



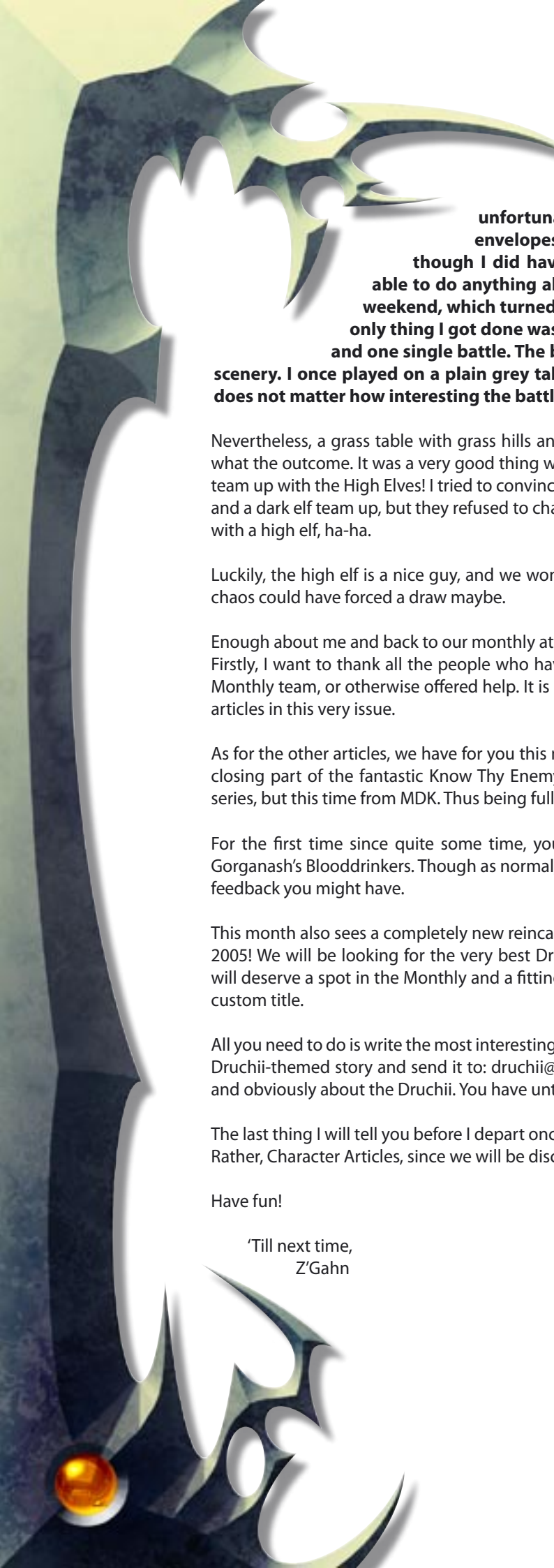
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M O N T H L Y



DECEMBER 2004





Prologue December 2004

Written by Z'Gahn

Well, I wanted to open up with a sigh, but unfortunately, letters don't make any sound (Editor; nor do the envelopes...). Anyway, the reason for wanting to sigh is that, even though I did have a full week of holidays this month, I have hardly been able to do anything about Warhammer. Only thing was a six-player Warhammer weekend, which turned out to be a four-player weekend. It was lots of fun, but the only thing I got done was my tenth Cold One Knight and a plain grass gaming table, and one single battle. The battle itself was the best game I ever played because of the scenery. I once played on a plain grey table with no terrain, using only proxies for models. It really does not matter how interesting the battle itself was, the game still was not fun.

Nevertheless, a grass table with grass hills and some rocks and painted armies is always awesome no matter what the outcome. It was a very good thing we finally had a cool gaming table since it turned out that I had to team up with the High Elves! I tried to convince the two chaos players that it really is impossible to let a high elf and a dark elf team up, but they refused to change the teams. Not that I can blame them for not wanting to ally with a high elf, ha-ha.

Luckily, the high elf is a nice guy, and we won a solid victory. Though if we had played one or two more turn, chaos could have forced a draw maybe.

Enough about me and back to our monthly at hand.

Firstly, I want to thank all the people who have send in their freelance articles, have applied for a spot in the Monthly team, or otherwise offered help. It is immensely appreciated. We are already publishing two freelance articles in this very issue.

As for the other articles, we have for you this month; you will see a continuation of MTUCache's series, and the closing part of the fantastic Know Thy Enemy: Chaos, as well as the beginning of another starting-an-army-series, but this time from MDK. Thus being full of pictures instead of letters...

For the first time since quite some time, you'll also finally be seeing a new project from the 7th Convent: Gorganash's Blooddrinkers. Though as normal, they still need more people play testing it, so please send in any feedback you might have.

This month also sees a completely new reincarnation of the Scribe. The Druchii.net Monthly Story Competition 2005! We will be looking for the very best Druchii stories from the Druchii.net community, and the winner(s) will deserve a spot in the Monthly and a fitting representation of his winning in the form of a second avatar or custom title.

All you need to do is write the most interesting, the most bloody, the most character full or the most pleasurable Druchii-themed story and send it to: druchii@gmail.com The story may not be longer than 5 pages in type 12 and obviously about the Druchii. You have until 1st February, so get going and good luck!

The last thing I will tell you before I depart once more is that in this issue, we have no less than two unit articles. Rather, Character Articles, since we will be discussing both Morathi and the infamous Malus Darkblade.

Have fun!

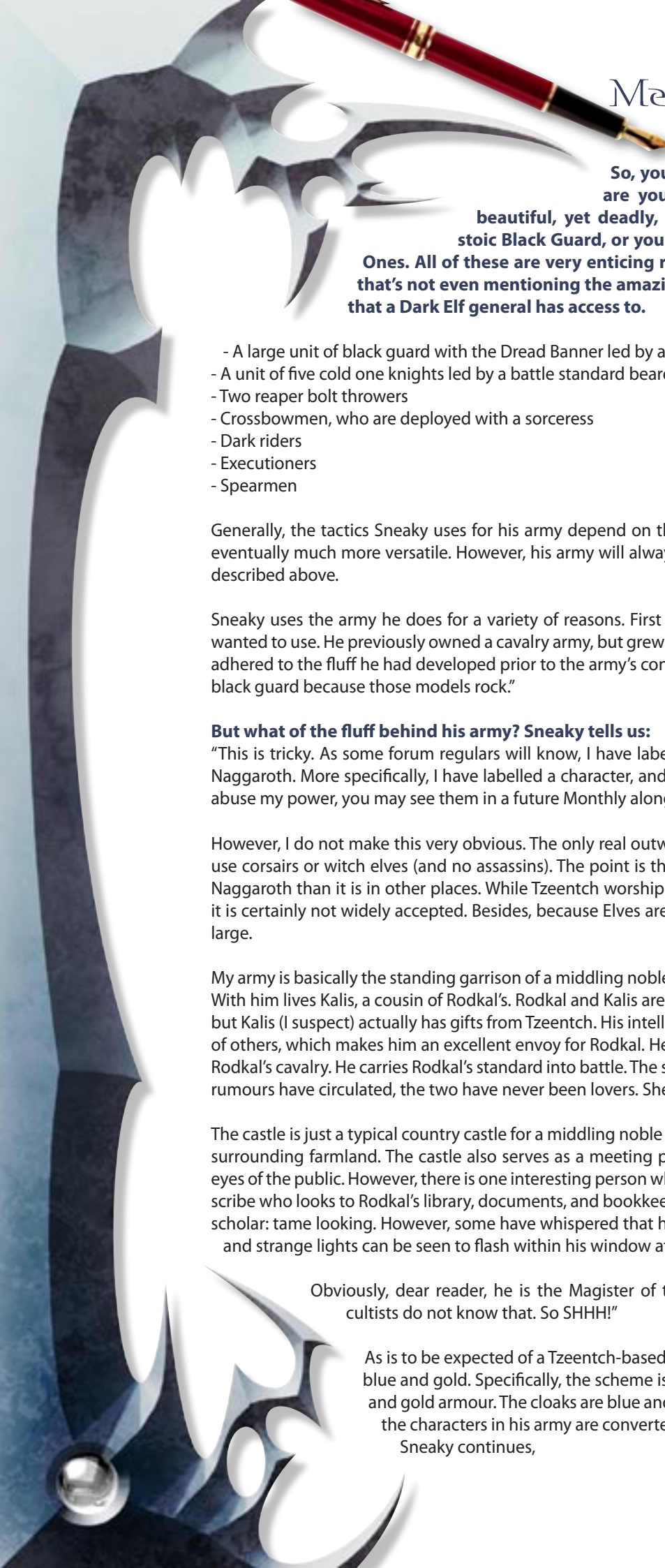
'Till next time,
Z'Gahn

Author: Z'Gahn
Initiative: The Blood Hawks
Editor: Silas
 Loremaster: Nagathi



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Me & My Army - Sneaky

Written by Auric Storm Cloud

So, you are thinking about starting a Dark Elf army, are you? No doubt you have heard stories of the beautiful, yet deadly, Witch Elves, the heartless Executioners, the stoic Black Guard, or you have submitted to the sirens' call of the Cold Ones. All of these are very enticing reasons for anyone to collect the Druchii, and that's not even mentioning the amazing firepower and even more amazing models that a Dark Elf general has access to.

- A large unit of black guard with the Dread Banner led by a noble armed with the Draich of Dark Power
- A unit of five cold one knights led by a battle standard bearer with a Hydra Banner
- Two reaper bolt throwers
- Crossbowmen, who are deployed with a sorceress
- Dark riders
- Executioners
- Spearmen

Generally, the tactics Sneaky uses for his army depend on the army he is facing. He wishes to make his army eventually much more versatile. However, his army will always the black guard and cold one knights which he described above.

Sneaky uses the army he does for a variety of reasons. First of all, he wanted to have an army with tactics he wanted to use. He previously owned a cavalry army, but grew bored with the tactics. He wanted to make sure he adhered to the fluff he had developed prior to the army's construction. Finally, Sneaky says, "I made sure to get black guard because those models rock."

But what of the fluff behind his army? Sneaky tells us:

"This is tricky. As some forum regulars will know, I have labelled myself as Magister of the Cult of Tzeentch in Naggaroth. More specifically, I have labelled a character, and I am toying with some special rules. If I decide to abuse my power, you may see them in a future Monthly along with a conversion article and some fluff.

However, I do not make this very obvious. The only real outward concession I make to that fluff is that I do not use corsairs or witch elves (and no assassins). The point is that the Cult of Tzeentch is a lot more subversive in Naggaroth than it is in other places. While Tzeentch worship might be more tolerated than in, say, the Empire, it is certainly not widely accepted. Besides, because Elves are generally resistant to change, the cult is not very large.

My army is basically the standing garrison of a middling noble, named Rodkal, who has a castle near Karond Kar. With him lives Kalis, a cousin of Rodkal's. Rodkal and Kalis are both, obviously, members of the Cult of Tzeentch, but Kalis (I suspect) actually has gifts from Tzeentch. His intelligence is matched only by his subtle manipulation of others, which makes him an excellent envoy for Rodkal. He is a master tactician as well and is commander of Rodkal's cavalry. He carries Rodkal's standard into battle. The sorceress, Sulris, lives with Rodkal as well, but while rumours have circulated, the two have never been lovers. She is also a Tzeentch cultist.

The castle is just a typical country castle for a middling noble such as Rodkal, replete with slaves, a garrison, and surrounding farmland. The castle also serves as a meeting place for dignitaries who wish to avoid the prying eyes of the public. However, there is one interesting person who lives with Rodkal. His name is Arador, and he is a scribe who looks to Rodkal's library, documents, and bookkeeping. His appearance is that of a typical scribe and scholar: tame looking. However, some have whispered that he conducts strange experiments at times and strange lights can be seen to flash within his window at odd hours during the day and night.

Obviously, dear reader, he is the Magister of the Cult of Tzeentch. However, non-cultists do not know that. So SHHH!"

As is to be expected of a Tzeentch-based army, the colour scheme uses both blue and gold. Specifically, the scheme is blue and black clothing; and silver and gold armour. The cloaks are blue and the shoulder plates are gold. All of the characters in his army are converted, though no troops are converted. Sneaky continues,



"My battle standard is a dark rider standard bearer placed on a dark steed. I used a warrior standard, added some random spiky bits (spears etc), and part of a dragon's tail. Rodkal is a black guard master with the executioner champion's sword (simple but effective), and my sorceress has not been assembled yet. I mail ordered the female beast master on foot (the one you can see in the hydra box) and a bat from the VC bat swarms model range. She will have it sitting on one hand as a familiar.

I also have a highborn on dark pegasus with a Gauntlet of Power that I do not use any more, but still love. He is Malekith's torso, cold one knight legs, dark pegasus, and a beast master head. I also used a chaos lord shield. He looks good."

As for his plans for the future, he plans to get more executioners and more spearmen. He eventually plans to repaint his dark riders, which, Sneaky says "were painted when I sucked more at painting". He does want his army to reach tournament status, but says he has a long way to go in tactical prowess. Ultimately though, he is very with his army, and if asked to replace this army, he would say, "Hell no."

Author: Auric Stormcloud (and Sneaky?)

Initiative: The Blood Hawks

Editor: Lethalis

Loremaster: Nagathi



The Warlord

Have you always wanted to play a huge campaign? A campaign where you could build empires, control armies and traverse exotic terrain? Have you always thought of that as something that would be a lot of work?

The Black Forge is proud to release their first piece of software, "The Warlord" (Loremaster's Note: Second piece of software. Check the TBF homepage for more info – Nag). The Warlord is a campaign manager, which makes running those fantastic detailed maps something every Warhammer player can do; it makes running a campaign easier than ever before. With a colourful interface and intuitive commands, you can start playing right away. No more learning complicated rules and managing tons of data to play a campaign that is not even as detailed as you would like it to be.

What about the time it all takes?

Without complicated tracking and the ability to play everything other than battles yourself, campaigns can be done over a much shorter period of time. I myself have played a campaign over 2 days. Now, that may be very short, but it does dispel the myth that map-based campaigns have to take forever and only veterans of Warhammer should attempt to play them.

Achieve levels of realism never achieved on pen and paper.

With an innovative stealth and detection system, you plan strategies on a completely new level, scouting for greater intelligence, concealing armies within shadowy terrain to prepare ambushes and covert operations. You can use up to nineteen different races each with individual statistics and army icons, including the Temple of Khaine and Cult of Pleasure.

Expand your empire!

Construct cities in your honour. Settle new lands, raise new cities, and train armies. With a tax-based system, you must carefully balance expanding your economy or military. You can be aggressive and raid your opponent, robbing them of vital gold and suffocating them or be defensive and fortify your realm and push back the hordes of barbarians.

What about the battles?

Well, just like a real campaign you play the battles yourself. With terrain suggestions, you can even get help in making the battle more realistic. Some areas of the map also have special rules you can use making the game even more detailed. With a handy battle organizer, you have a nicely displayed list of all the battles that need to be played.

I would like to take this moment to personally thank all of the people that made this project possible. Without the help of the people on this site, this project never would have been accomplished. I hope you enjoy using it as much as I have enjoyed making it!

Author: Black Hydra
Initiative: The Black Forge
Editor: Alkair
Loremaster: Nagathi



Know Thy Enemy: Chaos Undivided, Part II

Written by Drakken and Vorchild

We concluded our first segment with a look at the Marauder Horde Army of Chaos. It was, to say the least, one of the less plausible armies to see a Chaos opponent field. However, it was shown to be fairly potent nevertheless. It is that potential that drives the undivided army to greatness. The potential variability forces the Druchii player to use more balanced armies to face an unknown undivided army, rather than less balanced ones that would normally tear a regular Chaos army to shreds. However, not all hope is lost for the Druchii player.

The marauder army of the last segment is actually quite frail in many regards, and a balanced Druchii force should be able to deal well with it. Repeater crossbow warriors can quickly whittle down war hounds, and corsairs can fairly easily face marauder warriors in combat, as can a unit of witches. Cold one knights can add some of the punch needed and can even get rid of spawn if the occasion calls for it. It is truly only the balanced Druchii army that can deal well with a horde, for only the balance Druchii army can adequately deal with all the multitudes of different threats and lay them to rest one by one.

The same can be said of the next army: The All Daemon Army. It is an army that is no longer seen in today's games due to the coming of the Storm of Chaos Daemonic Legion, but previous to that time, the undivided daemon army was the only truly viable daemon army available to Chaos players.

The All Daemon Army

Daemon Prince of Undivided

Soul Hunger, Diabolic Splendour, Blade of the Ether, Level 1 Wizard

6 Furies

5 Screammers of Tzeentch

4 Nurgling bases

5 Mounted Daemonettes

5 Mounted Daemonettes

10 Horrors

10 Horrors

5 Flesh Hounds

15 Daemonettes

15 Daemonettes

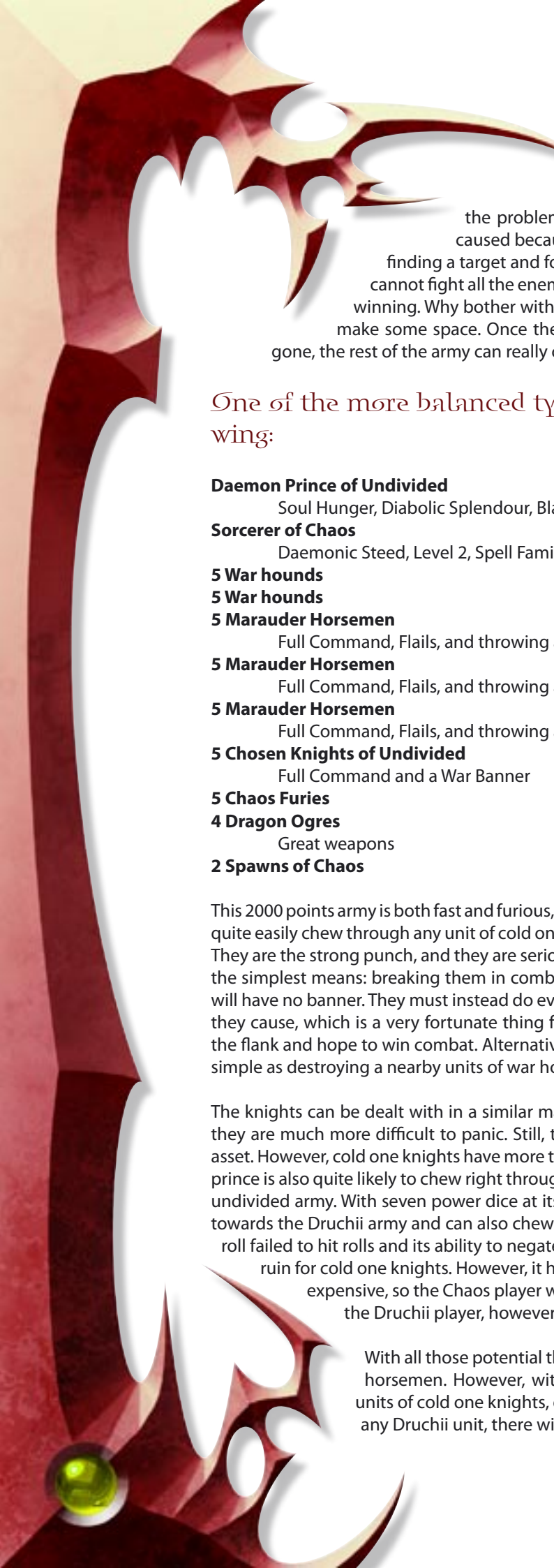
It is freely admitted here, however, that daemon armies are much more powerful using the daemonic legion army list from the Storm of Chaos, so this list is here mainly to prove a point on versatility. This list is also not as powerful as one can make a daemonic list either, but it does have a little bit of everything.

If anything, this army can be considered as rather vexing. It is also quite a bit faster than one might expect what with the pair of flying units, the mounted daemonettes, the flesh hounds, and the daemonettes aren't too shabby in terms of speed either. The horrors don't need speed and will rather be attempting to pelt the enemy with magic.

There are numerous ways to defeat such an army, and getting into combat with it is certainly one of them. Due to the high cost of daemonic units, a balanced Druchii force should outnumber the daemons.

Not only that but, Druchii magic and shooting should whittle enough of the daemons down so as to be much more manageable. On top of that, bolt throwers will do wonders against such an army. Not only in their potential to kill the daemon prince in the first turn, but also to hit the units of horrors and help decrease their magical potential.

Like a Druchii army, much of this one has a toughness value of 3, which is to say very susceptible to the Druchii tricks. Sadly, about the only use any dark rider units have combat wise in this army is to rid the world of those units of horrors. They are small, and horrors are pathetic in combat, so take them out early and use the dark rider units to march block for the rest of the game.



The only problem a Druchii army may have is getting bogged down in so many daemononic units. With so many of them around, you can also be sure that more fiends are on the way. By destroying the general early, some of the problem can be solved, but there is still a lot of dismay that may be caused because those units refuse to budge. That is where the Druchii art of finding a target and focusing on it comes into play. One simply has to admit that one cannot fight all the enemies at once. So instead, one has to pick the fights that are worth winning. Why bother with the daemonettes? Pick off the small and easier things first and make some space. Once the horrors, mounted daemonettes, furies, and flesh hounds are gone, the rest of the army can really concentrate on what remains.

One of the more balanced types of Undivided armies is the following:

Daemon Prince of Undivided

Soul Hunger, Diabolic Splendour, Blade of the Ether, Level 3 Wizard,

Sorcerer of Chaos

Daemonic Steed, Level 2, Spell Familiar, Dispel Scroll

5 War hounds

5 War hounds

5 Marauder Horsemen

Full Command, Flails, and throwing axes

5 Marauder Horsemen

Full Command, Flails, and throwing axes

5 Marauder Horsemen

Full Command, Flails, and throwing axes

5 Chosen Knights of Undivided

Full Command and a War Banner

5 Chaos Furies

4 Dragon Ogres

Great weapons

2 Spawns of Chaos

This 2000 points army is both fast and furious, and at the same time, it is rather balanced. The dragon ogres can quite easily chew through any unit of cold one knights, and will make even shorter work of cold one chariots. They are the strong punch, and they are seriously difficult to kill. Though daunting, they can be overcome by the simplest means: breaking them in combat. They have no ranks, and they will not outnumber, and they will have no banner. They must instead do everything in their power to win based on the number of wounds they cause, which is a very fortunate thing for the Druchii player. As such, any ranked unit can hit them in the flank and hope to win combat. Alternatively, finding ways to panic the unit is always wise and can be as simple as destroying a nearby unit of war hounds.

The knights can be dealt with in a similar manner, though they are generally more difficult to deal with as they are much more difficult to panic. Still, they are still susceptible to fear, so cold one knights can be an asset. However, cold one knights have more to fear in the undivided army than dragon ogres, for the daemon prince is also quite likely to chew right through them. In fact, the daemon prince is the toughest thing in that undivided army. With seven power dice at its disposal, it can toss a potentially significant amount of magic towards the Druchii army and can also chew through most of the smaller units with its ability to re-roll failed to hit rolls and its ability to negate any possible armour saves. That combination spells ruin for cold one knights. However, it has nowhere to run, and nowhere to hide, and is very expensive, so the Chaos player would be wise to keep it out of harm's way. It is up to the Druchii player, however, to show where that harm lies.

With all those potential threats, one can almost forget about the marauder horsemen. However, with their flails, they are easily the match of small units of cold one knights, dark riders, or chariots, and if they hit the flank of any Druchii unit, there will be some serious trouble.

It is those multitudes of potential threats that is the power behind the undivided army, and it really drives home the point that the Druchii player must choose the fights to fight wisely, or else risk losing so much more. Eventually, that undivided army will back even the most competitive

Druchii army into a corner if one tries to destroy every threat. In the case of the above army, it is key for that army to string out the Druchii lines. In few places can that army make a real punch through a dense line, so don't make it easy on the Chaos player. Refuse the flank, and go right for the heart and pound THEM into submission for a change.

That is a solution for one simple undivided army. The general solution is one that works for most Druchii armies, and that is to cut away at the support units one by one. Druchii, as an elite army, excel at finding the cracks and exploiting them. Small manageable units should be the primary targets of any Dark Elf general.



For the general undivided army, maybe magic can be an answer... Nah. Anyone who has ever used or played against the Slaanesh lore knows how brutal it can be, and is normally thankful for its limited dice. However, what happens when the dice happy Tzeentch units suddenly show up in support of said slaaneshi magic users? While a lord is not available below the 2000 points limit, using tzeentchian units can still see more than enough dice for two level two's to put on a good show. Heck, even using just fire with support from a tzeentchian wizard or things like the Banner of Wrath can put on a fireworks display to remove many an Elf.

So many magic missiles and so little time. A large number of dice, numerous bound items (from across the board) and a multitude of effective lore's available make this not a good army to have a lack magic defence against. It gets no kinder trying to attack them, as in addition to the possibility of numerous wizards, Khornate troops with their additional dispel die are available to support the eventuality of magical attack.

Speaking of Khorne, remember how easy it was to draw off their troops with only undivided screens like war hounds or marauders available? What happens if suddenly things like nurglings are screening them? Not quite as simple to destroy now is it? Screening can become much harshly, and the second layers of troops are not likely to be really good to you, especially if you have to deal with faster elements buying them time to reach you.

We're talking about an army with incredible versatility here. Things like elite screening troops in the form of nurglings, or hordes of faster elements to buy time for slower infantry to reach with minimal damage. You are talking about a force far less vulnerable to psychology than good for you, between immunity (khornate troops, slaaneshi troops), re-rolls for undivided, and even the option for spells to grant immunity. Even flanking becomes more difficult, as you bring beast herds into play to hold flanks (a roll they excel at). In fact, beast herds can be used to add a few key ranks to smaller elite units of marked troops, in a sort of quasi-multiple small unit elitist army.

This variability also does not even cover things like pure undivided armies. Things like the Marauder Hordes or All Calvary armies, using large numbers of war hounds and marauder horsemen supported by either knights or fully ranked marauder units. They can then be supported by beast herds to provide ranks for knights, or hold flanks for marauders.

Or perhaps even more unnerving, the Undivided Hordes of Chaos Daemon Force, drawing upon the strengths of every god as I the list shown above. You can gain the speed of an army of furies, screamers, flesh hounds and mounted daemonettes, all supported by flying daemononic characters

(prince and exalted). Alternatively, perhaps you are a fan of the infantry variation; with plague-bearers and blood-letters supported by nurglings and maybe horrors/flamers are flank holders. The possibilities are not pretty when you are across the table from them.

The possibilities are virtually endless – such is the beauty of undivided. However, we will leave you with one last list to take a look at.

Another Balanced Army of Undivided

Exalted Chaos Champion

Great Weapon Helm of Many Eyes, Barded Chaos Steed

Bray Shaman

Braystaff and two Dispel Scrolls

5 Chaos Warhounds

5 Chaos Warhounds

5 Marauder Horsemen

Flails, Shields, Musician, Chieftain

5 Marauder Horsemen

Flails, Shields, Musician, Chieftain

2 Chaos Chariots

20 Marauders

Light Armour, Shields, and Full Command

5 Chosen Chaos Knights of Khorne

Full Command

Beast Herd

12 Gors with two hand weapons and 8 Ungors, Full Command

Beast Herd

12 Gors with two hand weapons and 8 Ungors, Full Command

4 Screammers of Tzeentch

1 Fiend of Slaanesh

1 Fiend of Slaanesh

1 Fiend of Slaanesh

1 Fiend of Slaanesh

This 2000 point army combines many elements, the most vexing of which are quite possibly the four spawns of Slaanesh, which are ideal at holding up Druchii units. The beastmen provide cheap screens, as do the war hounds and the screamers prevent marches and destroy bolt throwers. All the while, the chosen knights get closer, and with so many other distractions, they may be difficult to divert.

Nevertheless, I leave it to you to think about. With so many possibilities, how can one NOT think of bringing a balanced army to the table? A manticore would surely be carved up by the knights or the chariots, and even a dragon might have some serious troubles. Could one knights and regular units have to avoid the spawn or be trapped long enough for re-enforcements to come to their aid and finish the job, and the beast herds can safely deal with many Druchii units.

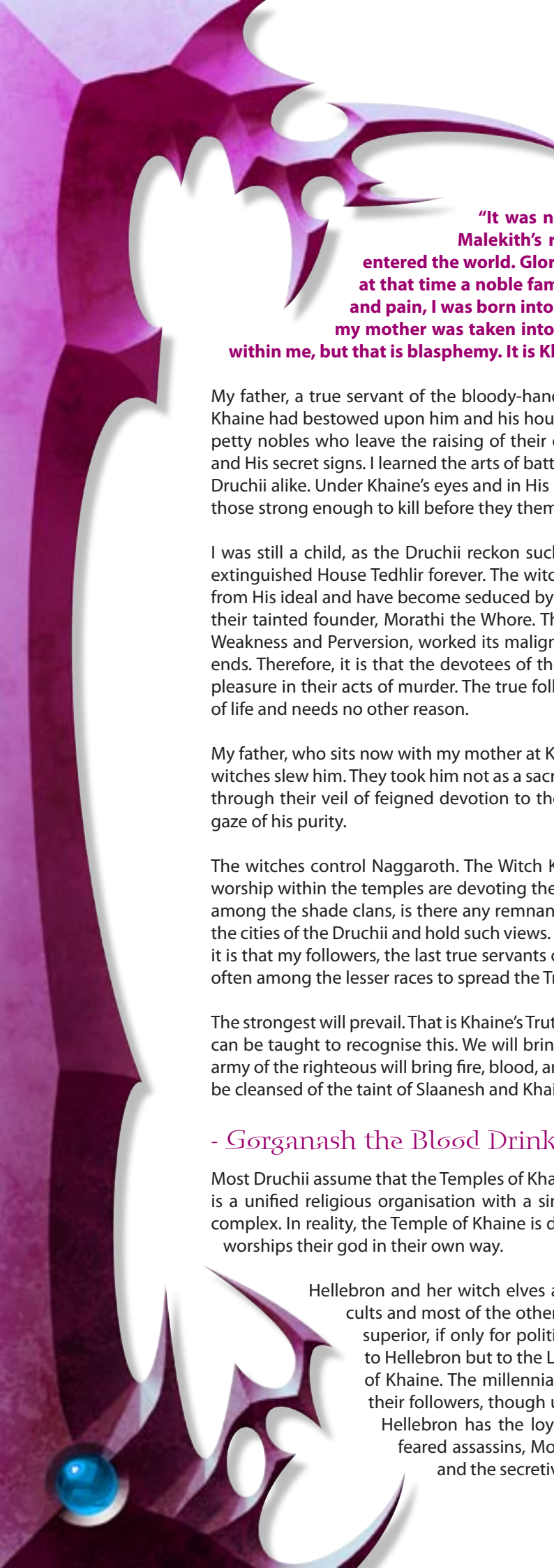
Still, every army has a weakness, but those of undivided are constantly changing. It is only inevitable, however, that they fall to Druchii blades. It is only inevitable that their leaders bow to the might of the Witch King. And it is only inevitable that our series on Chaos should come to an end. We hope that our epic has inspired the greatest of tactics from you, so that you may more easily slide your blades into the chaotic distortions that forever darken the lands of Naggaroth.

Authors: Drakken and Vorchild

Initiative: Temple of Khaine

Editor: Silas

Loremaster: Nagathi



Gorganash's Blood-Drinkers

By Shadowspite

"It was near the end of the third millennium of Malekith's reign as Witch King of the Druchii that I entered the world. Glorious Khaine saw fit to gift me to House Tedhlir, at that time a noble family of modest heritage and low standing at court. In blood and pain, I was born into the waking world and in that same moment of holy agony, my mother was taken into the realm of Khaine. Some have said that her spirit burns within me, but that is blasphemy. It is Khaine's undying fury alone that gives me strength."

My father, a true servant of the bloody-handed god, rejoiced in his beloved wife's sacrifice and in the gift Khaine had bestowed upon him and his house. He instructed me in the ways of our god, unlike those other petty nobles who leave the raising of their offspring to their servants. I learned the true names of Khaine and His secret signs. I learned the arts of battle and practised them upon slave-creatures and common-born Druchii alike. Under Khaine's eyes and in His name, I killed without mercy. That is the way of Khaine, for only those strong enough to kill before they themselves can be slain are worthy to live.

I was still a child, as the Druchii reckon such things, when the accursed witches took my father's life and extinguished House Tedhlir forever. The witch cult claims to serve Khaine, but that is a lie. They have fallen from His ideal and have become seduced by Chaos, the bane of all true elves. Their corruption goes back to their tainted founder, Morathi the Whore. The vilest of the daemon-gods of Chaos, Slaanesh the Prince of Weakness and Perversion, worked its malign will through her, turning the holy rituals of Khaine to its own ends. Therefore, it is that the devotees of the witch cult and their assassins take an unrighteous pride and pleasure in their acts of murder. The true follower of Khaine kills because blood and death are the purpose of life and needs no other reason.

My father, who sits now with my mother at Khaine's feet, told me all this before he died. That is also why the witches slew him. They took him not as a sacrifice to Khaine, but to silence his voice of righteousness. He saw through their veil of feigned devotion to the perversion beneath and they could not withstand the harsh gaze of his purity.

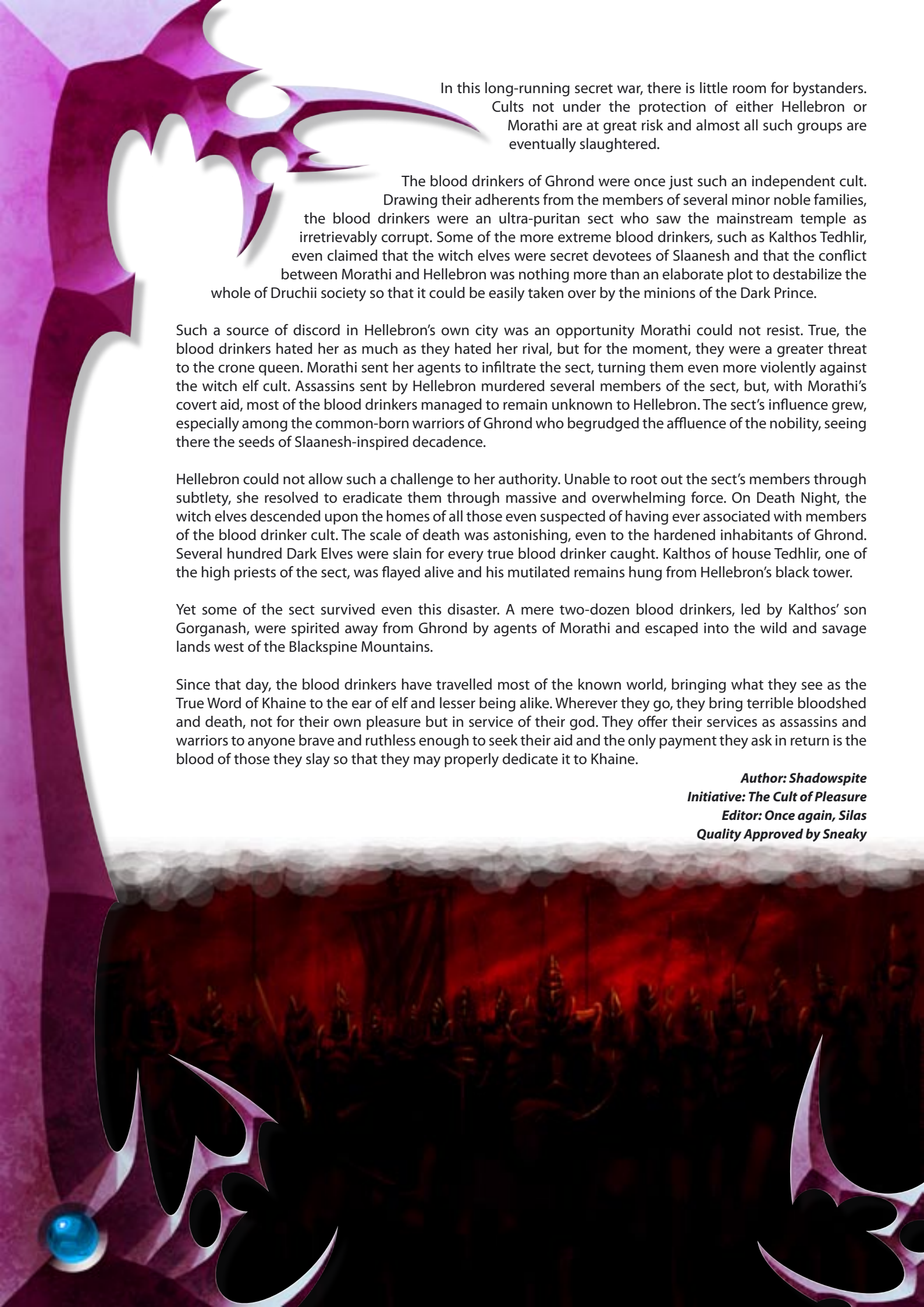
The witches control Naggaroth. The Witch King is a puppet of his tainted mother and all those who give worship within the temples are devoting themselves to a vile perversion of the true faith. Only in the wilds, among the shade clans, is there any remnant left of Khaine's purity and truth. It is impossible to live within the cities of the Druchii and hold such views. It is forbidden to speak the truth in the Witch King's realm. Thus, it is that my followers, the last true servants of Khaine, and I dwell in the wilds among the shades, travelling often among the lesser races to spread the True Word.

The strongest will prevail. That is Khaine's Truth. Even the hairy humans and the stunted folk of the mountains can be taught to recognise this. We will bring the word to every corner of the world and then our glorious army of the righteous will bring fire, blood, and death to the false witches and their puppets. The Druchii will be cleansed of the taint of Slaanesh and Khaine will rule over both the living and the dead."

- Gorganash the Blood Drinker

Most Druchii assume that the Temples of Khaine, under the leadership of Hellebron, crone queen of Ghrond, is a unified religious organisation with a single guiding purpose. The truth, however, is somewhat more complex. In reality, the Temple of Khaine is divided into hundreds of disparate cults, each of which worships their god in their own way.

Hellebron and her witch elves are by far the largest and most powerful of these cults and most of the others acknowledge the crone queen as their spiritual superior, if only for political reasons. Many cults owe their allegiance not to Hellebron but to the Lady Morathi, who some claim is the true Beloved of Khaine. The millennia-long war between these powerful females and their followers, though usually covert, is often bloody and savage. While Hellebron has the loyalty of the majority of the witch elves and the feared assassins, Morathi can rely upon the initiates of the convents and the secretive Cult of Pleasure as well as her khainite minions.



In this long-running secret war, there is little room for bystanders. Cults not under the protection of either Hellebron or Morathi are at great risk and almost all such groups are eventually slaughtered.

The blood drinkers of Ghronnd were once just such an independent cult. Drawing their adherents from the members of several minor noble families, the blood drinkers were an ultra-puritan sect who saw the mainstream temple as irretrievably corrupt. Some of the more extreme blood drinkers, such as Kalthos Tedhlir, even claimed that the witch elves were secret devotees of Slaanesh and that the conflict between Morathi and Hellebron was nothing more than an elaborate plot to destabilize the whole of Druchii society so that it could be easily taken over by the minions of the Dark Prince.

Such a source of discord in Hellebron's own city was an opportunity Morathi could not resist. True, the blood drinkers hated her as much as they hated her rival, but for the moment, they were a greater threat to the crone queen. Morathi sent her agents to infiltrate the sect, turning them even more violently against the witch elf cult. Assassins sent by Hellebron murdered several members of the sect, but, with Morathi's covert aid, most of the blood drinkers managed to remain unknown to Hellebron. The sect's influence grew, especially among the common-born warriors of Ghronnd who begrudged the affluence of the nobility, seeing there the seeds of Slaanesh-inspired decadence.

Hellebron could not allow such a challenge to her authority. Unable to root out the sect's members through subtlety, she resolved to eradicate them through massive and overwhelming force. On Death Night, the witch elves descended upon the homes of all those even suspected of having ever associated with members of the blood drinker cult. The scale of death was astonishing, even to the hardened inhabitants of Ghronnd. Several hundred Dark Elves were slain for every true blood drinker caught. Kalthos of house Tedhlir, one of the high priests of the sect, was flayed alive and his mutilated remains hung from Hellebron's black tower.

Yet some of the sect survived even this disaster. A mere two-dozen blood drinkers, led by Kalthos' son Gorganash, were spirited away from Ghronnd by agents of Morathi and escaped into the wild and savage lands west of the Blackspine Mountains.

Since that day, the blood drinkers have travelled most of the known world, bringing what they see as the True Word of Khaine to the ear of elf and lesser being alike. Wherever they go, they bring terrible bloodshed and death, not for their own pleasure but in service of their god. They offer their services as assassins and warriors to anyone brave and ruthless enough to seek their aid and the only payment they ask in return is the blood of those they slay so that they may properly dedicate it to Khaine.

Author: *Shadowspite*
Initiative: *The Cult of Pleasure*
Editor: *Once again, Silas*
Quality Approved by *Sneaky*

Gorganash's Blood Drinkers

For Hire: may be hired by all armies except High Elves, Wood Elves, Bretonnia and Dwarfs. Counts as Special in DoW army and as Special in DE army. DE army hiring them may not contain any Witch Elf.

Points: Gorganash, standard bearer, musician and 7 Blood Drinkers, cost 235 points, unit may be enlarged for 10 points per Blood Drinker.

Gorganash	M=5	WS=6	BS=6	S=4	T=3	W=	I=7	A=3	Ld=9
Blood Drinker	M=5	WS=4	BS=4	S=3	T=3	W=1	I=6	A=1	Ld=8

Unit size: 10+

Weapons and Armour:

Gorganash is armed with Reaper Blade and dagger (counts as hand weapon) and wears heavy armour.

All Blood Drinkers are armed with Reaper Blades and daggers (count as hand weapons).

Special Rules:

Reaper Blades – this wicked long, one and half handed swords are designed to wound in extremely bloody and painful fashion. They may be used in two ways: two handed, giving +1S to the bearer or one handed, counting as hand weapon (ed: in which case it counts as an additional hand weapon?). May not switch way of use during combat.

Blood Bath – all units which take panic test because of Blood Drinkers destroyed friendly unit (in close combat or run down) take a panic test with -1 to Ld modifier. However, they may not overrun. Opponents Immune to Psychology are not affected.

Cry Of War – the view of Blood Drinkers, advancing screaming and covered with blood, is menacing to every opponent who face them. As a result they count as having Cry Of War ability. Opponents Immune to Psychology are not affected.

Frenzy – Blood Drinkers drink blood mixed with various herbs and are encouraged by Gorganash's speech before the battle. As a result Blood Drinkers, except Gorganash, are subject to frenzy.

Die? Not Me! – Gorganash is recognized by Blood Drinkers as a holy man of Khaine, they are ready to give up their lives for him. When Gorganash suffers wound, roll D6. On a roll of 5+ one of Blood Drinkers which is in unit with him, is pushed from back ranks and sacrifices his life, taking a wound instead of Gorganash. In addition when Gorganash refuses challenge, he may act as normal and one of Blood Drinkers takes up the challenge instead of him.

Hate High Elves

Starting a New Druchii Army, Part II

Written by MTUCache

Last month we looked at creating a new Dark Elf army, and created a 500 point list based upon what kind of armies we expected to face. This month, we get to have twice as much fun! We will look at increasing your army's size to 1000 points.

(Again, the unit selections I have made are just examples, and can easily be substituted with whichever you prefer, but the process will need to be the same. You will need to carefully evaluate their strengths and weaknesses, equip them accordingly, and make sure you have selections capable of dealing with your expected enemies.)

To review, the 500 point army I created last month looked like this:

- Noble with heavy armour, cloak, and great weapon in a chariot with spears
- 5 dark riders with musician
- 20 corsairs with full command

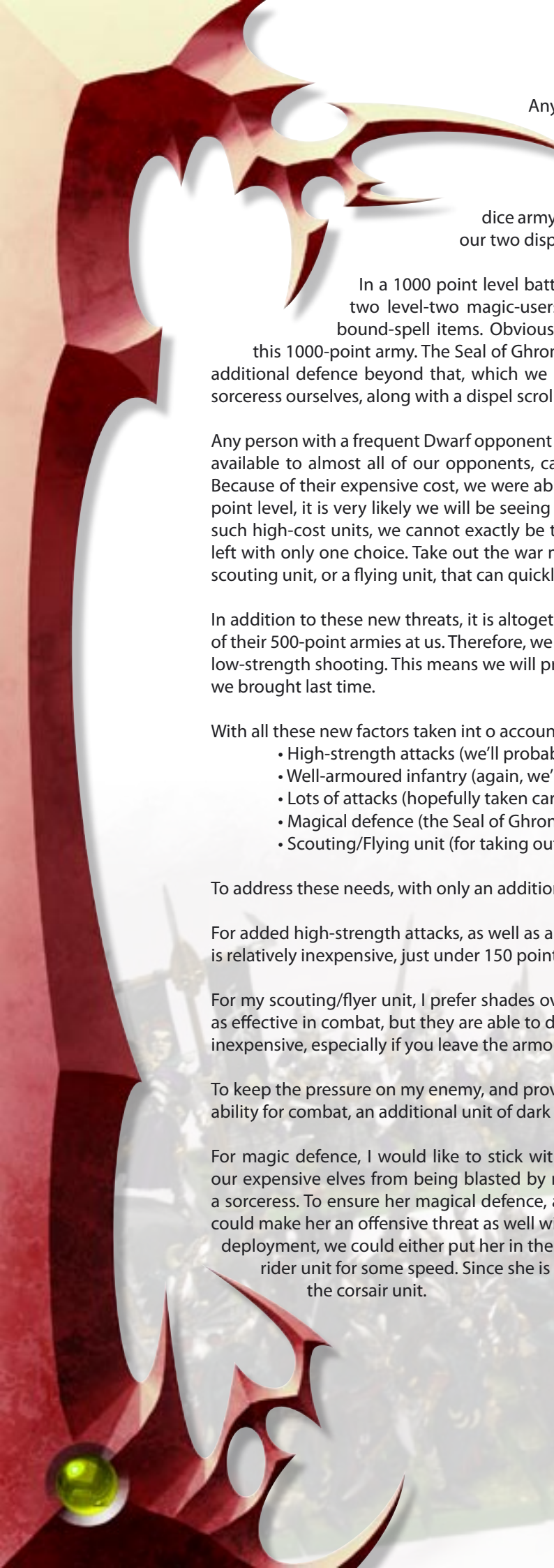
Looks kinda small, doesn't it? Of course it does! It's only a 500-point army.

We assembled that army by taking a look at what types of opponents we expected to face, and what types of units the Dark Elf army had to exploit those opponents. We looked at the threats we were likely to come up against, and addressed them appropriately. Guess what. We're about to do that all over again!

The specific threats we addressed last month included horde-type armies, heavy-shooting armies, and small-elite armies. To this end, we brought a noble in a chariot to deal out some high strength attacks, and our corsairs for some heavily armoured, high-attack infantry to deal with weaker units. The dark riders helped out with any unexpected things we may face.



We will continue to ready ourselves for these types of armies, but at 1000 points, our opponents have many more options. Not only could they field those types of armies, they could field combinations of them. In addition, they could introduce some new threats, such as a magic-oriented army, or a war machine heavy army. Looking at our current 500-point army, we certainly aren't prepared to face these types of armies.



Any time you are facing a magic heavy army, you will quickly find that the standard issue two dispel dice fall short of what you need. This is even more true once the point-level of the battles starts to increase. In a 500 point army, we were not likely to face anything more than a two power dice army (one level two magic-user), which we could easily counter with our two dispel dice.

In a 1000 point level battle, however, our opponents could field much more magic, say two level-two magic-users, or even more with the addition of another magic-user or bound-spell items. Obviously, we are going to need to bump up our magic-defence for this 1000-point army. The Seal of Ghroind seems perfectly suited for this task. If we are looking for any additional defence beyond that, which we may indeed need, we will have to start looking at bringing a sorceress ourselves, along with a dispel scroll or two.

Any person with a frequent Dwarf opponent will tell you, war machines can hurt! These deadly contraptions, available to almost all of our opponents, can deal out high-strength, armour-negating attacks from afar. Because of their expensive cost, we were able to ignore them at the 500-point level. However, at the 1000-point level, it is very likely we will be seeing one or more of these machines. With the Dark Elf army having such high-cost units, we cannot exactly be trudging across the battlefield being shot at. Therefore, we are left with only one choice. Take out the war machines... the sooner, the better. Often, this means bringing a scouting unit, or a flying unit, that can quickly get into grips with the crew and disable the machine.

In addition to these new threats, it is altogether possible that our enemies will simply throw larger versions of their 500-point armies at us. Therefore, we have the same threats as before, large numbers, elite units, and low-strength shooting. This means we will probably end up having to bring even more of the types of units we brought last time.

With all these new factors taken into account, our new wish list looks something like this:

- High-strength attacks (we'll probably need more than a noble in a chariot now)
- Well-armoured infantry (again, we'll probably need more than just one corsair unit)
- Lots of attacks (hopefully taken care of by new units)
- Magical defence (the Seal of Ghroind at a minimum, possibly a sorceress)
- Scouting/Flying unit (for taking out war machines)

To address these needs, with only an additional 500 points, we will have to be prudent with our points.

For added high-strength attacks, as well as a well-armoured unit, I prefer the cold one knights. A unit of five is relatively inexpensive, just under 150 points, and will fit nicely alongside the chariot and corsairs.

For my scouting/flyer unit, I prefer shades over harpies, simply for the extra leadership. They are not nearly as effective in combat, but they are able to dispatch most war machine crews. A unit of five shades is pretty inexpensive, especially if you leave the armour at home, which as a throw-away unit they won't really need.

To keep the pressure on my enemy, and provide some good backup to the shades, as well as some flanking ability for combat, an additional unit of dark riders is well worth the odd 100 points it costs.

For magic defence, I would like to stick with just the Seal of Ghroind, but often it is not enough to keep our expensive elves from being blasted by magic. So, against my better judgement, I am forced to put in a sorceress. To ensure her magical defence, a dispel scroll fits quite nicely. If there are enough points left, I could make her an offensive threat as well with an extra level or some other magical item. As for her deployment, we could either put her in the corsair unit, for some protection, or put her in a dark rider unit for some speed. Since she is primarily a defensive selection, I prefer to put her in the corsair unit.

So, let's get out our pencil and paper again
and see how we've done:

Noble
Army General, Heavy Armour, Sea
Dragon Cloak, Great Weapon, Mounted in a Chariot
equipped with spears
Sorceress
Dispel Scroll
19 Corsairs
Full Command Group
5 Dark Riders
Musician
5 Dark Riders
Musician
5 Cold One Knights
5 Shades

Surprisingly, I've managed to come up with a list that under my target total! I have another 80 points to work with before I get up to 1000... Giving me plenty of options.

Since I put in the sorceress against my better judgement, I would like to make her as effective as possible, which means getting some offensive production out of her, as well as her defensive magic. For 40 points, I can increase her level to a level 2, making her twice the threat she was before. To give her even more options during my magic phase, the Darkstar Cloak is a simple addition. An additional power die for only 20 points? Seems like a pretty sound investment to me. With my last few points, I can put the War Banner on the Corsair unit, increasing their Combat Resolution, and thereby doing their job(s) more effectively.

So, our new 1000 point list looks like:

Noble
Army General, Heavy Armour, Sea Dragon Cloak, Great Weapon,
Mounted in a Chariot equipped with spears
Sorceress
Magic Level 2, Dispel Scroll, Darkstar Cloak
19 Corsairs
Full Command Group, War Banner
5 Dark Riders
Musician
5 Dark Riders
Musician
5 Cold One Knights
5 Shades

Typical for me, this list comes out to just over our 1000 points target. Again, hopefully our opponents will be generous...

Next month: We will continue upgrading our army to 1500 points, and take a more in depth look at the implications of these size battles. As our points allowance increases, so does the amount of troubles we will encounter. Until then remember, have fun, and play often... there is no substitute for experience!

Author: MTUCache
Initiative: Temple of Khaine
Editor: Silas
 Loremaster: Nagathi

My way to 'Way to supremacy'

By MDK

In a Galaxy far far away ...

Nah, not that far away, in fact, really close. The Netherlands to be exact. There was a guy who got a 5th edition Dark Elf general on a Cold One for his birthday from a friend. This is a story of how this evolved from one 90pt Dark Elf general to a two times 2000pt Dark Elf tournament army ready to rule the Warhammer world.

After I painted this first (pour) Dark Elf mini five times with new colour schemes I thought I found the best scheme ever. Pink! Yeah, that was it ... nice blending with Warlock Purple and Tentacle Pink. I was so happy I forgot all about contrast and functionality I have ever learned. All I needed now was a nice logo/item to put on my shields and banners. And there it was; a nice flame. Very time consuming if you must paint forty of them and after I painted 2000pt with this theme I wasn't so happy any more. However I entered two tournament's with it and both tournaments I got nominated for the best painted army award but never actually won.



This army consists of a Highborn on a Manticore, 10 Cold one Knights, three times 5 Dark Riders, 2 Sorceresses on steeds, 2 Chariots, a Hydra and four Ogres. This turned out to be a disaster with a big "D". No wins at all. I got massacred by my very own friends who showed no mercy what so ever. And the Pink was the last drop I needed to get rid of the theme. Pink, pffff, I'm 100% Khaine!

So there I sat. I wanted a new theme, one with a huge "WOW" factor. So I started thinking for once. What was something I said "WOW" to, besides some girls in my life? This happened to be the comic "Black Moon Chronicles". In this comic appears a huge army with a black moon on a green field as their army symbol. So there was my inspiration, a black moon, on a green field ...

But wait, I hate green. Now what?!

In the Druchii army book there is an army painted in red, I love the dark and sinister look of it. So that would be my colour scheme. And besides it looked nice it seemed easy to do as well (I know, I am a lazy ****). When you finally have found a nice colour for your army you have to decide how to use it. You can't just pick a colour and then paint really everything with it. You need a secondary colour to match it. I choose black. Just plain black. I thought it would be rather easy to paint as well, but I found that painting a good looking black is not as easy as it seems. You can't shade black, you

can only highlight it and here is the problem. If you just highlight it with a grey it look quite dull, but if you mix your black with a colour like blue you get a surprising effect and less its boring than grey.

Now, I picked the basic colours of my army I started to think what to paint with what colour. I thought that the armour would look cool in red and tried it on a couple of miniatures. It turned out okay for a first try. What I did was used 5 stages to paint. Obviously Blood Red was the best choice for basic colour. Now this mixing can begin. When you mix colours you write down how many you used of what colour because paint can dry out or even worse, fall on the floor after you painted a couple of minis with it. Than its very hard to mix the right colour again.

These are the colour mix I used for the armour:

Chaos black

60 / 40 mix Chaos black / Blood red

30 / 70 mix Chaos black / Blood red

100% Blood red

100% orange for the ultimate highlight

Wash of Red ink.



The red ink really blended the colours together. This is an easy and good way to create a blending without actually blending, and gives the armour a soft shining surface so the contrast between the cloth and armour is even bigger. Now it was time to paint a few examples of how I wanted it to look like. I started with a Warrior unit of 10 strong, this included a full command as well so i could apply the banner and shield symbols and see how it turned out.

Not bad after all, time to put an army together worthy of "Black moon Rising".

Author: MDK
Initiative: To Make It Like A Slave
Editor: Silas
 Loremaster: Nagathi



Parting Shots

A random article on Randomness

By Rork

So, here I am, lurking in the dark places under Monthly Towers (you should see all the High Elf army books outside the boiler room!). My occasional sojourn into the clean spaces upstairs resulted in being a spectator to the Inaugural Monthly mud-wrestling tournament. After what could be called a good, clean fight, the To Make Like a Slave team was declared the winner, but only after Darkprincess and OrtharRrith got the Cult of Pleasure disqualified for gaining an "unfair" advantage (Editor's Note: They got 10/10 points from me – Silas).

But anyway, enough of that, let's get back to the reason I, "Mr doesn't-play-Dark-Elves", is here. One of my bright ideas has turned into this, an article musing on Warhammer and the craziness associated with it.

So what better topic to start with than randomness? Despite being a bit of a control freak at times, I have a deep-rooted urge to get out there and throw dice at a table. Of course, you can be a strategic genius at this game, but still have your fate decided by some little six-sided objects that probably hate you more than life itself. I am not a superstitious person; I don't do religion, and certainly don't have any lucky charms.

But then there is playing Warhammer.

Normally sane (for a given value of "sane") and rational people become bizarre, hunched individuals, muttering to said inanimate objects. Take me for example; for no apparent reason books stay firmly in cases, despite never getting used, units stay divided between layers for no other reason than "Things could go wrong if I change it!" At some point, I will get to the barrier where a sacrificial goat is required to get the army out of its case, though I suspect a Twix (Editor's Note: A chocolate bar for all you far flung people of the world – Silas) might be easier. If you think shaking dice like a maraca is something you are never likely to see, play me and wait for a key dice roll... That makes no sense, does it?

Even worse are dice. I think this is something we can all relate to in some way – You play a game where the dice can do nothing right. From leadership tests to flee moves (which you will see a lot of) it all goes out of the window. Your crushing flank charge suddenly finds that those mighty lances are pointy sticks, and your enemy has decided that leather armour has the same properties as six inches of steel. Do we shrug this off? Do we hell.

The dice are cursed! The dice will never roll well again! They shall be punished! I like white dice. I trust white dice. The one time I bought some red and black dice to top up my meagre 10 white dice, the things betrayed me. The aforementioned high rolling for leadership kicks in, and before long, I'm eyeing them like a madman. They, and eventually those loathsome ten whities, never saw the light of day again. Never. They sit in my bag,



discarded, lurking with menace while my friendly (and plentiful) newer dice roll happily past my Chaos and Eldar armies. I've assigned a bestial intelligence to small cubes of plastic, despite the fact that they just sit there, those little eyes... err...dots, staring at me.

Let's take a favourite subject of the Dark Elf community as another example: Stupidity. We've all seen it happen, those mighty leadership 9, or more frequently, 10, knights decide now is a good time to discuss the weather right in front of those howling Knights of Khorne. I frequently hear of, and see, players' mutter about how they are going to fail the roll.

Am I any better? Don't be daft. I always expect the Lord Rork to hit with two of his weapon skill 8 attacks. There have been times when he couldn't kill zombies, rather unfortunate, given he was alone, or decided to score an impressive four killing blows – On Empire Spearmen. I'm surprised when he rolls average dice! (It just doesn't happen)

This is what they call a self-fulfilling prophecy. You reinforce the belief that you are going to fail every time ("On average") it happens. It gets worse when it happens at one of those carefully executed bad moments that stick out like a man at a Witch Elf conference. Trundling forward into the path of that 500-point unit you know is going to carve some buttock.

When things go wrong, what do we do? We get a little angry, annoyed, or depressed. I have been known to make strangling gestures at a lot of models. It makes me feel better (apart from singing Gold or Bohemian Rhapsody to myself, of course). What many others and I are guilty of is forming an attachment to our armies. Instead of laughing at it, we see the army, and the dice, as an extension of ourselves, unleashing carnage upon our opponents... Hahahahaha... until the models decide they are not playing any more (especially when they decide the highest number on a dice is two...).

Ideally as a player treating it as a game is the way to go. Even in those horribly unlucky games, a maniac like me attempts to keep some form of humour. For a few hours each week you and a friend (or at the very minimum, someone you wish to crush mercilessly) enjoy a game of Warhammer. So the next time stupidity, frenzy or weapon skill five kicks you in the teeth, laugh or smile at it.

It is a game, and there are going to be games that make up for it.

The credits page is whispering to me, so remember – The dice are watching you.

Rork

Author: Rork
Initiative: Freelancing
Editor: Silas
 Loremaster: Nagathi



Mother of the Witch King: Morathi

By Zaqir

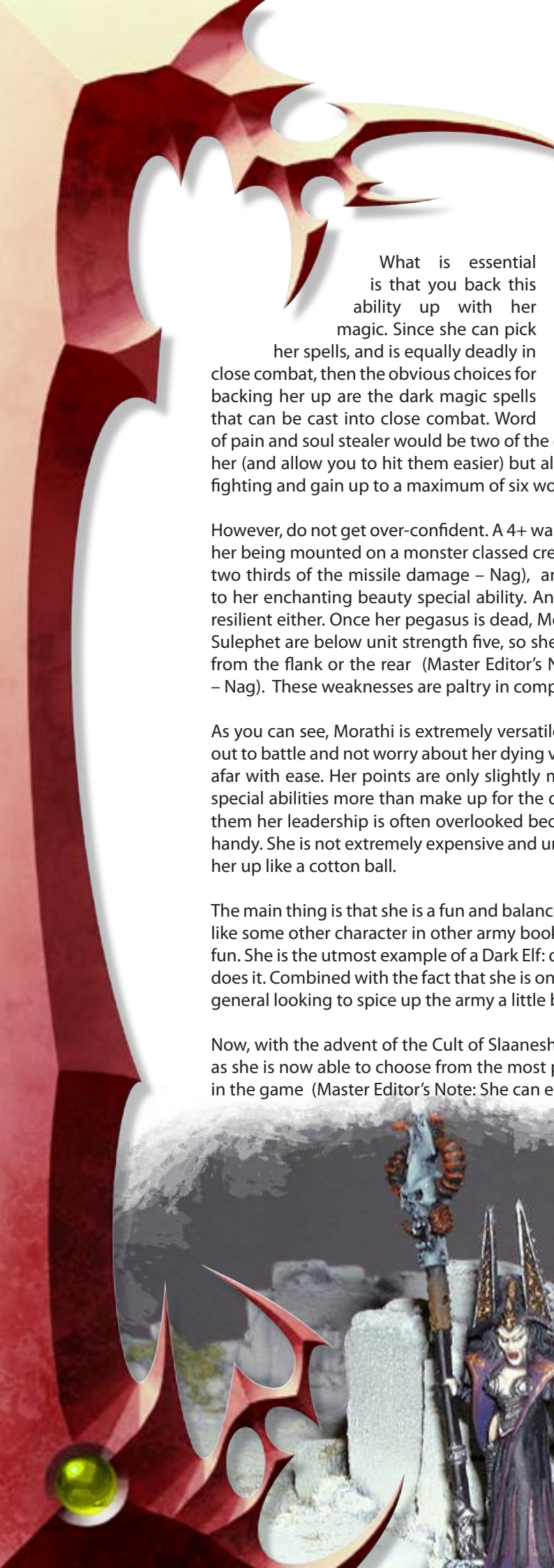
Many players shun the use of special characters; some think that it is a cheesy tactic while others feel most characters are overpowered. Despite what they think, special characters are used and can be quite fun and enjoyable. For many Druchii players, one character that can be lots of fun is Morathi, the foremost sorceress of all the Dark Elves, mother of King Malekith and first hag of the witch elves. What makes Morathi so much fun to utilize is her versatility.

Morathi is a fourth level sorceress that can choose her own spells. Already deadly in this manner, what makes her even more feared is that she gets +2 to all of her Dark Magic casting rolls. However, it is not just her magic that makes her so appalling to the opponent – her movement, due to her dark pegasus Sulephet, her skill at using weapons, and her special rules (enchanted beauty and 1001 dark blessings) make her a great close combat fighter as well, greatly increasing her effectiveness in your army.

It is easy enough to see the possibilities afforded by Morathi. Not only can she fly around the battlefield and get into advantageous positions to unleash her magic, but also her skill at casting lets you cast spells like chillwind or doombolt on a single die. The +2 to your roll means you can afford to risk one die on those aforementioned spells while your opponent might have to use two dispel dice to be safe and sure in dispelling unless he or she likes taking chances.

Morathi's true strength is revealed when she gets down and dirty in hand-to-hand fighting. On the charge, her magical lance gives her a strength greater than an executioner, as well as the important killing blow ability. And to make things better, Sulephet, her pegasus, gain an additional point in strength on the charge because of his horn. Her dark blessings do a decent job of protecting her, and her enchanted beauty can distract any unit with desire, making them lose their skill at arms (except to undead and those immune to psychology).





What is essential is that you back this ability up with her magic. Since she can pick her spells, and is equally deadly in close combat, then the obvious choices for backing her up are the dark magic spells that can be cast into close combat. Word of pain and soul stealer would be two of the obvious choices. Not only will enemies have a hard time hitting her (and allow you to hit them easier) but also the fact that she can drain the life out of the enemies she is fighting and gain up to a maximum of six wounds is something the opponent needs to be wary of.

However, do not get over-confident. A 4+ ward save is the only protection she has (Master Editor's Note: And her being mounted on a monster classed creature makes for a "randomization save" when Sulepeth will take two thirds of the missile damage – Nag), and certain armies like Lizardmen and the Undead are resistant to her enchanting beauty special ability. Another weakness that Morathi has, is that her mount is not too resilient either. Once her pegasus is dead, Morathi loses a lot of her mobility. Never forget that Morathi and Sulephet are below unit strength five, so she does not negate rank bonuses and the like when she charges from the flank or the rear (Master Editor's Note: And she doesn't get the added combat resolution either – Nag). These weaknesses are paltry in comparison to her other benefits in the long run.

As you can see, Morathi is extremely versatile. She has enough defensive capabilities that you can send her out to battle and not worry about her dying very easily. She does well up close and can rain down spells from afar with ease. Her points are only slightly more expensive than a fully tricked out High Sorceress, yet her special abilities more than make up for the difference in points. Her ability to lead the witch elves and give them her leadership is often overlooked because witch elves do not usually need it, but it can still come in handy. She is not extremely expensive and unlike her son – some mortal with a glowing sword will not carve her up like a cotton ball.

The main thing is that she is a fun and balanced character to use. None of her abilities are truly overpowering like some other character in other army books, and her points do not cripple armies. Try her and have some fun. She is the utmost example of a Dark Elf: deadly in everything she does but wonderful to watch while she does it. Combined with the fact that she is only a single lord choice makes her the ideal choice for the Druchii general looking to spice up the army a little bit.

Now, with the advent of the Cult of Slaanesh army list, Morathi's magical powers have grown exponentially as she is now able to choose from the most powerful spells from two of the most devastating lore of magic in the game (Master Editor's Note: She can even choose from both in the same battle – Nag).

Author: Zaqir
Initiative: Temple of Khaine
Editor: AloneAndBurned
QA Guy: Loremaster Nagathi



Morathi, the Hag Sorceress

Written by Darkprincess

It was cold, even by the bone-chilling standards of Naggaroath; the weather had taken a turn for the worse. The wind had turned and blew in from the northwest and it carried ice and snow along with it. Even the relatively hardy population of Naggarond had moved indoors wherever they could to avoid the icy chill. Within a short space of time, the streets and rooftops of the great city were white and the blizzard conditions made visibility both difficult and extremely limited. Even the harpies that gathered around the towers of the twelve temples of Khaine had settled into sheltered niches rather than remain exposed to the appalling weather.

High in the central tower, palace of Malekith the Witch King, Morathi paced around furiously, pausing occasionally to stare out of the east window, towards the far-off land of Ulthuan, where even now, her great son was engaged in battle with the hated Asur kin. The thought of the slaughter did something to warm her on this bitterly cold day. More of the old enemy would die, and more still would be enslaved and brought back to the Land of Chill where they would suffer a fate far worse than to die upon the battlefield.

She heard footsteps outside. Three sets, she deduced, partly from the sounds but mostly because she was expecting a single visitor who would have been accompanied up the winding steps by two guards. A loud knock came on the door. Morathi took her place at the head of an enormous table. The King's table in fact, she was seated in his place during his absence, and felt it to be her own.

"Enter", she called out. The great double doorway opened without a sound. Three figures stepped inside. Morathi's guest flanked by two heavily armoured palace guards carrying halberds with the King's crest engraved on them and dressed in golden armour with purple robes. One of the guards spoke; "Milady, the priestess Kytheriel requests an audience"

Morathi nodded but did not stand. "Leave us," she instructed the guard. "Come forward, priestess Kytheriel, so we may be well met". The priestess stepped forward, her long robe swaying as she walked. "Thank you for granting me your time, Milady"

"You bring me news, priestess?" Morathi asked. Kytheriel began to feel more at ease and her voice appeared more confident, although the priestess still remained hesitant in the presence of the king's mother. "Yes, Milady", she replied. Morathi sat back in the chair. "Then give me this news quickly, for I do not have all day. Time is short."

"My apologies... We have learned that a great army marches from Lustria and seeks to ally with the Khainist infidels that they might destroy us in vengeance for our successes in their country." Morathi sat up straight. She appeared horrified by this revelation. "What!?" she hissed. "The lizards forming an alliance with the Khainists? That seems very unlikely; however, given that the reptiles have developed an even greater hatred for us since the glorious Lustrian campaign, I believe we should take this threat very seriously. They will come to us seeking recompense for their losses."

"We didn't take all their treasures, Milady..." Kytheriel attempted to calm the sorceress. Morathi thought for a moment. "We didn't have time, priestess... But no matter – we will defeat them in Naggaroath as we defeated them in their own lands. But this time, the conditions will favour our great warriors. Winter is fast approaching. The reptiles have just made a monumental error in judgement in planning to attack us during the Naggaroath winter. The climate will kill more than we will, leaving us free to destroy the Khainists and set this great nation back onto the correct path."

"Your wisdom as ever is inspirational, Milady." Kytheriel bowed slightly. "However, word has also reached us that the army of Khaine is preparing a large scale attack on our forces and that Hellebron herself will take command." Morathi nodded and a wry smile crossed her lips. "Naturally. She wishes to kill me in battle, but I will not allow her the satisfaction. I will defeat Hellebron but I will do so in my own time, not hers. I will not have that demented crone dictating terms to me! Darkness is about



to fall upon our lands and she hopes that she will be able to tip the balance of power in her favour. She wishes to be Queen, but she has neither the popular nor the political support to stage a coup. She has formidable military strength, yet she has consistently failed in her many attempts to destroy us. She will of course, fail once more."

"There is a danger that the people will rally behind her if they sense that we are becoming too closely linked with Chaos, Milady." The priestess seemed genuinely concerned. Morathi, however, remained unperturbed by her worries. "The people have no power and no voice, priestess. They will do my bidding and that of my son, lest they find themselves upon the altars of sacrifice or the victims of a faceless assassin. I have the power in Naggaroth. I always have, and I always will. I control the Temple, I control the Witch Elves, and what's more, I control Hellebron herself, though she lacks the presence of mind to see the fact. I could have her killed in an instant if the whim takes me."

"Then why do you allow her to live, Milady?" Kytheriel asked.

"Because she is still useful to me. While she lives, I can both dominate and humiliate her, both of which afford me great pleasure and satisfaction. She believes herself to be the stronger of us, yet her life hangs by a fine thread that I may cut whenever I choose. Thus she is forced to go on with her pretence and her inane rituals. She lacks the mental powers to command the winds of magic, so she spends her time with potions, familiars and other petty evil, whereas I can call upon the forces of creation."

"But she remains a danger, Milady. I believe I speak for many others among us that we feel a great need to learn of her death." Morathi smiled as she poured a goblet of wine for her guest. "All in good time, priestess. I need her alive at the moment. When the time comes that I grow tired of her pathetic life, I will snuff her out as I would a candle. She provides me with sufficient entertainment for the time being."

"As ever, you see the things that the rest of us do not, Milady, but we will of course accept that you are far wiser than we are, and will give you our allegiance without question." Kytheriel bowed slightly towards Morathi, but the sorceress seemed impassive rather than pleased. "Indeed, priestess," she said in a disdainful voice. "I can see very well that you are loyal in every way. However, I find your promise somewhat hollow this day, and the focus of your loyalty questionable."

"Milady?" Kytheriel suddenly became tense and nervous. Morathi continued. "There is no conceivable way in which the forces of Khaine could have known of the route taken by our army on its return from Lustria." The priestess now appeared very uncomfortable. She placed her goblet back on the table. "What are you suggesting, Milady?"

"I am suggesting that somebody informed Hellebron or one of her agents of our plans. Somebody who would stand to gain a significant degree of power if the Cult of Pleasure were destroyed. I know of your house's allegiance to the Temple of Khaine, priestess. I too have my own agents, as they have theirs." The indignant priestess rushed to her own defence, realising the gravity of the situation she had suddenly found herself in. "That is not true, Milady. I offer my unswerving loyalty only to you."

Morathi sat back in the grand chair, and appeared more relaxed. "Indeed, priestess. There is nothing we value more highly than loyalty," she paused for a moment "Fall on your sword."

Kytheriel was incredulous at Morathi's totally unexpected response. "Milady?" she croaked, suddenly unable to find her full voice. The High Sorceress was neither impressed nor pitiful of her guest's plight, and repeated her words. "Go on, priestess, demonstrate for me this 'unswerving loyalty' - throw yourself upon your sword that I might see for myself where your true allegiance lies."

Kytheriel shook her head nervously. "No, Milady, please...." Morathi sighed. "You claim loyalty to me yet you fail to follow the simplest of my instructions. What use are you to me then, priestess?"

Kytheriel looked around, shaking with fear, then suddenly appeared calmer. "Very well, Milady. I will do as you command." She reached beneath her flowing robe and pulled the short sword from its scabbard. She

held it above her head. "Let my sacrifice be a lesson in loyalty to all who would come after me." She lowered the blade slightly, and then lunged forward towards the great sorceress. Morathi did not flinch, but raised her hand slightly, and the priestess stopped in her tracks, as if frozen in time.

"Oh no, priestess Kytheriel", Morathi said in a soft, mocking tone, "that is far too predictable."

She took the sword from the priestess' hand and stabbed it quickly into Kytheriel's abdomen. Kytheriel gasped and cried out, the spell of Dominion broken, and she fell to her knees. She looked up at Morathi, standing over her and hissed. "Khaine will destroy you all", she spat.

"Perhaps, priestess", Morathi replied, "but not on this day."

The sorceress knelt down over Kytheriel's dying body, drew her own dagger, and used it to carve a number of Slaaneshi runes into the flesh and recited a prayer to the Dark Prince that he might take this misguided soul into His realm of tortuous ecstasy. As the priestess' life ebbed away, Morathi smiled at her sweetly. "Give my love to Slaanesh", she whispered, before waiting some moments until she was dead.

Morathi stood up slowly. "Guards!" she shouted. The huge door opened once again, and two guards rushed in. They both looked at the body lying on the marble-tiled floor. Morathi turned and walked back to the head of the table.

"The priestess Kytheriel will be leaving us now. See that she arrives safely to Ghond...."

The great sorceress filled another goblet with wine and relaxed once more in the King's chair. The day was still young, and suddenly it didn't feel quite as cold anymore.



Author: *darkprincess*
Initiative: *The Cult of Pleasure*
Editor: *Silas*
Loremaster: *Nagathi*



The Vow to Khaine

By Danceman

Even though a year had now passed since Ashir had faced his brother of the Field of Sorrow, Ashir remembered the pain in visions; indeed it was a fitting name for such a day of loss. There was not much left of his once proud warriors, one by one Lonicera had poisoned his followers with false promises. He was now near nothing, he had lost everything he once was proud to calling his domain. Not long from now he would fall under his once loyal subjects, not long would it be before the she-bitch claws would rend his soul and body alike. He looked down upon the parchment and quill, for a letter must be written. King Malekith must know what has been put aside under the corruption under Morathi's scheming.

Just thinking of Morathi made his blood boil but now it was too late. He knew what he had to do and what he is going to do. If he would live a few more days it would make all the difference but it was not like the chance of dying made him sad or bitter other than what might happen to his once glorious race, what would happen when Morathi would fall and fall she will, of that he had no doubt but what than? When this pathetic attempt to control chaos would cease, chaos would reign over elves and the ultimate defeat would be at the feet of elves.

He tried to focus upon the letter he had to write but the moans and cries of both pain and pleasure which the windows failed to totally muffle felt like a slavers whip towards his mind. Images from the battle flashing before his eyes, his brother's eyes as they died, the pain that followed. Although they were just memories, they burned him to the point where he questioned it all. It was indeed his father who had come and taken him on his black dragon, and the scars on his body screamed of the betrayal through the years. Tears formed in his eyes, his father was dead... dead because he had saved his son. That witch Lonicera had smashed into his fathers forces; she had heard of my deeds and waited for him... for them, to walk into their deaths.

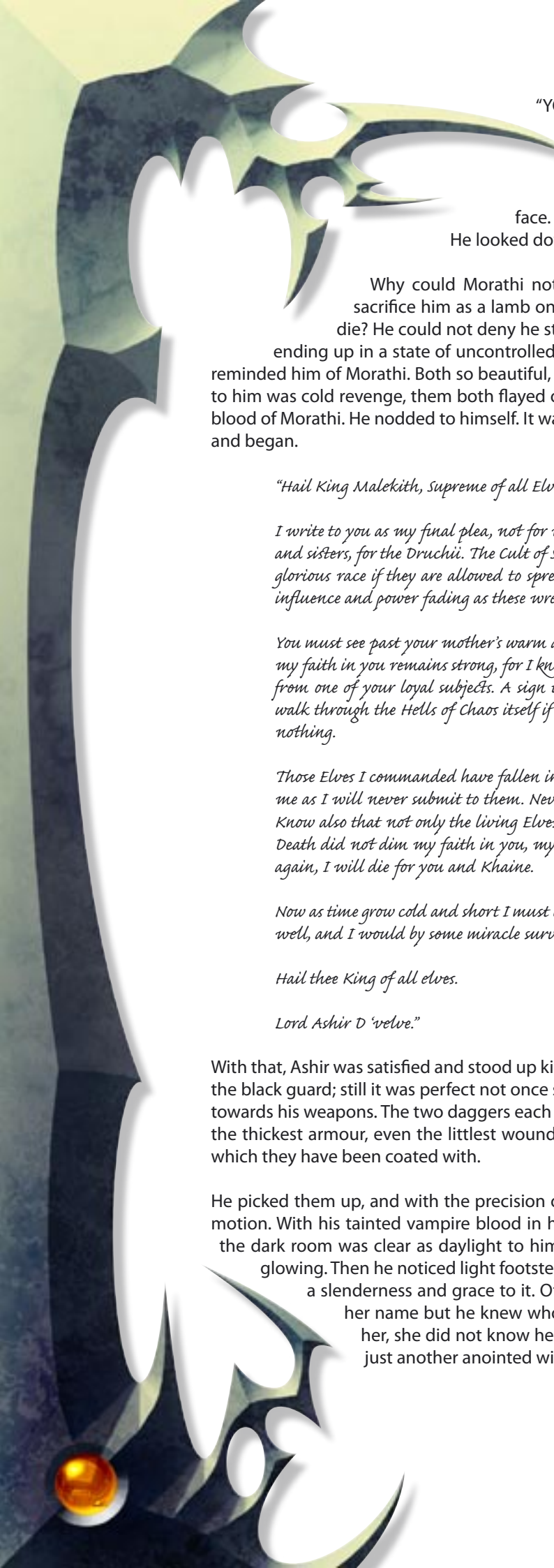
The screams outside his windows seemed to grow to an unbearable level. Again, it was memories of the past, but of a near past, of torture of that elf woman, Lonicera. Ashir's will had almost failed him, but time and time again his anger towards all things that is Slaanesh had strengthened him. It was almost as if he had to look around, blinked a few times to believe he was not in her shackles still.

It was during this time he had to give up life, for another. The only way he thought he would be free of Slaanesh's grip of his soul, drinking the Elixir of Life. As he fled from Morathi's grasp, he had been forced to leave Naggaroth behind him. He travelled through the old world posing as an Asur trader for many years until the day he stayed on the road a bit too late into the night. The face of the vampire was still crystal clear in his memory, she was near perfect and indeed she lured him in. Ashir could not do much, for he had always trusted women where he should not, and cast them aside when he should not.

The vampire whose name was Natalaha, a name that he never heard a woman being called before. There in the woods just southeast of Middenheim he had remained for nearly 200 hundreds year. The night she fooled him into drink the elixir; pouring it into his wine. He remembers this moment in sadness and regrets. In his anger he had killed her and drained her completely, only to realise what he had done. She wanted him for all eternity; she might even have loved him.

That night he almost killed himself, and today death was just another word. Ashir shook his head trying to fend of the uneasiness overwhelming him, but the fact remained he was a fool. Time had always shown him who he truly was, always the paranoid fool. Although he did no longer possess a soul, his mind and memories bore scars that never would mend; only bring more insanity, more pain to him.

Suddenly he burst into a laugh. Laughing hard at himself, he remembered how freely he had offered his life to Lady Morathi, how sweet it all tasted at first, and how hollow it became with time. When he felt every pleasure 1000 times, every pain 1000 times and 1000 times again. He had felt he belonged somewhere though, when he was near Morathi. As he sat at the table, he caught his face in the mirror standing in the corner of the room stretching from floor to the roof. He stood up furious, glaring angrily at the figure greeting him.



"YOU DAMNED FOOL! YOU DAMNED FOOL!" he roared, and rammed his fist into the mirror, breaking it into a million pieces and again began to laugh, he was really losing it. The Dark prince leached his sanity by the minute. Laughter dying as tears started to pour down from his face. "Father... forgive me, please... forg..." he managed to push forth. He looked down at the pieces of glass. Shattered – just like his life.

Why could Morathi not keep him under her warm embrace? Why did she have to sacrifice him as a lamb on the shores of Ulthuan? How could she just leave him there to die? He could not deny he still felt for her but she had hurt him so much everything always ending up in a state of uncontrolled rage, this was probably why he hated Lonicera so much... she reminded him of Morathi. Both so beautiful, both so... beyond his reach. He tried to focus, but all that came to him was cold revenge, them both flayed of their skin, him bathing in their blood in the very cauldron of blood of Morathi. He nodded to himself. It was time. He went back to his chair and he brought quill to paper and began.

"Hail King Malekith, Supreme of all Elves, True ruler of Ulthuan and of all Elves.

I write to you as my final plea, not for myself, for my life matters little, but for my brothers and sisters, for the Druchii. The Cult of Slaanesh is ever growing and I fear the demise of our glorious race if they are allowed to spread any further. In addition, I fear for your divine influence and power fading as these wretches gain more and more ground.

You must see past your mother's warm arms for she only wants you as her puppet. However, my faith in you remains strong, for I know you are no fool nor puppet, this is merely a word from one of your loyal subjects. A sign that I will never stop defending you, that I would walk through the Hells of Chaos itself if it meant victory for you. Without you, Druchii are nothing.

Those Elves I commanded have fallen into the grip of Slaanesh, and soon they will come for me as I will never submit to them. Never will I let Khaine fall into the shades of my soul. Know also that not only the living Elves support you; you have undying servants as myself. Death did not dim my faith in you, my king, or Khaine, it bolstered it. If I were to die once again, I will die for you and Khaine.

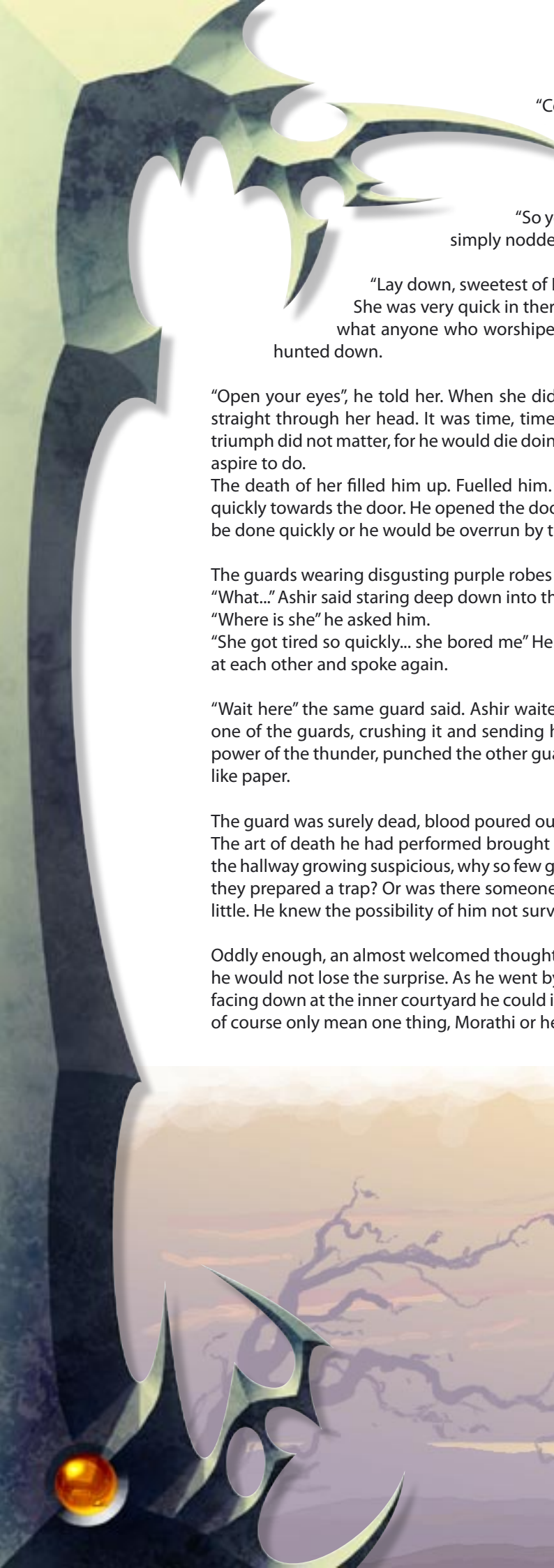
Now as time grows cold and short I must end this letter, now I shall prove my worth. If it goes well, and I would by some miracle survive this night, then you will hear from me again.

Hail thee King of all elves.

Lord Ashir D 'velve."

With that, Ashir was satisfied and stood up kicking the chair half across the room. Still he wore the armour of the black guard; still it was perfect not once scratched. He checked it once last time before turning his head towards his weapons. The two daggers each engraved with prayers to Khaine, the edges would cut through the thickest armour, even the slightest wound would be fatal because of the ancient and potent poisons of which they have been coated with.

He picked them up, and with the precision of 4000 thousand years of training sheathed them with a swift motion. With his tainted vampire blood in his veins, he was not the same Elf anymore. In his eyes the dark room was clear as daylight to him as he stood there in his black armour, his red eyes glowing. Then he noticed light footsteps coming down the hallway, not sneaking but with a slenderness and grace to it. Of course... it was her, she who still has not spoken her name but he knew who she was, a bride of Slaanesh. He was amused by her, she did not know he was a vampire as far as she is concerned. He was just another anointed with doubts.



"Come in..." Ashir said with a loud voice and could feel her heart skip, he grinned.

As she entered, he saw her mark. That mark made his face contort in anger. She saw his reaction but again, why should she suspect that it was the mark?

"So you want it dark this time..." she said with a seductive smile, Ashir simply nodded but then spoke.

"Lay down, sweetest of Elves... I have surprise for you, close your eyes," he said softly.

She was very quick in there to the amusement of Ashir, such a weak creature for that was what anyone who worshiped the Dark Prince was to Ashir, merely a beast who should be hunted down.

"Open your eyes", he told her. When she did, all she saw was the metallic bolt milliseconds before it went straight through her head. It was time, time prove his worth for Khaine, whether it would be his death or triumph did not matter, for he would die doing Khaine's great work and that is all a true Druchii always should aspire to do.

The death of her filled him up. Fuelled him. Made him confident. He took one last look at her and moved quickly towards the door. He opened the door casually with both daggers still in their scabbards. This was to be done quickly or he would be overrun by the guards placed everywhere in the castle.

The guards wearing disgusting purple robes of their armour halted Ashir in his stride.

"What..." Ashir said staring deep down into the eyes of one of the two guards outside.

"Where is she" he asked him.

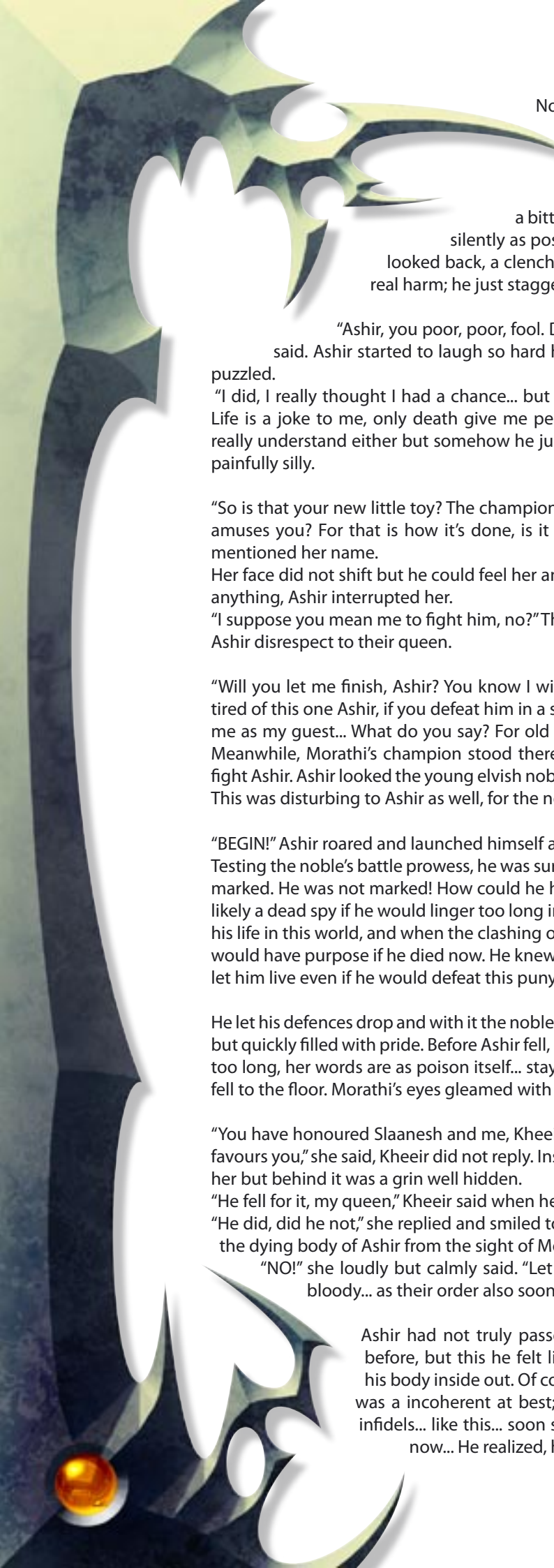
"She got tired so quickly... she bored me" He said with a tone revealing no emotion. The two guards looked at each other and spoke again.

"Wait here" the same guard said. Ashir waited not for them to enter. With a powerful blow to the cheek of one of the guards, crushing it and sending him falling to the ground. Then Ashir, quick as a viper but with power of the thunder, punched the other guard in the stomach. Loud cracks was heard as ribs were broken like paper.

The guard was surely dead, blood poured out from the skull and the body remained limp.

The art of death he had performed brought a grin to his face. This was just the beginning. He looked down the hallway growing suspicious, why so few guards all of a sudden? Did they expect him to turn so easily? Had they prepared a trap? Or was there someone else more important present today? He shrugged. It mattered little. He knew the possibility of him not surviving this night.

Oddly enough, an almost welcomed thought. No, no time to think. Ashir let the daggers remain sheathed so he would not lose the surprise. As he went by the windows facing down at the inner courtyard he could indeed see that a feast of some sort was being prepared. It could of course only mean one thing, Morathi or her fanatical lapdog Lonicera.



Now he really had to move quickly to elude these if it truly was them. Either way it must be someone of importance and stature. He fastened his pace when he reached the main stairs down the large hall below, the marble steps gleaming with enchanted gems and rare stones, but only a bitter reminder of his own race's downfall. He ran down the stairs as silently as possible, he looked over his shoulder for a moment, and when he looked back, a clenched fist greeted him. It was not a blow that would give him any real harm; he just staggered back a little.

"Ashir, you poor, poor, fool. Did you really think you could escape?" An all too familiar voice said. Ashir started to laugh so hard he barely could stand up straight, the female Elf looked at him puzzled.

"I did, I really thought I had a chance... but you if anyone should know by now I am not easily cast aside. Life is a joke to me, only death give me peace." He replied trying not start laughing again. He could not really understand either but somehow he just found her presence, it all too neatly arranged it was... just so painfully silly.

"So is that your new little toy? The champion for the moment? Someone to throw away when he no longer amuses you? For that is how it's done, is it not, Morathi, whore of Slaanesh?" he continued spiting as he mentioned her name.

Her face did not shift but he could feel her anger boiling inside of her. Before Morathi had the chance to say anything, Ashir interrupted her.

"I suppose you mean me to fight him, no?" The servants, soldiers and her bodyguard was clearly angered by Ashir disrespect to their queen.

"Will you let me finish, Ashir? You know I will not kill you if I do not have to... but as you say I have grown tired of this one Ashir, if you defeat him in a suitable manner I will allow you to live... and take you back with me as my guest... What do you say? For old times' sake?" she said and smiled to him, that deceiving smile. Meanwhile, Morathi's champion stood there heartbroken, unable to really move as he was prodded into fight Ashir. Ashir looked the young elvish noble into the eyes, as if he was encouraging him to draw his sword. This was disturbing to Ashir as well, for the noble reminded him of himself so long ago.

"BEGIN!" Ashir roared and launched himself at the poor noble, he took it slow in the beginning. Testing the noble's battle prowess, he was surprised. This young Elf really knew how to fight and... He was not marked. He was not marked! How could he have been so close to her... but then it came to him, a spy. Most likely a dead spy if he would linger too long in Morathi's presence. So this is how Khaine wanted Ashir to end his life in this world, and when the clashing of steel felt as they were raping his soul in two. At least his death would have purpose if he died now. He knew he would die either way. Morathi had not a shred of nobility to let him live even if he would defeat this puny enemy.

He let his defences drop and with it the noble's sword pierced his chest. The noble's eyes were fixed in surprise but quickly filled with pride. Before Ashir fell, he held his adversary with an iron grip and said calmly. "Stay not too long, her words are as poison itself... stay not too long" after these words his strength failed him and he fell to the floor. Morathi's eyes gleamed with joy and relief. She turned her head to her champion.

"You have honoured Slaanesh and me, Kheir Elith, From this moment know that Slaanesh is watching you, favours you," she said, Kheir did not reply. Instead, he simply fell to his knees, lowered his head in respect for her but behind it was a grin well hidden.

"He fell for it, my queen," Kheir said when he rose.

"He did, did he not," she replied and smiled to his champion. Quickly, her servants moved to remove the dying body of Ashir from the sight of Morathi.

"NO!" she loudly but calmly said. "Let the Khainist infidels find him like this, broken and bloody... as their order also soon shall become."

Ashir had not truly passed away yet, he felt weird. He had tasted death before, but this he felt like his blood was burning, shifting, and twisting his body inside out. Of course, he realised... poison. The words around him was a incoherent at best; he only could make out "He fell for it...Khanist infidels... like this... soon shall". Yet something in him felt it, it made sense now... He realized, his whole body roared in anger. He would not fall



like this, not to a weakling noble. Every part of his body screamed in pain as he stood up.

"Kheir... You still have not won this duel, pathetic whelp."

Ashir roared with anger. Both Morathi and Kheir stood awestruck, he had suffered a terrible wound yet he stood refusing death. Morathi saw the man she actually had felt more than a moment of pleasure with, a man she had betrayed, but Kheir saw something else, he saw his death. He wanted to run away but Morathi would kill him as surely.

"Very well Ashir", Kheir said trying to hide his terror and drew his sword ready to meet whatever end.

Ashir drew his daggers once more and launched himself at Kheir, this fight was not like the last, Ashir knew his opponents every move. Even though it pained him his limbs followed him in a dance of death. The fight went on as Ashir played with Kheir, He wanted this moment to last for now he was truly alive. He noticed the poor Elf was getting tired and was not much of challenge anymore. His eyes met his adversary's and Ashir grinned.

"KHAELA MENSHA KHAINE!" He screamed before he lashed out with his two daggers both piercing the noble's heart. Just as he did so, he felt the world around him fade yet again. His legs did not want to support him anymore. As the noble's limp body fell in front of him, he fell to his knees barely able to keep balance. This time darkness seized him and his eyes closed, his face displaying happiness for the first time in many hundreds of years. But would the world finally grant Ashir's wish to sleep forever? Would the broken soul that he is finally get some rest, or have he truly been cursed to walk the lands of the Naggaroth as a ghost with no home?

Author: Danceman
Initiative: Freelancing
Editor: Lethalis
Loremaster: Nagathi



Dungeons and Dragons for Druchii

Written by Svart

I have always wanted to do a number of small articles concerning running a D20 adventures set in the Warhammer universe. The world of Warhammer provides countless opportunities for adventuring, and while there are Warhammer Role Playing Game (RPG) and even a Druchii.net Role Playing Game around, in my most humble opinion, the D20 system is more suited for pen & paper role-playing. To all those of you uninterested in such material ñ sorry, but I do not think that such small articles will spoil our monthly. In these articles, I will use materials created by our gaming community over the last five years of D&D role-playing. Enough said, on to the start!

Of course, the first article will be dedicated to the Dark Elves of Naggaroth as a race in the D20 system! Druchii make interesting PC variants, a party consisting entirely of Druchii is a great (but a little bit dangerous) idea for a D&D campaign. In addition, they can make nasty villains for your lawful good aligned party. You can also incorporate Druchii into your own campaign even if it is not set in the world of Warhammer. Either they can replace the classic Drow, or there can be both races.

Note that such traits as personality, physical description, relations, and the like are not included here. We all know who the Druchii are. The article is fully dedicated to representing them in the D20 rulesí system. Druchii tend towards evil alignment, mostly Neutral Evil. Although a particular Druchii may be Neutral or even (Khaine forbid!) good, as a whole the Druchii race is utterly evil.

When ìconvertingî something from Warhammer to D&D, countless disputes and arguments are almost unavoidable. There will not be a perfect ìconversionî, and the points of view of different people on one problem or another may vary greatly. That is why I decided to include several variants of game rules based on opinions from different people on what the Druchii in D&D should look like. The three variants included here are ìlow-powerî, ìhigh-powerî and the ìgolden meanî that I shall start with.

Please feel free to mail me at svart@list.ru; I would appreciate any kind of feedback.

Druchii: The Golden Mean variant

Druchii traits:

- +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, +2 Charisma: Although as frail as all other elves, Druchii are graceful, cunning, attractive and display a great talent for magic.
- Druchii base speed is 30 feet
- Low-light vision as described in Playerís Handbook
- +2 racial bonus on attack and damage rolls against High Elves due to ever-burning hatred for their High kin.
- +2 racial bonus on all Listen, Spot, Hide and Move Silently checks: Druchii have keen senses and are very stealthy.
- Weapon Proficiency: Druchii receive Martial Weapon Proficiency for long spear, short sword, long sword, and dagger as a bonus feat.
- Weapon Familiarity: Druchii may treat whips and all manner of repeating crossbows as martial weapons rather than exotic weapons.
- Automatic Languages: Drukh-Eltharin. Bonus Languages: Common, Eltharin, Draconic, Dwarven, The Dark Tongue and any other languages appropriate for your campaign. You may also decide that all Druchii speak Common.
- Favourite class: Fighter.
 - Level Adjustment: +1: The Druchii are more powerful than standard races presented in the Playerís Handbook.

Druchii: The Low-Power variant

This variant treats Druchii as almost common elves from the Playerís Handbook. There is no Level Adjustment.

Druchii traits:

- +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution: Druchii are graceful and frail just like all other elves
- Druchii base speed is 30 feet
- Low-light vision as described in Player's Handbook
- +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against High Elves due to ever-burning hatred for their High kin.
- +2 racial bonus on all Listen and Spot checks: Druchii have keen senses.
- +1 to Difficulty Class of all Evocation, Illusion, Necromancy and Enchantment spells.
- Weapon Proficiency: Druchii receive Martial Weapon Proficiency for long spear, short sword, long sword, and dagger as a bonus feat.
- Weapon Familiarity: Druchii may treat whips and all manner of repeating crossbows as martial weapons rather than exotic weapons.
- Automatic Languages: Drukh-Eltharin. Bonus Languages: Common, Eltharin, Draconic, Dwarven, The Dark Tongue and any other languages appropriate for your campaign. You may also decide that all Druchii speak Common.
- Favourite class: Fighter.

Druchii: The High-Power Variant

In this variant, Druchii are far more powerful than mere humans. To compensate for this, they have a +2 Level Adjustment.

Druchii traits:

- +4 Dexterity, -2 Constitution, +4 Intelligence, +4 Charisma: Although as frail as all other elves, Druchii are graceful, cunning, attractive and display a great talent for magic.
- Druchii base speed is 40 feet: Druchii are very fast.
- Low-light vision as described in Player's Handbook
- +2 racial bonus on attack and damage rolls against High Elves due to ever-burning hatred for their High kin. In addition, threat range for all weapons wielded by Druchii against High Elves is doubled. The Druchii are experts in fighting their high kin.
- +4 racial bonus on all Listen, Spot, Balance, Hide and Move Silently checks: Druchii have keen senses and are very stealthy.
- Weapon Proficiency: Druchii receive Martial Weapon Proficiency for long spear, short sword, long sword, and dagger as a bonus feat.
- Weapon Familiarity: Druchii may treat whips and all manner of repeating crossbows as martial weapons rather than exotic weapons.
- Automatic Languages: Drukh-Eltharin. Bonus Languages: Common, Eltharin, Draconic, Dwarven, The Dark Tongue and any other languages appropriate for your campaign. You may also decide that all Druchii speak Common.
- +2 Racial Bonus to all Saving Throws against all spells and spell-like abilities.
- Favourite class: Fighter.
- Level Adjustment: +2: The Druchii are far more powerful than standard races presented in the Player's Handbook.



Additional Options:

There are several other options that you may add to the Druchii race, such as an extremely long lifespan, racial boni to all Saving Throws made to resist Chaos corruption, a +2 Saving Throw to all Survival and Constitution checks made to survive in cold climate, etc. I will try to present some druchii-specific racial feats in the next issues. (Loremastersí Note: If we decide to include another article about this, yes. ñ Nag).

Also, the most interesting thing about Druchii are their prestige classes, representing their elite forces, great combat training and skill.
And the first comesÖ

Druchii Executioner of Har-Ganeth!

Requirements:

To qualify to become an executioner, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Race: Druchii

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Power Critical, Weapon Focus: Draich (Greatsword), Weapon Specialization: Draich (Greatsword).

Skills: Heal 4 ranks (represents the knowledge of anatomy)

Alignment: any non-good, non-chaotic

Special: Characters must be accepted into the ranks of Executioners of Har-Ganeth by passing a test called ÆThe Trialí.

Note: Some executioners prefer the Executionerís Axe to the Draich. In this case, all boni apply to the Executionerís Axe (treat it like a great axe in all respects) rather than the Draich. Executioners must make this selection immediately upon gaining the first level in this prestige class.

Level -	BAB -	Fort Save -	Ref Save -	Will Save -	Special
1 +	1 +	2 +	0 +	0	Increased Threat Range
2 +	2 +	3 +	0 +	0	Greater Draich Focus
3 +	3 +	3 +	1 +	1	Power Critical +1
4 +	4 +	4 +	1 +	1	Improved Critical
5 +	5 +	4 +	1 +	1	Fast Execution
6 +	6 +	5 +	2 +	2	Power Critical +2
7 +	7 +	5 +	2 +	2	Greater Draich Specialization
8 +	8 +	6 +	2 +	2	
9 +	9 +	6 +	3 +	3	Power Critical +3
10 +	10 +	7 +	3 +	3	Draich of Dark Power

Class Features:

Hit Die: D10

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: Executioners gain no armour proficiency with any weapon or armour.

Increased Threat Range: Executioners know how to hit where it really hurts, delivering deadly blows to their opponents. The threat range of any draich held by an executioner is increased by 1 (To 18-20). Please note that Improved Critical feat further increases threat range only by 2 points to 16-20 and not 15-20.

Greater Draich Focus: At second level, executioners get Greater Weapon Focus (Draich) as a bonus feat.



Power Critical: At third level, executioners add +1 to all rolls to confirm critical hits when fighting with the Draich. This bonus stacks with boni granted by the Power Critical feat and increases to +2 at 6th level and to +3 at 9th level.

Improved Critical: At fourth level, executioners get Improved Critical (Draich) as a bonus feat.

Fast Execution: Starting at fifth level, executioners have mastered the art of execution. They can deliver a coup de grace as a standard action rather than a full-round action.

Greater Draich Specialization: At seventh level, executioners get the Greater Draich Specialization (Draich) as a bonus feat.

Draich of Dark Power: Upon reaching 10th level, an Executioner can proudly call himself the Master Executioner. He is gifted with a gift of dark power from Khaine himself. The dark power imbues any draich held by a Master Executioner making it vorpal. If the weapon wielded by a Master Executioner is already vorpal, then the decapitation effect applies on a natural roll of 19 and 20 instead of only 20.

If you like this first article, you might be able to find this in the next issue: Witch Elf Prestige Class together with powerful poisons from the Temple of Khaine and new equipment such as Witchblades!

Author: Svart
Initiative: Freelancing
Editor: Alkair
Loremaster: Nagathi



Malus Darkblade

Written by Nagathi

Malus Darkblade, the Soulless One, the Kinslayer, Scion of Hag Graef, Adventurer of the Chaos Wastes, Seeker of the Unholy Artefacts, and Renegade Warrior; many are the names for this bloodthirsty and cunning lord, but many dislike using him in their battles. Malus (means "Evil" on Latin – bad imagination from Games Workshop?) has a couple of disadvantages compared to his fellow Druchii special characters, but that does not make him any worse than them. I will explain how to use him properly.

So, he got lotsa names? That doesn't help me in combat!

Okay, first of all, we must look at where Malus shines during a battle. He is mounted on Spite, and thereby receives a movement of seven inches, thus a charge move of fourteen. With the relatively smart Spite, Malus does not have to worry about stupidity test, and even if he had to take those tests, it would not be such a big deal if Malus had already released Tz'Arkan, the daemon within him. With a leadership equal to our best lords, and the ability to re-roll failed leadership tests would make passing these tests a piece of cake. Not to mention his frenzy that actually makes him immune to stupidity (although Games Workshop would probably have fixed that as they did on our cold one knights in the cult list). Therefore, he has a decent movement and does not have to worry about Spite stopping in the middle of the field, wondering whether grass is grass or if blood is tasty; instead, he can continue speeding towards the enemy at all times.

Malus is born to fight and has the stats to do so effectively. When Tz'Arkan is released, unbound, taken into affect, liberated – call it whatever you want – he gets the fighting stats of a Chaos lord save the initiative and leadership, where Malus wins by two respectively one point. Do not worry, the frenzy gives Malus the fifth attack, I had not missed that. Therefore, we have a combat monster with decent movement; where do you think he should belong? In battle of course! It is very fluffy that such ruthless and bloodthirsty monsters, like Malus, has bad or no saves, instead focusing everything forward, killing everything that comes in his way (including fellow Druchii if you are unlucky).

Many people think that frenzy can be a downside from time to time due to the must-charge-if-possible rule together with the inability to flee as a charge reaction. However, in Malus' case, you should use the frenzy to his advantage, and it is easier done thanks to the fast (and somewhat cute) legs of Spite. I try to see this act of rage and thirst for blood as a way to never get failed charges. Think about it; if you never declare charges, you can never fail them. What does not exist cannot go wrong (even if our friend Murphy might disagree). Malus charges if he can and with that movement he possesses, you should be able to decide when and where to charge even if it is a compulsory charge.

Armour Save? What Armour Save?

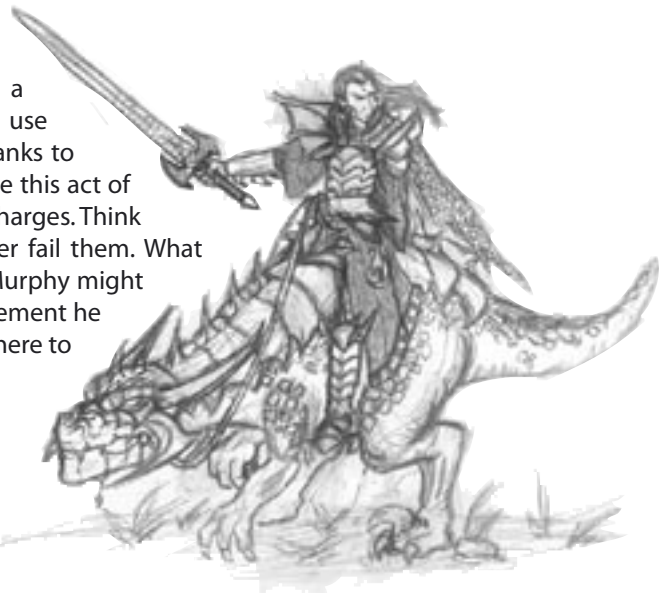
When reading through his statistics, rules, and items, most people are hung up on one thing – the lack of defensive capabilities. As all elves, Malus has a toughness of three, and his biggest disadvantage

in relation to Malekith, Morathi, and Shadowblade is his lack of ward

save. Not even his armour save is keeping an average standard for our lords and nobles.

With just a heavy armour and his trustworthy cold one (the one and only trustworthy cold one) he passes his armour saves on two out of three rolls from a strength three or lower attack. When he is up against enemy characters and more elite troops most people think of him as dead meat. However, that is not always the case, so let me explain why.

The importance lies in the target of choice. Malus is weak against enemy characters, and those should be avoided unless you are



completely
certain you can
eliminate him in the
first round of combat.

With a movement of seven
inches, you should be able to avoid
the most dangerous characters and instead
home in on enemy troopers, preferably
something hard with lots of armour such
as expensive knights or similar. Now, all you
have to do is to follow a complete combat
phase through in your mind.



First of all, Malus charges. As said, he cannot fail his charge. Malus then makes his five attacks with weapon skill nine, re-rolling any failed to-hit rolls if the enemy is Asur. On an average, Malus hits on three and one third of his attacks (four and four ninths against High Elves). This is based on the assumption of Malus hitting on 3+. Most elite expensive troops are toughness four, so here goes the statistics for that: 3 1/3 hits when wounding on 3+ gives 2 2/9 wounds. However, Malus gets to re-roll failed rolls to wound due to his Warpsword of Khaine, thus actually inflicting 2.962962963 wounds. Again, this is just on an average.

Since the Warpsword of Khaine ignores armour saves, and you are fighting normal troops, three enemy models should be dead. In the case of Asur, there would be 4.320987654 dead bodies (I am rounding the numbers off to a simple ten decimals instead of the actual, infinite, ones). See the table I have put together for an easier overlook. Note that this diagram also work for enemy characters without ward saves. Imagine that you are fighting a Dwarf thane; unless he has some ward save, you will do 2,963 wounds on him on an average. This diagram shows average numbers with decimals rounded to only three.

code:

Toughness	Hits	1st To-Wound	2nd To-Wound	TOTAL
1	3,333	2,778	0,463	3,241
2	3,333	2,778	0,463	3,241
3	3,333	2,778	0,463	3,241
4	3,333	2,222	0,741	2,963
5	3,333	1,667	0,833	2,500
6	3,333	1.111	0,741	1,852
7	3,333	0,556	0,926	1,481
8	3,333	0,556	0,926	1,481
9	3,333	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	3,333	N/A	N/A	N/A

Above: Table over Malus' effectiveness on an average against different toughness targets when Malus hits on 3+

Moreover, do not forget the greatest of all cold ones, Spite's, attacks. Two weapon skill three, strength four attacks are not to be underestimated. Against toughness three infantry, he might kill someone per turn, but against chosen Chaos knights of Khorne, those attacks will have a great deal of luck to even scratch the armour. Spite does 0.055555555 wounds on chaos knights, but together with Malus' attacks you will see 3.0185185185 dead lumps of chaos, which means that you can actually kill chosen Chaos knights of Khorne worth of 135.833333333 points. Per turn!

code:

Toughness	Hits	Wounds
1	1.000	0.833
2	1.000	0.833
3	1.000	0.667
4	1.000	0.500
5	1.000	0.333
6	1.000	0.167
7	1.000	0.167
8	1.000	N/A
9	1.000	N/A
10	1.000	N/A



Above: Spite's average damage chart against different toughness targets when hitting on 4+

Remember that these wounds are before any armour saves, but I would need a 3D model to bring in that aspect, and we all know that such a model is not possible in a magazine, be it on the web or real. Just add in the possibility for the enemy to fail his save. For example: if it is against an enemy spearman with toughness three and 5+ armour save, just take 0.5 and multiply it with 4/6. That would result in 0.333 dead spearmen.

With three or four dead models in base contact, there will be no, or maybe very few, attacks back, and Malus can thus survive in combat. The point of stress is "Malus charges", without that, if the enemy charges, Malus has some trouble staying alive. However, his toughness of five, high weapon skill, and 3+ armour save can keep him alive to strike back, and then everything is all right again. If he just manages to survive the first round of attacks at him, everything will be fine. His attacks back are just as lethal if Malus charges as if he gets charged. He gets to kill a couple of enemy models and should be able to not break from combat due to his lordly leadership and ability to re-roll it.

In subsequent turns Malus has the higher initiative (with the initiative of our assassins he supersedes any troopers in the Warhammer world) and strikes first, just as when he charged. The only time he can be beaten in combat on an average is if he gets charged and dies, or if he loses the combat resolution with so great modifiers that he cannot make his break test on two tries. Even then, if he breaks, he has a flee movement of 3D6", thus having a big chance of outrunning his pursuers and later on rally. His subordinate armour save and lack of ward is not going to be a trouble if you never have any living models in base contact able to attack you, and that is how to get around the issue.

Okay, okay. Enough with the numbers! Tell me where to put him

The deployment of Malus is as important as the actual use of him. Since the Screaming God-Child was so mean to poor Mr. Darkblade and imprisoned Tz'Arkan within his body (again...), Malus runs the risk of killing whoever stands next to him if "The Tz'Arkan Mode" is activated. This detriment is cancelled as soon as Malus reaches combat and has a "real" foe to kill. If not, and if a fellow Druchii is standing by his side instead, he will be killed by Malus' attacks, be so sure ye young one.

However, it only happens every other combat phase on an average (yet again I have to rely on "average" – not a good sign), but it is every combat phase, not only your own. Meaning one failed "rage test" per game

turn, i.e. six of them if you activate Tz'Arkan in the early stage of the game with a possibility for twelve failed tests per game (and we all know how good leadership tests for cold one-mounted models go for us Druchii commanders).

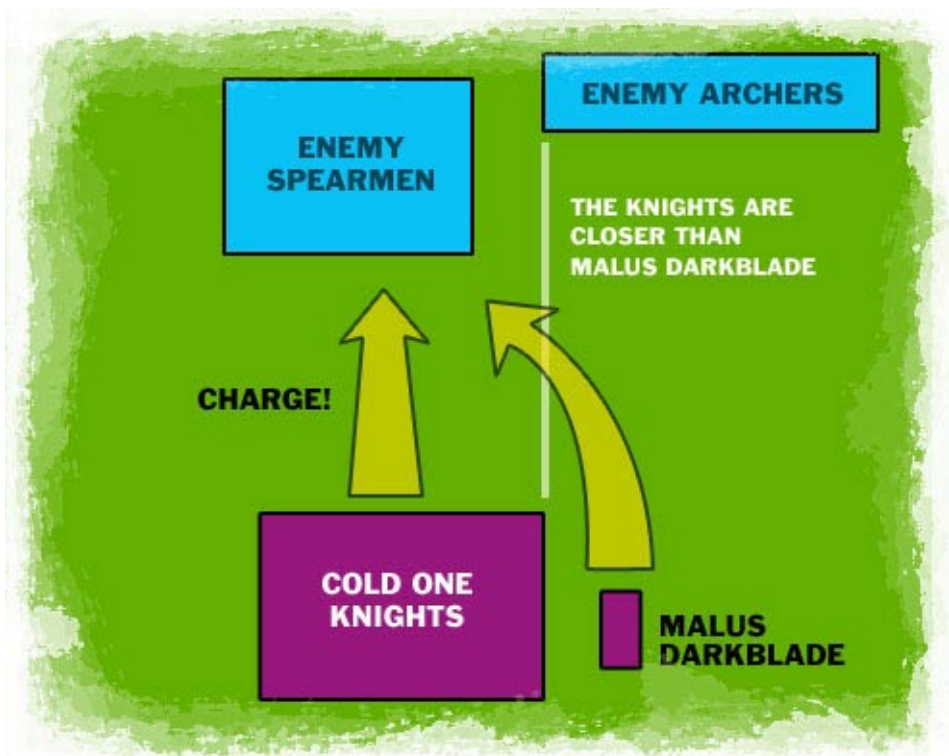
If you do not deploy Malus out alone, you have three choices. Either you put him together with an infantry unit, together with knights, or with the dark riders. Deploying with an infantry unit, or later joining one, is of no use at all. The only real affect that has is that Malus' movement is reduced to five inch and his manoeuvrability is severely abridged. He can still be shot at since he is of another size then his surrounding Druchii, so putting him with a unit of infantry is just plain stupid, and who wants a guy with a cold one's intelligence to play with the army?

Putting Malus together with fellow cold one riders seem to be the best option of the three. There he cannot be shot at with ordinary missile weapons (but beware of Hochland Long Rifles and the likes – weapons that can pick out characters even if within units), and his movement is not reduced. For appearance, it looks really good by having Malus in a unit of cold one knights, it ties him into a unity. However, our knights are our most expensive troopers, and that Tz'Arkan has his murderous rage even if Malus rides with his knightly partners. A fury of attacks and ignoring armour with a high strength is the certain death of those 29 points of cold one nobility. Maybe putting him among the knights was not such a good idea after all...

Putting him amid the dark riders might work better. Considering that the unit becomes slow (a unit always moves at the rate of its slowest member at the best), and harder to manoeuvre due to the expanded frontage speaks against this choice of deployment. Even if it were to be cool to have Malus in a fast flanking unit to rip the sides of the enemy apart and roll up his entire army, Malus is stuck on his relatively slow steed, and the possibility of a fast Malus is hard to achieve.

Ahhh yes... right... Malus nowhere... now, that's smart...

We need to find him another alternative for deployment, and there is only one option left. Simply put, deploy Malus by himself, where he cannot kill his comrades. Of course, you can place Malus together with the knights and wait to trigger Tz'Arkan until a combat nears, but he will loose one of the bonuses of frenzy, and the immunity to stupidity. If among cold one knights, he cannot even use the re-roll on leadership tests for stupidity. A unit can use a character's leadership, but not any rules he may have with it. My advice to you, young Druchii commander, is to deploy Mr. Darkblade alone, out of a unit, but close enough to a nice and strong unit of cold one knights so normal shooting cannot target him. See image below:



*Above: The enemy archers cannot shoot at Malus because the Knights are closer.
Graphic is courtesy of MDK.*

Activate Tz'Arkan immediately to be assured he can survive a blast from any shooting that still may occur (Malus will sometimes be the closest target, and then the 5" rule cease to apply). A character alone is better off without having to worry that much about psychology tests from panic due to nearby fleeing friends and the like, as well as the increased toughness, but above all: the frenzy. As I said long ago (in the fourth paragraph if you want to re-read it), you can and must use frenzy to your advantage. No failed charges and immunity to panic, terror, and all other psychology is just thirst-quenching for a character like Malus Darkblade. Drink it up, baby!



What you need to watch out for are enemy units that strike first, even against chargers. Druchii assassins with the Blade of Ruin, Touch of Death and Sword of Might; Rune of Khaine and Manbane, or any other nasty combination, are a constant threat when Druchii fight Druchii with Malus. Even though we, the true first speakers, the merciless ones, would never fight against our own kin, this could happen (Loremaster's Note: In the upcoming (or ongoing when this is published) civil war, that is a great possibility – Nag). Those who strike before Malus and have a decent amount of attacks are to be avoided. Assassins are most often hidden in units and undetectable thus hard to avoid, and it is always hard to avoid something you do not know where it is – or so methinks.

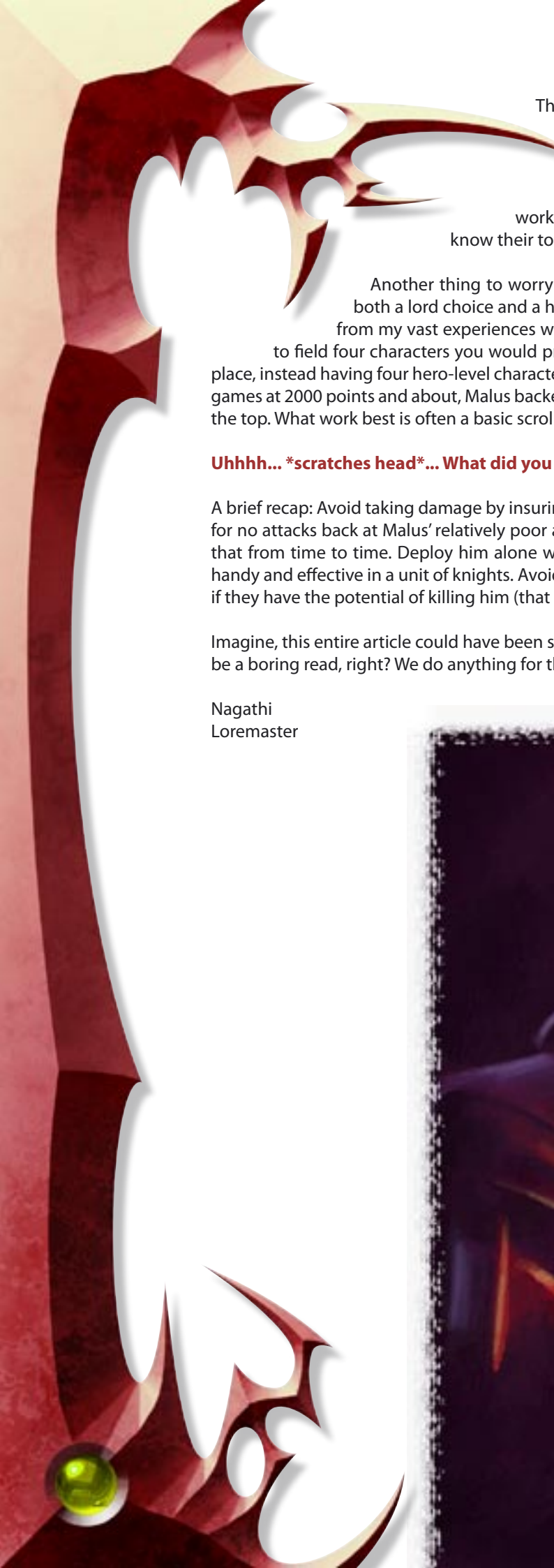
So Malus is good n' all... But is he effective enough for his cost?

Malus is expensive, no doubt about that, but he is cost effective. He is not a straight up character killer who can slay them single-handedly – if that is what you want, go get yourself Shadowblade, the Master of Assassins for pretty much the same points. No, Malus excels at killing troopers, preferably expensive ones with lots of armour to ignore. You might not be lucky enough to face chosen Chaos knights of Khorne in all your battles and get Malus in combat with them each time, thus killing those odd 136 points per turn. Instead, you might have other enemies to slay, and enemy characters to dispose.



When facing an enemy character and you either cannot or will not take another route, you need to remember the effectiveness diagram I showed earlier. It is never any good to rely on average dice rolling, but to decide whether to engage or run you need to do a fast calculation of your chances. It happens quite often that the two opposing generals face each other in a single combat, and that is not a good sign for Malus. Although possible, Malus is better off killing troopers then getting killed himself by the enemy general – unless the general is a wizard, which makes it a whole other story and the fight look a bit more promising for Malus – unless it is a Chaos wizard, which makes us go back to the first kind of story again.

In the world of Warhammer, there are more things than troopers and characters on the battlefields. You guessed it (or not...) – I am talking about monsters. A common question could be if Mr. Kinslayer can slay these foul creatures as well; just as good as with regular troopers (is there anything that earns the right to be called 'regular' in Warhammer?). The answer is proudly presented in the same ol' diagram near the beginning of this ever-longer article.



The table extends up to enemy toughness ten, so all monsters would be included. As far as I know, which is not to say a lot though (Editor's Note: But still more than most – Lethalis), there are not many monsters out there with a ward save against magical attacks, so the table should work against most creatures you will encounter – as long as you know their toughness.

Another thing to worry about is the slots the Scion of Hag Graef seizes. He counts as both a lord choice and a hero one, meaning one less character for you to bring. However, from my vast experiences with Druchii army lists, that is nothing of a biggie. If you wanted to field four characters you would probably not even have considered Malus Darkblade in the first place, instead having four hero-level characters to lower the severe points sink those characters would be. In games at 2000 points and about, Malus backed up by two sorceresses and a noble is a bit expensive and over the top. What work best is often a basic scroll caddy and a supporting noble with the Seal of Ghron.

Uhhhh... *scratches head*... What did you say again?

A brief recap: Avoid taking damage by insuring you get the charge or attack first. Kill enough enemy models for no attacks back at Malus' relatively poor armour. Never forget any of his special rules; we all seem to do that from time to time. Deploy him alone with Tz'Arkan activated for best results, even though he can be handy and effective in a unit of knights. Avoid people who strike Malus before Malus strikes them, especially if they have the potential of killing him (that one seemed pretty obvious). I think that is all.

Imagine, this entire article could have been squeezed into a single paragraph – but then the Monthly would be a boring read, right? We do anything for the readers these days...

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Malus Darkblade

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Many are the battles fought by Malus Darkblade of Hag Graef, the Kinslayer, as he roamed, soulless, about the Chaos Wastes. He fought alone, and he fought for others. Always he sought to die, but never did he find an opponent capable of killing him. His exploits were such that his name became known by night on every tribe of the Wastes, and his services were highly valued. Here are two tales of such exploits.

The Dance of Flesh and Steel

"Do you really think you can defeat me, a chosen warrior of Slaanesh?" sneered the anointed.

"I shall cut you down. Just as I have countless others who counted themselves among the chosen of their god" replied Malus with a smug grin.

"Ah," replied the Anointed, drawing his sword "But I am a foe the likes of which you have never encountered. For I am an Anointed of Slaanesh. The first followers of Morathi and the Cult of Pleasure. I am older even than your great lord Malekith. For I was among the warriors who rescued Morathi from the clutches of a Chaos war band. I stood beside the first Phoenix King in many battles. And I have defeated many warriors who were more than a match for yourself."

"Perhaps you have," retorted the noble "But I doubt that any of those opponents wielded the Warpsword of Khaine!" With this, Malus made to attack his opponent, but the anointed moved faster than Malus could have imagined, and the Dark Elf was struck across the back. Still wincing in pain, Malus swung around, and hit his opponent unawares, but the impact caused no damage. This foe truly was unlike any Malus had ever encountered, for he was quick as lightening, and protected by the darkest of blessings.

The anointed, completely unfazed, backed away quickly from Malus, laughing maniacally. Before Malus could attack his opponent, the fiend whispered a few short words in a tongue indecipherable to Malus. With these words, the air before the anointed's neck seemed to fracture, and a long whip of sparkling energy emerged, striking Malus, and filling him with unbearable agony. As Malus writhed in his torture, he looked upon the face of his foe. Though the anointed's near translucent blue skin, and black eyes betrayed little emotion, Malus could see that his foe envied him this agony.

Disgusted at his hated foe, Malus rose, and thrust the Warpsword through the anointed's thigh. At this, the anointed howled into the air. Whether that howl was in agony or ecstasy, Malus knew not, nor did he care. The anointed fell to his knees, and Malus drew the blade from his foe's flesh, causing the fallen warrior to moan with pleasure.

"So, this is the best that you've got! Chosen warrior!" said Malus, mockingly.

"It would seem," replied the anointed, breathing heavily, "that I have underestimated my foe. You are truly the most worthy opponent that I have faced in many millennia."

"Tell me, Slaaneshi, what is your name. For I would have it before I part you from your head."

"Ahureh Madhahk" replied the anointed.

"Well, Ahureh Madahk," said Malus, raising his sword. "I think that we can safely say that I am in fact, the better warrior." With that, Malus brought down his mighty sword to kill the powerful anointed. Ahureh, however, was not to be so easily beaten. Moving unerringly quickly, the anointed spun over on the ground and onto his feet, and struck Malus across the face with his shield.

Malus bellowed with rage at his inability to dispatch his foe. His anger now knew no bounds, and he fought like an enraged daemon. Each of his strikes hit his foe, and brought with it cries of ecstasy from Ahureh. Even the mighty anointed could not stand against this unstoppable foe. Soon Ahureh was once more, on his knees, waiting for the killing blow.

With a scream of rage that was probably heard all across the Chaos Wastes; Malus drove the Warpsword through his opponent's torso. Ahureh's cries of joy soon dribbled away as he choked on his own blood and he fell, his body broken, at Malus' feet.

"How the mighty fall," spat Malus, calling Spite, so that the cold one might feast upon the still warm cadaver.

Tonic

A great stream of filth followed Malus' blade as he withdrew it from the bloated warrior whose screams were a gurgled, phlegm filled moan. The Warpsword sizzled as the pestilent pieces of the warrior stuck on its surface were evaporated away.

"Disgusting whelp." hissed Malus.

Malus felled a dozen more diseased warriors in a matter of minutes. Looking around, he saw that the Tzeentch war band that had hired him to fight a war band of their patron's sworn enemy, Nurgle, was not faring quite so well as he. They had underestimated the power of the nurglesques, and were falling to their superior numbers. One of the Tzeentch champions stood on a nearby hill, casting spell after spell into their opponent's ranks, but it was not enough.

All around him, Malus' allies were being stricken by the hideous poxes and plagues. The Nurgle worshippers clearly had a powerful sorcerer among their ranks. For the Tzeentch champions barely dispelled a single magical attack. Malus knew that this battle would not end well for Tzeentch.

Malus made his way. Slowly threw the pestilent ranks of Nurgle, killing as he went. He cut a path down the centre of their lines, as he searched for the one who cast all those hideous spells. He found the sorcerer, born aloft upon a horribly mutated steed. Malus almost retched at the site of the plague horse, for it was truly the most disgusting thing he had ever seen. The skin of its torso was gone, and threw its rib cage Malus could see its bloated organs, festering with innumerable ills. The flesh on its face writhed with something Malus cared not to identify. Its eyes were gone, and Malus could not conceive of it could see. The stench it produced was worse than that of a thousand corpses, and Malus could verily see the gases escaping from its corrupted form.

The Sorcerer atop the plague horse had not yet noticed Malus, consumed as he was with his dark workings. Malus struck out at his diseased form, and pierced his chaos armour. As he withdrew his sword, Malus saw that he had ripped out the sorcerer's heart. The sorcerer, now aware of his would be foe, reared his horse in preparation to attack Malus. Spite however, would not see his master killed so easily, and tore the plague horse's head from its body.

The horse disappeared as it fell, and its rider fell flat-faced on the ground. As the enraged sorcerer rose, Malus saw something that would haunt his dreams forever. A nurgling climbed out of the hole that Malus had put through the sorcerer, and fell the ground. Kicking the hideous thing away, Malus prepared to strike down his foe. Jumping off Spite, Malus swung around; the Warpsword extended from his body, and removed the sorcerer's head.

His task of removing the war band's leader down complete, Malus returned his attention to the other warriors. Remounting Spite, Malus charged back into the enemy ranks, and prepared to slaughter the worshippers of the plague god.

So you see, Elf of true blood, Malus is truly one of the greatest warriors in the service of the Witch King. His deeds are great, and his wrath, even greater. Consider yourself lucky that the Kinslayer of Hag Graef, will always be fighting on your side.



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