

WARHAMMER
40,000

KILL TEAM™



THE WRITHING SHADOW
GENESTEALERS KILL TEAM

INTRODUCTION

Vermillion clearance advisory; the document before you contains all collected information on the xenoform threat codified Nemesis 9, or 'the Writhing Shadow'. These alien hunter-organisms have taken an alarming toll upon Vigilus defence forces, and seem only to be escalating their operations...

The Tyranids are an alien threat of terrifying magnitude. Their rapacious hive fleets drive like talons into the galaxy's yielding flesh, surging from the intergalactic void with the unstoppable certainty of death. They cannot be reasoned or bargained with, or appealed to. They do not think or feel like the galaxy's other races, for they have no interest in territorial conquest or individual glory. The Tyranids are a faceless, endless swarm of bioengineered weapon-beasts driven by a vast and utterly ineffable consciousness known as the Hive Mind; their only goal appears to be the slaughter and consumption of every last living thing and natural resource in the entire galaxy.

Often, the Tyranids achieve their aims by sheer overwhelming force, blanketing each prey world in the psychic distortion-field known as the Shadow in the Warp before descending in endless waves of claws, fangs and rippling chitin to overwhelm the isolated defenders. A true apex predator understands that sometimes it must use subtlety, however. Thus the Hive Mind has also been witnessed deploying infiltrator organisms and vanguard broods of Genestealers that slip behind the prey's defences to wreak havoc.

Within this booklet you will find all Imperial intelligence gathered upon one such brood of Genestealers, which can be built using the models supplied in this box. An exciting piece of fiction shows the Writhing Shadow on the hunt, after which you will be provided access to the disturbing findings of Inquisitor Lysette Astomar on the hunting patterns, potential lairs and composition of this singularly deadly brood, as generated from the background tables in the Kill Team Core Manual.

A timeline of this Genestealer kill team's bloody exploits follows, after which you will find a showcase of beautifully painted Citadel Miniatures. Not only does this section show off the predatory magnificence of this xenos brood, but it also serves as a guide to help you build and paint them for yourself.

Whether you choose to recreate the Writhing Shadow, or simply draw inspiration from the background material in order to fashion your own terrifying pack of warrior-bioforms, you will find this booklet a valuable source of inspiration and guidance. Remember, there is no correct way to collect and paint your miniatures, just as long as you heed the will of the Hive Mind...



INCIDENT FILE 227//54.1

The interior of the Taurox was close and warm, lit red by tactical lumen. Converted for command, much of the vehicle's troop bay was taken up by cogitator banks, vox uplinks and auspex arrays. Upon the largest of these machines, a set of vid-screens glowed. They limned the craggy features of Tempestor Prime Gresmund Sorl, who hunched over them.

Standing at his back, swathed in ruddy shadows, was a second figure. She was tall, powerfully built and clad in baroque carapace armour. The light from the monitors caught the violet glint of her augmetic pupils, and the Inquisitorial rosette that clasped a theldrite-laced cloak across one shoulder.

Each vid-screen displayed the feed from a helmet-cam, six direct feeds from the squad of Tempestus Scions undertaking this classified operation.

'Approaching Munitorium Warehouse Nine-Four-Four from south concourse,' crackled the voice of the Squad's Tempestor, Griss.

'Acknowledged,' said Sorl. 'Situational appraisal?'

'No signs of movement, negative contact on auspex,' replied Griss. 'The building's dark. All machine spirits appear to have been silenced.'

'South concourse entrance shows signs of forced entry,' reported Scion Kastor. Sorl saw the wreckage of the sturdy doorway through Kastor's vid-feed.

'Blast patterns consistent with PDF forced entry tactics,' said Scion Velov, the squad's demolitions expert.

'So the local sweep team made it this far,' said Sorl. 'Then what happened to them?'

'They met Nemesis Nine,' murmured the shadowy figure at his shoulder. 'And then they all died.'

'With respect, Inquisitor Astromar, I will reserve judgement until I am presented with visual evidence of the soldiers' fate,' said Sorl.

'Are your Scions prepared for what they are about to face?' She asked. 'You have impressed upon them the sheer lethality of this foe, yes?'

'They have undergone full subconscious inload of all pertinent mission intelligence,' said Sorl, gruffly.

'I see,' said Inquisitor Astromar. 'Let us hope, then, that comprehension equates understanding.'

Sorl bit down on an angry retort. He ran a final, intense check of the pict-feeds and auspex data his squad were sending back. Satisfied that his warriors were dispersed in parade-ground-perfect deployment around the sundered doorway, he nodded.

'Do we have your clearance to proceed, my lady?' Sorl asked.

'Clearance given,' said Astromar, her eyes gleaming intently, her gaze fixed upon the monitors. 'Begin the hunt.'

'Significant PDF casualties,' came Griss' voice as the Scions entered the warehouse. On the monitors, Sorl saw a high-ceilinged atrium replete with statues on plinths and huge Aquila banners hanging down the walls. He saw a rampart-like administration desk, a wide set of metal stairs leading up to the first floor data-cloisters, and heavy double-doors set into the back wall over which a sign in Low Gothic read CONVEYOR/STORAGE CHAMBER 4.

He also saw bodies, over two-dozen slung around the chamber like rag dolls. They were torn open, discarded, draped across the desk and slumped bonelessly against the walls. In the gloom, their blood looked black.

'Lumen,' ordered Griss. As one, his squad activated their shoulder-mounted stablights. Lines of pure white sliced through the darkness, revealing the horrified expressions and mangled weapons of the fallen men and women.

'Bodies have been eviscerated, some amputations and decapitations,' reported Scion Jensling. The barrels of her hot-shot volley gun jutted pugnaciously into the vid-feed as she panned it left and right.

'That's their modus operandi - sheer, cruel savagery,' said Astromar, and Sorl found himself uncomfortable at her fascinated tone.

'Negative contacts on auspex, no visual,' said Griss. 'Orders?'

'Split into sweep teams,' said Sorl. 'Griss, Kastor, T'chen, push up into the conveyor and storage chamber. Velov, Jensling, Datch, you have the first floor data-cloisters. Let's do this right, Scions.'

'The Emperor protects,' replied Griss, flashing quick hand signals to set Sorl's orders in motion.

The Tempestor Prime flicked his attention back and forth between the vid-feeds as the two teams separated. One set of images showed a steady ascent of the corpse-strewn stairs, revealing a broad landing at their crest. It led onto spartan-looking office cloisters divided by stained-glass partitions.

The other images showed Griss lead Kastor and T'chen up to and then through the heavy double doors, heaving the unpowered portals open with brute force. Beyond, a cavernous space was revealed, inert industrial conveyor belts winding silent and still between high stacks of armoured cargo containers. Dead servitors hung in their restraint-cradles, lens eyes dull, corpse-flesh slowly rotting.

'Still no movement, nothing on auspex,' reported Griss. 'Advancing into the chamber.'

'Acknowledged,' said Sorl. 'Watch your flanks in there, Tempestor.'

'Yes, sir,' came Griss' brisk response.

'Possible contact,' Velov's voice crackled from the

vox-speakers. Sorl felt his heart-rate climb slightly and flicked his attention to the Scion's vid-feed.

'I see nothing on auspex,' said Sorl, noting that the upper team had halted in firing crouches. They were playing their stablights through the cloisters, raising vivid splashes of colour as the lumen beams caught the stained glass. He saw the face of some haloed local saint, a sorrowful expression on its features, there and gone in an instant.

'There is an... oppressive sense,' said Velov, struggling to articulate his unease.

'Confirmed,' said Jensling. 'Posit possible xeniform psychic threat.'

'Inquisitor?' asked Sorl.

'Nemesis Nine have no psykers amongst their ranks,' she said quietly. 'But proximity to the Terror does tend to unsettle even the stoutest souls. Danger is near, Tempestor Prime.'

'The Terror?' he asked, unable to entirely keep the distaste from his tone.

'Codename Nemesis Crucius,' she said. 'I felt the sobriquet to be fitting.'

'Upper team—' began Sorl, but a report from Griss cut him off.

'Contact contact, solid auspex return,' barked the Tempestor.

'Visual, three o'clock,' said Scion T'chen, and the sudden glare of hot-shot las fire filled the vid-feed as the lower team let fly. Sorl saw shadowy figures dashing between the container stacks, hunched things with too many limbs leaping and bounding, scurrying along the walls with their lashing claws.

'Possible hit,' said Kastor.

'Tracking multiple contacts,' said Griss. 'They're pulling back from our fire. Pursuing.'

'Acknowledged,' said Sorl. 'Upper team, use of single-ampoule combat stimms authorised to negate deleterious aura. Advance in trident formation on location of source.'

On the vid-feeds, the team moved up, Jensling stalking towards the cloister while Velov flanked right and Datch left.

'Reading someth—'

Velov's words were cut off as a hideous nest of bone hooks and writhing tendrils burst from a floor grille at his feet. There came a terrible sound of armour and flesh being punctured. His vid-feed lurched violently forward as he was dragged off balance with enormous force. There was a crunch and a scream, the howl of hot-shot lasfire, then another crunch as the footage cut out.

At the same moment, Jensling's feed lit with vivid blasts as she was caught amidst Velov's wild fire. Stained glass exploded and Jensling hissed in pain.

'Jensling, threat forward,' barked Sorl as the auspex flashed. He saw her try to swing her volley gun to bear as a hissing abomination lunged from the shadows. The volley gun blitzed las rounds, its

flaring muzzle illuminating the hideous form of a Genestealer. Talons flashed, and Jensling's camera hit the ground with a thud. A severed arm lay twitching in shot.

'Contact contact, auspex returns front, right flank, left flank. Throne, they're all around us,' this from Griss, his voice tight over the howl of las fire.

'Griss, hold position, suppressing fire,' ordered Sorl. 'Datch, fall back on Griss.'

Vox pips came back, all the answers his Scions had time for. On Datch's feed, fire blossomed as the Scion hurled frag grenades to cover his retreat. Something shadowy leapt amongst them, hissing as it was driven back. Sorl glanced at the Inquisitor despite himself, and his scowl deepened at the rapt fascination he saw on her features.

'Contact down,' sang T'chen, then let out a plosive gasp of pain. Blood sprayed his feed, and through the crimson mess Sorl saw the Scion being hiked bodily upwards, bouncing against the side of a stack of containers. The image rolled vertiginously, showing xenos fangs closing upon T'chen's helm. There came an awful crunching, slurping sound before the feed cut out.

'Requesting permission to fall back,' voxed Griss, his plasma pistol screaming.

'Given,' snapped Sorl, pointedly not looking to the Inquisitor. 'Fall back to the administration desk and use it as a bulwark.'

Sorl saw Datch's feed reach to the top of the stairs, then spin around. Something impossibly fast struck the helm, and the image burst with static as Datch was hurled down the stairs.

'Throne damn it,' said Sorl, his composure slipping for a moment.

He watched the two remaining feeds jolt as the Scions ran for the doors to the chamber. One feed lurched suddenly sideways, Kastor giving a ragged scream of pain as something hit him from the side. Blood sprayed as his feed jolted again, then rolled to a stop, the decapitated head staring back at Kastor's twitching body. It still stood, impaled upon Genestealer claws.

Griss shouldered the doors open with a snarl. A huge shape thumped down in front of him. His feed showed the Genestealer loom, acid dripping from its slaver jaws. Griss raised his pistol and the thing lunged, biting his arm off at the elbow. The feed wobbled but didn't fall, and Sorl heard the sound of a power fist crackling.

'Come on then, you—'

Griss' voice cut out abruptly as the Genestealer lunged again. The last feed went dead.

Reflected in the blank monitors, Sorl saw the Inquisitor shake her head then turn away, sweeping from the Taurox's troop bay without a word.

He waited until she was gone before he roared his anger and put his fist through the console...

CODIFIED: NEMESIS 9

Tyrannid vanguard organisms are often stealthy, and invariably lethal. When a string of strange disappearances and bloody murders led across the Nachmund Sector towards the planet of Vigilus, it was not long before an Inquisitor of the Ordo Xenos suspected such creatures' involvement.

First, there were the mysterious deaths of three hundred pilgrims aboard the depopulated transporter *Holy Sanctum*. Next, the mining colony of Asteroid CXXI dropped out of contact; by the time its populace were found floating and eviscerated in chambers exposed to hard vacuum, the perpetrators were long gone. The Saint Iscabel massacre, the macabre death of Captain Lasandros Gnell and his entire command staff, ghost stories told by frightened labourers in the strato-spans of Xakan Prime; all were clues to the relentless advance of a terrible alien threat, blood spots upon a map that described a trail towards the sanctum world of Vigilus.

Amidst the endless martial furore of the 41st Millennium, it was a trail few were capable of seeing, yet there are those who watch for just such insidious terrors. Inquisitor Lysette Astromar of the Holy Ordo Xenos was just such a one, and with her small retinue of devoted acolytes, she followed the trail of the murderers towards their apparent destination. Lady Astromar saw tell-tale signs that others might have missed, in claw wounds, acid spatters and biological fragments left embedded deep within slain corpses. She knew with cold certainty what it was she hunted: Genestealers.

Lady Astromar built a profile of her quarry, utilising pict captures and vid-feeds from servo-skulls and Adeptus Arbites monitoring units. She studied hunting patterns, habitual behaviours, favoured victims and methods of murder employed by the creatures she sought. Gradually, Astromar was able to identify bio-weaponry and specialisations, codifying the brood itself as Nemesis 9 – the ninth such pack of xenos terrors she had hunted in her storied career – and the beasts that made up its ranks as Nemesis Alpha, Beta, Crucius, Decima, Enigmus, Fulgaris, Geminon and Hades.

The more that Astromar learned, the more she realised that the creatures she trailed were an especially dangerous example of their sort. The urgency of her hunt increased with each revelation, for it had become clear to her that Nemesis 9 were amongst the most intelligent and murderous beasts she had ever seen.

THE KRAKEN'S SPAWN

All of Nemesis 9 – or 'the Writhing Shadow' as the PDF squads of Vigilus came to know them – displayed the uniform colourations common to creatures of Hive

Fleet Kraken. Yet each was a distinct and dangerous organism in its own right. Astromar identified one beast amongst the brood as their leader, the creature whose imperatives the others followed instinctively. This Genestealer, Nemesis Alpha, was an acid-mawed killer of prodigious size that she soon nicknamed 'Spitter' for its predilection for vomiting sizzling mucous into the faces of its screaming victims. Nemesis Alpha exhibited almost paternal behaviours towards the other beasts in its brood, not only directing them but also husbanding their strength and defending their temporary haunts with vicious fervour.

Nemesis Beta, Astromar came to know as 'the Shadow'. This fiend displayed an almost supernatural ability to slink silently through the shadows, utilising apparently impossible routes of approach towards its victims and striking only when the moment was right. Astromar noted that Beta left hidden trails of biospore in its wake for the rest of the brood to follow, allowing them to bypass threats that it had detected. It also put paid to a great many hapless sentries and guards, its barbed flesh hooks exploding suddenly from dark vents or inspection hatches to drag them wordlessly to their deaths.

Nemesis Crucius was amongst the most horrifying of the brood's beasts; older and tougher than its comrades, with vicious talons and an extended carapace, Crucius appeared to be the veteran of many bloody hunts. Yet it was the nebulous sense of unease that its presence evoked that was most terrifying, leading warriors to fumble their blades or panic when they should have stood their ground.

Slinking in Crucius' shadow came Nemesis Decima, nicknamed 'the Minder'. This foul creature was utterly lethal at close quarters, and displayed an alarming tendency to crack open the skulls of its victims and devour their cerebral matter. Astromar posited that some form of direct information transfer was performed during this grisly process, a claim she supported with footage of Decima entering access codes into keypads shortly after devouring the brains of the sentries that had stood watch over them.

With the remainder of the brood hunting with perfect synchronicity around these nodes of clawed bio-horrors, Nemesis 9 were a dreadful threat to the safety of the Imperial holdings upon Vigilus...





Nemesis Hades



Nemesis Geminon



Nemesis Beta 'The Shadow',
Scout Specialist with flesh hooks



Nemesis Decima 'Mindeater',
Combat Specialist with
scything talons



On the depopulated asteroid refinery of Xanadyr 663, the Writhing Shadow pounce upon an unwitting strike team of T'au Fire Warriors.



Nemesis Enigmus
with scything talons



Nemesis Alpha 'Spitter', Kill Team
Leader with acid maw



Nemesis Crucius 'The Terror', Veteran
Specialist with scything talons



Nemesis Fulgaris



THE VOID HUNT

During Inquisitor Astromar's hunt for Nemesis 9, both before and after their arrival upon Vigilus, she noted certain key events that demonstrated their terrifying abilities, and marked moments where the Genestealers adapted and advanced their skills as hunters to an ever more deadly level.

M41 SHADOWTRAIL

The Holy Sanctum

Panic engulfs the orbital docks of Pardosia after the pilgrim transporter *Holy Sanctum* makes its scheduled rendezvous. Upon opening the transport decks, the crew and dockers are horrified to find every last pilgrim butchered, the walls painted in gore, and no sign of the perpetrators aboard the ship. Officially, the slaughter is marked as unknown malefic interdiction. However, coded missives are sent, and Inquisitor Astromar begins her investigation.

Asteroid CXXI

Having gained access to the station aboard a servitor ore-shuttle, the predatory beasts of Nemesis 9 stalk the corridors and chambers of mining asteroid CXXI. After Nemesis Decima destroys the station's only deep-space vox array, the miners are cut off and their militia slaughtered one by one. By the time the desperate survivors vent the interior of the asteroid to space, it is already far too late...

Death Gnell

With Inquisitor Astromar now hot on their tracks, Nemesis 9 display unthinkable cunning by striking at a high-value Imperial command asset in order to spread panic and obfuscate their movements. Nemesis Beta infiltrates the bunker of Captain Lasandros Gnell of the 54th Korvian Dragoons, laying a trail past the sentries for its broodmates to follow. The Genestealers burst from concealment into the heart of the bunker, rapidly butchering their victims and eating the secrets right out of Gnell's brain before vanishing again. They leave behind them a

panicked furore that sees the entire planet locked down against possible invasion, and that delays Astromar's pursuit by weeks.

The Ghosts of Xakan Prime

Driven onwards by the ineffable will of the Hive Mind, Nemesis 9 span the stars as stowaways on freighters, warships, drifting wrecks and more. Infiltrating the pan-atmospheric strato-spans of Xakan Prime, they seek transport towards Vigilus. During their time there, Nemesis Crucius pursues a deliberate campaign of terror, leading Nemesis Fulgaris and Nemesis Hades in a series of murderous attacks that misdirect local Arbites forces. So preoccupied do their sweep teams become with the eviscerated corpses found in the strato-vent exchange sumps, their vigilance around the orbital docking relays relaxes, and Nemesis 9 are able to slip off-world.

M41 BEFORE THE STORM

Blood and Ink

Before infiltrating Vigilus itself, Nemesis 9 briefly ghost through the scriptorums of Neovellum. Only when Inquisitor Astromar catches up to them, and launches an attack at the head of a Deathwatch Kill Team against the brood nest, do the Genestealers abandon their lair. In the wake of the fighting, it transpires that Nemesis Decima has devoured the minds of dozens of high level adepts, and has thus learned a frightening amount regarding the operations of the Adeptus Munitorum on Vigilus.

Into the Hive Sprawl

Fearful whispers of an entity or entities known as the Writhing

Shadow spread through the labourers and PDF of the Munitorum macro-yards on the continent of Hyperia. Entire crews are found butchered, or not found at all. Servitor units are torn apart at an alarming rate. Several PDF squads sent in by the Munitorum to reinforce the yards' patrols simply vanish without a trace. There is consternation amongst Hyperian Munitorum Command, until Inquisitor Astromar arrives amongst them and explains the nature of the threat they face. With productivity and resupply rates dropping by the day, and menial work crews fleeing into the underhabs rather than risk the Writhing Shadow, the Munitorum are only too quick to obey the Inquisitor's demands for suitable manpower. The hunt begins.

Stormbreak

As the Great Rift billows across the stars, Vigilus is cut off and plunged into anarchy. Amidst the darkness, Nemesis 9 evade one ill-fated Imperial hunting party after another. They have achieved communion with the Patriarch of the Genestealer Cults upon the planet, falling partly under his sway while at the same time, acting as envoys and harbingers for their hive fleet. As the Cult of the Pauper Princes begins their uprising on Vigilus, and the planet is plunged into war on many fronts, Nemesis 9 continue with their own, inscrutable hunt. If any truly knows what function they are to perform upon Vigilus for the Hive Mind, it is Nemesis Alpha, but for all others they remain a terrifying and shadowy presence, whose campaign of murder only increases as the violence on the sanctuary world escalates...



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Few organisms are as rapacious as the Tyranids.
Surging at the forefront of their advance come
elite vanguard beasts of truly terrifying aspect...

The Tyranids are a deadly alien threat from beyond the fringes of the known galaxy. Merciless and implacable, their hive fleets push ever further into occupied space, burying world after world in swarming warrior-organisms that slaughter and then devour everything in their path. This booklet contains the assembled findings of Inquisitor Lysette Astromar upon a vanguard brood of especially deadly bioforms. Codenamed Nemesis 9, or simply 'the Writhing Shadow', this Genestealer brood are shown in horrific action against the soldiery of the Imperium, alongside an analysis and history of their vicious deeds, and profiles of the individual killers that make up this exceptionally lethal brood.

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