows louder. In front of you, the passageway ends in a gaping metal doorframe labelled "Vault 13" surrounded by faded hazard markings beyond which can be seen a vast high chamber. The great vault is an irregular space hundreds of metres across whose greenish, plate-metal walls ascend to unguessed at heights above and whose floor is littered with a haphazard maze of cages, crates, and containers set around hulking machine-boists, gaping pits, and tanker domes. High above the ground at the centre of this echoing space, a trio of great luminal spheres are suspended on chains like pale artificial moons. Beneath their sickly light, you can see masked figures move between a cluster of burning gas-braziers and hammering machinery, and behind them the skeletal framework of an elevator shaft ascends between the false moons high into the darkness above."

Layout of the Vault

The periphery of Vault 13 is like a vast abandoned dockyard, filled with scores of empty cargo containers, some of which are covered in what looks like the dust and cobwebs of centuries. The floor is thick with dirt and detritus, and piles of nameless containers, corroded machine parts, and rusted drums lay stacked

GM's NOTE: RECOVERING EXTRA EQUIPMENT

At the GM's discretion, additional gear the Acolytes may have had on their person when they were abducted may be a part of the Beast House stash, as may any additional "drop items" you think they may need to carry on, such as a medikit, extra ammo, tradable items, valuable goods from the slavers' other victims, etc. If established characters are being used, this also makes an excellent location to restore special or important items to the Acolytes (see *GM's Advice* on Page 4).

haphazardly everywhere. Along with these are more bizarre objects as well: broken statuary, long-dead trees, stone architectural columns in neat rows, a pleasure barge careened on its side, and even a gaudy circus ride half concealed under yellowing plastek wrap. Closer to the centre, under the light of the luminal spheres, the space has been largely cleared and the containers replaced by cages and pits, some open and others domed, a few occupied by beasts and creatures, and the rest empty but showing signs of recent occupation. At the very centre at their base of operations, a group of Beast House slavers remains to oversee the last of their charges and guard the access to the surface.

The Opposition

The central area of Vault 13 is the domain of Beast House slavers. The exact strength of this opposition is left to the GM to determine and should be enough to overmatch the Acolytes and any hangers on they've managed to pick up in a direct fight, but should be defeatable if the Acolytes manage to pick them off singly or to isolate them in small groups where the Acolytes' superior abilities one-to-one and teamwork will be able to tell.

If the Beast House slavers are unaware of the Acolytes' escape (which unless the Acolytes have battled the Beast Slavers elsewhere and the alarm has been raised, they will be), they can be caught largely off guard by a stealthy attack. Such slavers that remain are somewhat exhausted from preparing their charges for the great entertainments above, are undermanned and overworked, and have been left here solely at Jackal Mask's pleasure to guard his prize captive. At any given time, one or two slavers make long, erratic circuits of the perimeter that take them outside the immediate sight of their fellows. If the alarm is raised, the ant's nest will be stirred and the slavers will react in a suitably brutal and disciplined fashion, loosing attack animals and servitors into the dark to flush out the enemy for the kill. The slavers are vicious and savage individuals who know what fates await them should they fail or flee and will fight to the death.

Going About Unseen

Vault 13 is huge, noisy, and dark, and there is plenty of cover to hide behind. In fact, almost perfect conditions prevail for sneaking about, and *Silent Move* and *Concealment Tests* are Routine (+20) in the areas close to the illuminated centre and not required at all beyond it unless a deliberate search is taking place (or an Acolyte is making a particular spectacle of himself).

Locations on the Map

The following is a key to the map locations presented for Vault 13 on page 23.

Gas Jets

Set about the area of Vault 13 at irregular intervals are a number of gas-vent junctions that periodically spurt a high tongue of blue-white flame into the air. These dangerous contraptions appear to be part of the Red Cages infrastructure, although a steady flame produced by one is being used to roast an animal carcass near the abattoir. Weapons fire near these gas jet pipes may well spark sudden unexpected gouts of flame several metres long that will last for a few seconds but will not cause major explosions.

Optional: Some of the Beast House Slavers may be roasting the remains of some creature upon a crude spit over one of these gas-jets, thus highlighting the possible uses.

Area 1—The Central Elevator

The central elevator platform is wide, open-sided, and big enough for a score of men to stand on. It is operated by a single lever on the platform itself, with both up and down positions, next to which there is positioned a small votive brazier. It moves with a squeal of gears at no more than a crawling speed, at which time a siren intermittently sounds and flickering lights flash on the platform's underside. It takes some ten minutes for it to fully ascend to the upper level.

REPLACING KARKALLA

In an ongoing campaign, the GM may wish to replace Karkalla with another Inquisitor who the Acolytes have encountered before* (or even the one to which they are in service!) to increase this encounter's impact for them. Alternatively, you may wish to include Karkalla in a "cameo" role in an adventure that takes place before you run *Tattered Fates*, thus helping to establish his character and credentials.

**If you have already played *The House of Dust and Ash* (in *DISCIPLES OF THE DARK GODS*), don't kill off Inquisitor Marr, as he will feature again in a later part of this chain of adventures!*

Area 2—The Field Hospital Pod

Flanking one side of the vault's central area is a squat rectangular armoured pod mounted on hydraulic supports some ten metres by five in size. Acolytes with an Imperial Guard background or other appropriate experience will recognise this a standard Departmento Munitorium unit designed to be deployed by drop craft into warzones. Its markings, though obscured by dirt and superficial damage, are those of a field hospital pod, belonging somewhat incongruously to the Margin Crusade. The Pod's single entrance is guarded at all times by a slaver standing sentry, and if trouble is expected, by a slaver using a hunting rifle positioned as a sniper on its flat roof. Inside the medal pod is a chamber of horrors and the location of the mutilated Inquisitor Karkalla.



Area 3—The Abattoir

Set some way aside from the main area, this long open rank of cutting tables, scaffolds, and troughs contains a vast profusion of meat and butchered carcasses, many hanging from racks and in various stages of dismemberment. There are a profusion of vicious implements here, and at any time, it is tended by a slaver or servitor covered in soiled plastek sheeting and wielding a red cleaver to good effect. There are a set of two extra cleavers (each counts as a knife) upon the tool rack and one poor quality chainaxe that is used to chop up large carcasses.

Area 4—The Dome Pits and Cages

Surrounding the central area of the vault are numerous beast pens and cages, either standing free or sunk into the ferrocrete and steel floor. The most heavily secure of these are pits further protected by articulated armour domes covering their mouths. Many of these pens and cages are empty but show signs of recent occupation, reeking of beasts and blood, while the remainder whose occupants await their hour in the arena are left for the GM to detail.

Area 5—The Winch Works

A rough horseshoe of heavy machinery has been reclaimed and bought back into use by the Beast House, including crane hoists, lifting gear, and lines of thick winch chains high in the ceiling above. Periodically, a slaver will use one of these to load cargo onto an elevator ramp or ferry a carcass for release over one of the open pits to the delight of the occupant below.

Optional: Gantry Cranes. With a successful **Ordinary (+10) Tech-Use Test**, a character can operate the gantry cranes via the pict-viewers here. Doing so is a Full Action and the character automatically goes last in the Initiative order. The character may use the cranes to pick up and drop some of the random crates, boxes, cages, and so forth on top of an individual Beast House Slaver with a successful **Difficult (-10) Tech-Use Test**. Dropping the item on top of the target inflicts 2d10 Impact Wounds to the body location.

Optional: Track Crane Assembly. The track crane assembly is an operator-controlled machine that runs across a metal track that extends over the entire area. A successful **Difficult (-10) Drive (Ground Vehicle) Test** means that a character can

“drive” the crane assembly over the main chamber. While inside the assembly, the cabin offers 8 Armor Points to the operator’s legs and body locations. A successful **Difficult (-10) Tech-Use Test** can rig the crane to drive itself out towards the central elevator platform, which immediately draws the attention of the Slavers below.

Optional: Damaged Sentinel Loader. An ancient, rust-ridden Sentinel Loader device is present here. A successful **Difficult (-10) Tech-Use Test** can convince the vehicle’s machine spirit to start up the engine, and a **Routine (+20) Drive (Walker) Test** means that a character can drive the Walker down to the main area and use it to battle the slavers. In combat, the Walker may only engage in melee; the operator is far too busy driving to take any other actions other than to control the Walker. The Walker has the following profile when it is under a character’s control:

WS	BS	S	T	Ag
Operator +10	—	(10) 50	40	20

Move: 5/10/15/30

Wounds: 15

Traits: Machine (4), Unnatural Strength (x2).

Armour: None (All 4).

Weapons: Loading claws (1d10+10 I, Unwieldy)

When the Walker is destroyed, the character inside suffers 1d10 Explosive damage to his body location and is considered prone. The Walker’s power plant is too decrepit to operate for more than a few minutes, and it shuts down permanently after the battle here. It is obvious to any character with the Tech-Use skill that the Walker’s machine spirit is beyond repair.

In addition, the Walker cannot fit through any of the passageways leading out of this area and must be left behind when the characters leave.

Area 6—The Viewer Shrine:

Set between the central elevator shaft and the hospital pod, a stack of jury-rigged pict-viewer screens, chattering cogitator units, and steam-hissing machinery has been spliced into a power conduit and decorated with votive papers, data-tokens, and candles. Aside from providing further flickering illumination and the occasional burst of noise, the static shrouded screens constantly flicker between grainy views of different beast-pens, containment cells, long black corridors, and scenes of mute carnage in random order. At the GM’s discretion, the screens may also show brief images of the revels of Xicarph’s surface, the baying crowds of the blood sport arenas and more sinister and bizarre views, such as the icy exterior of the great crystal dome, the watching face of Heron Mask, or a blasted and ravaged nightscape of shattered palaces on which snow is falling.

Various packing crates and metal void transit chests are stacked up beside the viewer shrine, and a search of these will reveal several useful items such as a multi-tool, a med kit, a box of shotgun ammunition (20 regular shells, 4 inferno shells), a somewhat unreliable hand auspex, and several bottles of drinking water, as well as numerous articles of cast-off clothing and the personal effects of dozens of people.

Optional: If the player characters see the shrine before they enter the main chamber and witness The Jackal Mask’s Anger (see below), they can watch the same scene on the viewer shrine

THE LOST INQUISITOR

Drawn to Quaddis by the activities of Vulpa and the Beast House, Inquisitor Karkalla and his retinue stumbled on the Pilgrims of Hayte unprepared and paid for it with blood. With most of his companions slaughtered, the savagely mutilated and barely living Inquisitor can provide the Acolytes with vital intelligence as to what has befallen them and point them in the direction of his last surviving servant, an Adept going under the false identity of Septimus Dexter, who may aid them as an ally.

Note: If this is the Acolytes’ first brush with an Inquisitor, then the dying Karkalla will swear them into his service, and later when met, Septimus will insist on more formally taking their oath and recording their names and origins.

screens instead. A successful **Difficult (-10) Tech-Use Test** allows a character to capture and record the event on a data-slate as well.

Optional: At the GM's discretion, other equipment may be scavenged here, including a multi-tool, data-slates, or micro-beads.

JACKAL MASK'S ANGER

If the Acolytes successfully advance on the Beast House slavers by stealth or sent some of their number forward to reconnoitre the area and get within sight and earshot of the hospital pod, reward them with the following encounter before any direct conflict occurs.

Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

The armoured door of the hospital pod is flung open and the brutal figure of the Jackal Masked man stalks forth, followed by two cowering figures draped in bloodstained plastek robes and harnesses of surgical tools. The Jackal Mask turns angrily on them, and they flinch in fear.

"Damn your warp-rotted hides, and damn him to hell's eye! What game does he play here? He brings an Inquisitor here, to my domain, to mutilate and pry? And you did not see fit to inform me?" The Jackal Mask shouts.

"But master, you asked us to offer him every assistance—" The cowering Heretek pleads but is silenced as crackling metal coils lash out from Jackal Mask's hand and ensnare him. The Heretek judders screaming for a few moments before slumping to the ground no more than a sack of burnt meat.

"I am no stalking prey to be staked out to lure the beast in, no matter what the Heron believes! Find out what that mangled thing told him or you will suffer your comrade's fate!" the Jackal snarls at the remaining Heretek before, flanked by two heavily armed men in pig-faced iron masks, he mounts the elevator platform and it begins its slow and rumbling ascent upwards.

mutilated Inquisitor Karkalla. He is in a dire state: both of his legs below the knee and his right arm are missing, his Inquisitorial Rosette has been crudely nailed to his chest, and the left side of his face has been flensed down to the glistening bone beneath. Despite his terrible injuries, Karkalla is alive and reasonably lucid. Once any combat is over, he declares his identity and authority in a clear voice and orders the Acolytes to stand forth.

A Sacred Charge

Nazauth Karkalla is an Inquisitor Ordinary of the Ordo Xenos who has been a member of the Conclave Calixis for several decades. Recently, he and his retinue have been tracking the activities of the wanted heretic and Beast House slaver Marcus Vulpa (who the Acolytes have encountered as Jackal Mask) and this organisation's acquisition of prohibited creatures for the festivities mounted for Quaddis' Festival of Tattered Fates. Karkalla came to Xicarph incognito in the hope of snaring the organisation's highly placed buyers as well. Unfortunately for Karkalla, he uncovered far more than he bargained for in the city. He was set upon and much of his retinue was slaughtered by the Pilgrims of Hayte before he could alert the Inquisition of what he had learned concerning a terrible occult threat growing on Quaddis.

Karkalla is in agony and is kept alive by only his indomitable will, but even that will not sustain him much longer. Heron Mask put him to the knife but could not break him (nor did he expect to in the time allotted) and has left him here, ravaged in body, as another lure for the Widower, the Acolytes, and any others that might pry into his insane plan. Karkalla, however, is in a



THE DREADFUL FATE OF INQUISITOR KARKALLA

The scene within the hospital pod is a dim red twilight of bloody horror, and what was once a place of healing has been turned into a shrine to pain and mutilation. Every surface is splattered in the blood and gore of countless victims, human, xenos, and bestial. Surgical equipment, chemicals, specimen jars, trophies, bizarre bone sculptures, flayed skins, and tanned hides clutter the room, and strange machines throb and pulse while pict-viewers replay static-shrouded images of the chamber's past work.

Experiencing the nightmarish interior of the hospital pod firsthand requires a **Disturbing (+0) Fear Test**.

Unless lured out, one Heretek Flenser will be resident here, accompanied by a servitor and several armed servo-skulls (see page 144 of **THE INQUISITOR'S HANDBOOK**). Needless to say, they will fight savagely, treacherously, and to the death.

At the centre of the hospital pod, attached to an angled metal framework and hooked up to a life-support regulator is the

better mental state than Heron Mask believes and recognises the Acolytes for what they are (or at the least as fellow victims of the web of conspiracy) and charges them to stop Heron Mask, or else Quaddis, and every living soul on it, them included, is doomed. He charges them with this sacred duty with the full weight of his Inquisitorial authority and in the Emperor's holy name and asks each of them to so swear before he tells them anything. It is a desperate ploy on Karkalla's part, but the only gambit the dying Inquisitor has left.

What Karkalla Knows

Karkalla's lucidity comes and goes in waves of agony mastered by his iron self control, and the GM can use him to give the players as much (or as little information) as he desires. His answers should be kept to curt, short sentences issued through gritted teeth, and he will dismiss any question he does not feel pertinent. He does not know the full ins-and-outs of Heron Mask's plan, far from it, but from his own prior investigations and from what he has heard and seen since becoming a captive, he has surmised much.

The following offers some guidelines as to what Karkalla knows:

Where are we? *"Quaddis, infamous Quaddis, pleasure planet, false paradise, noble's plaything, hidden world. During the Festival of Tattered Fates, a great and sinful folly of the powerful."*

What is this place? *"The Red Cages, underworld of the city Xicarph, ancient and wicked."*

Who has been holding us captive? *"The Beast House, some part of it: slavers, xenos hunters, blood trackers, smugglers, killers, and worse. Their talons are sunk into the carcass of the whole sector, but they are the pawns here, not the masters."*

Who is the Jackal Masked man? *"Vupla, Marcus Vulpa, one of their slaver chiefs, deluded fool. I followed him here, hoping to find his customers...beasts, beasts for the great entertainment...blood for the carnival...found worse... Death is my sentence on him. Purge the unclean."*

Who is the Heron Masked man? *"He is a liar, a liar! Do not trust him. The warp shines in his black soul. Did this to me...for sport, for pleasure, and to use me as bait for someone, something else, but he thought he had driven me mad, his mistake. Fear him, stop him!"*

Why were we brought here? *"Dark omens, dark prophecy, a gathering of dark souls, the time of the Great Conjunction, an ancient evil, lurking secrets best left buried. The Heron has some cancerous plan, some malign plot he would not reveal; he needed the old blood, I think, to lure it out. Brought you all, brought the others, dust and ash, I cannot see. Blood, it always comes back to that for them. Haarlock, the old monsters, knew too much, their world then, now, and forever, whatever lies the nobles prattle. Do not forget that."*

What will happen? *"This world dies unless you stop him, and with it how many others, how far will the rot spread? The cancer must be cut out now, before it is too late..."*

Once the GM feels Karkalla has given the Acolytes as much as they should know, he suffers a violent and painful seizure and begins to breathe his last. Before the end, he tells the Acolytes to "get to the surface, the city. Seek out the white scholar, one of mine, escaped the attack I think, he will help you, ask him...ask him what can be found in the ninth stack on Prol. He will answer, "emptiness" if it is he... Stop the Heron Mask, and burn my body, unsafe otherwise... May the Emperor make you a vessel of his wrath..." With that, the life support monitors register Karkalla's death, his will finally failing, and neither medical aid nor psychic arts can restore his ravaged body to life.

GETTING OUT ALIVE

Assuming the Acolytes can gain control of the central elevator and have the good sense to set it for "up," they can reach the city of Xicarph above and the intrigues and dangers of this adventure's second part, Carnival of Blood. GMs, of course, are free to add in additional encounters in the Red Cages' upper levels beyond this point, or to include additional methods of egress to the surface (there are numerous such exits in the labyrinth, leading to a wide variety of locations in the city). If the main vault area is avoided, however, the GM should take measures to relocate some or all of the clues that can be gained there and by encountering Karkalla (and perhaps re-position this important NPC) along their chosen path.

REWARDS

AS TATTERED FATES is quite a large and open-structured framework, rather than working out rewards and advancement at the end of the whole thing, it is better to hand out experience and other rewards at the end of each individual chapter. Acolytes should receive between 100 and 300 xp per game session in the Red Cages, depending on their progress, cleverness, and skill, with a +100 bonus for the Acolytes if they come up with a particularly cunning plan to escape the slaughter pit and/or overcome the slavers in Vault 13. Also, any Acolytes who solemnly swear to take up Inquisitor Karkalla's charge to uncover and thwart Heron Mask's plan should each receive an additional Fate Point—they're likely to need it.





CARNIVAL OF BLOOD

ALL THE FUN OF THE
FAIRE

•

MAKING AN ENTRANCE:
THE CARNIVAL OF
BLOOD BEGINS

•

PLACES TO GO, PEOPLE
TO SEE

•

SOLE SURVIVOR

•

CHASE THE LADY

•

THE STREET PREACHER

•

THE TWILIGHT GARDENS

•

BLOODY MURDER IN
XICARPH



CHAPTER III: CARNIVAL OF BLOOD

In this, the second part of the adventure, the Acolytes have fought their way to freedom and the surface, finding themselves in the strange and sinister city of Xicarph and the tumult of the Festival of Tattered Fate. Here, they must quickly overcome the shock of their surroundings and seek to uncover the dark plot that has brought them to this world before the shadowy forces moving through the carnival find them. If they are successful, ultimately they will discover that the unfolding events hinge on the ancient estate of Gabriel Chase at Xicarph's heart and the striking of the Steel Clock, an event which may very well herald the end of this world.

STRUCTURE

The structure of Carnival of Blood is an open one, driven not so much by a progression of set events or a path of travel, but rather by the decisions the Acolytes make and the consequences of their actions. The Red Cages will have left the Acolytes with a mystery to unravel, some leads to follow, and more than likely a desire to revenge themselves on their captors and the architect of their abductions, but how they choose to do this is not set in stone. The Acolytes will also doubtless wish to better arm and equip themselves for what lies ahead and discover more about the strange situation they have found themselves in.

The city of Xicarph is open to the Acolytes to explore, and it is both a wondrous and a dangerous place, filled with opportunities, terrors, and spectacles in abundance. As such, the GM is encouraged to tailor and embellish the events and locations that the Acolytes encounter as much as he wishes, making this part of the adventure a unique experience for the players. To aid you in this endeavour, a gazetteer and map of the city has been provided on pages 8-9, and the Exploring the Carnival section further on in this chapter offers more details about the chaotic festivities themselves and offers guidelines for the kind of information the Acolytes can discover in their investigations.

The timeline of Carnival of Blood is also fluid. At the time of the Acolytes' escape from the Red Cages, the festival is in full swing, and thanks to the unpredictable nature of the cosmological events the festival celebrates, none can answer exactly how long it will last. The trigger for the festival's climactic final stage is the beginning of the eclipse of Quaddis' sun, a time known as "the passing of the shadow," which marks the start of the Great Conjunction. It is left up to the GM just how much time passes before this occurs, but perhaps 48-100 hours of "in-game" time is recommended—long enough for the Acolytes to get themselves into trouble, pursue some leads, and maybe even get some rest! In practical terms, this length of time is likely to mean three or four sessions of play

(or more) will pass depending on how thorough the Acolytes' investigations are. The eclipse should begin after the Acolytes have discovered the need to be at Gabriel Chase during the Great Conjunction and have gained a means of admittance there, these events being the central focus of this adventure's third and final act: The 13th Hour.

While the Acolytes have considerable freedom in what they do in Xicarph and what path they follow, they are not operating in a vacuum. The festival is a hotbed of intrigues both petty and great, any of which may embroil the Acolytes at any time (and the GM is encouraged to weave his own plot ideas and intrigues into this part of the adventure). Most importantly, Heron Mask's own dark plot is continuing apace, and it is succeeding—amid the riotous celebrations, the Pilgrims of Hayte move unseen, preparing for the hour their master unleashes them in earnest, and as a result, the entity known as the Widower, drawn out by the scent of Haarlock blood, has begun to stalk and murder those it believes to be a threat to it. Either side may turn their lethal attentions to the Acolytes should they become known.

CHAPTER GOALS

The Acolytes' goals in Carnival of Blood are broadly threefold:

- Establish themselves with weapons, gear, and allies (such as by finding the White Scholar, etc.).
- Discover the details and goal of Heron Mask's plot, learn the nature of the festival, and hear of the myth of the Widower and the importance of the Steel Clock at Gabriel Chase.
- Gain admittance to Gabriel Chase at the time of the Great Conjunction.

ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIRE

When portraying the festival and Xicarph, it is important to put across the sheer dazzling opulence and wonder of everything and the scale and enormity of the celebrations at hand. The air is sweet and clean, the sky is a dazzling icy blue trapped on the other side of an impossible crystal dome, and night will not fall. The marble-faced buildings shine, there is wealth enough in evidence to buy and sell whole worlds, and what's more the city is thronging not with hundreds of revellers but tens of thousands. Masks and costumes are in evidence everywhere, as are licentious behaviour, largess, abundance, and seemingly joy, and the heavy hand of Imperial Law, and the Ecclesiarchy for that matter, is little to be seen. This environment should be a complete shock to the system for the Acolytes—unsettling, even terrifying. Some will rapidly grow to view this setting with contempt or suspicion (and rightly so), but others, perhaps, as a terrible temptation.

The exact level of danger the revels pose, both in casual terms (winding up in the wrong place at the wrong time) and by specific threat (having the Acolytes deliberately targeted and hunted) is left up to the individual GM to determine and tailor to the abilities of the Acolytes and tastes of his players. However, it should be borne in mind that no matter how extravagant the festival is, it is a prelude to bloodshed, and the brightest lights cast the deepest shadows.

LOOKING FOR EASY ANSWERS

One other important point to convey in Carnival of Blood is that sorting out this mess and saving the city and their own lives in the process is the responsibility of the Acolytes. Hopefully, the torment they have already endured and their own natures should be sufficient motivation for doing so, but if they waver, the GM should consider reinforcing the following points:

The Way of Things: Central authority on Xicarph is almost non-existent, and the powers-that-be are too busy with the festival and their own viperous intrigues to listen to dire warnings from blood—spattered undesirables of dubious provenance. In particular, claiming Inquisitorial rank or authority will be met at best with scorn and derision, and at worst with violence from the Promenade Sentinels (see page 58) guarding Xicarph's Hub, to which they will allow no one admittance during the festival. Even if the Acolytes can somehow persuade someone of their Inquisitorial rank, they will be regretfully informed to “return with your allegations after the Revel, if we all live so long in the Emperor's light.” For dreg and noble alike on Quaddis, the die is cast.

There is No Cavalry Coming over the Hill: Other than the White Scholar, no Inquisitorial or Imperial help is available, and even if a message were gotten out, there is no way for aid to arrive in time. It is literally “five minutes to midnight,” and inaction will end in destruction.

There is No Escape: There is no way off Quaddis and no way out of Xicarph. During the festival, orbital entry is permitted until the time of the Revel of Darkness, but no one leaves for the “safety” of all until the Revel of Darkness passes, a tradition enforced at the point of automated orbital defences if needs be. Acolytes attempting to leave via the starport will be firmly turned away, and persistence will be met with force and stealing a craft with destruction.

EXPLORING THE CARNIVAL

Running a vast city at a time of anarchy might at first seem a daunting task for the GM, but it is in fact no more difficult than handling any other setting, as the vast majority of events, NPCs, and locales should be simply portrayed as characterful “window dressing” unless they hold particular importance to what the Acolytes are doing. Carnival of Blood, much like Red Cages before it, has a small cluster of important locations that can be arrived at in any desired order.

These important locations are as follows:

The Rose Colonnade: This is a stone plaza thronging with revellers where the Acolytes exit the Red Cages.

Fates Wheel: This is a prominent gambling hall in the Arenas, where the crime lord Papa Grist holds court. Grist is also an infamous black marketeer and information broker whose name will be suggested to any high-paying Acolyte in search of such services.

The Chancel Athenaeum: A library and genealogical archive hall in the Refutation District, it is here that Septimus

Dexter, the last member of Inquisitor Karkalla's retinue, is holed up.

The Twilight Pavilion: A shadowed terrace of silken-webbed cloth and midnight gardens cast perpetually in shadow at the heart of the Akasen follies, here can be found the Spider Bride, keeper of many of Xicarph's secrets.

The Shattered Ramparts: This is part of the rubble-strewn siding of the Collapsed Palaces, where the street preacher Obadiah Psalter is losing his flock to a new messiah.

The GM is encouraged to add or subtract to these locations as he sees fit, using the Xicarph city map on page 9 as a guide, as well as to invent minor encounters to "fit between the spaces" as he wishes. So for example, if the Acolytes seek out lodgings, the GM should make up an appropriate hostelry as desired, such as a rented chamber above a fighting hall in the Promenade of Arenas, or a private villa among the Gilden Houses if the Acolytes have expensive tastes, or an abandoned shanty in the spill of the Collapsed Palaces if they wish to lay low, and so on. Likewise, if the Acolytes are seeking out a

THE FACE IN THE CROWD

Upon leaving the Red Cages, the Acolytes are being watched by Heron Mask and the Pilgrims of Hayte, who sit poised to see if they can draw the Widower out or to see what the Acolytes themselves may uncover. Whether or not the Acolytes can detect this observation and indeed lose their tail is up to the GM, but here and there in the crowd, the occasional snatched glimpse of a man in a Heron Mask will only increase the tension.

"white scholar," their inquires might point them in the district known as the Refutation.

Acquiring Information

One of the principal tasks for the Acolytes during this part of the adventure is to gain knowledge both about the events

TABLE 3-1: INFORMATION FROM THE CARNIVAL OF BLOOD

Degrees of Success	Details Revealed
Standard Success	"It is a wondrous thing, blessed are we to see such bounty. I've known hunger my whole life before I came here on a colonial transport bound for Tranch. Instead we came to this city of plenty, and I thought I'd died and gone to Holy Terra at first, like in the old hive tales!"
One	"Have you ever seen such sights as these? Known such times? I seen a carnosaur fight a dozen rip-saw scuttlers and take half of them to the grave with it, and won a year's Gelt on a chrono-bout at the Crimson Sands. And days yet they tell me maybe before it all finishes, some sort of eclipse...here, take a drink to my good fortune!"
Two	"All this, can you believe it friend? Unnatural if you ask me, all laid on by the great and the good; up-hivers, lords and ladies for a score of worlds they say, spared no expense. Well there wasn't one of them born gave more than they took in their Saint's-cursed lives I say. Mark me, there'll be a price to pay, always a price."
Three	"I came in as a hired gun for a rakehell—thought he'd come play where the real money was. Arrogant bastard's dead now, slighted some edgeworlder who cut him into bloody chunks all fair and square. Then there were four of us left and his money: first one, he picks a bar fight and winds up dead; the second, he just disappears in a crowd at the shadow show like he never was; and our pilot, I find her dead in our lodgings without a mark on her. Now there's just me drinking on a dead man's coin; this place is death, I tell you, death plated gold."
Four	"Masks, so many masks, you must have seen them, what are they hiding I ask you, what awful thing lives behind those masks? Deviance, mutation, the signs of their sins and wickedness, monsters and terrors slaking their lusts and hunger on us. They have a myth, the ones who were born here and the servants of the mighty. I've heard them whisper about "the beast." They call it the Widower, a fiend of a thousand faces. I saw a body on the avenue, innards strung like garlands from the statues of saints, and I heard them whisper, 'It was the Widower's work,' but they can't lie to me, I know what they hide beneath their masks."
Five (or more)	"Be ready. When the Dark Revel comes, pull the tattered threads of fate. Make your fortune, lose your life—a wise man prepares for both we say in Xicarph. When the sun burns dark, trust nothing but the empty mask and the striking of the Steel Clock."

they have been caught up in and their surroundings. There are many avenues to do this, from questioning passers by in the carnival to seeking out figures of authority, making contact with the likes of Septimus Dexter the White Scholar, interrogating hired killers sent after them, or seeking out the divination of a seer.

Possible lines of enquiry include:

The Festival of Tattered Fate: See page 12

The History of Quaddis: See page 6

The Grand City of Xicarph: See page 8

The Myth of the Widower: See page 43

Gabriel Chase: See page 11

The Beast House/Jackal Mask: See page 12

†**The Pilgrims of Hayte and Heron Mask's Plan:** See page 42

†**The House of Haarlock and the Legacy:** See page 50

†Of all of the above topics, these last two should be the most difficult and dangerous to acquire knowledge of, and such information is likely to be incomplete.

The GM is free to make such information as he feels is appropriate available to the Acolytes as he wishes and to make the getting of this intelligence as easy or difficult as the situation and the Acolytes' actions warrant. Such knowledge should come in pieces for the Acolytes to assemble, as no single individual has the whole story of what is going on, except perhaps Heron Mask, and he's not talking.

By way of some guidance, the following chart represents the kind of general news and rumours that might be picked up from the mass of revellers in the carnival using the appropriate Charm, Carouse, or Inquiry Tests. Such tests should have a base value of **Routine (+10)** further modified by circumstance.

MATTERS OF BASE COMMERCE

Xicarph is awash with money. The problem the Acolytes have is getting some of it to flow into their hands. They are likely to enter the carnival with little more than some scavenged weaponry (some of which they may choose to barter away) and will soon find that Throne Gelt will make their task considerably easier, both in terms of equipping themselves, bribing contacts, and buying information. While unfortunately the Acolytes just don't have the time to set themselves up into business, the festival offers a wealth of opportunities for the rapid acquisition of wealth, and Acolytes will be best served playing to their strengths. Clerics may sermonise and take up collections or sell indulgences to guilty nobles (or simply "liberate" wealth from the sinful and wicked for the greater good). Scum will find ample opportunities to lie, cheat, gamble, steal, and trade, and in particular, anyone with the skill and will to do violence will find an open market in the arenas for "freelancers," with duels and bouts to fit any fighting style and level of desperation.

PRINCIPAL NPCs IN CARNIVAL OF BLOOD

The following list details the principal NPCs the Acolytes may encounter in the city of Xicarph that are tied to Heron Mask's plot and the Haarlock Legacy, although just in what circumstances and to what effect depends greatly on the Acolytes' own actions and the unfolding events.

The White Scholar: The last survivor of Inquisitor Karkalla's retinue, this elderly adept is in hiding, but remains loyal to his oath. If the Acolytes can gain his trust, he can be a potent source of information and advice.

Papa Grist: An off-world crime boss with problems of his own, Grist makes for either a potent ally or deadly enemy for the Acolytes, and can offer them a way into Gabriel Chase.

Lady Melua: A young noblewoman and sister of one of those abducted as part of the Beloved's plans, her path will cross that of the Acolytes as she seeks answers.

Obadiah Psalter: A firebrand street preacher, he has lost much of his flock to a new prophet calling himself the Beloved and is now conducting street sermons promising fire and blood to come, but no one is listening; will the Acolytes?



The Spider Bride: The dark, ageless, and deadly queen of Xicarph's Pleasure Gardens, the Spider Bride is an ancient servant of the house of Haarlock. She knows the truth and can provide ingress to Gabriel Chase—if the Acolytes can survive her hospitality.

The Widower: Moving like a murderous shadow through the carnival, the Widower has been drawn out by Haarlock's blood and Heron Mask's plan, conducting appalling murders seemingly at random and disappearing like a phantom.

A CAST OF THOUSANDS

Aside from the principal characters mentioned here, the carnival itself has a massive number of potential NPCs, encounters, and lines of enquiry the Acolytes can follow, which it would be foolish to catalogue exhaustively here. As



with any open-scoped adventure where the Acolytes are likely to plough their own path, it's advised that the GM make up a few different names and character sketches he can employ in advance to help him improvise such encounters and NPCs as needed. Additionally, the NPCs and Antagonists appendix at the back of this adventure contains several modifiable stat-blocks for quick and convenient use.

MAKING AN ENTRANCE: THE CARNIVAL OF BLOOD BEGINS

If the Acolytes have managed to escape the Red Cages via the main access elevator in Vault 13 (or another exit of the GM's devising), they will doubtless expect something similar awaiting them as the platform ascends up toward the darkened roof of the vault. What happens next should come then as something of a shock. After some 20 minutes of riding upwards through a lightless enclosed shaft, a sound not unlike thunder becomes steadily louder until the roof above them splits open.

Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

The elevator shaft floods with hard, brilliant daylight as the platform breaks the surface and judders to a halt. A wave of sound assaults you and the sweet air is intoxicating as you stare helplessly dumbfounded for a moment at the scene that surrounds you. The platform has deposited you on a raised marble dais, one of many that grace an ornate high-sided plaza decorated in lofty and opulent fashion. Statues and billowing silk pavilions line wide paved walkways that are thronged with hundreds of people in a riot of costume and colour. The people walk and sway, rush and revel, seemingly without purpose or reason; some cheer and laugh, while others seem to cling fearfully to each other and hurry on to unguessed at destinations.

Beside your platform, an ethereal-looking noblewoman clad in a blue gown of shimmersilk and an immaculate pearl mask sweeps through the crowd, her midnight-robed attendants clearing her way with iron staves, while ivory skinned cherubim swoop about her, filling the air with narcotic vapours from their silver censers. She pauses to look up at you and says,

"I say, what fun, is it a revel you are from? What delightful costumes, so decadent, so visceral. Tell me, will there be blood, can you promise me blood?"

Before you can answer, a great bell tolls and the woman turns away, and she and her retinue are swallowed up by the thronging crowd.

MOVING OUT

The Acolytes have reached the city of Xicarph, decadent and wicked playground of the Calixis Sector's powerful for more than a thousand years, and they are on their own. The platform has deposited them in one of the outer plazas of the Promenade of Arenas in the city's northern quadrant, and it is

now up to them where to go and what to do. Likely priorities are to find out where they are, and then perhaps to find a place to hold up, receive medical assistance, eat and rest, or re-arm and re-equip. The various establishments dotted around the arenas can take care of all these needs, for a price. Alternatively, the Acolytes may wish to leave the Promenade as quickly as possible to evade any possible pursuit, in which case Xicarph awaits them.

PLACES TO GO, PEOPLE TO SEE

The following section details the principal characters, encounters, and events related to the central plot of Carnival of Blood that the Acolytes may find during the course of their investigations and travels through Xicarph. More information about the districts in which they are located can be found in the Gazetteer on pages 8-10.

NEEDFUL THINGS

A great many things are for sale in Xicarph, with no questions asked if the price is right, from weapons to hired help. In terms of availability, Xicarph is treated as the highest population level Hive World (see page 124 of **DARK HERESY**). In addition, pistols, drugs, consumables, medical care, and hand weapons are one level of difficulty easier to find, while heavy weapons, explosives, technical equipment, and religious items are one degree more difficult. Items at the lower end of the scale can be purchased from street vendors, backroom traders at the arenas, and the scum of the Collapsed Palaces, while best quality items are on display in the emporia of the Gilden Houses.

BLOOD ON THE SANDS

As matters stand when the Acolytes escape into the city, the arenas are in full swing, and a dozen stadia resound with the noise of roaring crowds, the bestial cries of beasts, and the clash of weapons. Given their likely condition and appearance, the Acolytes will be assumed by many to be freelance fighters between bouts, and indeed hawkers of weapons, foodstuffs, strong drink, and the like will probably approach them as such. What they choose to do at this point is up to them, but there are several possible options within the Promenade of Arenas itself, including finding medical aid, seeking out intelligence on their enemies, renting out a chamber to rest, catching one of the bloody shows, or indeed participating in one.

TRACKING DOWN VULPA

Tracking down and finding out more about Vulpa, the man in the Jackal Mask, is difficult but not impossible and can be achieved either by capturing and interrogating mid-ranking Beast House slavers or making some stiff threats to or bribing his clientele.

What can be learned is that he and his men have been

putting out feelers and have put up a substantial reward for any that can bring them information on “the Heron Masked man,” who was his former accomplice, in particular his current whereabouts, and he has send his slavers to the Collapsed Palaces to look for him. Further rumours have it that the Heron Masked man is to blame for some particularly unnatural and dangerous beast he has supplied that has triggered a spate of mysterious killings and strange incidents that have damaged Vulpa’s reputation recently.

If the Acolytes ask too many questions, however, it is likely he will send his own killers after them, particularly after he learns of any bloody mess they made while escaping the Red cages.

THE WEB OF HAYTE

The Pilgrims of Hayte are an extremely powerful and unbelievably dangerous cult, with a love of violence, mutilation, and destruction on a grand scale, and are responsible for numerous atrocities across the sector. The “false prophets” who rule the cult are sorcerers of incredible and reckless power, and every one of them is utterly insane. By possessing the Haarlock Legacy, the Pilgrims hope to unleash a force to topple the Calixis Sector into a nightmare of death and suffering, plunging billions into darkness. In pursuit of this goal, the cult members are willing to curb their usual excesses, for a time at least, and operate with a degree of subtlety that many with knowledge of them would perhaps assume them incapable.

Using occult means of warcraft and prophecy, the Pilgrims of Hayte have divined what they believe to be the key that will bring the Haarlock Legacy into their grasp. That key is a being known in the legends of Quaddis as the Widower. In order to hunt their quarry, one of the cult’s false prophets has concocted a diabolic plan to lure the Widower into the open using live bait—live bait which includes the Acolytes.

Using the Beast House organisation and Quaddis’ need for fresh horrors for the arena like a disease vector to infect Xicarph with their presence, the Pilgrims of Hayte have come in secret and in force. Their quarry is concealed from normal means of detection, and hidden even from the powers of the warp, but they mean to force it into the open and, if needs be, be there at the appointed hour and place when it reveals itself. As part of this plan, they have arranged for a score of men and women their warp-seers have divined as having some link of blood or fate to the Haarlock Legacy to be abducted and brought to Quaddis, thanks to the Beast House, and have selected the ones most to their liking to be their direct cat’s-paws. The rest, the Acolytes included, they will let run as bait first in the Red Cages and then in the city, to die or prosper as they can, all the time shadowed by the Pilgrims of Hayte who hope to tempt their chosen prey into the open.

Unfortunately for the Pilgrim’s of Hayte, Quaddis and the Grand Carnival has surprises in store even they do not expect, and the Widower is waiting for them.



What Goes Around, Comes Around

Should the Acolytes be particularly persistent or successful in their quest to find Vulpa, have a tip lead them to an empty pottery shop where Vulpa was to meet with a contact with information about Heron Mask's whereabouts. There they will find the place empty and in disarray. A thorough search will lead to the discovery of a skinless and bloody corpse missing its lower right arm concealed in a travelling trunk.

THE TURN OF THE WHEEL

Acolytes conducting inquiries into underworld connections, high grade weaponry, people smuggling, or the Beast House organisation or simply seeking the highest value game in the Promenade will eventually find themselves directed to an establishment called Fate's Wheel. At the Wheel, it is notable that there are few "bystanders"; the place's clientele is comprised of the wealthy and well-protected, the dangerous, and the downright sinister. It specialises as a betting venue, with pict-screens linked to the continuous arena fights, and also features private games, a balcony over the largest carnivora stadium, and its own fighting pit for "specialised" blood matches that are always to the death. It is also a prime location for black marketeers to gather and for illicit goods and information to be bought and sold.

Sidearms, hand weapons, and light body armour are permitted; anything else is checked at the door, unless of course you're working for the management. Bloodshed and

disagreements between patrons should be carried out on the fighting floor (where bets can be placed on the winner); anything else will be met with extreme violence.

As newcomers to the Wheel, the Acolytes will be sized up with covert interest by its other patrons and its proprietor, and some obnoxious noblemen with a cluster of paid muscle is bound to send their pet "champion" to spill an Acolyte's drink...

The Price of a Purse

The quickest way to make some money at the Wheel is to kill for it. The clientele there is open to any sport that ends in death, from Metalican quick-draw to chrono-locked gladiator matches. Depending on the spectacle, skill, and odds, the survivor can expect to fetch anything from a few hundred Thrones to a few thousand (plus the profits from any side betting of course).

Papa Grist

Fate's Wheel is run by a frightening and sinister figure called Papa Grist (see page 59 for his stats and a detailed description). Grist is an off-world crime lord with connections to the Cold Guild, come to Quaddis at the time of the festival to profit from narcotics, forbidden goods, murder for hire, and other illicit activities. He and his operatives, up to recently, have been making a killing both in a literal and metaphoric sense running their operations, and come the Revel, he's planning to be in secure lockdown with his money to ride out the worst. Grist serves both as chief information broker, dealer, and showman of the Wheel.

Aside from the supply of weapons, drugs, and gear, Grist's other stock in trade is information. Grist knows a great deal of what has been going on in the city and will sell all for a price. He knows that Marcus Vulpa of the Beast House has supplied numerous truly savage creatures to private buyers in the city, foul monsters that have the reek of the unholy about them, and that he now seeks out a former partner with a vengeance. He can also point the Acolytes to some of Vulpa's other contacts and send out his own feelers for information they desire—if they meet the right price.

Crackmarrow and Bliss

Crackmarrow, a hulking ex-guardsmen, and Bliss, a gaunt unsanctioned psyker, are Grist's chief enforcers, heads of security, and in Crackmarrow's case, champion of "hammer" fights in the Wheel. See page 60 for their detailed description and stat blocks. Crossing Grist will result in these two and any other desired help (Grist has about a dozen hired killers, cyber-gladiators, and heavies in his permanent employ and can easily pick up scores more if needed.) being brought into the matter.

Grist's Proposition

Despite his power and success during the festival, Grist has unwittingly run afoul of another older and darker force in

Xicarph—the Spider Bride—and much of what he has gained is beginning to be slowly destroyed around him. Once a relationship of some sort has developed between Grist and the Acolytes and he has taken some measure of their abilities, he will offer them a proposition. As free agents fresh to the city and not directly linked to his operations, he would like them to kill someone for him: “A creature so evil that you might make me out for a milksop saint beside her.” His desired target is the Spider Bride, who he describes as a rival, a procuress, and a murderess based out of a pleasure garden in the lower Akasen, and he will caution them “not to be lulled by the wiles of those she keeps by her.”

In return for the killing, Grist offers the Acolytes a thousand Thrones each and something they need—an invitation to Gabriel Chase at the time of the Passing of the Shadow, claimed as part of a gambling debt. He then tells them of the truth of the Revel of Darkness if they do not know it and that “... Vulpa hi’self has claimed an invitation from a corpse noble’s hand. You’ll find him there and what else you’re after.”

Finding the Spider bride is no problem at all; she is after all legend. Killing her, however, might prove a more difficult matter.

SOLE SURVIVOR

One of the likely leads the Acolytes have is Inquisitor Karkalla’s last Acolyte, the individual he named as “the White Scholar,” but finding him may be difficult. The most direct method is simply searching for him in likely places of finding an adept in Xicarph. A successful **Routine (+10) Inquiry Test** or posing the right questions to the right people will reveal that most of the city’s adepts, few though they are, tend to cluster in the Refutation District. Once in that district, further more difficult inquiries might uncover sightings of an elderly scholar clothed in white seen among the genealogical stacks at the Chancel Athenaeum.

THE WHITE SCHOLAR

Hiding out under a pre—prepared cover since the attack on his master, the last surviving member of Inquisitor Karkalla’s retinue, the “White Scholar,” is a senior adept going currently under the assumed identity of a Vexophilologist of the Sibellan universities by the name of Septimus Dexter. He is frightened and hunted, but loyal to his Inquisitorial oath. If the Acolytes can successfully contact him, and assure him of their intentions, Septimus will take them to a secluded corner of the Athenaeum and tell them of his master’s tracking down of Vulpa and the discovery of a darker force in operation. This darker force ambushed Karkalla and his retinue, and only he, not being present at the ambush, had escaped their wrath. He fled to assume a cover identity and await news from his master.

Given the additional information the Acolytes can likely provide him with from their abduction and time in the Red Cages, Septimus can be used to help the Acolytes assemble what they know into a cogent pattern and to provide them with extra clues as to what’s going on.

Septimus can help with the following information;

- He suspects the Pilgrims of Hayte cult is involved.
- He knows the Beast House has unwittingly been used.
- He knows the myth of the Widower is somehow involved.
- His investigations have led him to rumours of the “Spider Bride,” a sinister figure who dwells in the Akasen Follies who is said to know many of Xicarph’s secrets and be willing to part with them for a price.

If so prompted, he can also research the myth of the Widower and parse out vital clues from the tales around it.

Also, while not a fighter, he can help the Acolytes using his access to research documents and archives in the city. Any Adept Acolytes can choose to have him help them dig for information, or he can act on his own for them. He can also conduct further research into the history of Quaddis and Xicarph, the myth of the Widower, and most importantly the Haarlock line and the connection of the Steel Clock to the Festival of Tattered Fate. However, in order to be of later help, he must survive the next events.

CLEANING UP LOOSE ENDS

Just as the Acolytes’ discussion with Septimus has borne fruit, a commotion occurs at the far end of the reading room to which Septimus has taken them. The Acolytes see, as if coming from nowhere, a group of four men standing over the tangled remains of a Librarium servitor, all wearing Heron Masks. As one, they doff their masks to reveal faces covered in bloody cuts and wide grins. The leader then speaks:

“Forgive our master’s jest, but is time for the pawns on the Regicide board to play their parts; now give us the old man and you can go back to the dance...”

These are Pilgrims of Hayte, and given the slightest provocation or reluctance to give up Septimus, they instantly leap to the attack. Three of them are Redjacks (see page 64), and their leader is a Witch (see page 345 of **DARK HERESY**). All have the Consumed by Spite Talent (see page 59), and thanks to the warp-sorcery cut into their skins, all have the Daemonic Trait.

CHASE THE LADY

A character the Acolytes may encounter at any point during their investigations is Lady Du’landra Melua, a young Malfian noblewoman whose goals are similar to that of the Acolytes and who is asking pointed questions and doing so publicly. Lady Melua’s path may cross that of the Acolytes’ at several points, as she is searching for the same answers they are. She may act as ally, enemy, source of information, stalking horse, or even substitute player character in the case of an Acolyte fatality, depending on how matters develop.

The GM may drop hints of a young noblewoman asking after the Heron Masked man, or have her questioning other NPCs before the Acolytes get to them, before the Acolytes

encounter the Lady herself. They may, in fact, seek her out. Alternatively, she may be encountered pursuing the Acolytes in order to question them, or the Acolytes might interrupt an attempt to abduct her by the Beast House slavers, the Pilgrims of Hayte, or even the Widower itself.

LADY DU'LANDRA MELUA

Lady Melua has come to Quaddis in search of her younger brother, Lar'ax, who was abducted several months ago from their House's estates on Malfi. Independently wealthy, she has come to Xicarph against the wishes of her father (who knows precisely what the festival and the Revel of Darkness entails) following exorbitantly bought information obtained from seer-craft as to her brother's whereabouts. Lady Melua's stat block and description can be found on page 60.

Although she has no idea that it is a factor, she knows her bloodline is distantly related to the House of Haarlock, a fact that puts her in grave danger from the dark forces moving in the city and was the cause of her brother's abduction. Little does she know that Lar'ax was one of those chosen by the Pilgrims of Hayte to be their pawns (in the incident which begins this adventure), and she carries with her a holo-locket containing his likeness, which one of the Acolytes may recognise. Being a Malfian noble, she also knows of and despises the Pilgrims of Hayte (see **DISCIPLES OF THE DARK GODS** for more information on this deadly cult's history). Motivated by a desire to rescue her brother or for revenge, she may help the Acolytes as she can if correctly treated with.

Melua's lineage (once known) can be confirmed in the genealogical archive at the Chancel Athenaeum by Acolytes with a mind to do so.

THE STREET PREACHER

As an optional encounter that can occur whenever the Acolytes are passing through a public space, they may fall within earshot of the firebrand preacher Obadiah Psalter. Psalter and a small huddled group of flagellants are attempting to preach the Emperor's punishment on the wicked and the darkness to come to a crowd of disinterested revellers and are being harrassed by some drunken crewmen across the street, while a pair of Promenade Sentinels stand idly by. Trouble is evidently imminent, but as the Acolytes pass, a phrase should strike their attention;

"Listen not to the voice of the false prophet; he is a liar, a liar I tell you. He will betray you when the black night comes! Trust him not, whether he wears a pleasing face or it be covered by the Heron Mask! Shun him in the Emperor's name, and you will be saved!"

A fight then breaks out, and the crowd turns into a rioting mob (use the Petty Thug, Reveller, and Sentinel stats on pages 62-64). A Pilgrim of Hayte may try and murder Psalter in the confusion as well. It's up to the Acolytes how they deal with this altercation and whether they wish to save, question, and perhaps even aid Psalter.

OBADIAH PSALTER

An agitator, rabble-rouser, and devout puritan of the Imperial faith, Psalter was on a pilgrimage barge that was diverted to Xicarph at the whim of its noble master. He has found the city to be an anathema and has founded himself a small congregation among the poor and destitute in the Collapsed Palaces. But several days ago, he lost his fledgling following to the honeyed tongue and twisted promises of another voice, a preacher calling himself the Beloved who first came to them wearing a Heron Mask. Driven out of his makeshift chapel and assaulted when he resisted, Psalter has sought to arm himself and gather up a force to "cast down the wicked and do battle with the false prophet," truer words, sadly, than Psalter knows. Psalter's stat block and description can be found on page 60.

The Shattered Ramparts

So far, Psalter's "crusade force" consists of himself and a handful of desperate and half mad dregs, but he is more than willing to accept the Acolytes help to "Do the Emperor's work." If they agree to accompany him, he will lead them to a sloping, ruined area of the Collapsed Palaces called the Shattered Ramparts. The Beloved and his Pilgrims of Hayte are long gone, but in their wake, they have left a desecrated chapel daubed in the foul markings of Chaos and the butchered remains of the members of Psalter's congregation who would not embrace the Beloved's vision.

The Beloved has also left a trap for those who would come after him in the shape of a trio of incarnate lesser daemons (use the Horror stats on page 352 of **DARK HERESY**). They erupt from the pooled blood before the profaned altar as soon as any approach it and leap upon Psalter and his followers first as their preferred targets.

In the stained detritus of the Pilgrim's activities at the chapel, a search will uncover several empty storage crates for weapons and ammunition, scattered papers containing occult scrawling, astrological charts, data readouts of astronomical alignments, the lineages of several noble houses (including that of Haarlock and Melua), and a rent painting on canvas of the great manse of Gabriel Chase. Searchers will also find a set of ancient half-burned plans to a great circular structure that indicates the presence of secret passageways and hidden observation points in the walls.

THE TWILIGHT GARDENS

Situated in a nest of secluded grottos and sumptuous arbours at the southern tip of the High Steps of the Pleasure Gardens, deep within the Akasen, can be found the Spider Bride's domain. Shaded by filtering drift-silk pavilions and shrouding void fields, the Twilight Gardens are plunged in cool shadow despite Xicarph's blazing sun, and the whole area has a strange mirage-like quality to it, like a sinister and luxurious dream.

Hidden away from the thronging crowds, the Twilight Gardens are frequented only by epicures, masque dilettantes, and seekers of pleasure willing to risk their lives and more. The gardens are tended by a succession of pale and luminous beauties in perfect and graceful attire, the Spider Bride's ladies, who conduct visitors to audience with their mistress, while unseen things scuttle just on the edge of sight.

There is only one reason for the Acolytes to come here—to visit the Spider Bride, either to seek her wisdom or to kill her if they have accepted Papa Grist's offer.

Attacking the Spider Bride and her venomous ladies directly is likely to be suicidal folly, resulting in the Acolytes being chased through a nightmarish maze of distorted perception and hunted by metal spiders fashioned from human heads and lithe sharp-toothed women. Fortunately for the Acolytes, the Spider Bride is better aware of what is going on than they are, and her servants' fangs will be loaded with narcotics rather than lethal poisons—this time. However, the conflict, should one occur, should not be handled any less seriously than if the Acolytes were being hunted to their deaths. The stat blocks and descriptions of the Spider Bride and her servants can be found on page 59.

See page 10 for more information on the Akasen and the High Steps.

THE SPIDER BRIDE

Crouched like her namesake at the centre of her web, the woman known as the Spider Bride is the mistress of dark revels in which uncounted lusts may be slaked and vices pursued. A source of shadowed myth and rumour, she is in truth more ancient and terrible a thing than most can guess at, put in place long ago by the Haarlocks to regulate and control the Pleasure Garden's activities and excesses.

The Spider Bride's Proposition

Whether the Acolytes come to visit the Spider Bride seeking knowledge or fail in an attempt to kill her, she offers them a proposal; they must carry a gift from her to Papa Grist, who has slighted and offended her. Bringing him this gift, she states, will result in Grist's end. In return, she will favour them with information and something they need (whether they know it or not): an invitation to Gabriel Chase. It is up to the GM to decide what consequences will result from turning her down or interfering with her plan once in motion...

The Gift

The gift in question is an ornate silver canister, about the size and shape of a hat box, which is to be presented directly to Grist. When opened, an arachnid servitor springs out, enfolds its thorax cage around Grist's head with a sudden snap, decapitates him, and departs with his still screaming severed head. At this point, all hell will likely break loose at Fortune's Wheel, and the Acolytes will have Crackmarrow and Bliss to contend with, as well as numerous horrified bystanders. If the Acolytes need help, the GM can supply it with a cold wind that brings in the dusty shapes of a dozen Venomous Ladies who make short work of massacring the patrons.

The Spider Bride's Secrets

She knows many dark truths left uncovered and can provide answers (if cryptic ones) to questions few others in Xicarph can. She can tell of the Festival of Tattered Fate and the true nature of the Widower and the Revel of Darkness. If asked, she will speak



of the Haarlocks' ancient power and of Erasmus's bloody feud and will reveal that she "tastes the dark destiny of that bloody line upon you all, whether you know it or not."

Of the Heron Masked man, she will say only:

"I can see him, yet only dimly, for the Ruinous Gods walk in his wake. Hollow and nameless, he carries the death of this world in his mind, and may succeed where others have failed before."

She guesses that some force or cruel fate is leading on the Widower and can guess why: because it is the Guardian of the Haarlocks' Steel Clock, a device she knows that not only regulates and predicts astronomical events, but can also manipulate them.

"I fear the Widower will serve no more. Spite has consumed him, and the key may be in his hand now to end his own suffering and this world's with it."

She also knows (as Heron Mask believes) that the Widower's power is bound up with that of the Steel Clock and that it is vulnerable at the time of the Revel of Darkness and can be controlled by one of Haarlock blood or bested with sufficient force.

"The blood may tame him if it has the will, but to slay such a beast as he is no small thing; no trifle of the laser's heat or the assassin's needle to perform, but his heart plucked from its keeping place and shattered, will shatter also his living death."

The Spider Bride, too, is a servant of the line of Haarlock and is bound to their will.

"In dread of the Traveller's return we serve."

BLOODY MURDER IN XICARPH

All the while that the Acolytes are conducting their own passage through the final hours of the Festival of Tattered Fate, another force is at work—the Widower. While this creature and its true nature is the focus of this adventure's final act, The 13th Hour, it is abroad during the carnival, killing those linked to the Haarlock bloodline and any others it suspects in hopes of avoiding its enslavement to a new master.

The exact extent to which its activities interact with the Acolytes during Carnival of Blood is left to the GM to determine, but regardless of whether the Acolytes encounter the entity in the flesh in the streets of Xicarph, the news of impossibly conducted and insanely violent murders is the talk of the city's gossip. Stories abound of men folded in half in the middle of a crowd, of entrails strewn across public statues, of nobles torn to pieces behind locked doors, and worse, and the natives soon being to whisper that it is "The Widower's work" (See the myth of the Widower on page 43.).

MEET THE MONSTER

If the GM wishes the Acolytes to be drawn into an encounter with the Widower (this is particularly appropriate if one of them has the Haarlock bloodline or they have the company of Lady Melua), then this meeting should be both public and messy, and leave them in no doubt of the thing's power.

Outside of the Theatre of Clocks at the appointed hour, the Widower is all but impossible to stop or battle. It moves with superhuman swiftness, its shapeless, shifting flesh rippling the air around it like a storm scattering men and women, the Acolytes included, like toys before a hurricane, shattering stone and turning its victims inside-out with the flick of a tendril arm. Should this encounter occur, magi and daemons of the Pilgrims of Hayte descend to assault the Widower (just as Heron Mask has planned all along) and are sacrificed while he watches to test its power and defences.

CROSSFIRE

In this battle, the Acolytes are more spectator than participant in the Widower's attack, unless they interpose themselves

directly, as the Widower realises they are no more than bait for a trap. However, the Pilgrims may well wish to dispose of them at the same time, as they have now served their purpose, resulting in an anarchic three-way battle, which once House Armsmen, Sentinels (see page 64), and terrified bystanders get involved, may swiftly dissolve into a bloody free for all. Regardless, the Acolytes can still make a difference, saving innocents as well as gaining a healthy respect for the power of the Widower. Eventually, however, as abruptly as a tattered cloth caught in the wind, the Widower will be gone into empty air, leaving carnage in its wake.

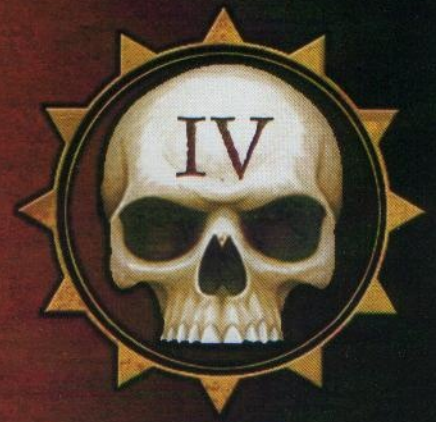
PROGRESSING TO PART III

As soon as the GM deems the Carnival of Blood has shown the Acolytes all he wishes it to, or simply once they have the gilded invite to Gabriel Chase in their hands, he may have the Eclipse begin, and with it the Passing of the Shadow. The Revel of Darkness and the 13th Hour awaits.

REWARDS

Acolytes should receive between 100 and 300 xp per game session of Carnival of Blood, depending on their progress, cleverness, and skill, with a +100 bonus for the Acolytes if they manage to piece together the links between Heron Masks plan, the bloodline, the Widower, and the Revel of Darkness.





THE 13TH HOUR

THE CELEBRATION OF
THE REVEL OF DARKNESS

•

THE WIDOWER

•

THE MANSE

•

DISCOVERIES TO BE
MADE IN GABRIEL
CHASE

•

LINKS TO THE HAARLOCK
LEGACY

•

THE OTHER GUESTS

•

THE GRAND
CONJUNCTION

•

A TRUE REVEL OF
DARKNESS

•

AFTERMATH

CHAPTER IV: THE 13TH HOUR

In the third and final act of **TATTERED FATES**, the Acolytes race against the clock to discover everything possible about the Widower and the mysterious Erasmus Haarlock and prepare to face and defeat what is to come when the Steel Clock strikes 13. Should they perform well, they may defeat the Widower, survive the designs of the Pilgrims of Hayte, and discover vital information about the Haarlock Legacy. Should they fail, the darkness will only retreat from Xicarph once it is a charred ruin, and the Pilgrims of Hayte will be one step closer to the secret power of the Haarlock Legacy.

STRUCTURE

While this final part of the adventure occurs in a confined space, the Grand Estate of Gabriel Chase, and in a set period of time, it allows for freedom of action on the part of the Acolytes right up to the adventure's ultimate conclusion: a confrontation between the Acolytes, the Pilgrims of Hayte, and the Widower itself with the fate of the world in the balance.

Until this climatic battle, the Acolytes can move about, gather information, and have exciting encounters in almost any way they please. No matter what the Acolytes do, however, events press on around them as the Steel Clock counts down to the Grand Conjunction. The Conjunction's occurrence and the striking of the 13th hour cannot be avoided, nor can it be slowed.

Once the Grand Conjunction occurs, the true measure of the Acolytes will be taken in a spectacular and violent finale. The factions vying for the power of the Legacy confront each other while the Widower attempts to use the power of the Steel Clock to murder Quaddis and kill itself in the process.

THE PILGRIMS OF HAYTE'S DARK DESIGN

The Beloved wants to subjugate the Widower because he believes this ancient creature holds the secrets to uncovering the Haarlock Legacy. By drawing it out, gauging its power, and then defeating and capturing it, the Beloved hopes to wrest those secrets into the hands of the Pilgrims of Hayte. All that he has wrought and schemed for in bringing the bloodline of Haarlock to Quaddis, in assuming the identity of Heron Mask, and in engaging in countless murders and intrigues have been leading up to this moment and this final confrontation between himself and the Widower. What the Beloved doesn't fully understand, however, is the true power of the Steel Clock the Widower guards or the full importance of its Keystone, thinking it merely of secondary worth to the Widower itself.



The Beloved has also underestimated the Widower's suicidal fury and what it is prepared to do to set itself free.

In the lead up to the 13th hour, the Pilgrims of Hayte have infiltrated the celebrations at Gabriel Chase, both to prepare for the Revel and in order to eliminate any rivals or obvious threats that might spoil their plans. Once the Conjunction occurs and the Widower is unmasked and rendered vulnerable, the Beloved intends to vanquish the Widower and escape with it while his followers unleash a wave of chaos and destruction in the manse.

THE MADNESS OF THE WIDOWER

The Widower is a terrifying, insane, and sinister creature, torn between its malice for those who would seek to claim the Haarlock Legacy, its hatred of the slavery to which it has been bound, and its desire to end the eternal nightmare of its own existence. Its goals are twofold: the first is to slaughter those with the temerity to attempt to control it, and the second is to use the blood of the Haarlock line and the power of the Steel Clock to bring forth the reflected light of the Tyrant

Star and, the Widower hopes, perish along with Quaddis in its black radiance.

The Widower has so far let the Pilgrims of Hayte's plan flourish, manipulating them to its own deadly agenda to bring the blood of Haarlock into its grasp. To this end, the Widower has eliminated several rival claimants for the Legacy and recently assumed the identity of Jackal Mask (Marcus Vulpa) to manipulate matters from the shadows. It now stands ready to reverse the Pilgrim's trap when the 13th hour strikes. When this happens, the Widower will seek to destroy the world using the Steel Clock's power. Obviously, it must be stopped.

SUNDRY ENEMIES AND OTHER FACTIONS

If they are present, other factions who are pursuing the Haarlock Legacy will try to eliminate rivals and steal what secrets they have learned. Enemies that the Acolytes may have made during Carnival of Blood (the surviving coterie of Papa Grist or the Spider Bride, Beast Slavers, vendetta sworn

THE WIDOWER

The Widower is a strange and terrifying entity who is considered no more than a dark fable by many. The crux of Heron Mask's plan is to draw out, expose, and thereby either capture or kill the creature known in legend as the Widower of Xicarph. This monstrous thing is an ancient living weapon belonging to the Haarlock line who guards the Steel Clock, which rests at the heart of Gabriel Chase, and thereby the key to the Haarlock Legacy. Drawn to the bloodline either to obey if mastered or kill if uncontrolled, the Widower is concealed by a thousand faces and seeks to destroy those who would control it. The Widower is responsible for a string of ghastly murders during the carnival, hunting those who hunt it, be they Acolytes or Pilgrims of Hayte. Vulnerable only during the Revel of Darkness at the festival's height, this fell creature must be confronted by the Acolytes at the adventure's finale.

THE MYTH OF THE WIDOWER OF XICARPH

Quaddis is a strange world, long the plaything of the vice, vainglory, and eccentricity of the powerful and great of the Calixis Sector and far beyond. It is a place of many strange tales and stories, and one of the oldest is that of the Widower—monster, changeling, creeper in the darkness. The Widower of old was said to be the Haarlocks' warder and spy and, when they needed, their peerless assassin, a thing that no weapon could kill and against which no lock could bar entry.

In the dawning centuries of the sector after the Angevin Crusade, when many great houses warred both openly and in secret to establish their domains and status in this new Imperial realm, the Widower was an unseen terror, a threat that kept a peace of sorts in Xicarph and ensured the game of power was kept to an almost genteel level of private murder and spiteful vendetta on Quaddis, rather than all-out war. As the centuries passed, and the Haarlocks' attentions once more roved far beyond the limits of the Imperium and their grip of Quaddis eased, the Widower became a thing of myth, a cautionary tale told by noble patriarchs to curb their scion's excesses and a nightmarish story that servants told their children to comfort them, a tale that taught there were always worse things waiting and even their masters knew fear. But the powerful on Xicarph always remembered that behind the Widower's myth, there lay a very real and terrible truth.

Whether human, xeno-form, daemon or something entirely other, according to some versions of the tale, the Widower was a servant of the House of Haarlock, and according to other sources, their enslaved victim—a treacherous creature that would slaughter its masters' kin when it could. The prevalent legends present the Widower as a thing of deceit and false guises, who walks forever unknown, with its true face revealed only at the hour of the Great Conjunction. This rare event is marked by Quaddis' Great Festival of Tattered Fate, and at that time, the Widower begs the blood of Haarlock for release from its eternal bondage, only to be forever denied.

THE WIDOWER AND THE STEEL CLOCK

The oldest and rarest tales speak also of the Widower's connection to the legendary Steel Clock at Gabriel Chase. No mere timepiece, this clock is said in fanciful and sinister legends to be able to change time, pulling it forward and trapping moments and events like flies in amber, and is said to be what binds and enslaves the Widower to the Haarlocks' will. Some say the clock's pendulum is, in fact, the Widower's living heart, stolen from it and bound in a prison of time.

nobles, and the like) may also be present and try to exact revenge on the Acolytes, seize the Keystone, or follow their own agenda as appropriate.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE REVEL OF DARKNESS

The celebrations at Gabriel Chase are the culmination of the Grand Carnival and the event to attend for the chosen high nobility who dwell in Xicarph. Gabriel Chase is opened for over a thousand guests when the Passing of the Shadow begins, and the celebrations continue as the Steel Clock strikes 13, heralding the total eclipse, and the gates of the estate are sealed. By tradition, in the relative safety of Gabriel Chase, standing refuge from the dangers of the city without, the celebrants then remove their masks and the Revel of Darkness begins. With the first rays of the returning sun, the Revel is at an end, law once again rules, and the great and powerful step out to the city once more.

This time, however, something is going to go very, very wrong.

ENTRY TO GABRIEL CHASE

Having gained an invitation to the celebration from Papa Grist, the Spider Bride, or some other means created by the GM, the Acolytes can enter Gabriel Chase through the Lunar Gate with the other guests flocking in.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF THE CELEBRATION AT GABRIEL CHASE

In describing Gabriel Chase to the players, the GM should evoke a sense of the power of wealth and the grandeur of the celebrations. The gardens of Gabriel Chase are lush and filled with thick scents of plants and flowers but juxtaposed strangely: moving from thick heady scent of giant pine forests in one place to the delicate scent of a spring meadow in another. Such unnaturalness is a mark of power. The manse is awash with bright full light, its contents are richly detailed, and everything one can see and touch is of the highest quality and rarity. For example, the carpets are thick and heavy, woven with deep, subtle patterns, and the tables are of rare wood inlaid with polished stone. The sound of subtle music flows around the manse like a tide, mingling with the sound of laughter and a multitude of accents and voices. Servitors with enamelled machine components move through the crowds, handing out glasses of rare liquor and exquisite sweetmeats and pastries.

Read or paraphrase the following as they approach the gate:



“Set in a high wall of black stone, gates of polished adamantine stand open, twinkling light in the morning sun. Around the edge of the gates’ vast mouth are inlaid symbols of the phases of sun and moon, with the simple dark circle of a moonless night above the apex of the gateway. Around the gate flock costumed figures in carriages or atop riding beasts held by jewelled halters. Around these exotic figures throng footmen, guards, and equerries in a kaleidoscope of liveries. Above the crowd hover raptors, their eyes plucked out and replaced by augmetics that scan the crowd jostling for entrance through the Lunar Gate.”

Once the characters reach the front of the crowd, they must present the invitation they have obtained to the formidable security. Discreet sentry guns can be seen by keen-eyed Acolytes (**Routine +20 Perception Test**). The sentry guns are imbedded in recesses above the gate and in the upper part of the wall to either side. Two ornate and ancient gun servitors with heavy bolters and another two with lascannons face the crowd of waiting guests from just outside the gate, while two pairs of functionaries in sober black check the validity of each invitation.

The functionaries are not interested in the actual guests themselves. They are solely concerned with the authenticity of a guest’s invitation. The authenticity of an invitation is ascertained by pressing the seal attached to it to a hand held device of tarnished brass. The device then projects a holographic cone of light into the air that fills with rotating numbers and symbols. The functionary will nod if the coding is correct and the invitation genuine; if it is not, the guest will be asked to leave. Should they press the point, they will get nowhere. Should anyone try to enter by force, the servitors and sentry guns will do their work.

THE ACOLYTES ON THE INSIDE

The information the Acolytes can discover during the celebrations has been outlined in the entries under Discoveries to be Made (see page 48), and the GM is encouraged to add to this. You can have the Acolytes uncover something or learn a piece of information in almost any of the locations presented here and from one of many different NPCs; likewise you can place discoveries in the path of the Acolytes and make these clues fit into what the Acolytes are doing and the environment they are in. Alongside the potential discoveries that the Acolytes can make, there are events that will occur as the 13th hour approaches; these events can also be positioned within the setting of Gabriel Chase as necessary.

The Celebrants

The partygoers are a wondrous parade of exaggerated style and ostentatious display. Some are adorned with high collars woven with precious gems, ruffs of feathers, waterfalls of silk and rich fabric, and so on. Others are artfully outlandish, their bodies covered in Spectoris fish scales or daubed in woad and hung with bones. The guests also display an endless variety of masks. Crudely beaten copper masks in the shapes of snarling

GHOST HOUSE

There is something not right about Gabriel Chase quite apart from the murderous cultists currently hiding in its walls and the shapeshifting killer stalking its halls. It is, in a literal sense, haunted, its time and space warped and twisted by the forces it contains, forces generated by the power of the Steel Clock. Parts of it are not always where they were, and occasionally corridors seem to shift, apparitions appear, conversations echo when no one is talking, room layouts somehow re-arrange themselves, and guests get lost, and sometimes they stay lost. The GM can make as much or as little of this aspect to Gabriel Chase as he wishes, but if these strange happenings are included, they should get steadily worse as the 13th hour approaches.

beasts, subtle domino masks studded with jewels, yellow half skulls, the faces of sun and moon, hoods of deep red velvet, grinning and weeping faces set in white porcelain, closed helms of brass, all these and more may be found hiding the faces of the guests at Gabriel Chase.

All guests are armed, and many trail entourages of guards in preparation for the 13th hour and the potential bloodletting of the Revel of Darkness. Until then and at the GMs discretion, there are dalliances, duels, poisonings, and hurled insults aplenty, but the peace is largely enforced (by popular accord and gun servitors if needs be) until the appointed hour.

THE LAYOUT OF THE ESTATE

Gabriel Chase is vast. As such, describing every detail of Gabriel Chase would be both unwieldy and of no real use. The following entries instead give a broad overview of Gabriel Chase and advice on capturing the sights and sounds of the estate that should allow you to add what details you need to those supplied. Each description also gives you an overview of what may go on in each location and what you can have Acolytes encounter or discover there.

The estate of Gabriel Chase is the largest in Xicarph and sits directly beneath the apex of the dome that contains the pleasure city. Roughly circular, the estate is a little over three kilometres across and is bounded by a 12 foot wall covered with vines crafted from tarnished copper. There are only two entrances through the wall: the Lunar Gate and the supply gate. Both are formidable. At the centre of the estate is the manse itself, a circular tiered drum of a building that extends not only up but also down into the soil and rock of Quaddis.

THE GARDENS

The walls of Gabriel Chase encompass a vast stretch of gardens of the most peculiar and remarkable kind, supporting as it does different environments created and maintained with

OUT OF TIME

Until the 13th hour, the Steel Clock is protected, phased outside of the normal flow of time and utterly invulnerable to harm or manipulation unless by one of the Haarlock blood. Force, solid matter, and energy directed at it simply pass through it; living creatures passing through its space suffer 1d10 reduction to their Toughness per exposure. This effect ends as the 13th hour strikes.

great artifice. A few guests wander into the gardens and jungle domes away from the manse, either out of curiosity or because they are looking for somewhere quiet. The gardens are also a place where the inebriated collapse and those steeling their courage for the violence of the Revel of Darkness might be found.

The main components of the gardens are as follows:

The Jungle Domes

Three sections of the gardens are trapped beneath domes of crystal that support the atmosphere of a fetid jungle. Each of these domes contains the flora and fauna of a different jungle world explored by the Haarlocks. These jungle domes are up to half a kilometre in diameter and are easily accessible by a series of rotating doors of crystal and brass. If you are feeling playful, you can have Acolytes who spend too long in the domes (away from the main action) attacked by one of the predatory jungle creatures that are kept as part of the jungle environment (use the Animals and Vermin entries on page 349 of **DARK HERESY**).

The Pastures

There are a number of idyllic and utterly artificial areas of ripe, swaying crops beside empty but perfectly recreated agri-world homesteads. Through these fields flow rivers supplied by melt water from outside Xicarph that are crossed by rustic bridges of stone and wood.

The Forests and Follies

The remainder of the gardens are given over to unkempt tangles of dark forest. Set amongst the trees of these forests are follies and broken ruins of ancient buildings gathered from a hundred worlds and set amongst the trees to grow thick with moss and ivy.

THE MANSE

The manse is circular and rises in three colonnaded tiers to a great crystal dome that apes the dome that contains the city of Xicarph, which the manse sits at the centre of. Though the manse has numerous entrances both above and below ground, its main entrance is via a set of silver doors that are reached by a great spill of broad steps. The remainder of the manse is labyrinthine and opulent in the extreme, with receiving rooms, libraries, salons, and galleries without number and endless thick carpets of rich colour, vast exotic plants grown in colossal vases

made of the rarest materials, and exotic objects of incalculable value.

Everywhere there are the signs of the power and wealth of the Haarlock line. Since the disappearance of Erasmus Haarlock, thought to be the last survivor of the great line, the manse has been maintained in readiness for one of the Haarlock blood to return and claim it. The house is imposing, grandiose, sterile, and above all old, with a brooding sinister air and a décor that is off—kilter somehow, with familiar symbols of the Imperium, such as saints and Aquila, rendered somehow just off from the norm enough to trouble the eye.

The manse is where most of the thousand plus guests will be at any one time, moving through the corridors, clustering in conversation, and jeering at each other that they will die when the 13th hour comes. Most rooms in the house have people in them, and even if a room is quiet, it is a good bet that the Acolytes will be interrupted there by idling strangers after only a few minutes.

Most useful discoveries in the manse will come from examining the surroundings and conversing with other guests. The GM may decide to position an object which reveals the **Desire of Haarlock** (see page 50) or may have the Acolytes converse with Old Man Vipus to learn of the **Legend of the Keystone** (see page 49). They could also catch a glimpse of Heron Mask and realise that the **Pilgrims of Hayte are Here** (see page 48).

THE STAFF

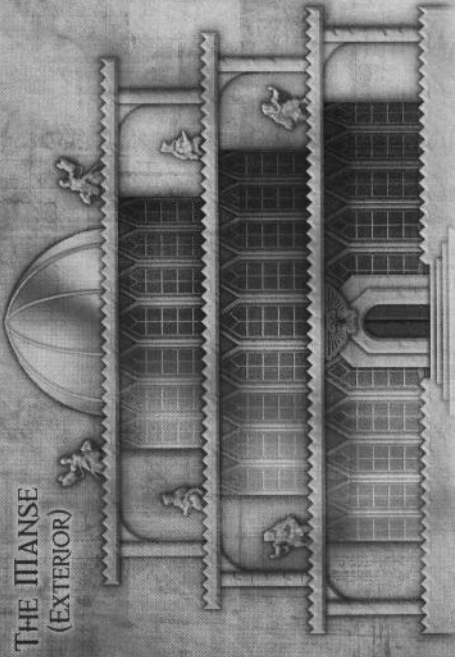
The Manse is staffed for this auspicious event by a legion of parchment-skinned servitors tending to their guests' needs under the watchful gaze of supervising adepts in icy blue robes and crimson sashes (the only people who do not go masked). Upon questioning these adepts, Acolytes can discover that most belong to the Office of the Colonial Regent, that they have been drafted by ancient tradition and are both uncomfortable and nervous in their role, and that they are terrified of the small "real staff" clad in hooded crimson cassocks who appear to be nowhere to be seen.

THE THEATRE OF CLOCKS

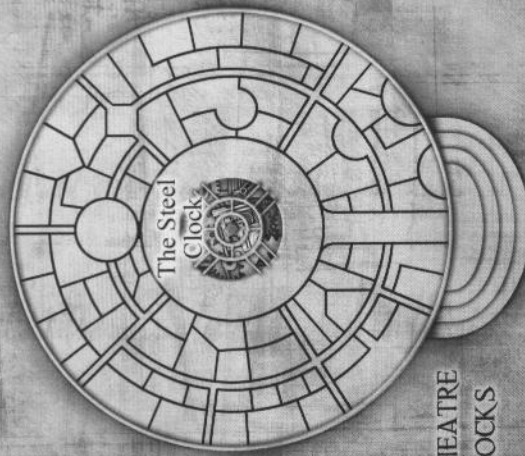
At the centre of Xicarph is the estate of Gabriel Chase, at the centre of Gabriel Chase is the manse, and at the centre of the manse is the Theatre of Clocks. This great circular atrium, the Theatre of Clocks, is the entrance hall into the rest of the manse and is also its ballroom and one of the strangest places in the Calixis Sector. The Theatre of Clocks rises through all three floors of the manse to the crystal dome that sits at the top of the manse. The floor itself is white marble, but its centre is dominated by a device of a multi-rayed black sun inlaid in brass and granite. Every inch of the walls are covered with ticking clocks and time pieces of every conceivable shape, size, and design, their mechanisms exposed like the insides of a patient on a surgeon's table. Each clock tells a different time—the times of the thousand worlds visited by the Haarlocks. Double doors of black wood lead away from the Theatre of Clocks into the curving corridors and spiral staircases that access the rest of the manse.

THE GREAT ESTATE OF GABRIEL CHASE

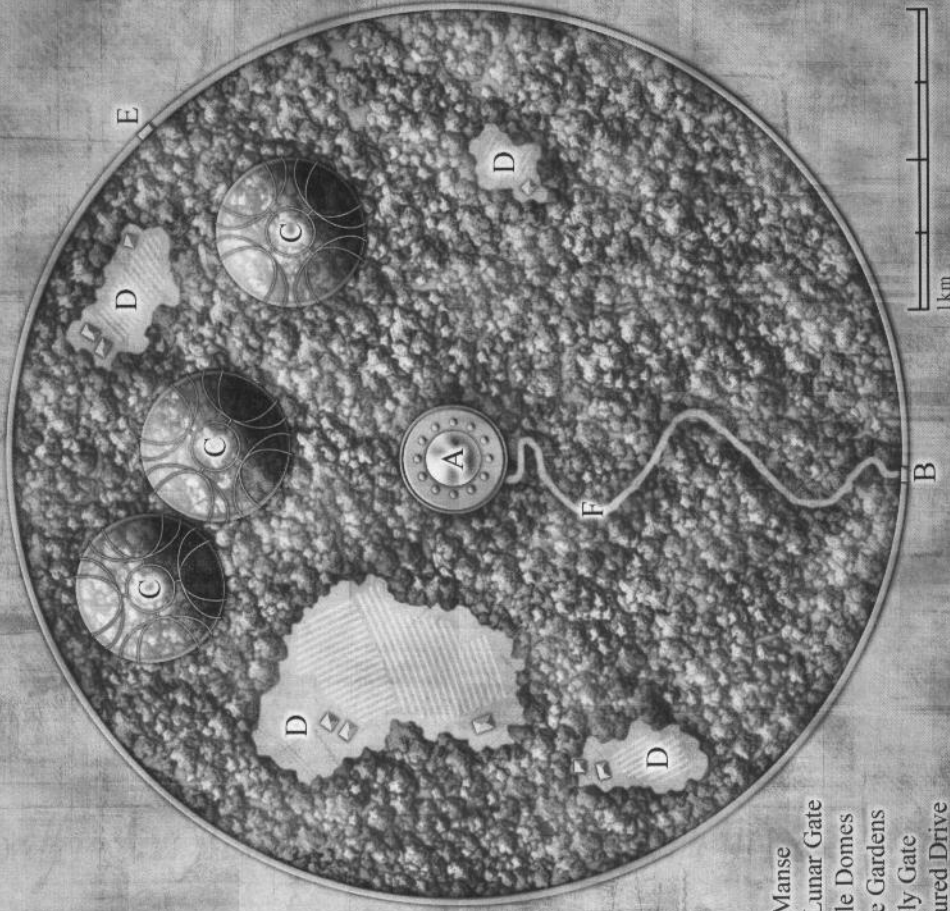
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THE MANSE
(EXTERIOR)



THE THEATRE
OF CLOCKS



- A: The Manse
- B: The Lunar Gate
- C: Tangle Domes
- D: Stone Gardens
- E: Supply Gate
- F: Arboured Drive

CHAPTER IV: THE 13TH HOUR

The Steel Clock

At the centre of the inlaid device in the theatre is the legendary Steel Clock—a six meter high column of whirling clockwork, lever arms, scything blades, and turning cogs made of glittering steel at the heart of which swings a great pendulum weighted by a curiously cut coal-like stone of iridescent mineral the size of a large fist.

Using the Theatre of Clocks

The Theatre of Clocks is the focus of the celebration. Here many of the most powerful guests and their entourages gather. Some may engage in displays of martial prowess or get their hirelings to do so for their sport, and dancing, music, and, above all, posturing and gossip are the order of the day. Entertainments occasionally take up space on the floor (performance dancers, musicians, and acrobats), but in the main, the Theatre of Clocks is the place to converse and align oneself for the fight to come. The Acolytes might make allies there that may prove crucial when the 13th hour strikes.

THE SOLAR COLONNADES

The Solar Colonnades are pillared promenades that circle each tier of the manse. The pillars are made of a white marble said to have been mined from within the solar system itself. Ancient sculptures, some reputed to date to before the Great Crusade, look down from plinths and niches along the colonnades. Accessed from great bay windows, it is here that many of the thousands of guests mingle amongst the splendour of the sculptures and the wondrous view across the other towers and domes of Xicarph.

THE HIDDEN WAYS

The manse of Gabriel Chase is riddled with secret tunnels and passages. Almost every wall has a passage at its core. Lined with bare stone, the tunnels and passages are thick with dust and cobwebs. Accessed from secret doors hidden behind huge pictures, sculptures, and elaborate panelling, they allow one to pass unseen throughout the manse. Connected to this network of passages and tunnels are secret chambers, hidden prison cells, dingy libraries, and storage spaces.

The Pilgrims of Hayte have access to these secret passages and have been using them to move around the manse, drag away members of rival factions, and get in place for the 13th hour.

The secret passages are a discovery in themselves, so gaining access to them should give the Acolytes the potential to discover a lot more. There is also much hidden in the secret chambers connected to the secret passages, and interesting pieces of information could be tucked away in a dusty tome or painted on the walls of a secret chapel.

DISCOVERIES TO BE MADE IN GABRIEL CHASE

The time leading up to the 13th hour are about the Acolytes fending off threats, uncovering information, preparing, and having more of the mystery of the Haarlock Legacy revealed to them. The discoveries that the Acolytes can make during this time are outlined in this section and have been divided into those that are of immediate significance to the conclusion of Tattered Fates and those that are of a wider significance in



the Haarlock Legacy campaign.

Where and how discoveries are made by the Acolytes have not been prescribed but instead left open. While suggestions have been made about what may be discovered by Acolytes in particular parts of Gabriel Chase, you should feel free to move them around and have them discovered where and when you like based on what the Acolytes do. The Acolytes might, for example, spend most of their time around the centre of the manse, never discovering the secret passages, and concentrate on mingling and interacting with other guests rather than looking at the Haarlocks' collection of art and curios. In this case, you should reward the course of action that the Acolytes are taking by letting them make discoveries by charming, cajoling, or duping other guests into telling them things. Likewise, if the Acolytes fall straight into the hidden passages, they can learn what they need from dusty maps, journals, and objects found in hidden chambers.

It is important to note that any important clues the Acolytes have previously missed can also be found at Gabriel Chase in some form or another.

The potential discoveries that are outlined in this section have an important impact on the events going on around the Acolytes at that moment, and the GM can introduce any clues or information here he feels has been missed or needs reinforcing from earlier in the adventure. Such knowledge is key to the successful conclusion of events and offers the Acolytes vital advantages in the climax of Tattered Fates. If you are only going place a few discoveries in the paths of the Acolytes, these are the ones to focus on.

THE PILGRIMS OF HAYTE ARE HERE

The Pilgrims of Hayte have infiltrated Gabriel Chase in numbers thanks to a brief warp portal Heron Mask opened in a chamber in the secret passages. There are now more than a score of them in the building, and they await the 13th hour to slaughter all they can as cover for the Beloved (Heron Mask) while he does battle with the Widower. They have come armed and are dressed in black priest robes with crude and grotesque masks, a fact which means they go unnoticed amongst the masked and costumed guests. They are using the secret passages of Gabriel Chase to move around and to quietly grab and then slaughter those they think may be a threat to their designs.

Means of Discovery: The simplest way for the Acolytes to discover the presence of the Pilgrims of Hayte is by seeing them. The Acolytes could catch a glimpse of them through the crowds, see one disappear into a tunnel, or witness a body of a guest being dragged away. If the Acolytes have discovered the secret passages, the Acolytes could come face to face with the Pilgrims moving about the manse making preparations or find the smouldering remains of the ritual portal and burned human sacrifices used to bring them here.

SECRET PASSAGES

Gabriel Chase is threaded through with secret passages and hidden doors. Within these passages are forgotten chambers, libraries, oubliettes, and chapels. The passages are narrow and

are lined with spy holes that allow those inside the secret passages to eavesdrop on or observe those in the manse.

Means of Discovery: The Acolytes could discover the passages by deliberately looking which is a **Difficult (-10) Search Test** if they know that there are hidden entrances to find, which is increased to **Very Hard (-30)** if they do not.

They may see others (such as the Pilgrims of Hayte) disappear into the passageways or learn of the presence of the secret passages from one of the other guests or by simple chance.

THE LEGEND OF THE KEYSTONE

Legend says that the Keystone that makes up the pendulum weight of the Steel Clock may only be removed from the clock during the 13th hour. If it is removed, the clock will be destroyed and the Widower will be undone. The Keystone is also said to possess the power to unlock the greatest secrets of the House of Haarlock. This is "of course only a legend, for the Widower has never been seen and none dares to try and take the Keystone from the clock."

Means of Discovery: This information is available during Carnival of Blood either through contact with the Spider Bride or by looking into the myths of the Widower. It is also known by several of those at the Manse, although few of the guests believe it to be more than a fanciful tale (Old Man Vipus or Lady Obellia, for example). In addition, research into documents found in the manse's libraries will also turn up this information.

THE DEATH OF TANIS

Prominently featured in one of the larger salons in the manse is a giant painting entitled "The Death of Tanis," which features a warship bearing the Haarlocks' golden spider heraldry beside a world dying in the light of a burning black sun.

Means of Discovery: A **Challenging (+0) Forbidden Lore (Warp) Test** will detect symbology and runes marked in the painting's margins indicating "distortion," "slaughter," "time," and "captivity," while a **Difficult (-10) Forbidden Lore (Heresy) Test** will bring to mind that Tanis is the forbidden name of a "dead" world, said to have once been part of the sector, that was murdered in a single night.

MAKING ALLIES

There are people amongst the guests at Gabriel Chase who can become allies of the Acolytes. Such people may be lone nobles or ones with entourages of armed hirelings and bodyguards. Such people can be persuaded to help the Acolytes both during the lead up to the striking of the 13th hour and during the mayhem that is unleashed at that point. Both Tarrik Doru and Lady Obellia provide ready-made, possible allies that the Acolytes can swing to their cause.

The possibility of finding allies may well occur to Acolytes without prompting. If it does not, however, you can place the notion in their minds by getting them into an altercation and having one of the guests come to their aid because the guest liked the look of them or for a similar reason. Getting a

ENTER THE PILGRIMS

As the timepieces in the Theatre of Clocks begin to synchronise, the remaining Pilgrims of Hayte appear robed in the black grab of priests, their faces hidden by grotesque masks of metal and skin. They stand on the edges of the crowds in many rooms of the manse and ring the Theatre of Clocks, watching and waiting. The Acolytes will almost certainly react to this presence, but they have the barest moment until the 13th hour is struck (and even if the Acolytes kill a lot during the climax, there should always be more). The profiles of the Pilgrims of Hayte statistics can be found on page 58, and if needs be they should be further bolstered by the presence of Incarnate Lesser Daemons and Cult Magi (see page 351 and 337 in **DARK HERESY**).

potential ally to back them comes down to how the Acolytes act and, if necessary, Tests based on Charm, Command, or any skill that the GM deems appropriate.

LINKS TO THE HAARLOCK LEGACY

The Acolytes can make discoveries during this part of Tattered Fates that have significance for the Haarlock Legacy campaign as a whole. Some of what they can discover may fill in the campaign's backstory and context for those who may be entering into the campaign via Tattered Fates, while reinforcing or adding detail to the facts known by Acolytes who might already have entered the web of mystery that surrounds Erasmus Haarlock and his fate. Other discoveries are clues that will lead the Acolytes to other places and other adventures in pursuit of the Haarlock Legacy. These last discoveries are linked to the structure of the whole campaign as explained in the Haarlock Legacy Campaign structure on page 66.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF HAARLOCK

Erasmus Haarlock, rogue trader, master of the vast power of the Haarlocks, and last of his line, disappeared many years ago. Now presumed deceased, the huge wealth of his line is locked in legal dispute in the Courts of Solomon. Though some whisper that scions of the Haarlock line may still exist, they have proven reticent to come forward to claim the great prize of Haarlock's legacy.

Means of Discovery: This facet of the mystery of Erasmus Haarlock is best recounted to the players by one of the guests at Gabriel Chase. Lady Obellia, or a similar character, is ideal for imparting a lavish and speculative version of the disappearance of Haarlock, while Old Man Vipus may be used to impart it as bald and sober fact.

THE WRATH OF ERASMUS HAARLOCK

Erasmus Haarlock lost his beloved wife and only daughter to a

vicious war between the members of the Haarlock line fought for the inheritance of the Haarlock rogue trader warrant. He later hunted down and killed every member of his family and their families, friends, allies, and associates.

Means of Discovery: The vengeance that Erasmus Haarlock unleashed on his family is known by other members of the elite and high nobility who may have known Erasmus Haarlock himself or others of the line that he destroyed. Interacting with guests who know something of the infamous history of Erasmus Haarlock is the best way to discover this information. Lady Obellia could be used to tell how a charming lady of the Haarlock line who was once a fast friend of hers was slaughtered by agents of Erasmus Haarlock.

THE DESIRE OF ERASMUS HAARLOCK

There is one thing that Erasmus Haarlock desired after the death of his wife and daughter—to undo what happened, return them both to life, and return to the life that he led before they were slain. Haarlock was willing to pursue any means to this end.

Means of Discovery: The desire of Haarlock to undo the past is not something that is known by anyone. It is best, therefore, stumbled over in a secret room in the form of an inscription around a portrait of his dead wife kept in a secret room or on the only surviving page of a burnt journal. (See Player Handout 3: The Haarlock Warrant on page 70)

Note: This information is important to the overall story of the Haarlock Legacy series; thus it should be amongst the first details discovered by curious and investigative player characters.

HAARLOCK'S SCATTERED DOMAINS

Erasmus Haarlock had and maintained several holdings and interests on worlds throughout the Calixis Sector. Those of particular interest to him in his later days included the mortuary complex known as the House of Dust and Ash on Solomon and a strange folly he had built outside the city of Sinophia Magna on the planet of Sinophia. You can also add other holdings that you may want to include to act as hooks for your own adventures (see The Haarlock Legacy Campaign on page 66 for more details).

Means of Discovery: The holdings of the Haarlocks that were of close interest to Erasmus Haarlock could be learnt from a guest who perhaps had heard rumours of his comings and goings on various worlds. Alternatively, an old map of the sector with ciphered notes written next to particular planets could be found in a secret room.

THE OTHER GUESTS

Much of what the Acolytes can discover can be learnt by interacting with other guests. With in excess of a thousand guests at Gabriel Chase, there is a large enough field of choice that you can add in any types and dispositions of non-player characters that you like. Presented here, however, are three sample guests that are particularly suited to certain discoveries. Above any Tests made as part of interacting with NPCs, you should reward good role-play and attentive approaches by players.

OLD MAN VIPUS

Claudius Vipus is an old man who has seen a lot, knows more, and is tired by all of it. A scion of the ancient and mysterious House Vipus of Nova Castillia who has been cut out of business by younger relative, he knows much of the Haarlock line and its artefacts and has heard many tales about Erasmus Haarlock. He is attending the celebration at Gabriel Chase because he has nothing else to do and is bored. He responds well to charming characters and to intelligence, particularly in those younger than him. He is not put off by an absence of nobility in those he converses with, and he is not armed. If asked if he is worried about being attacked during the Revel of Darkness, he simply smiles weakly and says that he does not think anyone would want to try to kill one such as him.

Use the Merchant Magnate stat block on page 342 of **DARK HERESY** for old man Vipus, but add +10 Intelligence, add Forbidden Lore (Cults and Heresy), and remove his weapons.

SIRE TARRIK DORU

Tarrik Doru is the second son in line to the headship of the Fane of Doru of Gunmetal City on Scintilla. He is a handsome, young man of high ideals and a hotter temper who resents the sneering of other nobles at his house's "factory made wealth." The line of Doru is little respected by the high nobility that gather in Xicaph, who look down on it as not only a line of a lesser hive but also one whose wealth is built "panel-beating artless lumps for war," which refers to the Fane of Doru's chief business of mass producing weaponry for use by local PDF units. This trade has, however, made the Fane of Doru very, very wealthy. Tarrik Doru is intended to be a potential ally for Acolytes who can befriend him. He responds well to anyone who demonstrates guts or straitforward honesty, and anyone that backs him in an argument with another guest has made a friend. He is also a friend and ally worth having, as he has brought with him an entourage of hardened and loyal Gunmetal muscle (four Bounty Hunters and two Skulkers see pages 336 and 344 of **DARK HERESY**).

Use the Merchant Magnate on page 342 of **DARK HERESY** for Sire Tarrik Doru, increasing his Ballistic Skill and Willpower both by +5.

If you have access to The Inquisitor's Handbook, feel free to arm Doru and his lackeys with the weapons of his forge.

LADY OBELLIA

Lady Obellia is an old and spiteful grand dame of Calixian nobility. She has sampled many pleasures in her rejuvenated extended life, learned many secrets, and delighted in the reputations she has ruined. She is also very drunk when encountered (treat as Fatigued). Lady Obellia is well disposed to anyone who suffers her company, flatters her, or has gossip (true or not) to share. In return, she tells with glee stories of Erasmus Haarlock, his line, and their wealth if steered to the topic and fills the air with savage rumour and scandal otherwise. She is a potential ally if charmed enough and will also lend the muscle of her bodyguard, a chem-gelded mute from Hive Volg on Fenksworld (see the Heavy entry on page 341 of **DARK HERESY**, adding +5 Strength and the Chem-geld Talent).

Use the Dissolute Noble on page 339 of **DARK HERESY** for Lady Obellia, reducing her Toughness by -10 and adding +10 to her Perception. She is armed only with a compact laspistol, a jewelled dagger, and her bodyguard.

LORD LAR'AX MELUA

Standing vacantly in ill-worn finery in a forgotten corner is what is left of Lar'ax Melua, Lady Du'Landra's brother and a fellow abductee to the Red Cages, one of those first chosen by Heron Mask. Questioning will find him empty-eyed, vacant, and unresponsive, and he will allow himself to be led with the slightest touch. There is an acrid smell of fresh blood around him, and the front of his russet jacket is sodden with it. If stripped, it will be discovered that his chest has been ripped open and his heart has been removed, yet somehow he still walks and breathes...

If others are questioned about his appearance, they say he came in the company of a handsome, laughing man who donned a Heron Mask and several other companions, the details of whose appearance they can't quite remember. Psyniscience reveals that he reeks of the Warp, and truly he is a corpse that walks, beyond any help other than being put out of his misery.

Lar'ax is also being watched by the Pilgrims via the secret passageways, in the hopes they might identify the Widower when he comes to take him.



THE CHIMES OF THE STEEL CLOCK

Throughout the celebrations of Gabriel Chase, the Steel Clock strikes the hours leading up to the Grand Conjunction through the passing of the Shadow, each time reconfiguring its internal arrangement slightly. When the clock chimes, events occur that affect all those within Gabriel Chase.

As the hours approach the striking of the 13th hour, the events that coincide with the chiming of the clock become more and more extreme. The guests, however, largely disregard all that happens no matter how strange as simply "part of the show" and carry on regardless, happy in their ignorance that they are truly counting down towards a potential apocalypse.

As GM, the Chimes of the Steel Clock are the device by which you control the pacing of the final part of the adventure; if the Acolytes are dithering or do not seem to be responding to the urgency of the situation, have the Steel Clock strike the hour. If the Acolytes are rushing to get to the end and missing all the important discoveries, you can stretch each hour out more. Do not forget, though, that the final part of Tattered Fates is literally on a clock, and the final, 13th hour must eventually strike.

For the striking of each hour leading up to the 13th hour and the Grand Conjunction, a description of the chiming of the Steel Clock is given and an accompanying event that is experienced by the Acolytes.

THE 9TH HOUR

The first time the Steel Clock strikes after the arrival of the Acolytes, it strikes for the 9th hour. When it does, read or paraphrase the following and then enact the accompanying event.

"Nine dolorous notes ring out from somewhere beneath the ground, like the slow beating of a vast metal heart. Those outside can see the body that will obscure the sun as a shadow approaching across the clear blue sky. A sense of delight and anticipation runs through the guests; the Grand Conjunction is but three hours away, and approaching with ever more eager feet."

A Standoff Between Enemies

At the striking of the final note for the 9th hour, the Acolytes

THE SMALL MATTER OF A KNIFE

If one of the Acolytes still is in possession of Heron Mask's knife, now is the time to regret it. The GM should secretly get the Acolyte to roll a Test to avoid possession by an Unclean Spirit with a Willpower of 40 (See page 354 of **DARK HERESY**). If the Acolyte fails, he becomes possessed by the Unclean Spirit and should act accordingly.

hear and/or see the following occur amongst those guests nearest to them. Read or paraphrase the following:

"A noble, masked in chased gold and crowned with green feathers, thrusts out his hand, pointing at another guest. The crowd around him shrinks back from the gesture as he shouts:

'You hear that? You hear that you scum? The hour of the Revel approaches, and with it, your vile little existence ticks to an end.' Drawing and activating a power blade to emphasise his point, the golden masked noble points it at the guest. 'Three, short, pitiful hours more will you draw breath.'

The noble with the golden mask and the sword has a vendetta against one of the other guests and intends to use the rules of the Revel of Darkness to murder the object of his hatred. This event serves to both remind the Acolytes of the tradition of the Revel of Darkness and to remind them of the violence that it will unleash. It also serves as a moment in which the Acolytes can make an ally by backing one of the two rivals if matters come to violence, or where they may be forced to pick between two potential sources of aid.

THE 10TH HOUR

The second striking of the Steel Clock after the arrival of the Acolytes is for the 10th hour. At this point, read or paraphrase the following:

"Deafening chimes fill the air, and every wall and surface vibrates to their note; the crystal of glasses sings, and dust rises from the relics of Gabriel Chase. It is as if the manse itself is producing the chimes, and as the 10th and final note fades, a sound like the winding of a thousand clogged mechanisms comes from the walls and then abruptly ceases. Those who look out at the sky see that a dark bite has been taken from the sun."

One of the nobles nearby falls to the ground and begins to spasm uncontrollably, coughing up blood only to die a few moments later. In the aftermath, a woman screams her husband is missing from beside her; the Widower has been at work.

Corridor of Death

The noise of clockwork coming from the walls is an outward sign of the hideous motion of engines and devices built into the fabric of the manse. Any Acolytes within the secret tunnels of Gabriel Chase, or in a corridor in the rest of the manse, find themselves the victims of one of the deadly jokes of the Haarlocks. For these unfortunate Acolytes, read or paraphrase the following:

"As the last chime sounds, you hear a monstrous whirring and clanking of machinery in the walls all around you. Then the corridor shakes like dice in a cup and is flipped upside down., dropping you from what is now the ceiling to the floor. The ends of the passage you were in disappear to be replaced by dark, rusted metal doors. With a final clank of gears, the metal doors grind open, and from the darkness beyond come scuttling servitors, their flesh dead and grey, their brass weapon limbs clicking like hungry jaws."

Unless the Acolytes can pass a **Difficult (-10) Agility or Acrobatics Test**, all are thrown prone on the floor. There are two servitors per Acolyte. These Combat Servitors (see page 338 of **DARK HERESY**) block the exits. When and if the Combat Servitors are destroyed, the Acolytes may exit the mechanically reconfigured corridor through the rusted metal doors from which the servitors entered. On the other side of each set of metal doors is a holding chamber for the servitors that smells of rotting flesh and an entrance to the secret passage network. It is advisable to reward the Acolytes who survive the corridor of death by having them make a discovery shortly after; a chamber holding some Discoveries of Significance (see page 48 in this chapter) is ideal.

THE 11TH HOUR

The third striking of the Steel Clock after the arrival of the Acolytes signals the 11th hour. Read or paraphrase the following:

"The sun is half obscured by the darkness spreading across its surface. The clock begins to strike out the notes of the hour—great slow beats of a funeral bell that grow louder and louder until the final monstrous note rings out like the voice of a mournful god. People clutch their ears, and some people fall to the floor as 11 monstrous notes are struck. As the ringing in your ears fades, you think that you hear a high and unnatural laugh woven into the aftershock."

A Glimpse of the Jackal

As the last note of the 11th hour strikes, the Acolytes catch a glimpse of Jackal Mask amongst the crowds. Although the Acolytes may be in different places, they all glimpse him for a second, for this is not Marcus Vulpa but the Widower masked in another form. The Widower is, in fact, wearing his skin, and spotting any difference involves a **Very Hard -30 Awareness Test**. This strange foreshadowing gives the Acolytes a chance to guess at what is going to happen and to be primed for the events that will unfold once the 13th hour has been struck. At the moment you deem right, read or paraphrase the following:



"As you look around, a view clears through the crowd, and as the last gaudy body shifts, you see a figure wearing an ebony jackal mask. He looks at you, his body completely still beneath his armour and robes that hang from it like loose, dead flesh. He tilts his head as if in greeting, and then the sight of Jackal Mask is lost again in the swirling tide of bright, coloured costumes."

No matter how hard they look, the Acolytes will not be able to find Jackal Mask.

THE 12TH HOUR

As the 12th hour strikes, the lights within the manse flicker and then plunge the whole manse into darkness; screams abound along with a few gunshots in the darkness before the lights abruptly snap back on. A commotion immediately forms around the Steel Clock.

"The Steel Clock has been daubed in blood, parts of it are now in furious motion where none were before, and a palpable aura of cold now radiates from it. Sticky red finger marks can be seen on several of the levers and gears and in a crimson print across the clock face. Lodged inside the mechanism, you can see the shape of a human hand, torn off at the wrist."

The Acolytes, depending on prior events, should recognise the severed hand as that of Lady Melua, Lord Lar'ax, or one

of the others they encountered during their abduction. The Widower has literally used the blood of Haarlock to trigger the Steel Clock's functions.

THE STRIKING OF THE 13TH HOUR

As the sun of Quaddis reaches its noon zenith, the darkness that has been slowly pursuing it blots it out utterly, and the Steel Clock strikes 13 times. This is the climax of Tattered Fates, a moment of truth when all is unmasked and the Acolytes are either prepared to face and defeat the darkness or let Xicarph die.

The entire Festival of Tattered Fates and the celebrations at Gabriel Chase have led to the Grand Conjunction, but the tension now builds to an even more acute pitch. To signal what is about to happen as the Passing of the Shadow draws to its fruition, read or paraphrase the following:

"The light has fled as if before the dark clouds of a storm. A cold breeze blows, stirring gowns and feathered finery, though Xicarph is sealed in a dome of crystal. Guests throng to the Theatre of Clocks. Servitors pass through the rooms and promenades, lighting huge candelabra of pale candles. In the candlelight, a hush falls as minutes pass and many of the masked faces turn upward to watch the light become blotted out. Others in the crowd finger their weaponry and edge into position, waiting for the permitted carnage of the revel to begin. The barest sliver of light, like a ring of silver, can still be seen behind the dark orb that has eaten the sun.

In the last seconds of light, the countless clocks of the Theatre of Clocks, which have struck the hours of a thousand different worlds for a thousand years, begin one by one to tick in unison with the Steel Clock. The guests begin to mutter, surprise showing in every gesture and glance; such a thing has never happened before. With a sweep of the pendulum of the Steel Clock, the last clock falls into rhythm with its fellows and the air resonates with the ticking of a thousand mechanical hearts. Then as one they strike the 13th hour in a great chorus of noise and chaos.

THE GRAND CONJUNCTION

As the last note of the 13th hour is struck, Xicarph is plunged into darkness and violence but not in the manner it expects. All the guests at Gabriel Chase and all those within the wondrous city of Xicarph expect the darkness to fall and for there to be a sudden surge of violence as people take advantage of the Revel of Darkness to kill enemies and rivals. They are all ready for the sun to be blotted out and for the blood to flow until the sun's face can once again be seen. This Grand Conjunction, however, is different. You should handle this pivotal moment in a manner that creates an atmosphere

of shock and panic. The essential events that happen in the first moments of the Grand Conjunction are given in the following paragraphs.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

"As the final, 13th note is struck, thousands of hands reach for masks and draw weapons. There is a heartbeat as the chime holds in the air, and then the world is plunged into a twilight gloom. All is primed, taut anticipation, but before a shot can be fired between rivals, an exultant voice shouts words as loud and terrible as the chiming of the Steel Clock. His heron mask glittering in the candlelight, an all too familiar figure leaps onto the plinth of the Steel Clock and gazes around smiling.

'Look, look at the sun!' he calls out. Above Xicarph shines the sun, so bright that it cannot be looked at, but it gives no light. All around in the impossible darkness, people begin to scream, and the sound of violence erupts in a desperate, panicked rush. 'Come, Widower of Haarlock, show me your face. It is your hour, and you will unmask.'

A figure walks from the seething crowd, his robes billowing in an unnatural wind, his jackal mask still in place.

'You!' shouts heron mask, and the wearer of the jackal reaches up and removes his mask.'

'Fool,' the Widower growls in a voice that is a hundred different voices blended into one. 'You have brought the Haarlocks' by-blows here and sealed your doom! You thought to tame me, but you know nothing! You are nothing! By their blood I have summoned the black light of death for this world, a shadow out of time captured centuries ago by the Traveller but no less lethal now. In death I shall be free of him who comes!'

Suddenly the mechanisms of the great Steel Clock begin to whirl and change, and unholy howling echoes from the machine.

The deathly fires of a black sun crawl round the dark totality of the eclipse, blacker than the darkness of the void.

All around the chamber, men and women scream. Some fall to their knees beneath the black light, clawing at their eyes and faces, while others lash out at each other like rabid animals, and the Widower laughs..."

All those beneath the gaze of the Tyrant Star take 1d5 Insanity and Corruption. Those who look directly at it must succeed at a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or take an additional 1d5 Insanity and Corruption.

A TRUE REVEL OF DARKNESS

This final part of Tattered Fates is a chaotic all-consuming battle. In Gabriel Chase, the appearance of the bright sun that casts no light creates immediate and violent panic. It is best run at a fast pace with constant moments of threat and combat and little time for the Acolytes to think; it's now time to act.

Use the following points as guide to what is going on:

People turn on one another in attempts to get away and try

to shoot and hack their way to whatever their panicked minds call safety at this moment. Everyone is dangerous, scared, and desperate.

Any allies that the Acolytes find and identify are some of the few holding it together, and they are eager to rally to the Acolytes' cause.

The Pilgrims of Hayte start to indiscriminately slaughter the crowds as the soon as Heron Mask shouts his exultation to look at the sky. They spread through the crowds, throwing grenades at random, spraying with their auto pistols, and axing anyone in reach.

Heron Mask and the Widower engage in an epic battle at the base of the Steel Clock. Ultimately, which of these two monsters triumphs is determined by the involvement of the Acolytes, but if you need to, you can scale the amount of Wounds that Heron Mask still has remaining to the condition of the Acolytes at the time. If, however, the Acolytes do not stop either the Widower or Heron Mask, then one will triumph over the other sooner or later.

THE FINAL CONFRONTATION

The climax of *Tattered Fates* is a pitched battle between the forces drawn to control the Haarlock Legacy. On one side is the Widower, who through its manipulation of the Steel Clock wishes to bring about the destruction of Quaddis and its own death unless stopped, and on the other side are those who seek to prevent this from happening, most notably the Acolytes and, for their own malign reasons, the Pilgrims of Hayte (as well as any other factions the GM has introduced!). This final confrontation is likely to take the shape of a bloody three-way battle at the heart of Gabriel Chase whose exact course is left for the GM and the players' actions to determine. In this desperate fight, the Acolytes' only initial advantage is likely to be the Widower and the Beloved focusing their murderous attentions on each other first and foremost.

The ultimate fate of the Widower in this final part of *Tattered Fates* is of great importance to how the adventure ends and what befalls both the Acolytes and Quaddis.

It is important to note that the Widower can only be destroyed by having its protean body ripped to pieces by overwhelming amounts of force, or by the Keystone's removal from the Steel Clock (see following section), which will unravel the creature's body. In any case, the physical destruction of the Widower's body will leave its screaming face—mere death is not enough to escape the Haarlocks' bondage. The fate of the Widower and the Tyrant Star are intertwined—it can only die under the light of the black sun. This reason is why the Widower has orchestrated this last battle, in order to cause as much destruction and suffering as possible before winking out of existence.

Even if the destruction of the Widower is quickly accomplished, the Acolytes will then likely have the Pilgrims of Hayte (and perhaps other factions) to deal with before they can declare victory.

The following are some guidelines for the GM about the adventure's potential endings:

If the Widower and the Pilgrims are Defeated:

The Acolytes have scored a great victory over the servants of Chaos and bested an ancient evil. The extraordinary eclipse swiftly passes with the Widower's bodily destruction, and light once again shines on Xicarph, leaving the Acolytes amid the carnage of the great and the good as armed servitors appear to usher them out of the Manse, taking with them what they will. Outside, the rioting and violence in the city is quickly brought to heel, and soon the ports are opened, allowing the survivors, both the guilty and the innocent, to escape, Acolytes included.

If the Widower and the Acolytes are Defeated: If this occurs, the Beloved gathers up the Widower's tormented remains and, as an afterthought, smashes the clock with warp-sorcery as he escapes amid the bloodshed perpetrated by his servants. The light of the Tyrant Star gutters and wanes as the eclipse passes, but its baleful influence lingers. In the aftermath of the Widower's summoning, thousands die as a day-long epidemic of murderous anarchy sweeps Xicarph and the Pilgrims of Hayte run riot while they flee the city. For any Acolytes that live, survival is a bitter victory, for although Quaddis has not been destroyed, the Pilgrims have succeeded in capturing the Widower and the secrets he holds—a fact that millions may learn to regret in the years to come.

The Keystone, however, may still lie unremarked and unlooked for in the wreckage of the Haarlocks' dread engine.



If the Widower is Triumphant: If neither the Acolytes nor the Pilgrims of Hayte can defeat the Widower, the stolen light of the Tyrant star bathes first Xicarph, then all of Quaddis, and the populace tears itself apart in madness and suicidal bloodletting. Days later, the true sun rises again and reveals the beautiful spires of the thousand palaces of Xicarph shattered and the ice winds sweeping snows through the smashed crystal dome. Quaddis is now a charnel house inhabited only by the dead and the hopelessly insane. Under the Tyrant Star's unholy blaze, the Widower will be worn away into nothing—a slow death, but inevitable.

REMOVING THE KEYSTONE FROM THE STEEL CLOCK

The Keystone is an asymmetrically cut fragment of coal-like stone the size of a human heart that hangs from the pendulum of the Steel Clock. During the Grand Conjunction, the Keystone can be removed by someone climbing into the mechanism and unlocking it from the shaft of the pendulum or by attacking the central structure of the clock itself (consider it to have 15 Armour Points and 30 Wounds). Removing the Keystone manually simply requires turning it counterclockwise in its cradle, which releases it.

At the moment the Keystone is removed or the device is smashed, the mechanism of the Steel Clock explodes in a storm of steel cogs, gears, and energy. All within 10 metres of the Steel Clock are hit by 2d10+3 R damage unless they can pass a **Challenging (+0) Dodge Test** (Treat this as an explosion.).

If the Keystone is removed or the clock itself smashed, the Steel Clock's power to manipulate time and space abruptly ends, the echoed light of the Black Sun flickers and disappears, and normal daylight soon shines again.

The Widower's power is also tied to the Steel Clock's energies, and if it is destroyed, the Widower is also spectacularly rent apart as the unnatural forces holding it together are undone, leaving only a horrific, writhing mass in the crude shape of a face screaming and wailing, begging its master for forgiveness.

The Keystone itself is ice cold to the touch, inert, and physically indestructible. Any psychic attempt to probe it automatically fails and leaves the individual attempting to do so violently nauseous.

The Keystone is a perilous and, in its own way, priceless artefact and should either be kept by the Acolytes or passed on to the Inquisition for safekeeping. This dark object has a further part to play in a later adventure in this series.

THE REMAINS OF THE WIDOWER

Should the widower be destroyed, its body explodes into ragged chunks of slime and protoplasmic ooze. The face of the Widower, like a horrific mask of flesh, is still intact and continues to twitch and make strange noises. If the face is approached, listeners will hear a strange, strangled, high-pitched voice issuing from its mouth:

"He comes—the master—I am his herald. By the footsteps of fools he is announced. The Mirror shatters and the Island Burns. He returns, the Dark Traveller, and ruin comes with him."

If asked what the words mean, it will reply, *"Last and first of the Haarlocks, my master,"* before lapsing into tittering incoherence.

If the Acolytes decide to keep the face of the Widower (in say, a secure containment jar), it will continue to live and will continue to gibber and rave, but will also answer questions from time to time. Keeping the face of the Widower is an act of radicalism but will prove very useful to the Acolytes in the remainder of the Haarlock Legacy, as it can be used as a source of information on Erasmus Haarlock and his ways. It also provides a means for you, as the GM, to feed information to the players or nudge them in the right direction during the rest of the Haarlock Legacy.

AFTERMATH

Should the Acolytes succeed in defeating the Widower, they will have saved Xicarph from anarchy and destruction as well as having learned many secrets relating to the Haarlock Legacy. They may also have gained possession of two important objects: the Keystone of the Steel Clock and the face of the Widower. Should they have failed, they will have to contend with escaping a city ripping itself apart and will have to account for their failure to the Ordos Calixis.

REWARDS

Experience awards are given after each of the three parts of Tattered Fates, and for the completion of The Thirteenth Hour, each acolyte should receive between 100 and 300 xp per game session. For defeating the Widower and ending the Grand Conjunction, each Acolyte also gains a fate point. All Acolytes who completed The Red Cages also gain free access to the Survivor of the Red Cages Elite Campaign Package (see page 67 of The Haarlock Legacy Campaign chapter in this book).





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APPENDIX I: NPCs AND ANTAGONISTS

THE PRINCIPALS

This appendix is divided into two parts: The Principals and The Masses. The Principals details and describes NPCs that play an important role in the plot of Tattered Fates. As such, they are each detailed individually. The people and creatures in The Masses do not receive such individual attention.

HERON MASK (THE BELOVED)

Clad to infiltrate the Red Cages of Xicarph, the Beloved wears the robes and dirty armour of a member of the Beast House, but hides his handsome face behind a silver heron mask crowned with a spray of metal feathers. In reality, however, he is a false prophet of the Pilgrims of Hayte. For more details on the Beloved, the Pilgrims of Hayte, and their motivations see page 42.

Heron Mask Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
34	39	30	37	32	47	55	46	58

Movement: 3/6/9/18

Wounds: 18

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Charm (Fel) +20, Command (Fel) +20, Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy, Imperial Creed, Imperium, Underworld) (Int) +10, Deceive (Fel) +20, Dodge (Ag) +10, Disguise (Fel) +20, Forbidden Lore (Daemonology, Warp) (Int) +20, Forbidden Lore (Inquisition, Heresy) (Int) +10, Invocation (WP) +10, Psyniscience (Per) +10, Scrutiny (Per) +10, Secret Signs (Occult) (Int) +10, Secret Tongue (Pilgrims of Hayte) +20, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int) +10, Trade (Soothsayer) (Int).

Talents: Air of Authority, Consumed by Spite, Exotic Weapon Training (Needle Pistol), Favoured of the Warp, Fearless, Master Orator, Melee Weapon Training (Power, Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, SP), Psy Rating 4, Resistance (Psychic), Strong Minded.

Psychic Powers: Chameleon, Constrict, Dowsing, Fearful Aura, Inflict Pain, Precognition, Preternatural Awareness, Touch of Madness.

Armour: Carapace chest plate and greaves with mesh woven vambraces (Arms 3, Body 6, Legs 5).

Weapons: Autopistol (30m; S/-/6; 1d10+2 I; Pen 0; Clip 18; Rld Full), needle pistol (30m; S/-/6; 1d10 R; Pen 0; Clip 6; Rld Full, Accurate, Toxic), power blade (1d0+6† E; Pen 6; Power Field).

THE LORE OF HAYTE

If you have access to the **DISCIPLES OF THE DARK GODS** sourcebook, add the Sorcerer Talent to Heron Mask's profile and the Whispers of the Warp power; he also knows many malefic rituals.

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Gear: Ragged cloak, auto pistol clip, needle pistol clip, manacles, withered hand taken from Abbot Raal (counts as psy—focus).

JACKAL MASK (MARCUS VULPA)

Marcus Vulpa is a figure of fear to his underlings in the Red Cages of Xicarph, one of the Beast House's slaver chiefs with a justly held reputation for malignant brutality and greed. He wears tattered robes with segmented chest armour, and his left hand is a cluster of flexible metal tentacles. With Vulpa's face always hidden behind a polished brazen jackal mask, this feature has all but replaced his given name amongst those who know of him.

Jackal Mask Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
48	43	40	44	35	32	45	40	28

Movement: 3/6/9/18

Wounds: 16

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Climb (S), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Concealment (Ag) +10, Dodge (Ag) +10, Drive (Ground Vehicle) (Ag), Forbidden Lore (Mutants, Xenos) (Int), Interrogation (WP), Intimidate (S) +10, Medicae (Int), Navigation (Surface) (Int) +10, Scholastic Lore (Beasts) (Int) +10, Security (Ag), Shadowing (Ag) +10, Silent Move (Ag) +10, Speak Language (Feral World dialect, Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int) +20, Swim (S), Tracking (Int) +10, Wrangling (Int) +10.

Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Las, Primitive, SP), Blind Fighting, Crippling Strike, Fearless, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive, Shock), Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, Primitive, SP), Rapid Reaction.

Armour: Light carapace breastplate and mesh reinforced leathers (Arms 2, Body 5, Legs 2)

Weapons: Skinning blade (1d5+6† R; Pen 2; Balanced), shock charged manipulator tendrils (1d10+6† I; Flexible, Shocking), hand cannon w/man-stopper rounds (35m; S/-/6; 1d10+4 I; Pen 3; Clip 5; Rld 2Full), mono-knife (3m; 1d5+4† R; Pen 2).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Implants: Good quality implanted manipulator bundle replacing left hand (when uncharged, the tips of the flexible tendrils can be used as dextrously as fingers).

Gear: 3 hand cannon clips, personal vox, injector with 2 doses of stimm and 1 of panimmune.

CONSUMED BY SPITE (TALENT)

The soul and mind of a Pilgrim of Hayte has been so damaged and consumed by bitterness and malice that there is room for little else. Physical suffering has little meaning to one, other than the pleasure of inflicting it on others.

Those with the Talent receive a +10 bonus to resist Fear and any attempt to directly control or influence their minds. In addition, they receive a +30 bonus to resist the effects of Intimidation and Interrogation. They may also ignore the effects of being Stunned with a successful **Difficult (-10) Willpower Test**.

THE SPIDER BRIDE

The Spider Bride is the legendary “dark lady” of the carnival and the ageless mistress of Xicarph’s garden of unearthly delights. Her myth promises death to any who gaze on her true face. Accompanied by her court of Venomous Ladies, and guarded by a swarm of arachnae servitors, what lurks beneath the silk and silvered mask of the Spider Bride is worse by far than any could guess. Years ago, in payment for a terrible service, a nameless servant of a death cult was gifted the greatest prize: immortality. That immortality was in the form of a halo device that even now bites into the flesh of the Spider Bride and is slowly remaking her into a true monster.

The Spider Bride Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
45	40	(6) 35	(6) 35	(8) 45	37	49	65	25

Movement: 4/8/12/24

Wounds: 26

Skills: Acrobatics (Ag) +20, Awareness (Per) +10, Climb (S) +20, Command (Fel) +20, Common Lore (Underworld, Secrets of Xicarph) (Int) +20, Common Lore (Imperium) (Int) +10, Concealment (Ag) +10, Dodge (Ag) +20, Deceive (Fel) +20, Intimidate (S) +20, Forbidden Lore (Archeaotech, Cults, Heresy) (Int) +10, Literacy (Int), Medicae (Int), Security (Ag), Shadowing (Ag) +10, Silent Move (Ag)+10, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int) +10, Tech—Use (Int), Tracking (Int).

Talents: Assassin Strike, Basic Weapon Training (Las, Primitive, SP), Fearless, Heightened Senses (Sight, Smell, Sound, Taste, Touch), Leap Up, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Power, Primitive), Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, Primitive, SP), Step Aside, Swift Attack.

Traits: Dark Sight, Regeneration, Unnatural Agility (×2), Unnatural Toughness (×2), Unnatural Strength (×2).

Armour: Xenos mesh with adamantine mask (All 4).

Weapons: Power blade (1d10+9† E; Pen 6; Powerfield), 2 miniaturised Blind Grenades.

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Implants: Halo Device, Good quality mind impulse unit that connects via wave signal to control and activation implants in the Venomous Ladies and Arachnae at distances of up to

500 metres.

Gear: Elaborate costume of red and black silks and cobwebs of dark lace.

Halo Device Effects: The Spider Bride does not suffer from Fatigue and may resurrect several days after death if the corpse is not destroyed (see the Halo Device section in **Chapter III: Xenos** in **DISCIPLES OF THE DARK GODS**, page 97, for more details if needed).

PAPA GRIST

Papa Grist is a figure of awe and fear among the criminals and scum of the Promenade of Arenas. He is garbed in tattered, ash-stained rags and is festooned with broken and grisly trophies. It is said that men die at the snap of his fingers and his blind white eye is able to look into a man’s soul to see if he’s lying. Rumoured to born of a witch on the feral world of Iocanthos, Papa Grist is a crime lord with ties to the Cold Guild, whose connections touch a dozen worlds, and who currently dominates the high-stakes gambling operations that thrive during the Grand Carnival.

Papa Grist Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
38	43	35	40	30	52	48	55	38

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 14

Skills: Awareness (Per) +20, Barter (Fel) +20, Blather (Fel), Carouse (T) +20, Chem-Use (Fel) +10, Command (Fel) +20, Common Lore (Underworld) (Int) +20, Deceive (Fel) +10, Evaluate (Int) +10, Forbidden Lore (Cults, Daemonology, Psykers) (Int), Interrogation (WP) +10, Intimidate (S) +20, Scrutiny (Per) +20, Secret Tongue (Gutter) (Int) +10, Speak Language (Dusk Cant, Iocanthian, Low Gothic Sibellian Hiver, Voider) (Int) +10.

Talents: Disturbing Voice, Fearless, Into the Jaws of Hell, Iron Discipline, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive, Shock), Pistol Training (Las, SP), Resistance (Psychic Powers).

Armour: Mesh woven clothes (Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3).

Weapons: Hand cannon with dumdummy bullets (35m, S/-/-; 1d10+6 I; Pen 3; Clip 5; Rld 2Full), mono knife (3m; 1d5+3† R; Pen 2), electro whip (1d10+5† I; Flexible, Shocking).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Gear: Tattered clothing of grey rags, numerous charms, mutilated dolls and shrunken head charms, 3 doses of spook with injector, data—slate, clip of dumdummy bullets.

CRACKMARROW

Crackmarrow is a massively built ex-guardsmen that Papa Grist picked up smuggling Ghostfire off Iocanthos some years ago. Sickeningly strong and psychopathically violent, he is Grist’s bodyguard and chief enforcer whose favourite “trick” is splintering his victim’s bones one at a time.

Crackmarrow Profile



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
43	43	55	45	30	20	30	35	20

Movement: 3/6/9/18**Wounds:** 18

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Carouse (T) +20, Climb (S), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Dodge (Ag), Drive (Ground Vehicle) (Ag), Interrogation (WP), Intimidate (S) +10, Navigation (Surface) (Int) +10, Secret Tongue (Gutter) (Int), Speak Language (Iocanthos Dialect, Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int) +10, Swim (S) (+10), Tracking (Int), Wrangling (Int) +10.

Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Las, SP), Berserk Charge, Combat Master, Crushing Blow, Disarm, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive), Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, SP), Take Down.

Armour: Worn and mismatched flak gear (Arms 3, Body 4, Legs 3).

Weapons: Sawn-off scattergun (10m; S/-/-; 1d10+5 I; Pen 0; Clip 5; Rld 2Full; Scatter, Extra Grip), Great hammer (2d10+7† I; Pen 2; Primitive, Unwieldy).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Gear: Ragged combat gear, finger bone charms, flask of rotgut booze, 10 scattergun shells, manacles.

BLISS

Bliss is one of Papa Grist's chief henchmen. A whip-thin obscura addict, he is also a potent unsanctioned psyker specialising in breaking the minds of Papa Grist's enemies.

Bliss Profile



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
20	18	25	21	30	45	30	40	25

Movement: 3/6/9/18**Wounds:** 13

Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium, Underworld) (Int), Deceive (Fel) +10, Forbidden Lore (Cults, Psykers, Warp), Literacy (Int) +10, Secret Signs (Occult), Secret Tongue (Gutter) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int).

Talents: Discipline Focus (Telepathy), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Psy Rating 4, Resistance (Psychic), Strong Minded.

Psychic Powers: Compel, Dominate, Inflict Pain, Mind Scan, Sense Presence, Spasm, Telepathy, Terrify, Touch of Madness, Warp Howl.

Armour: Mesh Vest (Body 4).

Weapons: Knife (3m; 1d5+2† R; Primitive), stub automatic (30m; S/3/-; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 9; Rld Full).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Gear: Stained high-collared coat of fine blue material patterned with white starbursts, 2 stub clips, False ID, 4 doses

of Obscura with a long-stemmed bone pipe.

OBADIAH PSALTER

Obadiah Psalter was once a priest-scholar of the Tarsine Chantry, whose zealous Puritanism and dislike of authority saw him cast into the life of a wandering firebrand preacher and rabble-rouser. He is a stocky, heavily built figure in his middle years, clad in grey robes stained with sweat and the grime of the streets.



Obadiah Psalter Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
32	20	37	41	25	31	32	42	35

Movement: 3/6/9/18**Wounds:** 13

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Charm (Fel), Common Lore (Imperial Creed) (Int) +20, Literacy (Int), Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) (Int) +10, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int).

Talents: Air of Authority, Master Orator, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Unshakable Faith.

Armour: None.

Weapons: Stout wooden pole (1d10+3† I, Primitive), hand cannon (35m; S/-/-; 1d10+4 I; Pen 2; Clip 5; Rld 2Full).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Gear: Grimy ecclesiastical robes, pilgrimage medals, prayer book, aquila talisman.

LADY MELUA

Lady Melua is young, intelligent, and strong-minded but has found herself rapidly out of her depth on Quaddis. Clad in the cutting edge of Malfian fashion for a young noblewoman traveller, she is also prepared for trouble with a small concealed arsenal in the rings on her fingers.



Lady Melua Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	35	30	30	35	45	40	38	48

Movement: 3/6/9/18**Wounds:** 12

Skills: Awareness (Per), Barter (Fel) +10, Charm (Fel) +20, Command (Fel), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int) +10, Deceive (Fel), Evaluate (Int) +10, Literacy (Int) +10, Logic (Int), Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int) +10, Tech Use (Int), Wrangling (Int).

Talents: Exotic Weapon Training (Digi-weapon, Needle Pistol), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, SP).

Armour: Mesh woven corset (Body 3).

Weapons: Digi-needler (10m; S/-/-; 1d10 R; Pen 0; Clip 3; Rld NA; Accurate, Toxic), Digi-laser (10m; S/-/-; 1d10+2



+10, Inquiry (Fel) +10, Literacy (Int) +20, Logic (Int) +10, Scholastic Lore (Heraldry) (Int) +20, Scholastic Lore (Cryptology, Imperial Creed, Judgement, Legend) (Int) +10, Scholastic Lore (Archaic, Astromancy, Philosophy) (Int), Scrutiny (Per) +10, Search (Per), Secret Tongue (Acolyte) (Int) +10, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int) +20, Tech-Use (Int) +10.

Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, Plasma, SP).

Armour: None.

Weapons: Compact plasma pistol (15m; S/-/-; 1d10+5 E; Pen 6; Clip 5; Rld 4Full; Recharge, Overheats).

Gear: Faded scholarly robes, chrono, auto quill, data-slate, writing kit, lho-sticks, 2 monotask (archive and viewer), 2 servo-skulls.

THE WIDOWER

The Widower is a nightmare creature. Once human and a scion of the Haarlock bloodline, it has been reborn as a creature of protean form and inhuman strength. Its flesh able to reshape like molten wax, the Widower can appear as a mound of flesh, extend biting mouths and bone-like barbs from its hands, or even wear the skin of another like a vile costume.

Note the following profile is for the Widower's "weakened state" during the Revel of Darkness. Other than at this time, increase its various Unnatural Characteristics by a further degree and add Unnatural Agility (x2) and the Psychic Powers Shape Flesh and See Me Not, both useable without needing to make any Power Rolls.

The Widower Profile



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
40	20	(12) 61	(10) 55	35	60	45	75	30

Movement: 3/6/9/18

Wounds: Special (see Protean Form special rules)

Skills: Awareness (Per) +20, Climb (S), Deceive (Fel) +20, Disguise (Fel) +20, Forbidden Lore (Archeotech, Cults, Heresy, Inquisition, Secrets of Haarlock, Warp) (Int) +20, Intimidate (S) +20, Literacy (Int) +20, Logic (Int) +20, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int) +20, Swim (S) +20.

Talents: Combat Master, Crushing Blow, Fearless, Leap Up, Lightning Attack, Swift Attack, Talented (Deceive, Disguise).
Traits: Dark Sight, From Beyond, Fear 2 (Frightening), Improved Natural Weapons, Natural Weapon (various), Strange Physiology, Unnatural Strength (x2), Unnatural Toughness (x2).

Weapons: Various claws, pincers, beaks, gaping maws, etc. (1d10+14† R; Tearing).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Gear: None.

Protean Form: The Widower's physical form can flow like

E; Pen 0; Clip 7; Rld NA; Reliable).

Gear: High-fashion travelling clothes, lesser seal of House Melua, personal cogitator, personal vox, jewellery worth 1d10x50 Throne Gelt, 3d10x100 Throne Gelt.

THE WHITE SCHOLAR (SEPTIMUS DEXTER)

Septimus Dexter is, in part, what he appears: a seller of rare books and a scholar of heraldry and the history of noble blood lines come to Quaddis at the behest of a Sibellan Collegium to catalogue the comings and goings of the great houses at this legendary event. The aged, stifflingly dusty, and forgetful persona that most see, however, is a façade that hides a razor-sharp mind that has long been in the service of the Calixian Ordos. He is aware that his master is lost and Karkalla's mission compromised, but has continued to gather what information he can in service to his oath, and knows his life is in mortal peril.

The White Scholar Profile



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	35	25	30	35	50	45	55	22

Movement: 3/6/9/18

Wounds: 12

Skills: Awareness (Per), Barter (Fel) +10, Chem-Use (Int), Ciphers (Acolyte) (Int) +10, Common Lore (Adeptus Arbiters, Administratum, Ecclesiarchy, Imperial Creed, Imperium, Underworld) (Int) +10, Common Lore (Machine Cult, Tech, War) (Int), Deceive (Fel) +20, Disguise (Fel) +10, Evaluate (Int) +10, Forbidden Lore (Cults, Heresy, Inquisition) (Int)

melted wax and change at the will of the Widower. The Widower can assume a form consisting of an unformed mass of flesh as a Full Action. It can reverse this and return to a defined form as a full action. The Widower does not have a Wound value. Instead, the widower is destroyed if 20 wounds are inflicted on it in a single round. If fewer than 19 wounds are inflicted in a single round, they are disregarded.

THE MASSES

This section details rules for the anonymous masses that form a crucial part of Tattered Fates, unnamed though they are. You'll also notice that many of the entries are root entries that can be modified, turning them into various different adversary subtypes all based on the same root. You simply apply the bonuses, penalties, skill changes, etc. to the root entry to create a new adversary subtype. Also, note that many of the NPCs listed in the **DARK HERESY** rulebook are perfectly usable and useful in this setting, most particularly the Citizen, Entertainer, Dissolute Noble, Dreg, and Scum.

Critical Damage and the Masses: When you are running a combat involving NPCs and antagonists from the following section, it is recommended that you apply rules for Sudden Death Critical Hits (see page 201 of **Chapter VII: Playing the Game** in **DARK HERESY** for details).

ARACHNAE SERVITOR

The arachnae servitors are the playthings of the Spider Bride. Each servitor consists of the head of one of the Spider Bride's former enemies encased in the metal abdomen of a mechanical spider, each face visible in the pattern of the metal. These hideous creations are armed with needle-like, adamantite fangs loaded with virulent neurotoxins.

Arachnae Servitor Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	—	10	15	40	15	35	20	—

Movement: 4/8/12/28

Wounds: 6

Skills: Awareness (Per), Concealment (Ag) +10, Silent Move (Ag) +10.

Talents: Fearless, Heightened Senses (Sound), Swift Attack.
Traits: Dark Sight, Improved Natural Weapon, Machine 2, Natural Weapon (Venomous Bite), Size (Scrawny), ††Spider Climb, Strange Physiology, Sturdy.

Armour: Machine body (Body 2), note that because of Strange Physiology all hits will be against the body.

Weapons: Venomous bite (1d5+1† R; Pen 2, Toxic).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

††Spider Climb: The arachnae servitors can climb sheer surfaces and ceilings. When moving in this way, the arachnae servitor has its movement rate halved.

Gear: MIU control connection to the Spider Bride (see Spider Bride entry on page 59).

DENIZEN OF XICARPH

Xicarph is not only home to the high elite of the Calixis Sector but also to a riot of attendants, flunkies, functionaries, hawkers, showmen, and opportunists who swarm around the doings of the great like insects around syrup. Besides these, there are a great many who have been swept up and deposited here simply to provide crowds and subjects (however unwitting) for their betters' supposed largess, while the third and most secretive group are the city's true natives, a wary and mysterious minority.

Denizen of Xicarph Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
20	20	30	30	30	25	25	30	30

Movement: 3/6/9/18

Wounds: 10

Skills: Carouse (T), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int).

Talents: None.

Gambler

Gamblers are those who chance all they have on the turn of a card or a roll of dice. Sly and untrustworthy, most have come to Quaddis with nothing to lose and everything to gain, and they are often willing to do so by any means, no matter how underhanded.

Characteristics: -5 to Strength and Toughness, -10 to Willpower.

Skills: As above plus Evaluate (Int), Gamble (Int) +10, Slight of Hand (Ag) +10, and Scrutiny (Per) +10.

Talents: As Denizen.

Weapons: 25% chance of a compact stub revolver (15m; S/-/-; 1d10+2 I; Pen 0; Clip 6; Rld Full; Reliable).

Armour: None.

Gear: Deck of cards, dice of various shapes and sizes, a personal charm.

Reveller

Revellers come in many types, but all are united in their excessive indulgence of the alcohol or narcotics on offer. Befuddled and foolhardy, they flow through the street in loud disarray.

Characteristics: -10 to Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Agility, and Perception, +10 to Willpower.

Skills: As Denizen.

Talents: None.

Weapons: None.

Armour: None.

Gear: Various forms of clothing, Throne Gelt, and other possessions as appropriate.

House Equerry

The equerries are the professional servants who are the bridge between the wants of the nobility and high elite and the wants being enacted. They also function as go betweens between the nobility and the unpleasantness of those who toil in their service and can be seen loitering at the edges of all gatherings of the great.

Characteristics: +5 to Intelligence and +10 to Fellowship.

Skills: As Denizen, plus Awareness (Per), Charm (Fel), Literacy (Int) +10, Scholastic Lore (Heraldry) (Int), Speak Language (High Gothic) (Int), Trade (Servant) (Fel) +10, Trade (Copyist) (Int) +10.

Talents: As Denizen, plus Pistol Training (Las).

Weapons: Compact laspistol (15m; S/-/-; 1d10+1 E; Clip 15; Rld Full; Reliable).

Armour: None.

Gear: Fine but understated clothes, auto-quill, data-slate, chrono, seal of access to holdings of the house they serve, plus 25% chance of one cybernetic sense.

Petty Noble

Petty nobles gather around the presence of the truly great and powerful. Dressed in an exaggerated high style and sporting every refinement they can afford, most of the petty nobility that come to the festival are either the product of some obscure bloodline or a merchant clan of adequate success whose aspirations outstrip their means, or a minor house in thrall to one of the sector's great players, arriving on Quaddis at their coattails and vying endlessly for prominence and favour.

Characteristics: As Denizen.

Skills: As Denizen, plus Carouse (T), Deceive (Fel) +10, Literacy (Int), and Speak Language (High Gothic) (Int).

Talents: As Denizen, plus Melee Weapon Training (Primitive) and Pistol Training (Las).

Weapons: Ornamental knife (3m; 1d5+3† R, Primitive), compact laspistol (15m; S/-/-; 1d10+1 E; Clip 15; Rld Full; Reliable).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Armour: None.

Gear: Fine ornate clothes, jewellery, 1d10x100 Thrones.

KILLER

Killers come in many forms throughout the events of Tattered Fates, but all are dangerous individuals inclined and equipped to do the Acolytes violent harm.

Killer Profile



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
30	30	35	35	30	20	25	30	18

Movement: 3/6/9/18

Wounds: 10

Skills: Awareness (Per), Carouse (T), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Intimidate (S), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int).

Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Weapon

Training (Las, SP).

Cyborg Gladiator

Cyborg gladiators have been augmented with all manner of brutal weaponry and have ornate helms and partial armour bonded to their flesh. These are no lobotomised combat servitors, though, but fully functioning humans hungry to kill for the entertainment of crowd.

Characteristics: +10 to Strength and Toughness, -5 to Agility and Fellowship.

Skills: As Killer.

Talents: As Killer, plus Melee Weapon Training (Chain) and Swift Attack.

Weapons: Implanted chain blades and buzz saws (1d10+7† R, Pen 2, Tearing).

Armour: Cybernetic augmented physique (All 4).

Gear: None.

Flenser Heretek

Sadistic butchers who put their knowledge of anatomy and alchemy to vile uses on behalf of the Beast Slavers, Flenser Hereteks are twisted, barely human creatures covered with scars, stitch marks, and minor implants.

Characteristics: +10 to Toughness, -5 to Agility and Fellowship.

Skills: As Killer, plus Chem-Use (Int) +10, Common Lore (Tech) (Int), Craft (Dissection) (Int) +10, Interrogation (WP), and Medicae (Int).

Talents: As Killer.

Weapons: Mono scalpel (1d5+2† R, Pen 2).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Armour: Plastek bindings (Head 1, Body 1).

Gear: Surgical tools, hooks, ampoules of corrosive tinctures, dose of Slaughter.

Manse Guard

Manse guards are ubiquitous in Xicarph, protecting the sprawling manses and holdings of its elite population, as well as serving as defenders and enforcers for their masters. Manse guards have the right to kill trespassers and transgressors without recourse.

Characteristics: +5 to Ballistic Skill, Weapon Skill, and Willpower.

Skills: As Killer, plus Awareness (Per) +10, Literacy (Int), Search (Per) +10.

Talents: As Killer, plus Basic Weapon Training (SP) and Take Down.

Weapons: Telescopic chastisement baton (1d10+3 I†), oath blade (3m, 1d5+3† R, Primitive), hand cannon (35m; S/-/-; 1d10+4 I; Pen 2; Clip 5; Rld 2Full), and if expecting trouble, an Autogun (90m; S/3/10; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 30; Rld Full).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Armour: Flak jacket and flak helmet (Head 2, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3).

Gear: Micro bead, breather mask, well-made clothing, 2 hand cannon clips, gas grenade.

Petty Thug

Even on a world like Quaddis, there are scum who arrive like rats on cargo ships or flee service of the great and powerful. Cowardly, such thugs prey on what weak pickings they can find. While armed only with crude weapons, they can prove dangerous in large numbers.

Characteristics: -10 to Willpower.

Skills: As Killer, plus Common Lore (Underworld).

Talents: As Killer, plus Street Fighting.

Weapons: Knife (3m, 1d5+3† R, Primitive), brass knuckles (1d5+2† I, Primitive), and 25% chance of stub revolver (30m; S/-/-; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 6; Rld Full; Reliable).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Armour: Crude leathers or reinforced work gear (Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 1, Primitive).

Gear: Nothing of note or value.

Pilgrim of Hayte

The Pilgrims of Hayte are the flock of the Beloved (Heron Mask) who have come to the culmination of the carnival to wreak chaos and destruction. With their weapons concealed beneath their robes, they wait for the signal from their false prophet to begin butchering bystanders and tossing grenades into crowds.

Characteristics: As Killer.

Skills: As Killer.

Talents: As Killer, plus Consumed by Spite (see page 59) and Unshakable Faith.

Weapons: Chain knife (1d5+6† R; Pen 2; Tearing) or Axe (1d10+4† R; Primitive, Unbalanced), autopistol (30m; S/-/6; 1d10+2 I; Pen 0; Clip 18; Rld Full), 3 frag grenades (9m; 2d10 X; Pen 0; Blast (4)).

Armour: None.

Gear: Black robes and vestments like those of a priest, crude masks made of metal and tanned skin, 1D5-1 autopistol clips.

Promenade Sentinel

The promenade sentinels serve to maintain some semblance of public order during the festivities, patrolling and herding the crowds. They are dressed in the gaudy livery of the house

NEW TRAITS

GOADED

The creature has been trained to fight and then goaded to attack regardless of any instinct to flee prey that is strong. The creature receives a +30 bonus to its Willpower when testing to see if it flees when frightened, startled, or injured.

IMPROVED NATURAL WEAPONS

This creature's attacks are powerful enough to crush plasteel or punch through armour. The creature's natural weapons no longer count as Primitive.

or faction that has supplied them to guard their master's contribution to the revels and to guard against interference from their employer's rivals.

Characteristics: +5 to Weapon Skill and Strength.

Skills: As Killer.

Talents: As Killer, plus Melee Weapon Training (Shock).

Weapons: Shock lance (1d10+4† I, Balanced, Shocking)—requires two hands to use, autopistol (30m; S/-/6; 1d10+2 I; Pen 0; Clip 18; Rld Full).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Armour: Flak jacket (Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3).

Gear: Masked headdress and tabard in livery of those he serves, medallion of authority, personal vox keyed in to the Hub, autopistol clip.

Redjack

Redjacks are red-handed killers who indulge their desires for spilt blood and pain amidst the thronging crowds.

Characteristics: +10 to Weapon Skill and to Agility.

Skills: As Killer, plus Dodge (Ag) and Literacy (Int).

Talents: As Killer, plus Fearless.

Weapons: Mono-edged killing razor (1d5+3† R, Pen 2, Fast).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Armour: None.

Gear: Fine clothing, stained red at the sleeves.

Slaver of the Red Cages

The slavers of the Red Cages are sadistic, muscled brutes who feed the beasts, kill the sick and the weak, and butcher them to feed to the living. Clad in crude cloth and flayed skins, they are reeking, foul things who can be barely considered human.

Characteristics: +5 to Strength and Toughness, -5 to Willpower and Fellowship.

Skills: As Killer, plus Tracking (Int) and Wrangling (Int).

Talents: As Killer, plus Basic Weapon Training (SP) and Iron Jaw.

Weapons: Meat hook (1d10+4† I, Primitive), cleaver (1d10+5† R, Primitive, Unbalanced), and a mercykiller pistol (20m; S/-/-; 1d10+2 I; Pen 0; Clip 1; Rld 2Full; Inaccurate, Unreliable).

Those set to guard over important areas or to hunt for escapees are also armed with either a Pump Shotgun (30m; S/-/-; 1d10+4 I; Pen 0; Clip 8; Rld 2Full; Scatter) or a cut down Hunting Rifle with man-stopper bullets (75m; S/-/-; 1d10+3 I; Pen 3; Clip 5; Rld Full; Accurate).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Armour: Heavy leathers and hides (Body 3, Legs 2, Primitive).

Gear: Soiled overalls covered in a patchwork of flayed skins, hides, crudely stitched cloth mask, unpleasant trinkets and charms, an assessor—key on a leather thong, 1d5 mercykiller bullets, and two full reloads for a shotgun or rifle if carried.

SPINDLE-MAW

The spindle-maw is a hound-like horror bred by the craft of

the Beast House. Its quadrupedal body is a raw lump of lean muscle that surges beneath transparent skin. The elongated head of the spindle-maw is a grinning nightmare of yellow bone and thousands of fine, sharp teeth spun with saliva. Spindle-maws are bred to be blind but possess keen smell and hearing that allow them to locate victims with ease.



Spindle-Maw Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	—	30	30	30	17	30	40	—

Movement: 6/12/18/36

Wounds: 9

Skills: Awareness (Per), Silent Move (Ag) +10, Swim (S), Tracking (Int) +10.

Talents: Heightened Senses (Smell, Sound), Swift Attack.

Traits: Blind††, Bestial, Fear 1, Goaded, Natural Weapon (Bite), Quadruped.

†† Though blind, spindle-maws disregard the normal -30 penalty to Weapon Skill Tests.

Armour: None.

Weapons: Bite (1d10+3† R; Primitive).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

Scenting for Flesh: A spindle-maw that is not already engaged in combat must make a Perception Test to locate a living creature by sound or smell before it can attack. This Perception Test is a Free Action, and taking into account the spindle-maw's Heightened Senses will normally be a test against 40. If the spindle-maw fails its Perception Test, it moves cautiously and continues to search for a victim. If the spindle-maw passes its Perception Test and locates a victim, it moves to attack it immediately.

VENOMOUS LADY

The Venomous Ladies are the courtesan attendants of the Spider Bride, said to be the daughters of high nobles given to the Spider Bride in payment of their debts. They serve as her companions, ladies-in-waiting, and when needs be, her assassins, and each is augmented in delicate but terrible ways. Cyber-bonded to the Spider Bride's dark and fathomless mind, at the will of their mistress, these beautiful and sinister

courtesans change—their skulls elongate, their noses turn into slits, and their eyes transform into unblinking amber pools so that they look like fusions of woman and serpent. Glittering fangs extends from their unhinging mouths, and exotic stimulants fill them with a terrible swiftness.



Venomous Lady Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
40	30	30	30	42	35	35	30	40

Movement: 4/8/12/28

Wounds: 9

Skills: Acrobatics (Ag) +10, Awareness (Per) +10, Charm (Fel) +10, Chem-Use (Int), Climb (S) +10, Contortionist (Ag) +10, Dodge (Ag) +10, Literacy (Int) +10, Performer (Dance, Musical Instrument, Singing) (Fel) +10, Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int) +10.

Talents: Heightened Senses (Smell), Resistance (Poisons).

Traits: Dark Sight.

Armour: Subcutaneous mechanica (Head 2, Arms 1, Body 2, Legs 1).

Weapons: None.

Gear: Clothes of fine silk and strange twisted jewellery of silver and aquamarine.

Activated

Once triggered by the Spider Bride, a Venomous Lady gains the following qualities:

Talents: Fearless, Heightened Senses (Sight, Smell, Sound, Taste, Touch), Leap Up, Natural Weapon (Venomous, Mono-toothed Bite).

Traits: Unnatural Agility (x2), Unnatural Speed.

Weapons: Venomous bite (1d10+3† R; Pen 2, Toxic).

† Includes Strength Bonus.

DARK PATTERNS

In Tattered Fates, certain stylistic themes have been employed that link it and the other parts of the campaign together. GMs, when adding their own encounters and adventures to the campaign, are encouraged to include their own take on these themes and symbols:

- Countdowns, clockwork, and the manipulation of time
- The number 13
- Bloodlines and the sins of the past haunting the present
- The mastery of flesh and matter—ancient dark science
- Bitter vengeance and insane obsession
- That which was long buried, forgotten, or hidden now awakening
- Servants fearing their master's return
- The dark traveller



APPENDIX II: THE HAARLOCK LEGACY CAMPAIGN

Although perfectly usable as a stand-alone adventure, *Tattered Fates* also forms part of the Haarlock Legacy campaign arc. The Legacy is an open plan, modular campaign whose parts, save for its conclusion, can be played (with some modification) in any order. The campaign's individual adventures surround dark events centred on the Legacy and domains of a long vanished and infamous Rogue Trader, Erasmus Haarlock, and the dreadful power various factions hope to gain from his Legacy.

By playing the adventures in the campaign, the Acolytes are drawn into a spiralling whirlpool of catastrophe and desperate struggle and begin to piece together the true horror of what is about to be unleashed on the Calixis Sector.

A LEGACY OF TERROR

The Rogue Trader House of Haarlock is an ancient one, far predating the Calixis Sector, which it helped to found. For thousands of years, the Haarlock warrant gave the Haarlocks license to travel far beyond the Imperium and to bring death and war to anything they deemed a threat to mankind's place in the cosmos. Over their centuries of conquest, they put whole worlds to the sword and plundered the tombs of xenos races passed to dust before man first walked upon the Earth. They acquired terrible secrets and amassed dark lore, weapons, and trinkets enough to found a dozen empires of their own and condemn them in the eyes of the Imperium a thousand times over if it were not for the protection of the warrant and the secrecy with which they guarded their affairs within the Imperium. The Haarlock line was ever a fractious one, and betrayal and internecine warfare were as common in the Haarlocks as were the twin sparks of diabolic genius and insanity that warred in the natures of the greatest of them. It was in such a family conflict that one of the lesser sons of the line was to come to the fore, his destiny burning like a bloody star in the heavens.

Erasmus Haarlock slaughtered his blood kin, unified the powers and dark lore that his line had amassed over the millennia, and willed them to a single purpose, a terrifying project that spanned a dozen worlds and brought into play arts and sciences forbidden since elder days. Then, at the height of his labours with all in preparation but for the final piece of the puzzle, Erasmus Haarlock vanished.

Now, hundreds of years since that day, the stars have again

turned, and on a dozen worlds the ancient domains of the House of Haarlock flicker to life. Strange events and mysterious deaths occur, and things long-buried awake. Signs and portents plague the visions of seers and the tortured dreams of madmen across the Calixis Sector, and their import disturbs the councils of the powerful and the power-hungry alike. Visions of worlds set to burn in cold fire, of a device that can order the very fabric of reality to its master's will, of a howling voice in the void and a black sun rising. Dreams of the traveller's return...

ELITE CAMPAIGN PACKAGES

Elite Campaign Packages are tools by which new players can be introduced into a campaign at any stage with in-game knowledge, experience, and plot involvement comparable to existing characters. For Acolytes that survive important episodes of a campaign, Elite Campaign Packages make Advances available to them that are based on the experiences they have been through.

The 41st millennium is an unforgiving place, and during a campaign such as the Haarlock Legacy, Acolytes will sometimes die. Introducing a new character mid-campaign can be challenging for both player and GM: the player's new character may not be directly linked to the events of the campaign, and the GM will usually have to work hard to embed the new character without losing connection to the prior events of the storyline. If characters are killed and replaced multiple times, then the loss of in-character knowledge about the campaign can quickly become a problem. One way of helping avoid this problem in **DARK HERESY** is the use of the game's Elite Advance system.

USING ELITE CAMPAIGN PACKAGES

How a player uses an Elite Campaign Package depends on whether the character is already part of the campaign or is being introduced to the campaign.

Existing Characters: For characters that survive a particular episode of a campaign, the Elite Advance Package (see page 86 in **THE INQUISITOR'S HANDBOOK**) linked to that episode automatically becomes available to them at the end of the episode. There is no experience point cost to make the Elite Campaign Package available: survival is enough. For example, at the end of *Tattered Fates*, the Survivor of the Red Cages Elite Campaign Package becomes available to all Acolytes who survived the events described in this book.

New players: For characters that are introduced at the end of an episode, the GM makes the Elite Campaign Package available to the player when he creates his character. If the Elite Campaign Package is used, the new character gains the automatic benefits and penalties listed for new characters and may use any experience points he has to spend on Advances from the Elite Campaign Package or on those from his normal career.

Note: When a player is creating a new character and using an Elite Campaign Package, he may disregard the prerequisites for Talents granted by the Elite Campaign Package.

HAARLOCK LEGACY ELITE CAMPAIGN PACKAGE: SURVIVOR OF THE RED CAGES

You have passed through blood and imprisonment, your mind broken by witchery. Those kept with you tried to take your life and you survived. You took the lives of others knowing that you bought your life with their death. Your keepers kept you alive like a breathing piece of meat, fed or slaughtered as the bloodstained pits of the Beast House needed. The things you have seen and done have left cracks in your mind and soul that will only deepen with time.

AS A CHARACTER CREATION BACKGROUND PACKAGE

Apply the listed effects if you are using the Survivor of the Red Cages Elite Campaign Package to create a new character that will join the Haarlock Legacy Campaign after the events of Tattered Fates.

Characteristics: Reduce your Willpower by -5, and increase your Perception by +5.

Talents: You gain the Die Hard, Hardy, Hatred (The Beast House), and the Light Sleeper Talents.

Insanity Points: You start the game with 2d10 Insanity Points.

Corruption: Your experiences in the cages have left you with 1d5 Corruption Points.

Fate Points: You gain one additional Fate Point.

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness	100	S	—
Awareness +10	100	S	Awareness
Awareness +20	100	S	Awareness +10
Concealment	100	S	—
Concealment +10	100	S	Concealment
Concealment +20	100	S	Concealment +10
Dark Soul	100	T	—
Flagellant	200	T	—
Jaded	200	T	—
Street Fighting	200	T	—
Resistance (Cold)	200	T	—
Resistance (Fear)	200	T	—
True Grit	200	T	T 40



PLAYER HANDOUT I: TAKEN

Darkness has taken you, leaving you endlessly falling into an empty oblivion without sight or sound. Moments flash briefly into being and fade again: a cold iron table and bright light above you, the mocking voice of a child, the reeking stench of beasts and raw meat, weightlessness, the hammering of great machinery, and finally, fetid black water oozing beneath you and chill winds stirring foul air.

You wake slowly to find yourself paralysed in cold darkness, your voice silent and your body as limp and useless as a rag doll. You are helpless to act or speak, or even hold your thoughts together, but you can hear the ragged breathing of others in the dark telling you that you are not alone in your fate and feel the bone-deep ache in your limbs confirming that you yet live.

Sickly-green lamps flicker on in the walls, and a dozen figures appear, wading shin-deep through rank waters towards the cold platform on which you and the other tangled forms hang. They wear ragged cloaks over dark body armour, and their faces are covered by grotesque animal masks fashioned from glittering metal and stitched skin. Each mask is different, one a hound, one a serpent, another a swine, and so on, while the leader wears the gilded visage of a Jackal with crimson teeth.

Chains are released and you are dumped into the ice-cold filth of the water with the others, all equally helpless, heaped up like in a mass grave for the living. Each of you is swiftly and perfunctorily examined by the masked men like livestock in a market. The Jackal Mask barks a curt order, and he and the others back away swiftly into the darkness.

Frost creeps across the walls, and the waters beneath you grow cold as the grave, as from the darkness a human-shaped, spike-studded metal cabinet comes into view, pushed along by two stunted and misshapen figures. Another shadowed form, tall and lean, hangs back on the edge of sight behind them.

Horror is heaped upon horror as the iron cabinet opens to reveal the severed head and mutilated torso of a young woman floating within in a column of unearthly light. The woman's eyes snap open and cruel white light floods out. You feel the stabbing claws of a vile force invade your mind with its polluting touch as you and your fellow captives finally find voice enough to scream.

The force withdraws suddenly as the iron cabinet snaps shut. A silver-clawed hand rises from the darkness and indicates three captives in turn. The misshapen figures lunge forth and drag them screaming into the darkness where they are abruptly silenced.

Mercifully you are not among them.

The light fades and oblivion takes you again.

PLAYER HANDOUT II: HERON MASK'S NOTE

I cannot trust you. I can trust No One and nor should you, least of all this poor lost servant.

Your Master is betrayed as Mine was, and there are worse things waiting for us all.

Kill or Be killed—that is the way of it, there is no other truth, whether it be in these dark cages, the riotous carnival above or the jaded palaces of the wicked.

If the Widower has his way, we will all drown in the black light of hells uncounted when the hour strikes at last.

May the God-Emperor Save You or the Warp Damn You. Each as you—as we all—deserve.



The Haarlock Warrant

Rogue Traders are all but unique in Imperial culture in that they are given licence to travel freely between the stars, both within the Imperium and without. A Rogue Trader's charter gives him the right and authority to contact, trade, and make war beyond the Emperor's Light. Outside the fringes of mankind's domain, each Rogue Trader is a law unto himself.

The Haarlock warrant goes further, charging the Haarlocks to "Bring the truth of the God-Emperor of Mankind and punish the foes of man in the darkness beyond." It authorizes the raising and maintenance of a private fleet and army, going so far as to grant (with certain caveats) title to request arms, vessels, and support from the "Emperor's Servants."

In Imperial terms, this degree of power in the hands of a single individual is staggeringly rare. The value of the Haarlock warrant is almost incalculable, and many would do any deed to possess it.

Much of the four millennia history of the Haarlock line is lost, and what does remain shows a repeated wax and wane of their power as they fade in and out of Imperial history. Recently, however, Albrach Haarlock was slain at the Battle of Bitter Reach, casting his bloodline into conflict. During this, an unusual scion rose to prominence.

A nephew of Albrach Haarlock by his long-dead sister, Erasmus is recorded in the Abulon Chronicles as being without ambition, remarkable only for a sharp wit and a valuable talent for the mysteries of technoarcana and xeno-lore. He was granted the captaincy of a scout frigate, *The Spear of Destiny*. During the conflict, Erasmus was lured into a trap by Mathias Haarlock, an outcast family member who turned to the Ruinous Powers for aid. Assailed by warp fiends, Erasmus was terribly injured in the attack and lost his beloved wife and daughter. Certain sources believe this incident drove Erasmus insane.

Ten standard years passed before Erasmus appeared again, and he had become a changed man, gaunt and terrible, possessing dire weapons and incomprehensible knowledge. In less than three years, Erasmus Haarlock succeeded in hunting down and systematically destroying every rival claimant to the Haarlock Warrant. Family members, allies, contacts, and anyone that stood between him and his vengeance were all considered forfeit by Erasmus. With his rivals destroyed, Erasmus was declared the Haarlock by a convocation of Imperial authorities from Solomon, Scintilla, and Ophelia VII. In the year 905 M42, Erasmus vanished without a trace.

SO SAY WE ALL.

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