



The Chasms

Necromunda Settlement Finalist

By Luke Webster

Come in, come in already and sbut the damn door. There! Much better - you don't go around wasting heat like that out here if you want a long life. Now you've made it to The Drop so you know at least a little about looking after yourself but it only gets harder from here on so you'd do well to know what's coming. Make yourself comfortable and have a read of this (You do know how to read don't you?) while I go and get some things you'll be needing. And don't bother going elsewhere, you'll find that the best prices are always the ones I'm offering.

AN INTRODUCTION TO, AND HISTORY OF, THE CHASMS

By Jonas Jariskon, Scholar and Historian

It is well know that the farther down one travels from the Hive the colder it becomes. A lesser know fact is that the further outwards one travels from the collective warmth of the Hive the colder it gets also. In roughly a NW direction from Dust Falls the huge domes and caverns so far out that they are no longer truly part of the hive are so bitterly cold that the darkest holes of the sump seem warm and welcoming by comparison. This region is know to its inhabitants as The Chasms.

Who knows how far these enormous caves stretch or the what depths the deepest of them descend? Maybe the natives, the ratskins of the area, have such knowledge but they are protective of this land and will not share their secrets with outsiders. A friendly drink (or two) with a native guide once revealed a fascinating story of large caverns where cold white powder falls from the smog and collects on the ground in large drifts but I have never witnessed such a spectacle.

The only civilised settlement in the Chasms is Dropoff Point, commonly referred to as 'The Drop'. A small town built into a spit of land rising out of the chasms, it is a spectacular location. On one side there are the myriad of passageways, domes, rubble and tunnels that make up the regular underhive and on the other there is a vast space, empty, save the hazy shapes of peaks in the distance . From stories told amongst the settlers here and some of the friendlier tribes I have discovered that Chasms were discovered between 500 and 600 standard years ago by an outlaw gang of Orlocks fleeing the justice of Imperial law. I can only imagine the pitiful state they must have been in when the natives rescued them from their plight. The gang settled in an

easily defensible location and soon began trade with their saviours, using the spoils of their raids to pay for much needed food and the white, giant rat hides that characterise the species in this area. Over the next 300 years The Drop developed a reputation as a safe and above all distant haven from the law.

It was the archeotech rush that both alientated the natives and lead to widespread knowledge of the Chasms. The Orlocks had often noticed many items and location within the Chasms that appeared to be of ancient and imperial origin. Their native guides always warned them away from such areas, claming that they were sacred and to disturb them would anger the spirits. Out of respect the gangers obeyed but more and more people were visiting or settling in The Drop every year and word got around that a man could make it all the way to the spire with a lucky find in the Chasms. During this period the population of The Drop swelled to at least 10 times its current levels. Thousands ventured into the Chasms and thousands died in the hazardous conditions. They few that returned with anything of value found that their profits were taken from them by the guild. Enraged by this betrayal of trust and the desecration of their holy places the local ratskin tribes gathered in council to decide what could be done. And so there came a day when thousands descended into the chasms and none came out. A messenger was sent to the Drop to inform the people there that they may continue their lives in peace but if they should even venture into the Chasms again they would not leave them alive. Such was the impact of this on those who remained that this state of affairs continues to this day. Only the brave or the desperate enter the chasms and only the strongest make it back out.

THE RULES

The following special rules apply to a campaign or game set in the chasms.

Archeotech Rush

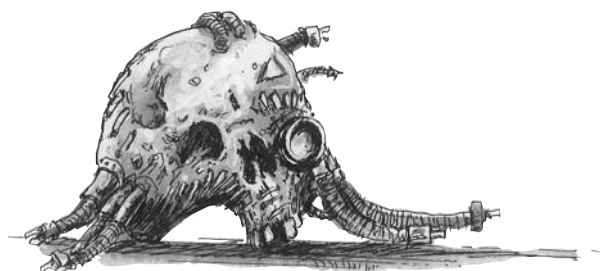
The Chasms are known for containing more ancient relics of great value than other areas of the underhive. To represent this any loot gained in a 'Scavenger' scenario in the chasms is worth D6x10 credits instead of the usual D6x5. Additionally all player add +1 randomly generated rare items to the list of items for sale after a game in the chasms as though they had an extra ganger searching for items.

Bitterly Cold

The Chasms are far from both the surface and the heat of the Hive and are one of the coldest places a hiver is every likely to visit. To be exposed to these temperatures for any length of time without proper protection is extremely dangerous and often causes death or serious injury. At the start of a player's turn every one of his models on the board takes a hit from the cold, ignoring armour saves. The strength of the hit is determined as follows.

	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7+
Strength	1	1	2	2	3	3	4

Ratskin scouts and renegades must roll on this chart like any other gang but are assumed to all have snowskin pelts. (See New Items section)



You Are Not Welcome Here

The ratskin tribes that live in the chasms will trade with outsiders but are very protective of their territory. Anybody who ventures into the Chasms can expect a determined effort by the locals to forcibly remove them. This can be represented in one of two ways. Either a campaign arbiter may play a ratskin gang of an appropriate points value in the scenario with the goal of forcing all other gangs to bottle out or you may roll on the following treacherous conditions table as you would normally for treacherous conditions. This represents the ratskins manipulating the environment to work against the intruders.

1 Thick Fog

Clouds of fog make the going tough. Vision range is reduced to a maximum of 16". Targets appear and disappear so quickly that models may not use the shooting skills Fast Shot, Rapid Fire and Marksman.

2 Snow Drifts

Strange piles of heavy, cold, white stuff cover the ground in large amounts. Any movement not on a gantry or walkway is reduced to 2" per turn. Models can't double their movement by running or charging in the snow as it is too tiring. Elevated areas aren't affected by these rules.

3 Blown Away!

Winds are high today, making high walkways and gantries dangerous. Any model on a cliff, gantry, walkway or the top level of a structure must roll equal to or under their strength on a D6 at the beginning of each of their turns to remain standing. If the roll is failed the model is pinned and may fall if it is within 1" of the edge of a structure or walkway.

The Chasms are quite different from most areas of the underhive. The domes appear to be uniformly larger and there are many caves that appear to be naturally formed. I have theorised that the chasms once contained installations of importance to the imperium. A forge of the Adeptus Mechanicus perhaps, or even a fortress of the legendary Adeptus Astartes. This would account for the increase in the amount of archeotech that may be found in the area. Local flora and fauna appear quite similar to that in

NEW ITEMS

Snowskin Pelt

The main trade between the gangs of The Drop and the ratskins of The Chasms is in snowskin pelts. These hides provide an insulation against the cold more effective than any synthetic material anyone in the Underhive is able to afford.

A ratskin trading in town had this scrap of paper for sale. I doubt he had any idea what was written on it and had kept it on the off chance that it had any value. It appears to be the diary of a gang leader who came through here a few weeks ago. I have a feeling we wont see him again. I've transcribed the entries below. (correcting grammar and spelling)

Day 12

Its been almost 3 days since the running fight with those stone heads and I'm fairly sure we've managed to lose them. Goliaths aren't known for their intelligence and we got away fairly easily. With any luck the ratskins in this area will be just as stupid.

Day 14

No sign of any natives yet though Niles said he saw shadows moving on his last watch. The pelts we got back in The Drop are doing a good job of keeping the cold out.

Day 15

Found the first sign today that all this walking hasn't been for waste. Half collapsed doorway had a big sign over it saying, "Resea-ch Fac-lity 01A" This is the most likely place we've found. Hard work but we've almost got the door clear now.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Luke Webster is a Necromunda fan who only just hit the competition deadline because he lived in Australia - that time difference is useful after all!

4 Big Rats!

These are mean and nasty. Each player rolls a D6 for each of their models. On a roll of a 1, the model gets attacked by a rat and suffers an automatic flesh wound. Reduce the models BS and WS by -1 for the duration of the game.

5 Blizzard!

High winds whip snow around in a flurry of icy death. Vision range is reduced to a maximum of 8". Targets appear and disappear so quickly that models may not use the shooting skills Fast Shot, Rapid Fire and Marksman. The wind and snow increase the debilitating effects of the cold. Add +1 to the strength of the hit caused by the cold.

6 Avalanche!

A particularly effective ratskin trap has caused tons of rocks, rubble, snow and other debris to come crashing down onto the battlefield. After setup each player rolls a D6 for each of their models. On a roll of a 1, the models is buried under a pile of rubble and goes out of action immediately. What's more, an avalanche will often cause all kinds of secondary problems as it throws up clouds of toxic fog, disturbs swarms of creatures, throws up sludge flows and so on. Because of this, make a Treacherous Conditions roll as found in the living rule book on the specialist games website once the Avalanche has been resolved.



other areas save that all are naturally resistant to the effects of the cold. The most significant example of this is the giant rat. Internally it appears to be much the same as any other rat but the hide is significantly thicker and heavier. The pelts of these creatures are an unusual white colour and are in great demand. Ratskin traders can be found at all times selling them in The Drop. (The natives refer to this breed of rat as 'Snowskins'. I have no idea why.)

A snowskin pelt reduces the strength of the cold by -2. Snowskin pelts are common items that costs 2D6 credits (worked out for each player every trading session) and are only available in the trading session after a battle in The Chasms. Multiple pelts may be brought in one trading session but the price must be re-rolled for all future sessions. This represent the unrestricted trading that occurs and the fluctuations in prices as a result.

Day 16

So the big bastards are smarter than they look. They must've been tailing us all the way here and ambushed us on the way out of the dome with our loot. We got away with most of it but lost Ripper and Old Bill. Doesn't matter if there still alive, there ain't no way I'm going back for 'em.

Day 17

Niles got buried in a landslide today. We could hear him in there somewhere but there was no way we could clear a path. Good luck to him, he was a likeable kid. Gotta keep moving. Emporer's Bones it's cold down here.

Day 19

Its all over. I though we were heading back towards The Drop but today we came across the place we looted. Looks like the goliaths didn't make it out of here either, their bodies have been staked up around the entrance. My fingers are going black and I cant see properly. We're going to go inside this place again and try and keep warm. Everyone's started seeing shadows now. They wont get us without a fight.