

OUR MARTYRED LADY



PART 2 – CONSPIRACY THEORIES (2019)

Written by Gav Thorpe

Original audio drama performed by Catherine Tate, Emma Gregory, David Sibley, Richard Reed, Ramon Tikaram, Toby Longworth, Jo Woodcock, Melvin Rawlinson, and Matthew Hunt

Scripted by Reverend

LIST OF CHARACTERS:

- * Celestine, the Living Saint
- * Inquisitor Katarinya Greyfax
- * Ecclesiarch Deacis
- * Custodian Longinus
- * Spy Kyrillos
- * Marshal Gardhelm
- * Heretic Hermida cardinal Kultza
- * cardinal Benedict Husheen
- * interrogator Antilios
- * Sister Superior;
- * heretics Nikos, Mondatra, Sharith

Kyrillos: "Almost safe now, Lord Ecclesiarch. Home ground, so to speak. Although Centurion Longinus, I would be happier if the rest of your squad had remained with us".

Greyfax: "I think we should be thankful for what we have, Kyrillos. To enjoy the protection of a single Custodian, a Companion at that, is without precedent".

Longinus: "You are right, Inquisitor. While I remain, I will do all I can to ensure the safety of the Ecclesiarch. My Companions will be better employed with their return to Terra, given the anarchy the darkness has spread since our departure".

Deacis: "Hm a terrible time, but a moment delayed will soon be upon us again. For two months the cardinals had been gathering on Ophelia VII and when we land I will be able to make my declaration in full. Sister Celestine, we stand upon a brink of a glorious epoch for the Imperial cult".

Celestine: "Is this wise, Lord Ecclesiarch? Can the Adeptus Ministorum afford to make enemies within the Inquisition and doubtless face hostility from the Astra Militarum and the Adeptus Astartes?"

Greyfax: "We were lucky to escape at all. A powerful force was unleashed against you, Ecclesiarch".

Longinus: "Yes, if not for Celestine we might all have been lost in the warp. I hope my Companions' return to the Throne world is less fraught¹".

Deacis: "Are we to turn aside from the righteous path simply because there are those that would set obstacles before us, revered lady? Did Sebastian Thor allow his purpose to be bogged² by opposition?"

Longinus: "What is that?"

Kyrillos: "Hallelujah Militant in the key of F probably".

Greyfax: "Why is there singing?"

Celestine: "Sebastian Thor chose to relinquish the armies of the Ecclesiarchy".

Deacis: "Thor fought for what he believed was right. Do you think he created the Confederation of Light with only pious³ words? Did he overthrow Goge Vandire with prayer alone? No!"

Celestine: "Thor also knew the corrupting influence of power. Temporal might is the destruction from the holy mission of the Ecclesiarchy. Your efforts are better spent bolstering⁴ the courage and faith of the Emperor's soldiers than trying to lead military campaigns".

Kyrillos: "I expect the crew of the orbital station have roused themselves to give the Ecclesiarch a suitable welcome".

Longinus: "You alerted them to our arrival?"

Deacis: "I am Ecclesiarch of the Adeptus Ministorum. I do not skulk⁵ like a thief, especially as I arrive at the greatest of our cardinal worlds".

Greyfax: "You were also the target of an assassination attempt seventy days ago. If those enemies know you were coming here..."

Kyrillos: "This maybe my fault, Inquisitor. When I arranged for the transfer lander to take us to down the surface, I told the station officials, it was for the Ecclesiarch".

Greyfax (sarcastically): "Wonderful!"

Deacis: "I am accompanied by an Inquisitor, a Centurion of the Companions and a Living Saint. I feel quite safe. (clearing his throat) Now, Celestine, back to our discussion. You understand that you stand beside me clad in armor, bearing a sword while you tell me that my duty is to spread the Imperial creed by word alone".

Celestine: "You think I am a hypocrite⁶?"

Deacis: "I think you are conflicted. How could you mark the battle sisters so remarkable that they can be trusted with physical power, whilst condemning those that would emulate⁷ you?"

Celestine: "I was raised for war, Lord Ecclesiarch. My soul was made for battle".

Deacis: "You were an orphan raised by the Imperial church and given weapons and armor, nothing more. You are a product of the Schola Progenium, a castaway⁸ made useful. The Ecclesiarchy does the same for those that become soldiers of the Tempestus Scions that we supply to the Imperial Guard".

Greyfax: "Wait here!"

(Greyfax leaving)

Deacis: "Of course, Inquisitor. Why should we not arm the scions⁹ ourselves and send to war directly, Celestine, rather than wait upon the Departmento Munitorum to bear them away to their fate?"

Celestine: "I claim no particular virtue, Lord Ecclesiarch. I do not doubt your moral purpose either. Yet can you swear to the Emperor that every deacon and cardinal that serves you will act with equal righteousness?"

Longinus: "The shuttle base is across this platform and up two levels to the station's apex, a five minute walk".

(crowd noticing Celestine, Custodian and Ecclesiarch in enticement)

Greyfax: "We have only arrived just yet. Even with Kyrillos's error that is little time to react to the news of Deaces's presence".

Deacis: "The Decree Passive is gesture, not an absolute law. When a company of the Imperial Guard loses its officers and follows a preacher into the midst of the enemy, are they not already soldiers of the Imperial church?"

Greyfax: "Under the eye of the Commissars and subject to the Departmento Munitorum and limitations of transport by the Imperial Navy. You wish to create an independent mobile force of Frateris Templars".

Deacis: "Perhaps, however our missionaries frequently hire mercenaries to protect them in the wild systems".

Greyfax: "That's still does not equate to a standing army, Ecclesiarch".

Deacis: “But why the sudden concern now, when we need warriors the most? Thor forbid men under arms, and so the Adeptus Ministorum immediately raised the Orders Militant of Battle Sisters sidestepping¹⁰ the literal law, but not its intent. What more proof do you need that the Decree Passive is a law that exists in word more than deed?”

Longinus: “Weapon, get back!”

Heretic (in the distance): “Take in the front priest!”

(battle erupting on the platform)

Greyfax: “Back inside!”

Longinus: “Driver, stop the carriage!”

Driver (being killed in the gun fight): “Oh!”

Deacis: “The Centurion, we can’t leave him”.

Greyfax: “Stay down, Deacis!”

Celestine: “Jump, Centurion! Take my hand!”

(characters successfully leaving the station platform in a carriage)

Deacis: “Perhaps you could get off me, Inquisitor”.

Greyfax: “Seems I was wrong to assume the enemy would not have time to organize another attack”.

Celestine: “What next?”

Greyfax: “Centurion, you are the most experienced in such matters”.

Longinus: “We cannot stay here and allow further attempts on the Ecclesiarch’s life. We must get off the station”.

* * *

Greyfax: “You seem to know where we are going, Centurion”.

Longinus: “Saint Aleph’s station was built from standard template construct. Its layout is similar to thousands of others across the galaxy”.

Kyrillos: “And you memorized it?”

Longinus: “Of course”.

Celestine: “How can we be sure that there will be no attack when we board the shuttle?”

Longinus: “We can’t be. But if the enemy had the means to attack the shuttle, I think they would have waited until then. It is the better ambush site. The assault on the transport carriage was hasty and clumsy”.

Greyfax: “Scanned relief if we get blasted out of the void by one of the station’s gun batteries”.

Kyrillos: “We could hide out somewhere and send word for the battle sisters and arbitrators to take over the station”.

Longinus: "It could take several hours for sufficient forces to mobilize. Better to keep moving, take the initiative and exit the compromised zone".

Kyrillos: "I am not..."

Longinus (interrupting): "I have protected the Emperor against all manner of threats for longer than you can imagine, adept. This is what I was created for".

(heretics unleashing laser fire)

Greyfax: "They've found us. Longinus, our lives are in your hands".

Longinus: "Through here, keep moving".

Kyrillos (running): "I am beginning to think someone really doesn't want you to deliver that speech, holy Ecclesiarch".

Deacis (running): "Do you not see what is happening, Celestine? The Imperium is changing, breaking apart. When the renegades come upon our shrine worlds, who will answer? The Adeptus Mechanicus protect their forge worlds..."

Greyfax (interrupting): "This is not the time..."

Deacis (running): "The Departmento Munitorum values hive cities and arms manufacturers over the temples of faith. Why can the Adeptus Ministorum not look to itself rather than the charity of the Imperial Guard?"

Celestine (running): "The Lord Commander has left Space Marines to guard Ophelia VII. A crusade of Black Templars patrols the nearby star systems".

Deacis (running): "Guilliman is no warrior of faith. He tolerates us but nothing more. The Adeptus Astartes are growing in power. The old laws that curbed¹¹ their strength had been abandoned".

Longinus (running): "This way, to the left! Under that bridge!"

(several torrents of stab fire)

Deacis (running): "The Primarch builds an empire for himself beyond the Great Rift and the oldest Chapters of the Space Marines call out to their successors gathering their numbers again. They care nothing for the Imperial church".

Celestine (running): "It was the Lord Commander that created the Codex Astartes, that laid down those curbs of power of which you speak".

Deacis (running): "Just as saints of us have signed the Decree Passive under threat of attack. Tell me, Celestine, what Guilliman intends with these new warriors, his Primaris Marines? An army conjured out of nowhere by forbidden technology. What more efforts do you need that he cares as much for his Codex Astartes as the litanies of faith?"

Celestine (running): "You make it sounds as though he seeks to rule the Imperium himself".

Deacis (running): "There is a history you do not know, Celestine. A past, hidden from you..."

Greyfax (angrily, running): "This is not the time for this discussion".

Deacis (running): “Heh, maybe not, but Celestine... You must believe me when I say, there have been times when the likes of Guilliman have turned on the Emperor. When the Space Marines have pursued their own goals ahead of the Imperium’s. If Guilliman declared a return to the ancient, faithless ways, who would protect us from his domination?”

Celestine (running): “Such heresy would not be allowed”.

Greyfax (running): “Say no more, Ecclesiarch!”

Deacis (running): “I need the support of the sisterhood, Celestine, not their opposition. Our enemies will exploit any division. When darkness surrounds us, we must create our own light”.

Longinus (running): “In here! The shuttle docks are ahead”.

(everyone finally halting the run)

Kyrillos (breathing hard): “I think they have stopped following”.

Longinus: “Yes, the slinked¹² back into the shadows. We may never identify them”.

Greyfax: “There will be a reckoning for this, I assure you”.

Deacis (breathing hard): “There most certainly will, Inquisitor. Celestine, can I rely upon you to do what is right?”

Celestine: “I remain as ever your servant, Lord Ecclesiarch”.

Deacis: “Ah, the Emperor has already set the truth in your heart, revered lady. I am sure you will follow the righteous path”.

* * *

Kyrillos: “Ah, the chamber ordinal! One of the wonders of Ophelia! Few not of the Synod Ministra are privileged to pass within”.

Longinus: “Stay vigilant or it may be the last sight you enjoy. The cardinals are almost all here and Deacis will arrive shortly”.

Greyfax: “I am not sure if our final arrival at this moment is for better or worse”.

Kyrillos: “I am rather glad to still be alive all things considered and the Ecclesiarch’s death would mean even more strife¹³ for the Imperium”.

Greyfax: “Which is the only comfort I take, that whatever plot we thwart¹⁴, must be worse than Deacis’s plans”.

Kyrillos: “Am I the only one who thinks it’s unwise that we have assembled nearly half of the remaining highest-ranking cardinals in the Imperium in one place just two months after the other half were vaporized?”

Greyfax: “The thought had occurred, Kyrillos. Given your earlier failings I trust that you’ve been more diligent in your investigation since we arrived at Ophelia?”

Kyrillos: “I’ve been unable to discover anything amiss in the Synod Ministra. Anything more than usual, I mean. I’ll keep looking for some connection between the atrocity on Terra and the incident at Saint Aleph’s station”.

Greyfax: "Keep your eyes open. The attack on the orbital station was opportunistic¹⁵ but this conclave has been two months in preparation".

Longinus: "I wonder, Inquisitor, why you have allowed this matter to escalate?"

Greyfax: "I've yet to see any evidence that the Ecclesiarch has acted against the Imperium. I would have more issue if he attempted to gather an army by clandestine¹⁶ means".

Longinus: "This will be your last chance to silence him before he officially lifts the Decree Passive. Once he publicly makes his will known, you will have an even harder time stifling¹⁷ any machinations for power".

Greyfax: "You are venturing into fresh waters, Centurion. Water is already well patrolled. It is one thing for the Adeptus Custodes to concern themselves with the protection of the Emperor in physical sense, another to stand guardian of more spiritual and moral matters".

Kyrrillos: "The cardinals are all here. Now for the Ecclesiarch to make..."

(heralds blowing the trumpets)

Kyrrillos: "Deacis bears the scepter of Thor. It must have been recovered from the ruins of the Ecclesiarchal palace".

Greyfax: "Does it matter which decorative rod he carries?"

Kyrrillos: "No Ecclesiarch has carried that scepter since Sebastian Thor. Deacis thinks himself a saint in the making".

(Deacis slowly going to the dais)

Deacis: "Blessings of the God Emperor upon this gathering! Today is a great day for the Imperial church!"

Greyfax: "Be watchful".

Deacis: "Many of you have traveled far and at some personal risk to be here and no doubt wish to return to your duties without delay. So I shall keep this brief. There are forces at large in the galaxy that would see humanity crushed and eternal darkness prevail. Our bastion against these foes since time immemorial has been the God Emperor, protector and master, the guide whose light unites us all against the unholy".

Longinus: "I am not sure the Emperor would approve of anything that occurs today".

Deacis: "Emerging from the terrors of the Long Night the Emperor had made himself known to his people and led us back to the stars. At the height of his triumph he was betrayed and gave off his own mortal life so that his followers might endure. As God Emperor he guards us even now, shielding us against countless enemies that would see us extinct".

Greyfax: "With some assistance".

Deacis: "In his sacrifice he showed us the way forward. Though his psychical form is sustained by the greatness of the Golden Throne, the spirit of the Emperor is given strength from our faith".

Longinus: "And a thousand psykers a day".

Deacis: “Through him did the Great Patinicus travel to Terra to anoint¹⁸ himself upon the steps of the Imperial Palace and from thence forward rose the temple of the Savior Emperor, becoming the print¹⁹ institution of the Ecclesiarchy”.

Greyfax: “I think Deacis needs a lesson in the meaning of brevity”.

Deacis: “For many thousands of years the Emperor...” (voice fading)

Kyrillos: “He is really going to do it, isn’t he?”

Greyfax: “This is not rhetoric. He actually believes he carries out the Emperor’s will”.

Kyrillos: “Perhaps, he does”.

Longinus: “To what extent will you allow him to extend his power? If Deacis wishes to recruit the millions of faithful that survived the pilgrimage to Terra, would you stop him?”

Greyfax: “If you wish to use that guardian spear I am not inclined to intervene. Would you slay Deacis preemptively, knowing that disorder and carnage²⁰ will follow?”

Kyrillos: “Also I think that Saint Celestine might not stand by while you make the attempt. See how she looks at us, not even a glance for the cardinals”.

Greyfax: “She thinks the Emperor has returned her to protect Deacis. She would give her life for him”.

Longinus: “If she sought to impede²¹ me, I would not hesitate”.

Kyrillos: “Heh, a Centurion of the Adeptus Custodes fighting a Living Saint. I wouldn’t be confident if I was either of you”.

Greyfax: “One of the reasons I am content to allow this to continue for the time being. Deacis already has the Orders Militant sent into battle if he wished to do so”.

Deacis: “The God Emperor laid his blessing. Long had we deliberated²² this and consensus has been reached. The Emperor would have us do this deed, otherwise he would not have sent glorious Celestine to save me when so many others perished in calamity²³. I count myself blessed these last few months to stand here before you to make this declaration. The Emperor indeed protects”.

Greyfax: “As does the conversion field generator built into your new broach”.

Deacis: “I do not doubt the righteousness of this cause. In the age passed the Imperial church called upon the regiments of the Frateris Templars to fight the enemies of our immortal lord. We will do so again! So it is I, Deacis the 23rd, Lord Ecclesiarch of the Adeptus Ministorum, rescind the Decree Passive legal by Sebastian Thor”.

(crowd exploding in chatter)

Longinus: “The first rock – Templars, now we will see how distractive the avalanche becomes”.

* * *

Celestine: “The Ecclesiarch is in the tower atop the basilica. I assume he is the target of this latest attack”.

Greyfax: "Do we know who they are? What they want? Deacis's speech was eight days ago and its content has been carried to systems across the galaxy. Why attack now?"

(Sister Superior approaching)

Celestine: "Sister Superior, you have something to report?"

Sister Superior: "Lady Celestine, we've discovered charges missing from the celebratory munition store as well as six las display projectors".

Greyfax: "Both could be modified to create the explosion that tore out the roof. Who else knew that the Ecclesiarch would be here?"

Sister Superior: "Everyone, Inquisitor. The blessing of the bells is a public engagement due to commence upon the hour. The entourage²⁴ was several dozen strong, mainly clerics and menials²⁵".

Greyfax: "And you've tried to subdue²⁶ them?"

Celestine: "Not yet. The tower is only accessed by a single old stairway, easily mined and defended. Judging by the damage we can see from here the attackers were already in the basilica and detonated their device behind the Ecclesiarch's entourage trapping them on the upper levels".

Greyfax: "Give me a moment, my ear piece has activated".

Kyrillos (over vox): "Inquisitor Greyfax, are you receiving this?"

Greyfax (coldly, over vox): "Yes, yes, I can hear you".

Kyrillos (over vox): "I am with Ecclesiarch, Inquisitor. He is alive but injured".

Greyfax (coldly, over vox): "Where are you?"

Kyrillos (over vox): "We've locked ourselves in one of the robing chambers at the basis of the upper tower".

Greyfax (over vox): "Who attacked you?"

Kyrillos (over vox): "I don't know, Inquisitor. All I remember is the explosion and then stumbling²⁷ through the smoke to get here".

Greyfax (over vox): "Very well, stay where you are and keep me updated".

Sister Superior: "Centurion Longinus wishes to approach us, Sister Superior".

Celestine: "Let him through".

(Longinus approaching)

Greyfax: "You arrived quickly, Centurion".

Longinus: "Like yourself I've stayed close to the Ecclesiarch in the present political climate".

Greyfax: "Deacis is alive for the time being. Let me see if I can ascertain²⁸ any more about the assailants, though they are quite distant".

(Greyfax using her psyker abilities)

Assailant 1: "Guards are going to come up any time now. We cannot be taken alive".

Assailant 2: "Where is Hermida? She was supposed to be back by now at the Bow Sisters corner".

(Greyfax coming around)

Greyfax: "Fourteen attackers. There were six more but they died in the explosion and the fight with the battle sister escort, nobody of significant rank".

Longinus: "How did they overpower ten sisters of the Orders Militant?"

Supiria: "Most of the escort was killed during the explosion, Centurion. Two survivors managed to flash vox warning to summon us, but we've lost contact about thirty seconds later".

Kyrillos (over vox): "Inquisitor, they've brought a plasma las to cut through the door".

Greyfax (over vox): "How long until they are inside?"

Kyrillos (over vox): "It seems I've missed the part of my training that covered structural engineering of Ecclesiarchy portals and their resistance to different tools. Given their progress maybe two minutes?"

Greyfax (over vox): "Are you armed?"

Kyrillos (over vox): "Only with my wits".

Greyfax (over vox): "Defenseless then. (to all) The renegades are trying to cut their way through the chamber. We have to do something now or they will reach the Ecclesiarch".

Celestine: "We cannot risk the assault from within. Who can say if they have set other traps?"

Supiria: "Reinforcements will be arriving from the convent. Three squads of Seraphim among them".

Greyfax: "Not soon enough".

Longinus: "Jump packs would not reach that height even if they were already here".

Celestine: "Then it seems we have only one option".

(Celestine spreading her wings and taking flight)

Longinus: "I have seen many impressive things in my long life, but I must admit seeing the Living Saint in full glory ranks highly among them".

Greyfax: "Hm..."

Supiria: "The Emperor's strength goes with you, revered sister".

Greyfax (over vox): "Can you see them?"

Celestine (over vox): "Not very well. Where is the Ecclesiarch meant to be?"

Greyfax (over vox): "In a robing chamber near the base of the main tower, that is all I know".

Celestine (over vox): "I... I cannot see them, but there is wide breach in the wall not far from the central stairwell²⁹. I will come upon them from there. Oh, by the Emperor's will I shall bring vengeance upon those that strike against his most holy servants".

Greyfax (over vox): “One or two alive would be good”.

Celestine (laughing menacingly over vox): “Hahaha, I shall endeavor³⁰ to spare some for your interrogation, but I make no promises. The death of my sisters stir³¹s my wrath and the Emperor’s righteousness fills my veins”.

(Celestine smashing into the tower)

Heretic (charging): “Love inside, kill the Ecclesiarch’s wretch!”

(heretics unleashing bolter fire)

Celestine (over vox): “They have taken the sacred weapons of my fallen sisters”.

(Celestine engaging in melee combat, slaying two heretics)

Celestine: “The Emperor’s vengeance finds you this night, heretics! I am the blade of retribution”.

Heretic (in the distance): “Some kind of force field! Our bolts cannot touch her”.

Celestine: “The mantle of the Emperor’s grace lies upon me, heretic! You cannot turn the weapons of my sacred sisters against a true servant”.

Heretic Nikos (in the distance): “Hermida, trap! Quicker!”

Heretic Mondatra (in the distance): “I’ll take the witch! Slay the renegade Deacis! The star shall shine brighter for their martyrdom”.

Celestine: “For that blasphemy I shall gift you to the attentions of the Inquisition”.

(Celestine slaying more screaming heretics in melee)

Celestine: “The faithless shall fall before the righteous, for their selfishness robs them of true purpose!”

(Celestine approaching Hermida)

Celestine: “You must be the one they call Hermida”.

Hermida: “I’ll take your head, you cursed witch!”

(Celestine knocking the shit out of Hermida)

Celestine: “You too shall feel the excoriations of Greyfax before your demise”.

(Celestine treading towards the door)

Celestine (opening the door): “Ecclesiarch, can you hear me?”

Kyrillos: “Saint Celestine, oh praise the Emperor!”

Celestine (grimly): “Praise him indeed”.

* * *

(cathedral bells chiming)

(congregation singing religious hymns in the distance)

Greyfax (approaching): “Kyrillos!”

Kyrillos: “What is it, Inquisitor?”

Greyfax: “The cardinals are departing and I would have words with some of them before they leave the planet. Where have you been? It’s been two days since the basilica attack”.

Kyrillos: “Recovering from the stress. It’s not been easy, Inquisitor. You cannot imagine the bureaucracy I’ve had to negotiate just to get close to the Ecclesiarch again”.

Greyfax: “And this is my concern because...”

Kyrillos: “Deacis is a little unsure of my connection to you. And so he’s been frankly suspicious of me and not forthcoming in renewing my access privileges in his new regime. On top of that the local lay of clerics has guarded against an interloper from Terra arriving in their midst”.

Greyfax: “If this preamble to admission of some failure on your part I would dispense for the excuses and speed out the confession”.

Kyrillos: “Not at all, Inquisitor. No failure on my part. We have received word from lord Trevayne that he uncovered a link to one of the Synod Ministra. I had to draw up a list of cardinals to investigate based on some vague recollections of the assassin, an necropath plucked from the deathly aura around the remains of the cathedral. I think I have found something, someone of note. Cardinal Kultza”.

Greyfax: “Why did you not just start with that?”

Kyrillos: “Oh...”

Greyfax: “It does not matter, tell me about cardinal Kultza”.

Kyrillos: “Oh, where to start? Kultza is one of the most powerful members of the Synod Ministra among several dozen cardinals that hold governorship of shrine worlds for the most part”.

Greyfax: “Hm, go on”.

Kyrillos: “Many of them have promised to devote their legally raised planetary defense forces to the Frateris Templars, but Trevayne uncovered that Kultza began the mobilization of his troops and ships before the Decree Passive was withdrawn”.

Greyfax: “I see. We know that Deacis sought support from most of the cardinals before making his declaration. Kultza preempted the announcement to gain some advantage. We need to find out more about Kultza before there is another assassination attempt”.

Kyrillos: “As I thought too, Inquisitor, but I dug a little more. The other Imperial commanders are transporting their troops here to the great muster³² called by the Ecclesiarch, not Kultza according to navigator reports. Along with the detachment of Tempestus Scions from Schola Progenium abbeys within his diocese Kultza sent his forces to the San Leor system, which has been lost to a warp storm since that cataclysm of the Cicatrix Maledictum tore the warp asunder”.

Greyfax: “San Leor? Why would anybody send troops there?”

* * *

Celestine: “Aux Spiritus Dominatus Domine Libra Nos! From the lightning and the tempest, our Emperor, deliver us! From plague, temptation and war, our Emperor, deliver us. From the scourge³³ of the kraken, our Emperor, deliver us. From the blasphemy of the fallen, our Emperor, deliver us. From the begetting³⁴ of demons, our Emperor, deliver us. From the curse of the mutant, our Emperor, deliver us. Aux Morte Perpetua Domine Libra Nos! That thou wouldst bring them only death! That thou shouldst spare none. That thou shouldst pardon none. We beseech³⁵ thee, destroy them! Master of Mankind, lord of the Imperium, golden king, I am your will and your weapon, send me your guidance so that I might know the path forward. Your realm trembles beneath the assaults of the heretics and the xenos. Your words quail³⁶ under the yoke³⁷ of nightmare darkness. Speed me forth to the battle that I may smite³⁸ those that would bring ruin to your domain and slaughter your faithful servants”.

(Celestine sighing deeply)

Celestine: “I am lost, my Emperor, among these petty³⁹ ambitions of mortal concerns. You did not raise me up from the bosom⁴⁰ of death to parlay⁴¹ with self-serving clergy and corrupt dive canters⁴². I serve you as I think right and reserve no judgment for your will, but this is not my battlefield. I cannot find atonement⁴³ here. I beseech you, master...”

(Celestine having a vision)

Master of Mankind (growling): “Celestine, heed my words... Our doom cometh near...”

Voice 1: “He returns...”

Voice 2: “It rises... The storm breaks...”

Voice 3: “The eight-turned god awakens”.

Celestine: “I see it, lord of terror, a burning blue effigy⁴⁴ of death. The tower of the Ecclesiarchy tumbles⁴⁵. I hear it, my lord...”

(Celestine moaning in terror, falling to the ground)

Sister Superior (approaching Celestine): “Revered sister, what affliction⁴⁶ is this?”

Celestine: “No affliction, my sister, but a blessing. A vision from the God Emperor. Send word to the canoness that she must ready as many battle sisters as she can master. A terrible war is almost upon us”.

Sister Superior: “And what of you, revered sister?”

Celestine: “I must speak with Inquisitor Greyfax”.

(Celestine running away fast)

* * *

Longinus: “These attacks on the Ecclesiarch are only going to continue. But he’s ignored my warnings to withdraw from his public duties”.

Greyfax: “I do not understand why they continue, Centurion. If the aim was to hold his rescinding of the Decree Passive, they are too late. The speech is made, the deed under way”.

Longinus: "Perhaps, we are looking at events through the wrong lens. Maybe it isn't about the Decree Passive at all".

Greyfax: "We shall know more when I spend time with the prisoners captured by Celestine. I am close to grasping the truth, but those I have interrogated were misled, manipulated in some way and I sense a hidden hand behind their actions. The last has not regained consciousness yet, but we will have answers soon".

Longinus: "I hope that".

Celestine (from the distance): "Katarinya!"

(Celestine rapidly approaching)

Celestine (breathing hard): "Katarinya, Longinus".

Longinus: "You look perturbed⁴⁷, sister Celestine".

Celestine: "The God Emperor has sent me a fresh warning, a vision".

Greyfax: "Calm down, Celestine".

Celestine: "I cannot. It has filled me with terrible foreboding⁴⁸. I feel the flames even now, hear the crackles as it blackens my flesh".

Longinus: "What flames? What was this vision?"

Celestine: "A blue flame that consumes all, a fire sent by eight-turned god".

Greyfax: "That phrase was in the mind of the Alpha psyker on Terra. The eight-turned god".

Celestine: "Those very words, Katarinya".

Longinus: "The dark powers... Their servants are everywhere in these terrible times".

Greyfax: "Tell nobody else of this. Ophelia has not long recovered from the horrors of demonic invasion".

Celestine: "The Lord Ecclesiarch should know".

Greyfax: "Especially not Deacis. There is no way to tell how he would react, what oil he might accidentally pour on the flames even if he intended to do right. We will keep this among ourselves".

* * *

(Katarinya snoring while sleeping)

(beeping noise)

Greyfax (mumbling in her sleep): "Purging continues... I shall have my (yawning) stay my... out of my brain... star gods returning..."

(Greyfax waking up to another beeping noise, standing up, yawning again and going to the door)

Greyfax (opening the door): "Kyrillos, what..."

Kyrillos: "Quickly, Inquisitor! Come with me!"

Greyfax: "What do you want? I've had little enough rest of late".

Kyrillos: "We must hurry. I'll explain on the way".

Greyfax: "This has better be important. (clearing her throat) Why are you not going?"

Kyrillos: "Um, let me get you a robe".

Greyfax: "Um?"

(Kyrillos bringing a robe to Greyfax)

Kyrillos: "Better".

Greyfax (still half-asleep, putting on the robe): "Um..."

Kyrillos: "I couldn't vox you, Inquisitor. I didn't want to risk anyone picking up my transmission. The Ecclesiarch has ordered to this information not be shared with anyone outside his close circle".

Greyfax: "What information?"

Kyrillos: "I've just learned that several ships arrived through the warp some days ago. It is Marshal Gardhelm's Black Templars".

Greyfax: "I see".

Kyrillos: "They've come back to Ophelia and are demanding that the Ecclesiarch reinstates the Decree Passive and turns himself over to them for... The phrase used was 'grotesque heresies against the God Emperor'".

Greyfax (sarcastically): "Three hundred genetically engineered power-armored battle-hardened religious zealots. Great!"

Kyrillos: "Yes, Inquisitor, and they made planet fall ten minutes ago".

Greyfax: "That is exactly what this delicate situation needs right now".

* * *

Benedict: "The Ecclesiarch is not receiving visitors".

Greyfax: "Stand aside".

Benedict (insisting): "The Ecclesiarch is not receiving visitors".

Greyfax: "I am a member of the Emperor's Inquisitor. If you are in my way when I reach the top of these stairs, I will have you executed for treason".

Benedict: "I... I..."

Kyrillos: "Do as she says, Benedict!"

Benedict: "This is most unprecedented".

Kyrillos: "Be shocked later. Key in the code for Ecclesiarch's chambers now".

(Benedict entering the key, doors opening)

Gardhelm: "You must be reminded that my gunships and drop cascades are at the ready, Lord Ecclesiarch. I will not be thwarted in my... "

(Greyfax entering the chambers)

Gardhelm: "What is this?"

Deacis: "I said no interruptions, Benedict".

Benedict: "It is the Inquisitor, Lord Ecclesiarch".

Deacis: "Of course it is. This is a meeting of the inner Synod, Greyfax. Your timing is most inconvenient".

Greyfax: "The Inquisition does not operate at your convenience".

Deacis: "Huh, I shall remind you that I am the head of the Adeptus Ministorum and a High Lord of Terra. My influence is considerable. Do not let our recent familiarity cloud that fact".

Benedict: "And you come garbed in the robe of the Sorrowitas adept? Show some decorum⁴⁹, Inquisitor!"

Greyfax: "My apparel⁵⁰ is not your concern, cardinal Husheen. Kyrillos, close the door behind me".

(door closing)

Greyfax: "You must be Marshal Gardhelm. I am Inquisitor Greyfax".

Gardhelm: "I am Regis Gerald Gardhelm, Marshal of the Ophelia crusade, Black Templars Chapter of the Adeptus Astartes. You are Katarinya Greyfax, yes?"

Greyfax: "And you are responding to the recent attack?"

Gardhelm: "Attack? I don't know of any attack. I received word from the High Marshal to return to Ophelia VII by request of the Inquisitorial representative lord Trevayne. It seems the Ecclesiarch wishes to raise armies and the lesson taught by my predecessors 4000 years ago has been forgotten".

Deacis: "Huh, you have no right to interfere, Marshal. Even with the backing of Lord Trevayne and comparing me to the tyrant Goge Vandire is further insult".

Gardhelm: "You haven't answered my demands, Ecclesiarch. You must issue a proclamation restoring the Decree Passive, release yourself to my custody⁵¹ for immediate transportation to Terra pending⁵² lord Trevayne's investigation".

Benedict: "Nonsense, the Adeptus Ministorum does not answer to the judgment of the Space Marines".

Greyfax: "But the authority of the Inquisition is absolute, cardinal. However, I do not think removing the Ecclesiarch to Terra at this point is conducive⁵³ to the security of the High Lord or his organization".

Gardhelm: "You work at cross-purposes⁵⁴ with lord Trevayne".

Greyfax: "Perhaps, but I have been following evidence of a growing conspiracy close to the Ecclesiarch. For those purposes and his continuing safety lord Deacis will remain on Ophelia VII for the time being".

(siren going off)

Gardhelm: "Your orbital defenses have locked onto my ships".

Black Templar (over vox): "Ships on intercept course, my lord. What are your orders?"

Gardhelm: "Why are Adepta Sorrowitas' cruisers inbound on my position?"

Kyrillos (over vox): "I must speak with you, Inquisitor".

Deacis: "An overreaction, I am sure".

(Gardhelm grabbing the pistol)

Greyfax: "Marshal, disarm your plasma pistol. Do not escalate the situation further. Ecclesiarch, send word for your battle sisters to keep their distance. Marshal Gardhelm, have your ships remain on station and take no further action".

Deacis (laughing): "I am not some lackey, Greyfax, to be ordered around".

Gardhelm: "My warriors and I will defend ourselves".

Kyrillos (over vox): "It is very urgent".

Greyfax: "I am an Inquisitor. I swear by the Throne on Terra that if either of you tax⁵⁵ me further, I will have both of you declared Excommunicate Traitoris and will erase every mention of you from existence before turning you to ashes and ejecting them into the void between stars. Ecclesiarch, you will remain under house arrest in these chambers overseen by members of the Adeptus Arbites answering to me personally. Would that satisfy you for the moment, Marshal?"

Benedict: "This is an imposition⁵⁶ too far, Inquisitor".

Another Cardinal: "I concur⁵⁷, this impudence⁵⁸..."

Greyfax (using psyker abilities and ordering the cardinals): "Be quiet".

Gardhelm: "It is an acceptable temporary measure if the battle sisters do not encroach⁵⁹ further into our vicinity⁶⁰. I would not wish to impede the holy works of the Inquisition".

Deacis: "I accept your conditions, Inquisitor. I have no desire to make this situation worse. Arrangements will be made".

Greyfax: "Good. Marshal, I will update you privately on the situation, if you are agreeable".

Gardhelm: "I await your signal, Inquisitor".

Greyfax: "I will also be discussing this matter in much greater detail with you, Ecclesiarch. First, I must attend another matter".

(Greyfax leaving the chambers)

Cardinals (angrily, in the distance): "Holy Terra!"

Kyrillos: "The last of the prisoners has woken, Katarinya. She is being prepared for interrogation".

* * *

Greyfax: "I didn't think to see you frequenting these grizzly⁶¹ low levels, sister Celestine".

Celestine: "How so?"

Greyfax: "Being a shining angel upon a far flung battlefield is a very different matter to applying a heated brand in a blood-stained cell far from the light of any sun. Are you sure this is the destiny the God Emperor has ordained⁶² for you?"

Celestine: "I am..."

Greyfax (interrupting): "For that matter why are you still on Ophelia VII? Is there not a war zone where you should be leading the faithful into the guns of their foes?"

(prisoner screaming in the distance from evident pain)

Celestine (smiling): "Hahaha, your cynicism does not wound me, Katarinya. It invigorates⁶³ me. Faith must be continually tested if it is of value. You said so yourself not long ago. I remain here because I have not yet fulfilled whatever destiny the Emperor has set aside for me. His guidance brought me to the Ecclesiarch, but the matter is not concluded. So I will remain until it is".

Greyfax: "How will you know when you have completed that mission?"

Celestine: "I always know. There is peace, for an instant I know peace".

(prisoner screaming in the distance)

Celestine: "That is why I am here, to find that moment. It might be in the confession of one of these sinners or something else entirely".

(Celestine and Greyfax entering the interrogation room)

(enchained Hermida moaning)

Greyfax: "Hermida, I am Inquisitor Greyfax, the last face you will see in your mortal life".

(doors closing behind Celestine and Greyfax with a bang)

Hermida: "Get that cursed witch away from me".

Greyfax: "The Living Saint? No! She stays".

Celestine: "If my presence discomforts you so, perhaps it is the light I shine into the shadows of your tortured soul".

Hermida: "I shall remain pure".

Greyfax: "I see that Antilios has completed the preliminaries, just a few additives to your blood to increase your fear responses, perk up⁶⁴ the nerve endings, keep you conscious once the excruciation⁶⁵ begins".

Hermida: "Your threats..."

Greyfax (interrupting coldly): “These are not threats... This statement is a fact. Antilios is not one of my people. He works for the Ecclesiarch, well, someone down the chain of authority from the Ecclesiarch himself, more in a lay capacity, but you understand what I mean”.

Hermida: “Why are you telling me this?”

Greyfax: “Antilios believes he can save your soul, while I am only interested in the truth. Whatever you tell me, it will not stop the agony he will inflict upon you. Only a repentance⁶⁶ of sin can do that, but that is not why I am here”.

Hermida: “I will tell you nothing, protector of the false prophet”.

Greyfax (taking out her blade): “Quaint⁶⁷, well I am no opponent of physical excruciation, I understand clearly its limitations. I also have other more effective means at my disposal. I want you to understand that I could have half your skin flayed off, your finger bones split apart and your ribs snapped⁶⁸ one by one. But I have no desire to do so”.

Hermida: “I will tell that witch nothing. The cursed saint will die the same as the false Ecclesiarch as she has set her throne in the shadow of heresy and will burn with all the other deluded⁶⁹ traitors”.

Celestine: “Unburden your soul before the God Emperor and move into his light with your confession”.

Greyfax: “Unlike Antilios who I think displays just a little too much affection for his work to be merely professionally interested, I take no enjoyment from what will happen. I am concerned with results. That is why you need to know that I have extracted everything from your coconspirators already. You’ll have no secrets to keep”.

Hermida: “You are just... You think I am stupid enough to fall for that trick?”

Celestine: “Unburden yourself of your guilt and your end will be swift”.

Greyfax: “I do not need tricks. I certainly do not consider you to be stupid. It is because I think that you can make an intelligent informed decision to cooperate that I am giving you this opportunity. Tell me if I am wrong. Your companions – Nikos and the others – told me that you came up with this plan to kill Deacis. You acquired some of the stores needed while Sharith and Mondatra came up with the ideal opportunity”.

Celestine: “You thought you would be martyrs. None of you expected to survive. None of you wanted to survive”.

Hermida (nervous): “Oh...Oh...”

Greyfax: “Your expression tells me exactly why that would be the case. I too would want to wish to avoid the fate in store for you”.

Hermida: “I don’t know anything more than Nikos. He was the leader”.

Greyfax: “Really? That is not true, is it, Hermida? There was another, one that did not take part in the attack. Nobody seems to remember him, but he is there all the same”.

Hermida: “What man?”

Celestine: “What is this? There was none that escaped me”.

Greyfax: "The one that hides in the shadows of your mind".

Hermida: "There was no one else, I swear".

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "Tell me about San Leor!"

Hermida: "San Leor? What? Who is San Leor?"

Celestine: "What is important about the mother world? What have you not told me?"

Greyfax: "I am not interested in giving you conciliation⁷⁰, Hermida, but you should know that the others said almost exactly the same. There was nothing you could do to avoid this".

Hermida: "Avoid?"

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "See the man in the shadows!"

Hermida (sobbing): "The Emperor will protect me! I am strong in my faith".

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "See the man in the shadows!"

Hermida (screaming): "Ah! Oh! There are nails in my head piercing deep! Take them out!"

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "See the man in the shadows!"

Hermida (sobbing): "The Emperor... The Em.... Shadows... Shadows in my thoughts..."

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "The fire shall burn away the shadows. See his face by the light of the cleansing flame! See him!"

Hermida: "Tatters⁷¹ of my soul, stop it! Stop! Stop! Nothing to see! Burn! Thoughts burning... He is here".

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "Look at him! See his face".

Hermida: "Shadows everywhere, I hear him. The truth shall be known. Deacis's blood shall be the river".

(barrier breaking, Hermida's thoughts turning to male voice)

Kultza: "That washes in the new era of faith... When I am gone, you will ensure that the blasphemer does not enjoy the fruits of the rotted tree he has planted. Cut him down and I will tear up the roots of this infamy⁷²".

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "What else? What else did he say?"

Kultza: "This is the will of the Emperor, our prophet of the eight-turned god. By his hand and word are you guided to this righteous act. Remember not his servant, the messenger, but know only the light of his truth and the message. I am not the light, I am but the shadow cast by its presence. You are the faithful and shall know paradise by his side".

Hermida: "See me not! Hear me not!"

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "Tell me about San Leor! What is the eight-turned god? Who else serves the eight-turned god?"

(Hermida weeping, Katarinya losing contact)

Greyfax: "I saw a face, one of the cardinals... Kultza".

Hermida: "No! The God Emperor willed it".

Greyfax: "If you fools profess⁷³ to know the Emperor's will, the likes on Antilios would become redundant⁷⁴. Why must we lay on mistakes upon the Master of Mankind and not admit to them being a creation of our weakness?"

(Hermida mumbling a prayer)

Greyfax: "What was that?"

Hermida: "I shall be born again forever in his light. I shall know no pain".

Greyfax: "Pathetic, Antilios will show you the lie of that".

Celestine: "No, she has confessed. She has earned absolution⁷⁵".

Greyfax (unsheathing her blade): "You defy⁷⁶ me?"

Hermida: "You will burn in the abyss, you and holy..."

(Greyfax slicing Hermida's throat)

Celestine (menacing): "I am the blade of God-Emperor, Katarinya. Never forget that".

(Celestine walking away from the interrogation room)

(door closing with a bang)

* * *

Kyrillos (breathing hard): "I came as soon as I could, Inquisitor".

Greyfax: "Hermida's confessions confirm the heresies of cardinal Kultza, Kyrillos. Where is he now?"

Kyrillos: "He was due to ascend to orbit last night, but unfortunately for him his entourage's shuttle was wrongly marked for immediate maintenance inspection. It will be several more hours until the tech-priests have finished reconsecrating its engines and systems".

Greyfax: "Unfortunate for him, but fortunate for us".

Kyrillos: "If you call a sleepless night of freezing cold rendezvous in the upper towers and a month's wine allocation in bribes fortunate... I thought it wise to delay his departure given your suspicions. You'll find him in the cloister of Saint Margetia completing the service of the second act of journeying with some of his colleagues".

Greyfax: "Lead the way".

* * *

Kultza (praying): "Imperius Dominatus Victorius! With this blessed oil I anoint upon the second act of sacrament and seal thy soul to the God Emperor as your service seals your body to him".

Kyrillos (whispering): "That's Kultza".

(Greyfax using psyker's abilities to enter Kultza's thoughts)

Kultza (thinking): "Find out who sabotaged my shuttle. Damn, that Inquisitor is here. What does she want? I knew those idiots would attack too soon".

Kultza (praying): "We offer up our prayers to the God Emperor at this time in return for the safe passage through the sea of souls. May his light burn forever in the sight of the blessed navigators and may the tides of the Empyrean swiftly bring us to our homes again".

Greyfax: "Cardinal Kultza! I have questions for you".

Kultza (thinking): "Stay calm, she knows nothing. Say nothing".

(Greyfax approaching the cardinal)

Kultza: "You are interrupting a holy liturgy, Inquisitor Greyfax. Can this not wait until I have returned to my chambers?"

Greyfax: "I will speak with you now, cardinal!"

Benedict: "Kultza is right, this intersession is blasphemous".

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "Perhaps I would have a word with you as well".

Benedict: "Well, that's not".

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "All of you, remain where you are".

Kultza (thinking): "She does know, by the eight-turned god, she has found out".

Kultza: "Let us not be hasty, Inquisitor. I am sure..."

Greyfax (interrupting): "Enough with your lies and posturing77".

Kultza (thinking): "The crooked path has ended, but I will not be taken. They cannot find out about San Leor. Just one flick of my thumb..."

Greyfax (crying): "Everyone, get down!"

(Kultza exploding, committing a suicide)

(Kyrillos moaning, Greyfax coughing)

Kyrillos: "Inquisitor, are you all right?"

Greyfax: "I am unhurt, you?"

Kyrillos: "Unharmmed... Thanks to your warning".

Greyfax: "We'll earn nothing more from him".

Benedict (moaning): "Emperor's mercy... What did you do to him, Greyfax?"

Greyfax: "It is what I will do to you that should be your highest concern, cardinal. All of you are now co-conspirators of this traitor and will be interrogated and processed accordingly. If you have anything to confess, you would be wise to do so now to avoid needless excruciation".

Cardinals: "...in the Emperor's name..."

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "Cease the prattling78!"

Benedict: "We are innocent of any crimes".

Greyfax: "That is highly unlikely, but we shall see if your transgressions are of any importance. Kyrillos, send for a squad of Battle Sisters to escort their Holinesses to suitable containment".

Kyrillos: "Yes, Inquisitor. What next? It looks like the trail ends in Kultza's scattered remains".

Greyfax: "You are so dull-witted, Kyrillos. The path to the truth is never straightforward. Even had he lived Kultza was not the end of this drama".

Kyrillos: "Perhaps, it's time to return to Terra".

Greyfax: "To return to your master, perhaps?"

Kyrillos: "I don't know what you mean, Inquisitor. Anyway I'll fetch those battle sisters".

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "Stay where you are, spy!"

(Kyrillos breathing hard in fear)

Kyrillos: "Inquisitor? Yes, I am your spy".

Greyfax: "How did you know that Trevayne dispatched the Black Templars? That knowledge was only divulged⁷⁹ by the Marshal while you remained outside the chamber".

Kyrillos: "If I deny it you'll just rip it from my thoughts anyway, won't you?"

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "When did he turn you?"

Kyrillos: "Eh... Eh... He never did, if you mean that I betrayed your interests".

Greyfax (using psyker abilities): "Speak swiftly or you will die".

Kyrillos: "Ah... He... He discovered my engagement in the Ecclesiarchy for you and insisted that I shared with him exactly what I passed to you. I never told him anything else. That's how I knew about the Inquisitor Lord's intent to hire an assassin".

Greyfax: "He would have assumed you would inform me of the plot, what would be the point?"

Kyrillos: "I don't know. Perhaps, getting your support or opposition for his move? To get you involved with the Ecclesiarch without having to request it himself?"

Greyfax: "That's a lie... As Inquisitorial representative he wanted to keep his hands clean while he reported to the Senatorum Imperialis. He could say that no Inquisitor was assigned to the investigation. I involved myself and he might have tried to pin⁸⁰ the assassination on me too".

Kyrillos (mumbling): "Wh... What? What do you intend for me?"

Greyfax: "I intend for you to remain with the Ecclesiarch and carry on informing me of what he does whilst under house arrest".

Kyrillos: "You still trust me?"

Greyfax: "Do not be ridiculous. I have never trusted you, hive scum. If I could buy you so easily, anyone could. It is a relief to know it is Lord Trevayne and not some worse radical that you serve".

Kyrillos: "And what am I to tell Lord Trevayne?"

Greyfax: "The truth. Now that I know of your association he may wish to break the relationship. If not continue as you are, I have nothing to hide from the Inquisitor Lord".

Kyrillos: "What is your command, Inquisitor?"

Greyfax: "Do whatever it is you need to do to make sure you stay among Deacis's staff during his internment. Keep anything from me again, Kyrillos, and we will not be having a conversation. Your life hangs by a slender thread only due to your past service".

Kyrillos (sobbing): "Thank you, Inquisitor".

Greyfax (menacing): "Do not thank me. There are many that would wish Deacis dead and I want you at his side always. Do not make any long term plans".

* * *

Greyfax: "Shut the door, Centurion, please. I would have no ears other than those present to hear what we are about to discuss".

(Longinus slowly walking and closing the door)

Longinus: "We are alone and unmonitored".

Celestine: "That is why you have brought us to this abandoned chapelry? For privacy?"

Gardhelm: "Speak plainly, Greyfax. I do not have the temperament for your clandestine machinations. Why have you brought us all here?"

Greyfax: "Cardinal Kultza was the architect of much of the troubles we have witnessed, but not its creator. Sister Celestine, tell me more about the vision".

Celestine: "I have prayed to seek the truth of it and I believe my purpose has been revealed to me. I think you were right, Katarinya. War is upon us and I am destined for battle".

Greyfax: "The Imperium's constant existence is one of unending war. You need to be more specific".

Celestine: "I saw a great flame of destruction engulf the Imperial church".

Greyfax: "That flame is not a schism, but the influence of the dark powers. We are all privy⁸¹ to certain specific protected knowledge. The Black Templars helped purge to Ophelia VII of warp influence. Longinus, you were right when you said that this may not be about the Decree Passive".

Longinus: "Your investigation began on Gallant V, a world with very slender connections to the Ecclesiarchy. A conspiracy purely from within seemed unlikely".

Greyfax: "The only link we have between Kultza's proxy attack and the first assassination attempt on the Ecclesiarch is a title. From both parties I detected mention of the eight-turned god".

Celestine: "I witnessed the confessions of those I fought. They made no mention of such a false deity".

Greyfax: "Because they remember nothing of it. Cardinal Kultza psychically manipulated them".

Longinus: "Kultza was a psyker? That explains a great deal".

Gardhelm: "Including his corruption of purpose".

Greyfax: "Of course, psykers, especially ones with such mind-controlling abilities, rise to positions of power across the Imperium. It is why we must always be vigilant".

Celestine: "And what do you know of the eight-turned god?"

Greyfax: "Nothing, but I know where to look for more. Kultza was connected to San Leor".

Celestine: "There is a pattern in the anarchy. San Leor was home to the daughters of the Emperor whom Goge Vandire turned into his brides of the Emperor. The Decree Passive granted power to them as the Adepta Sorroritas and with its revocation⁸² we are drawn again to the world where our sisterhood was founded".

Longinus: "A world beset by a raging warp storm? That is where you are going?"

Gardhelm: "Lord Trevayne desired that I bring the Ecclesiarch to him, but this dark cult is a greater threat. My crusade will break the storm with you. The Black Templars do not lack the courage to face the unknown, Custodian".

Longinus: "Your taunts have no effect on me, Marshal. That said I will join you to see the matter to its conclusion".

Celestine: "You will not travel all alone. The Order of Our Martyred Lady is mobilizing. (unsheathing her sword) This is no longer a battle to protect the Ecclesiarch. It is a holy war. It is the right and the duty of the battle sisters to prosecute this war, a war to reclaim the mother world of the sisterhood".