

WARHAMMER® THE HORUS HERESY®



→ Liberation of Constanix II

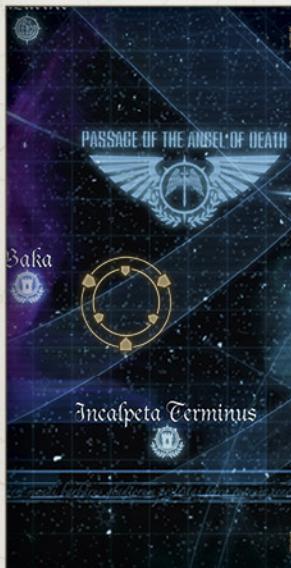


EXEMPLARY BATTLES OF
The Age of Darkness

EXEMPLARY BATTLES OF THE AGE OF DARKNESS

LIBERATION OF CONSTANIX II

As the Age of Darkness ground ever onwards, the fires of war would spread throughout the entire galaxy, consuming everything in their path. Armies and worlds were reduced to nothing more than ash, in many cases leaving no one alive to bear witness to the sacrifices made or the atrocities committed. During this time, each Legion employed unique formations to prosecute their own style of war, whether by choice or through necessity, making use of unconventional, often abhorrent, tactics and weapons. Many of these formations would be lost during the dark years following the Horus Heresy, their traditions wiped out and the last stockpiles of their weapons exhausted. Some, however, have been preserved in these records, that future generations may learn of the terrors unleashed upon the galaxy by the Emperor's turncoat sons and the valiant heroes who stood against them.



Constanix II was a minor and isolated Forge World in the Segmentum Tempestus, its surface dominated by an acidic sea, with few sizable land masses. The bulk of the Forge World's wealth came from oceanic dredging, harvesting the bioluminescent bacteria and the associated rich organic material for use in bio-forges and as biofuel for manufactoria. With few landmasses to build upon, Constanix II's population and its Taghmata conclaves were located on vast barge-cities, floating edifices borne above the clouds by long-lost technological artifice. Each barge-city was ruled over by a Magokritarch, each of whom paid fealty to Constanix II's archmagos Delvere, with barge-cities falling in and out of favour as their prominence waxed and waned. Shortly before the massacres that took place on Isstvan V, the Word Bearers emissary Nathrakin approached the archmagos of Constanix II, offering promises of forbidden knowledge in exchange for swearing fealty to the Traitor cause. Pride and a yearning for power was enough to drive Delvere into the Warmaster's arms, for Constanix II was a minor power in the wider galaxy; a new order carried with it dreams of Constanix II ascendant, a challenger in power to the greatest Forge Worlds of the age.

In the years following the cruel betrayal perpetrated upon the basalt sands of Isstvan V by Horus and his fellow Traitors, the Loyalist survivors of the Dropsite Massacre who managed to escape the planet sought the means to enact vengeance against their erstwhile brothers who had wrought devastation upon their Legions. For the sons of Corax, this took them first to the Segmentum Solar in search of the tools necessary to rebuild their Legion, and then to Deliverance, where Corax hoped to reforge the Raven Guard with the strength necessary to challenge the Traitors in open war. How successful the XIXth Legion's recruitment campaign was remained unknown, yet as the war progressed, a veil began to fall over the south-easterly borders of the Segmentum Tempestus, radiating outwards from Deliverance, as planet after planet that had offered allegiance to the Warmaster fell silent. Akin to the days before he was found, Corax fought from the shadows against a superior foe, striking out at occupied worlds and igniting rebellion against the Traitors that oppressed

them. Guerilla warfare on a sector-wide scale, it was a tactic which the Raven Guard were well-versed in for they were by nature creatures of the darkness, wraiths that emerged from the shadows to claim the lives of those that had wronged them.

It was this campaign that led the Primarch to Constanix II, following the trail of a Word Bearers splinter fleet. The insignificance of the Forge World to the wider conflict piqued the Primarch's curiosity, for it suggested a focused purpose on the part of the Word Bearers in their choice of ally. Unwilling to commit a large force, Corax took a small splinter fleet to Constanix II, falling upon the barge-city of Atlas and swaying those within the city who remained loyal to the Emperor to aid in seizing control of the barge. The next step was the fall of Iapetus, capital city and presumed location of both the Word Bearers commander and his puppet, the Archmagos Delvere.

Assuming command over the Mechanicum of Atlas, Corax ordered them to override the ordained locomotive protocols that controlled the barge-city's movements and set it on a new course towards Iapetus. There was no subtlety in this move, for against the objections of Atlas' caretakers, Corax ordered the barge-city to be utilised as a titanic battering ram, set upon a collision course with its sister city. As the two approached, squadrons of Mechanicum aircraft rose from both to duel in the skies, and city-spanning shield-domes sparked with the intense exchange of weapons fire from the two cities' weapons batteries. Through this, Atlas continued inexorably onwards, its engines flaring as it reacted to Iapetus' attempts at evasion. As the two cities neared one another, the corona of their shields merged and overloaded with a thunderous roar, unleashing destructive waves of electromagnetic interference. Reactor shielding failed as systems depowered across the cities, igniting explosions and fires across both. As damage control teams mobilised across both Atlas and Iapetus, secondary power reserves, stored within shielded batteries, fed their powers into Atlas' engines, driving it forwards to close the gap between the two barges. The vast constructs of metal, ferrocrite and ceramite slammed together in destructive union, the prow of Atlas craving a furrow into the dockyards of Iapetus. Metres-wide chasms were torn open in the streets of Iapetus sending hab-block-sized sheets of metal scything through the air. Furnace stacks toppled, crushing manufactorums under their weight and sending up plumes of dust and molten slag. At the point of impact, Atlas and Iapetus were merged by twisted metal across the broken landscape of fallen cranes and crumbling supply depots.

Soon after the initial tremors of the crash began to fade, the Taghma of Atlas emerged from their fall-out bunkers and crossed the broken landscape joining the two cities. In accordance with plans devised by Corax, the Taghma were to form the main thrust towards the temple-complex that sat at the heart of Iapetus, likely lair of Archmagos Delvere. Preliminary data, based upon information harvested from the data-streams as Atlas approached Iapetus, suggested the strength of the former was far less than that of their sister city. As a consequence, Corax pressed for expediency in order to gain purchase in the city. The report of volkite longrifles soon rang out as Skitarii forces rooted out disorientated groups of Traitors within the broken ground of Iapetus' dockyards, facilitating the establishment of forward command posts by Atlas' forces. The bulk were tech-guard, servile workers augmented with combat implants; favoured amongst the forces of Atlas were cortex-data implants that streamed weapon's training into the subject's conscious, combined with dermal coatings, voidsuits and sinew enhancers to create soldiers competent enough to field in battle. Skitarii maniples formed the centre of the Taghma line, sweeping through the husks of warehouses until the dockyards were cleared and the habitation districts reached.

It was there that Atlas' forces met the first resistance, tens of thousands of foes emerging from domiciles to assail the Loyalists. Those sent by Iapetus were tech-guard but a far cry from an organised force – their clothes were ragged and dust-covered, manufactoria uniforms marred by the grime of war, and bloodied hands clutched an array of small arms. These were the tech-guard of Iapetus, workers transformed into chattel with little care as to their survival. Each bore a crown of crude machinery atop their brow, a neuro-harness formed of cranial probes and needles that pierced their skulls. Such archaic devices were the thief of emotion, altering the wearer's perception to portray a world more befitting the controller's desire. Fear was suppressed by rudimentary combat knowledge, birthing crude facsimiles of soldiers implanted with the urge to fight no matter the odds. Survival was secondary. Fight or flight silenced in favour of a drive to kill or be killed.

The superior numbers of the neuro-thralls soon choked the streets and the press of bodies slowed the Loyalist advance to a crawl. Each city block seized was one earned with both time and blood, and as elements of Atlas' forces broke through to the city beyond the dockyards, they found themselves engaged with the second wave of Iapetus' forces. Amongst the rubble of partially-collapsed buildings barricades had been erected, Skitarii and tech-thralls hunkered behind them while gun batteries were nestled amidst the rubble of broken structures.

The advance of the Atlas forces quickly stalled, their strength and skill easily matched by Iapetus' own and the battleground became a mire of skirmishes where each gain was soon offset by a loss as the battlelines shifted back and forth with little forward movement from Atlas.

It fell to the Raven Guard to turn the tide of battle, for though few in number their role in taking Atlas had remained concealed as too did the presence of a Primarch. Corax had deployed his warriors, led by commander Agapito, in gunships as Atlas approached Iapetus. Within the haze of smog and dust that hung over the warring cities, the Raven Guard had waited until the moment of impact between the two barges. The crashing thunder of the two slamming together served as a signal to the Raven Guard and the gunships dove towards the right flank of the warring Mechanicum forces. It was not the silent descent of a hunting bird of prey but a spectacle of death, with each gunship opening fire with bombs and torrents of missiles that reduced entire maniples of Taghmata soldiers to charred flesh. Onwards the gunships came, their bay doors opening to disgorge black-clad Legionaries descending on flaring jetpacks. Agapito and his warriors dropped amongst the disorientated remnants of those that had survived the Raven Guard gunships, laying about their prey with blade and claw until the streets ran red. With their drop zone clear, the warriors of the XIXth pushed forwards but along its flank, aiming directly for the temple-complex. Their intent was to draw the attention of the foe, forcing increasing numbers of warriors to be committed against them and thus leeching strength from those thrown against Atlas' Taghma. At first it was merely neuro-thralls mobilised to face them, which the shredding chainswords and lightning claws of Raven Guard assault squads made light work of. Skitarii and armoured vehicles were soon deployed against the Raven Guard, ever greater numbers committed to hunting down the warriors of the XIXth.

In the smoke-veiled streets the Raven Guard plied their deadly trade, emerging from the miasma to cut deep into the Traitor lines before retreating into nearby gutted buildings, leaving their foe to flounder as they sought their hunters. Armoured columns of Krios and Karacnos tanks were lured into crossfires where Legionaries perched atop buildings unleashed flurries of missiles and plasma fire down upon them, while bursts of bolter fire slaughtered the disorientated warriors that spilled out of now-burning transports. As the fighting continued to rage, scout reports bore news of further troops deployed to the Raven Guard position, including a Warhound scout Titan and a group of Word Bearers dispatched from the temple-complex. Though Agapito yearned to engage his erstwhile kin and inflict red vengeance for their treacheries at Isstvan, to do so was to condemn his warriors to a foolish death; serving as bait was Agapito's goal and now he needed to lure his pursuers further from the temple-complex. In the face of overwhelming strength, the Raven Guard withdrew to pre-established rally points, drawing their foe further from both the temple-complex and the warring Mechanicum forces.

The pursuit of Agapito's forces triggered the final stage of Corax's plan, the Raven Lord himself taking to the field of battle. His foe was to be found not within the furious clash between Taghmata, nor upon streets carpeted with the corpses of those slain by his sons, but the temple-complex itself. Leeches of defenders by the efforts of Agapito and robbed of its turrets by the bombs of Atlas' aircraft, the heart of Iapetus stood vulnerable. Raven Guard gunships cut through the haze of battle, passing over the warring forces and alighting near the ziggurat-style temple at the complex's centre. Tech-thralls and Skitarii, seemingly the final dregs left behind to guard the ziggurat fell like wheat before the Primarch and his chosen warriors as they carved their way to the temple structure. Ornate doors guarded the entrance to the temple and from it emerged three towering crab-like walkers, each seemingly an amalgam of organic and artificial material, their armour graven with arcane runes that writhed with dark energy of their own. Corax launched himself towards the trio of foul creations, his talons meeting the claws of

his foe. The genhanced sinews of a Primarch contested warp-tainted artifice and though the Primarch emerged victorious, his talon shearing off one of the construct's claws, the Legionaries fighting with him were torn apart one by one. Surrounded on all sides, speed was Corax's sole ally, leaping forwards he tore through the underbelly of one construct. A second was felled by the missiles of a strafing gunship and the third destroyed as the Primarch ignited his flight pack and launched into the air, coming down upon the construct's hull with force enough to crack armour plate from which hissing fluid geysered forth. Alone amidst broken machines and his fallen sons, anger swelled within the Primarch as he breached the ziggurat's doors in search of his prey.

Within the fane heart was a nightmarish scene. A temple of labour and devotion to the Omnissiah had been transformed into a hellscape of twisted metal, sanctified machines replaced by flesh bound within electrified cages, haloed by light the hue of crimson radiating from the chamber's centre. Scores of crab-like machines, identical to those the Primarch had bested, rested half-complete upon an assembly line. As Corax moved deeper into the infernal forge he saw a pedestal crafted from metal and bone, surrounded by artificial stalagmites of dark stone carved with runes, a miasma of unreality crackling around them. At the foot of the pedestal, the Primarch met the Archmagos and his Word Bearers ally, Nathrakin, in battle. Like a bird of prey Corax took to the air, leaping through the tangle of machinery suspended from the temple's ceiling to avoid the infernal bolts of the archmagos' weapons. With a final bound, the Primarch fell upon Devere, severing his head from his shoulders in a single blow, before turning his attention to Nathrakin. Atop the platform surrounded by warp energy, the Word

Bearer stood basking in the foul touch of the Æther, its energies pouring into him. Cracks appeared across Nathrakin's armour as he grew larger, the power of the Immaterium swelling his form until he stood equal in size to Corax. The two came together in a flurry of blows, yet each wound dealt to Nathrakin healed quickly, the Word Bearer seemingly oblivious to the pain, while Corax began to tire. Unable to slay the foe in a conventional manner, Corax instead skewered the Word Bearer upon his talons before casting him into the rift. Submersed in the crackling energies of the warp rift, Nathrakin was torn apart, his screams echoing through the temple as Corax destroyed the pedestal and the machinery that fed it.

With the leadership of Iapetus slain, Corax seized control of the comms network, calling reserve gunships, and the tech-marines aboard them, to seize control of the complex's systems. Dataspheres provided the command codes necessary to inject new commands into the neuro-harnesses of Iapetus' forces, turning them upon those they had fought alongside moments before. In a single solar day Iapetus had fallen and the goal of restoring order over the remaining barge-cities was given to the tech-priests of Atlas. Content enough that the rule of the Emperor had been reestablished, Corax ordered the XIXth to withdraw and rally with those of the Legion fighting at Euesa. Constanix II once more retreated into isolation, contributing to the wider war by serving as a supply hub for Raven Guard fleets.



ADDITIONAL PROVENANCES OF WAR

The following Provenances of War are additional options available to a Imperialis Militia Force Commander, in addition to those within the Imperialis Militia army list.

The Provenances of War presented here represent militia forces that held ties with the Mechanicum, and in some cases make use of special rules, wargear and weapons which can be found in *Warhammer: The Horus Heresy – Liber Mechanicum*.

Arms of the Omniaiah

Some worlds benefited from the patronage of a Forge World in return for tributes of the most intellectually gifted of the planet's population. The armaments supplied lent considerable strength to the militia elites.

All eligible models in a Detachment with this Provenance may upgrade lasguns to lasrifles for no additional cost.

- **Option – Blessed Arms:** Eligible models in Imperialis Militia Grenadier Squads and Imperialis Militia Command Cadres may upgrade lasguns to laslocks and may upgrade sniper rifles to arc rifles at a cost of +45 points per unit, regardless of the number of models or types of weapons upgraded in a given unit.
- **Option – Sanctified Weapons:** A Force Commander in a Detachment with this Provenance may exchange a close combat weapon for a corposant stave for +5 points and/or a lasc pistol for a radium pistol for +5 points. A Force Commander may take a servo-arm for +10 points.

This Provenance cannot be taken in conjunction with the Armoury of Old Night Provenance.

Augmented Levy

Those unaugmented thralls conscripted into the Tech Guard in times of dire need would undergo rapid forced augmentation. This process involved the use of crude neuro-suppressors that numbed the subject to the horrors of war.

All Imperialis Militia Levy Squads in a Detachment with this Provenance receive +1 to their Leadership Characteristic and gain the Stubborn and The Rite of Pure Thought special rules (see page 108 of *Liber Mechanicum*). However, the Detachment's Compulsory Troops choices must be filled by Imperialis Militia Levy Squads, and it may not have more Infantry units, excepting HQ choices, of other types than it has Imperialis Militia Levy Squads in total. For example, if it has three Imperialis Militia Levy Squads, it can have a maximum of three additional Infantry squads of other kinds. Imperialis Militia Levy Squads in an army with this Provenance may not be joined by a Discipline Master.

This Provenance cannot be taken in conjunction with the Abhuman Muster, Tainted Flesh, Gene-crafted, Unending Hordes, Feral Warriors or Ogryn Conscripts Provenances.

Forge Remnants

The force originates from a colony unknowingly settled upon the ruins of a long-forgotten Mechanicum enclave, its rediscovered storage vaults replete with wonders of artifice repurposed by the militia forces. Unwilling to inform the Mechanicum for fear of repossession, the force relies upon its own rudimentary knowledge to keep the equipment functional.

Imperialis Militia Grenadier Squads and Imperialis Militia Command Cadres with this Provenance may take a Triaros Armoured Conveyer as a Dedicated Transport so long as they number 20 models or less. In addition, a Detachment with this Provenance may include three additional Heavy Support choices – but these additional choices may only be used to select Krios Squadrons (see *Liber Mechanicum* for details and points costs). All Triaros Armoured Conveyors and Krios Squadrons selected in this fashion gain the Third-line Unit Sub-type and reduce their Ballistic Skill to 3.

This Provenance cannot be taken in conjunction with the Survivors of the Dark Age or Clanfolk Levy Provenances.



THE LIBERATION OF CONSTANIX II LEGENDARY MISSION

CAPTURE AND HOLD

The presence of the Word Bearers on Constanix II was an unexpected one, for the Forge World was a minor power that held little obvious strategic value to the wider conflict. Unwilling to let the Word Bearers' plot play out unopposed, Corax led a splinter force to investigate the Forge World and, if possible, liberate it from the grip of the Traitors.

In this mission, one player will be the Defender, representing the Mechanicum forces protecting Iapetus, and the other will be the Attacker, representing the Raven Guard and Mechanicum attacking the barge-city.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: CONQUEST

Victory in this mission is decided by the capture and control of Objectives. This mission uses three Objectives:

- At the end of each of their player turns, the Defending player scores 1 Victory point if they control a single Objective marker and 3 Victory points if they control two or more Objective markers, and 5 Victory points if they control three Objective markers – the objectives represent key locations within the city.
- At the end of each of their player turns, the Attacking player scores 1 Victory point if they control a single Objective marker, 3 Victory points if they control two or more Objective markers, and 5 Victory points if they control three Objective markers.
- No Secondary Objectives are used in this mission, but any special rules or Warlord Traits that allow players to score Victory points may be used.

Once the battle has ended, the player with the highest total number of Victory points is declared the victor.

SELECTING ARMIES

Both players should select armies with a points limit of at least 3,000 points. Any Optional Detachment taken by the Attacker which is composed entirely of models with the Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard) special rule are affected by additional rules when Deploying before the start of the battle.

SETTING UP THE MISSION

The battlefield terrain should be set up to represent a ruined city, with ruins, industrial clutter and buildings spread across the battlefield.

OBJECTIVES

Before any models are deployed onto the battlefield, the defender must place three Objectives on the battlefield. The first must be at least 12" from the Defender's battlefield edge, the second at least 24" from the Defender's battlefield edge and the third at least 36" from the Defender's battlefield edge. Objectives must be placed at least 6" from any other battlefield edge and not within an area of Impassable Terrain.

DEPLOYMENT

This Exemplary Mission uses the Hammer and Anvil deployment map on page 303 of the *Warhammer: The Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness Rulebook*, with the Attacker deploying in the Side A Deployment Zone and the Defender taking the Side B Deployment Zone. Neither player may make a Deep Strike Assault, Flanking Assault, Subterranean Assault, Drop Pods Assault or other similar special deployment from Reserves.

The Defender must set up all of their units within their Deployment Zone first. Then, the Attacker sets up all of their units. All units within the Raven Guard Allied Detachment that do not have the Vehicle Unit Type count as having the Infiltrate special rule for the purposes of deployment.

FIRST TURN

The Attacker takes the first turn, unless their opponent successfully rolls to Seize the Initiative.

GAME LENGTH

At the end of Game Turn Four, the defending player must roll a D6. On a roll of 4+, the battle ends; if the roll is less than 4 then another full turn is played. If a fifth Game Turn is played, the defending player must roll a D6 at the end of the Game Turn. On a roll of 3+, the battle ends; if the score is less than 3 then another full turn is played. If a sixth Game Turn is played then the battle automatically ends once that turn is completely resolved.

Permission to download/print for personal use only.
© Copyright Games Workshop Limited 2023

CITADEL
MINIATURES

Forge World
MINIATURES



WARHAMMER.COM