

DARK HERESY™

HEED THE HIGHER CALL™

A COMPENDIUM OF
ASCENSION SECRETS

WARHAMMER
40,000
ROLEPLAY



CREDITS

LEAD DEVELOPER

Ross Watson

WRITTEN BY

Andy Hoare

ADDITIONAL WRITING BY

Mack Martin

EDITING

Leigh Anne Gross

DARK HERESY DESIGNED BY

Owen Barnes, Kate Flack, and Mike Mason

GRAPHIC DESIGN & LAYOUT

Kevin Childress, Mack Martin, and Mark Raynor

COVER ART

Henning Ludvigsen

INTERIOR ART

John Blanche, Matt Bradbury, Simon Eckert, Theo Stylianides, Tiernan Trevallion and Liu Yang

ART DIRECTION

Zoë Robinson

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Gabe Laulunen

FFG LEAD GAME PRODUCER

Michael Hurley

PUBLISHER

Christian T. Petersen

PROOFREADERS

Jay Little, Thaadd Powell, James Savage, and Paul Tucker

GAMES WORKSHOP

LICENSING MANAGER

Owen Rees

HEAD OF LICENSING

Paul Lyons

HEAD OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Alan Merrett



**FANTASY
FLIGHT
GAMES**

Fantasy Flight Games
1975 West County Road B2
Roseville, MN 55113
USA

Copyright © Games Workshop Limited 2010. All rights reserved. Games Workshop, Warhammer 40,000, the Warhammer 40,000 logo, Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay, the Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay logo, Dark Heresy, Ascension, Calixis Sector, and all associated marks, logos, places, names, creatures, races and race insignia/devices/logos/symbols, vehicles, locations, weapons, units and unit insignia, characters, products and illustrations from the Warhammer 40,000 universe are either ®, TM and/or © Games Workshop Ltd 2000–2010, variably registered in the UK and other countries around the world. All rights reserved. Published under license to Fantasy Flight Publishing Inc. Fantasy Flight Games and the FFG logo are trademarks of Fantasy Flight Publishing, Inc. All Rights Reserved to their respective owners. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the publishers.

Product Code DHP3

For more information about the Dark Heresy line, free downloads, answers to rule queries, or just to pass on greetings, visit us online at

www.FantasyFlightGames.com

INTRODUCTION

"I've seen uncounted visions that would make you babble. The trick is showing you something that makes you babble the information I find most useful."

—Interrogator Klasser

You hold in your hands a companion to **ASCENSION**, a **DARK HERESY** supplement. **ASCENSION** allows you to take your characters into the highest halls of power and influence. This companion is designed to give players and gamemasters more perspective on characters and new options for character creation.

An account of the ascension of Inquisitor Starkh gives players and gamemasters a sample **ASCENSION** character. This provides a reference for the stories that can be told through Throne Agents as they begin their new journeys into the grim darkness of the 41st millennium.

When preparing characters for an **ASCENSION** campaign a player must give thought to the background, skills, talents and history for a person who has become a Throne Agent. The **ASCENSION** book presents two character creation options. This companion gives a third that is designed for faster character generation, allowing players to jump into a game quickly.

Lastly this companion presents a discussion on the process of mind cleansing. Presented in **THE INQUISITOR'S HANDBOOK**, mind cleansing is a powerful player and GM tool for telling deep stories that unfold over time. This section presents additional information on how the mind cleansed are viewed by the Inquisition.



The Ascension and Descent of Inquisitor Starkh

Being a truthful account of his ascension to the Holy Orders of the Emperor's Inquisition, set down for posterity by his own hand on this day, 339859 Mq, by Inquisitor Joshua Starkh.

This account I commit to the archives that such things as I have seen may be recalled long after I have departed this plane. Emperor knows, that shall be soon.

I was born amongst the funeral grandeur of Granithor. My sire, as I recall, was a Master Mourner serving the crumbling Saint Astilenius Shrine District. Perhaps it was from him that came about the maudlin demeanour so many others have commented upon; perhaps it was growing up with none but the silent grave statues as companions. Of my youth I recall very little, for subsequent psy-conditioning and rejuvenat applications have blasted my mind as much as the horrors I have witnessed in the course of my duties. No doubt I would have followed my father's vocation in time, becoming an Apprentice Mourner, were it not for the sudden and dramatic arrival of Inquisitor Marr.

Marr was in his prime back then, yet he had already begun his obsession with Haarlock's legacy. It was an early investigation into that dread matter that brought Silas Marr to Granithor, in search of grave-census records linked to that ancient line. He found his records, and lot more besides. The attendants of Granithor's Inner Shrine, that place where the great and the good are interred for all time, had become involved in some form of organised grave-robbing, and it transpired that rival noble lines across the sector had been paying for attendants to desecrate the graves of their rivals. Such a petty matter would not normally have come to attention of one of Marr's station, but their activities had threatened his own mission, and so the attendants were brought to justice. It was during that mission that I came into Marr's service, for he required one with knowledge of the Shrine Districts. I provided that knowledge, and evidently proved sufficiently useful to the Inquisitor that I was retained on his staff after the grave-robbars were dealt with.

There followed several years of junior service to Marr's network, during which very little appeared to happen, from my lowly perspective at least. Had I expected to be granted some privileged rank or role I was soon disabused of such a foolish notion, and I did not see Marr again for the best part of a decade. Instead, I made myself useful to his various Acolyte cells, very occasionally being allowed to accompany them on one of their more tedious expeditions. All the while, I was being issued seemingly mundane administrative tasks to perform, often involving the transcribing of various genealogical records relating to the most august noble lines in the sector.

Eventually however, I was permitted to accompany Marr's Acolytes on more, shall I say, stimulating, missions. I took my first life on Siren's Den, where we exposed the smuggling of damned Simulacra to serve as the playthings of the idle wretches that congregate on that world.



I still recall that event with eidetic clarity. The Marquis Sa'lahnk, his bodyguard fled, ranting and raving that I had no right to judge him and no authority to bring him to justice. I replied that I served Inquisitor Silas Marr, and put a mass reactive round through the foppish idiot's mouth. The subsequent detonation was quite dramatic, and quite fatal to the young Marquis.

Subsequent to the successful purge of the Simulacra-addicts of Siren's Den, I was raised to the status of Acolyte. I served in one of the finest cadres I have ever had the honour of meeting. I witnessed the now legendary assassin Juki Vazk in her prime, long before her unfortunate association with the Cult of the Second Dawn. I served alongside Arbitrator Klock, seeing first hand the lengths he went to, to dispense the Emperor's Justice. Once, I served along side Primaci Lostok, he whose name must not be uttered within the walls of the Tricorn Palace. I saw him in action, and I name him now, whatever the censure may be.

In time, I rose in status. Following the death of Agent Omega on Fenksworld, I was named Acolyte Prime, and, for the first time since Granithor, communicated with Inquisitor Marr. I say communicated, for there would be no face-to-face meeting for another three years. Instead, my instructions would arrive by way of a wide range of mediums. At times, a silent messenger, sleek and stealthy, would come in the night, and whisper Marr's instructions into my ear whilst holding a knife to my throat. She always left the scent of Tslumbine behind her, though it never betrayed her approach. Other times, missives would be delivered by astropathic conduit, bearing the highest of ciphers, which only I could unlock. Once, I was called to descend into the rank bowels of Nive Anterior on Canopus, there to receive my orders from the toothless mouth of an ancient rat-herder.

It was at the Third Convocation of Elras that I once more laid eyes upon Silas Marr. In the intervening years, he had changed significantly. His eyes had taken on a certain haunted light, his frame had become stooped. His raiment, though not as scrupulous as that he has worn in latter years, was certainly not that he had affected when first I had met him.



To this day, I know not whether Silas Marr presented himself thus as some grand illusion, or whether he truly was as stricken of mind, body and soul as Marr's bitterness towards the Calixian Conclave and his refusal to adhere to its aims. The conclave lasted many days and nights, during which I served Marr in the capacity of aide, most of the time simply listening, watching, and reporting back to him the deeds of the other Inquisitors. Eventually, an agreement was reached and the conclave convened—a combined operation would be put into action and a hundred cults across half a dozen worlds crushed in a single night.

The operation came to be known as the Redemption of Hazeroth, and it saw the combined forces of two-dozen Inquisitors put ten thousand heretics to the torch. I lead my cell against a cult known as the Witch Brothers of Night, which had arisen on the Feral World of Valas Arin, and we sent untold numbers of warp-mumbling heretics to meet their fate that night. Marr had arranged for an Assault company from the 29th Guytoga Hussars to accompany us. That was my first battlefield mission, leading two hundred highly professional Imperial Guard troopers over the feral world's crude barricades. It might be said that I developed a taste for such heroics, and I would lead over a hundred such assaults over the next decades.

Needless to say, the Redemption of Hazeroth was judged a success. But there was strife to follow, for the conclave reconvened, to be split apart in factional infighting. It appeared that a number of Inquisitors present were investigating the matter of the Hereticus Tenabrae, and had reached the conclusion that the rise in cult activity over an entire Sub-Sector could only be a harbinger of far worse things to come. In crushing the cults, this small group announced, we had potentially missed an opportunity to witness an appearance of the so-called Tyrant Star. My master dismissed such claims; I believe even back then he lent little credence to the Tyrant Star representing anything more than an, admittedly unusual, natural phenomenon. For all that I am willing to commit to record, I dare not write more on this subject, for the things I have since seen have convinced me of Marr's error. I suspect he too now knows he was wrong.

With the Redemption behind me, I was entrusted with even more important, and vital missions. These were often given to me in person, and I became a frequent visitor to Marr's quarters at the Halls of the Chancellery Court on Solomon. I even took up residence on Solomon myself, establishing the at this stage in my career, I had little insight into the philosophical leanings of my master—in fact, it was not even apparent to which of the Ordo he owed allegiance, let alone whether he harboured any particular factional leanings.



Such is to be expected, even the case of a even senior Acolyte, and in later years I see the wisdom of withholding such details from my own underlings. The conclave was convened, a dozen Inquisitors and scores of their agents attending. It transpired that my master was entirely correct, and the gathering soon degenerated into a shouting match between three Ordo Xenos Inquisitors apparently of the Recongregator tendency, one whom I had encountered during the Redemption of Hageroth, and a number of Ordo Hereticus Inquisitors of the Amalathian faction. What started as a heated debate soon escalated into outrage and recrimination, until it appeared that the conclave stood upon the brink of anarchy. What happened next would prove a pivotal moment in my career. The chair of the conclave, Inquisitor Lady Cassilda Cognas, called for the battling Inquisitors to step down, and for witnesses to be called. To my great surprise, I was called to speak.

I was asked to recount the actions of the Inquisitor I had encountered at Hageroth, a former Acolyte of Inquisitor Lord Xerbe called Lydon Jan. I knew that should I utter a word of a lie, a dozen psy-spies in the chamber would cry out and denounce me as false. I recounted the events of the Redemption, omitting nothing. All the while, the gathered worthies hung on my every word, until I described the subsequent discussion of the Tyrant Star. I described how various elements had stated the uprisings in the Hageroth Sub-Sector might be related to the Hereticus Tenabrae, naming, when prompted, those who had taken such a stand. One such name was of course Inquisitor Jan.

At this, the Recongregators rose, drawing their weapons, bellowing that they were being made scapegoats in a sector-wide heresy. The Amalathians rose too, drawing their own weapons, stating that the other group were meddling in matters they should leave well alone. I stood in the centre of the chamber, utterly ignorant of the matters they were speaking of.

And then, both sides opened fire. I dove for cover as bolt and plasma erupted all around. I found myself at the base of Lord Xerbe's throne, and looked up, imploring him to end this debacle. Even as gun fire sparked around him, he looked down at me, his expression unreadable behind his mask, and shook his head. I would later come to understand Xerbe's approach to factional conflict within the Ordas Calixis, but at that time such a neutral stand seemed utterly inappropriate, and I cursed him for a fool. I have no doubt that my words on that day were etched into Xerbe's metaphorical record of grudges, and they have certainly come back to haunt me many times over the years.

Needless to say, the conclave ended. Three Inquisitors, including Lydon Jan were slain, along with a score of Acolytes and guards. It was my introduction to the strife that divides our order, and far from the last time I would encounter the ire of my peers.

Interrogator

Not long after the death of Lydon Jan, I received, under seal of my master, a curt, handwritten missive. I was, with immediate effect, granted the rank of Interrogator. I was to train to serve the Inquisition, perhaps one day to bear the rasette itself. Shaken by the huge honour I had been afforded, I read on.

Much to my bewilderment, I was to be taught the Interrogator's arts not under the tutelage of Inquisitor Marr, but under another Inquisitor Nature Orne. The letter ended with brief tasks. He would accompany his cadre as far as he could, but would often be forced to remain detached from potential danger, sometimes remaining in a transport while we, his trusted cadre faced his enemies on his behalf.

The greatest of those enemies transpired not to be a heretic, an alien or a fiend of the abyss. It turned out to be a fellow Inquisitor. Who this individual was, none amongst the Ordos Calixis have ever, to my knowledge, determined; yet he bore the rosette and was undoubtedly of our calling. We were engaged upon a mission on cursed Sleep, when the Stranger appeared, stepping out from the shifting, noxious gases venting from the ground. His voice dripping scorn, the Stranger simply bid us depart, or, he threatened, he would call down the wrath of the universe itself upon us. Upon hearing the words of the Stranger, Master Orne exploded with rage, ordering us to slay him without delay. At that, the stranger disappeared once more into the mists and was gone. Despite extensive searches, we could not locate him, nor any means by which he might have travelled to Sleep.

Following this incident, Master Orne withdrew from active involvement in our field missions, and I was given extensive licence to pursue our duties. Throughout the missions I was to lead, the hand of our mysterious foe became increasingly evident, ever-greater obstructions being laid in our path. Master Orne concentrated his efforts upon prognostication and data analysis, drawing upon his considerable recourses to predict the motives and deeds of the Stranger. Orne dispatched us on countless missions in an effort to entrap our foe, but it seemed the mysterious individual was always one step ahead of us. Despite this, we appeared to be getting closer, several times coming within arms reach of entrapping our elusive enemy.

The end of that affair came when we were dispatched with all haste to the Hive world of Barsapine. I later discovered that Master Orne had made certain contacts within the group I would later know as the Tyrantine Cabal, and had come into information of a nigh-apocalyptic nature. We travelled to our destination by the fastest means possible, and arrived there to find the entire world seemingly engulfed in anarchy. Doom-Sayers paraded the streets in great processions, and the masses wailed and screamed in bitter lamentation. We sought immediate explanation, but none was forthcoming. It appeared that no individual could say exactly what moved them to such depths of despair, and the preachers of doom were consistent in their ravings only in stating that the 'end was near'. Discerning certain similarities to the portents my master had sought out Zillman's Domain, my heart was filled with dread. I set about recording every detail of the travails afflicting the populace, using all of the skills Master Orne's sages had bestowed upon me. It was whilst conducting a meta-probe of Barsapine's archival systems that I caught a brief sight on a spy-lens of our enemy. The Stranger was there too, a fact that could scarcely have been a coincidence. The Stranger had been picked up standing atop the highest peak of the hive's tallest spire, and it was evident that he was engaged in some form of vile sorcery.

I made all haste for the spire, the skies darkening all the while. At last, I stepped forth on a wind-blasted platform at the very summit of the spire, to behold the Stranger, standing at the platform's very edge, wreathed in a corona of utter blackness.



His arms were raised to the darkening skies, the air charged with blasphemous energies. Even one such as I, not gifted of psychic talent, could perceive that the Stranger stood at the dead centre of a vortex of unprecedented power. I turned as my colleagues stepped out onto the platform beside me—those who were psykers dropped to their knees clutching their heads in agony, blood seeping from every orifice. I turned back towards the stranger, and as he bellowed sorcerous words in an unintelligible tongue, the arcane storm suddenly ceased. Time stood still. The Stranger and myself stood in the very eye of the storm, facing one another.

He spoke first. "It can be stopped." He gestured with a flick of his head to the frozen sky above.

"It will be stopped," I said. I drew my bolt pistol, and blew his head off.

With that, the spell was broken. Time resumed. The winds burst into motion once more, and within an hour the storm had abated and the light returned. The lamentations ceased, and the people shook off their woes as if awakening from some terrible nightmare.

Whatever had been about to occur in the skies above Barsapine had been averted. I know not with any certainty whether it was the Stranger's spell, or my killing of him, that had averted the event. Furthermore, it remains a mystery as to what may have been about to occur, but certainly, many would say that the Tyrant Star had been upon the verge of manifesting. Such a possibility still causes me to awaken at night, screaming, despite the many terrors I have witnessed in my lifetime.

The Tricorn Palace

Soon after, in the midst of an execution mission on Hesiod's Wake, I received a high-level summons. I was to make for Scintilla with all haste. I was to attend a hearing at the Tricorn Palace.

The voyage from Hesiod's Wake to Scintilla was riven with warp storms, a dire portent, I could not help but fear, of things to come. I had no inkling why I had been summoned to the Tricorn Palace, and to be honest, part of me expected never to leave that dark bastion. Had enemies of my master conspired against me? Or had my master determined to renounce me? Had I been found guilty of some crime in absentia, and summoned to face my executioners? I dreaded the answer, yet longed for that seemingly endless voyage to end, so that I might learn my fate.

Arriving at Scintilla following the roughest of warp voyages I had ever experienced, the merchant freighter on which I had taken passage docked at one of the void yards in orbit above Hive Tarsus. I made immediate arrangements for passage to Hive Sibellus, requisitioning a berth on a shuttle without delay. Ten hours later, I was standing before the dark majesty of the Tricorn Palace for the first time in my career.

What can I say of the Tricorn? I recall standing upon the landing apron, the shuttle departing behind me with undue haste, straining my neck to take in a sight few outside of our order would openly witness. From the midst of the baroque splendour of the hive rose the three, slab-sided towers of the palace. They reared high above the surrounding hive sprawl, their architecture and manufacture entirely at odds with the buildings all about. The three towers rose so high as to pierce the clouds, and I was struck by the impression that surely nothing could transpire for leagues all around without being noted by one of the multitude of spy-lenses and surveil-augurs that sprouted from blisters upon their sides. I noted too the many bridges connecting the three towers, and the clustered pylons at the peak of each, and knew that I must enter.

As I approached the nearest of the towers, I began to discern the material from which the palace is constructed. What from a distance appeared as stone revealed itself to be ancient and pitted ceramite, corroded, but evidently not weakened, by centuries of exposure to the toxic atmosphere of Santilla. As I approached still further, I could see that the base of the tower that I was making for was indented in many places. Each indenture was an armoured entry portal, capped with a weapons port, and attended by a grotesque servitor.

Approaching the nearest portal, I identified myself to the servitor, which was little more than a head and torso mounted upon a cantilevered armature. Upon this rusted contraption, the servitor lowered itself until its head was level with mine, and only an arm's length away. Its lens-eyes whirred and blinked for what seemed an inordinate time, before its grill-mouth emitted a piercing stream of atonal machine nonsense. With a sudden motion accompanied by the metallic screech of its armature, the servitor retracted into an alcove, and was gone. I turned towards the portal, in time to witness the armoured door rising, revealing stygian darkness beyond.

Throughout my career up to that point, I had entered some dark places indeed, many of which I had little expectation of returning from. I admit, traversing that portal was the worst. Crossing the threshold, the armoured door lowered behind me, the sound as ominous as the descent of the headsman's axe. After a moment, my eyes adjusted to the gloom, which I saw was scattered with thousands upon thousands of tiny pinpricks of light. The heavy scent of tallow informed me that each light was a candle, guttering in the dark.

Girding myself to plunge onwards into the darkness, I was shocked as a patch of shadow before me resolved itself into slab-a human form. A black-robed gatekeeper, his wizened hand grasping his rod of office approached, his shuffling gait suggesting he rarely moved from his station.

In a voice as dry as the grave, the gatekeeper bid me follow. He didn't even ask my business.

I followed the gatekeeper through long, dark galleries and hallways, the walls encrusted with the grime of centuries and hung with tattered and crumbling purity seals. The shadowed vaults high above were the roost of cyber-cherubs apparently turned feral, squabbling with one another over objects I could not discern.

Servo-skulls accompanied us, increasing numbers flocking behind, so that by the time we reached our destination a veritable horde of them clustered in my wake. Still, I had yet to encounter another being aside from the silent and shuffling gatekeeper.

At length, I found myself before an impassibly tall door made of wrought iron and adorned with spidery script. The gatekeeper turned and bowed to me, before shuffling off into the darkness, retracing the steps we had taken from the entry portal. With an ominous grinding of dormant gears, the brass doors swung slowly open, and I was confronted with a sight I shall take to my grave.



Ascension

Passing through the doors, I found myself standing in the centre of a vast, multi-tiered chamber, row upon row of seated figures looking down upon me from galleries high above. Before me, at the centre of the lowest tier, was an ornate, but unoccupied throne, which I was later to learn belonged to Lord Inquisitor Caidin himself, though he rarely seats himself upon it. Standing before the throne, appearing even more wizened and stooped than I had ever seen him, Inquisitor Silas Marr.

Despite the dreadful, awe-inspiring scale of my surroundings, I could look only to Marr. He approached, limping visibly and supporting himself with a gilded stick. Facing before me, he uttered a single word, "kneel." I did so.

Marr's next words echoed throughout the galleries of the chamber, and etched themselves into my mind for all time. "Joshua Starkh., you have served me well this last decade. I name thee... Inquisitor."

Needless to say, I was stunned, shaken to my core. I had of course hoped one day to attain such a rank, but knew that many who trod the path of Interrogator never reached such a destination. Inquisitor Marr continued, my hand, and by the concordance of my peers, I judge you worthy of our orders. You shall enter into the ranks of the Ordo Hereticus, and bring the light of the Emperor's Judgement to the soul generation.

As if such things were not sufficient to condemn us all to an eternity of damnation, I have come to know something of the nature of the Ordo Calixis. My erstwhile master, Silas Marr is now a cripple and a recluse, hiding court from his manse on Solomon. Despite his distance from the activities of the Ordo, much of what I have learned can be traced back to him. He appears to know so much of all that transpires in this sector, and beyond, yet what is truly known of him? I suspect that many of my peers harbour an abiding fear of Silas Marr, and I believe this to stem from the fact that he knows so much about their most secret of activities. I would go so far as to suggest that some have countenanced murdering him, though given his powers, I cannot believe any have come close to success.

No discussion of Silas Marr could fail but to proceed to Lord Inquisitor Caidin, for the two appear subtly aligned, though not in any tangible, solid sense. Some years after my ascension, I met this most elusive of individuals for the first and only time in my career. He wore a mask, and I believe his voice was in some manner altered, so I have no indication as to his actual identity. He wished to interrogate me following my pursuit of the so-called Three Daughters, the Daemohosts created by the radical De Falk during the crisis at Nive Atropas on Solomon. I had come so close to confronting them, only to be thwarted at the last by the actions of those whose interests must surely have been aligned with the Xanthites. Despite his elusiveness, Caidin continues to rule the Ordo Calixis with an iron hand, and it is evident that none would dare dispute his right to do so. He communicates with us rarely, and inevitably by sealed order. I have only once seen him upon his throne in the Tricorn Palace, and so wreathed in anonymity is he that he could be moving amongst us even now, and none would know of it.

As grave as so many of the concerns of my peers undoubtedly are, it is Komus, the Tyrant Star, that consumes so many of their number. Most consumed of all was the late Lady Cassida Cognas. Truly, she was amongst the greatest and most dedicated servants the Inquisition has ever produced, and her devotion to her duty was so great that her deeds must surely transcend her passing.

With the death of Inquisitor Cognas, Lord Xerbe has taken up the case of the Tyrant Star. On several occasions, I have been drawn into the circle of Inquisitors that constitutes the Tyrantine Cabal, though I often found my investigations hampered by his refusal to denounce those whose actions threaten to destabilise all of our efforts. I have no doubt that his even-handedness is an effort to facilitate unity against that which threatens to devour the entire sector, yet I find it divisive in itself. I sometimes fear Xerbe is not master of his own fate, that he is in fact in the thrall of some other. Perhaps that is why my enemies are so many.

Almost as condemned in my eyes are the On the subject of enemies, I must name those I faced for so many years. Many times in my career have I crossed paths with those of my peers of a Radical philosophy. The first, and possibly most terrible incident was the investigation surrounding the Mara Landing Massacre—I count Inquisitor Amaras and the Istvaanians as perhaps the most dangerous of heretics ever to have lighted the sector. Libricars, those who presume to denounce their peers as impure and weak. I have seen good men and women brought low by the self-serving arrogance of those who follow the Libricarian creed, and I hate them utterly for such deeds. Three of their number I have personally cast down: one by counter-denunciation, one by the sword, and one by the pyre.

The Xanthites too have I crossed paths with on many occasions. That an Inquisitor should look into that which is anathema to Mankind's salvation is tolerated by many as an acceptable price, but to court damnation so openly appears to me hubris of the very worst kind. I count myself no ranting Puritan, but neither can I accept the type of practice that leads to the creation of such abominations as the Three Daughters. I would see the Xanthites burn, every last one of them, and I am under no illusion that they have a different opinion of me.

Almost as bad in my eyes are the Recongregators, though I admit to a small degree of sympathy for the core of their philosophy. They hold that the Imperium is so corrupt, so riddled with damnation and sin that only wholesale regeneration can set it once more upon the path of righteousness. That much I can subscribe to. Where I differ from the Recongregators is in their belief that before any regeneration can come about, the whole crumbling edifice must first be torn down. They actively seek to do so, and that, in my eyes, puts them beyond the light of the Emperor.

Of the Ocularians I will not speak, although the more lucid of readers see that I have done so already. Nor do I commit to record that which I learned of the elusive Ordo Chronas, though it should appear obvious that the two are linked in some manner. Furthermore, I shall abstain from discussion of the vile Oblationists, for even to name them is, in my eyes, to accept they have a place in the Emperor's domains. They do not.

Ultimately, I have come to know the truth of things, as far as one man can. Through constant struggle and strife I have touched the divine, though in return, my soul has been seared and wounded by that which it so deeply craves. It seems an inevitability that in our service we pay the ultimate price, for that which we do in the name of Humanity ultimately condemns us all in the name of Mankind. Yet, we of the Holy Ordo of the Emperor's Inquisition are a breed apart. We know what it is that must be done, and we do it, even at the cost of our own souls.

And for me, that price must soon be paid, for my accusers approach even now. I hear the rattle of keys and the jangle of chains. The key turns in the lock, and the door is opened. I go now to confront my destiny. I know that all I have done has been in the service of the God-Emperor of Mankind. None, not even those who come for me, can take that away from me. born to each.

This feels oddly familiar doesn't it old friend?
B.F.

CHARACTERS

"Those who believe they have done all the Emperor asks deserve not rest but the pyre. The Emperor tasks us unto death and even that moment shall be in his service."

—Crusader Rawae

ASCENSION contains two approaches for creating characters. A third option (after the top-down and bottom-up approaches from page 24 of **ASCENSION**) for creating new Ascension characters is to simply select one of the following pre-generated packages. Each of these packages represents one route from amongst many to reach the beginning of Rank 9. Each pre-generated package has completed all the steps necessary to gain an Ascended Career, but these packages have not yet selected a Transition Package (and applied the attendant bonuses), nor spent their bonus 500 xp (see page 24 of **ASCENSION**). These quick-start packages are ideal for a player who simply wants to begin playing an Ascended Career as soon as possible and provides one way to speed up the process of character creation. Naturally, a player who selects this option for his character may, at his discretion, add additional layers to his character that are not included in these packages, such as a Divination (see page 34 in the **DARK HERESY** Rulebook) or additional background packages from other books in the **DARK HERESY** line.

Players can, of course, go back to their previous career and buy additional advances (though not with the bonus 500 xp, which must be spent on Ascended advances). They may also purchase additional characteristic advances. If they do so, they obviously must take the characteristic advances they received from their packages into account when determining the next level they can purchase. A character who gained +10 BS due to a package would have to purchase the "Trained" BS advance, not the "Simple" level, for example.

Note: All pre-generated characters come with Speak Language (Low Gothic) and Literacy as trained Skills. The characteristic Advances have been purchased in blocks of +5 (to a maximum of +20), meaning that these pre-generated packages have not yet purchased any Heroic or Master Advances. All of the pre-generated characters have gained extra Wounds from Sound Constitution Advances—this is indicated by a +(number of Sound Constitution Advances taken) Wounds in the Characteristics line. Unless otherwise noted, all the starting gear is of common craftsmanship.



CRUSADER

Former Career: Cleric

Characteristics: +20 WS, +20 Strength, +20 Toughness, +10 Agility, +5 Perception, +20 Willpower, +8 Wounds

Starting Gear: Best-craftsmanship power sword, crusader suppression shield, best-craftsmanship carapace armour, Badge of Office, micro-bead

Starting Skills: Awareness (Per) +20, Charm (Fel), Command (Fel), Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy, Imperial Creed, Imperium, War) (Int) +10, Dodge (Ag) +10, Drive (Ground Vehicles, Hover) (Ag) +10, Inquiry (Fel), Intimidate (S) +20, Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) (Int) +10, Scrutiny (Per) +10, Secret Tongue (Acolyte), Speak Language (High Gothic) (Int)
Starting Talents: Ambidextrous, Armour of Contempt, Blademaster, Combat Master, Counter-attack, Crippling Strike, Crushing Blow, Die Hard, Fearless, Hatred (any one), Insanely Faithful, Jaded, Lightning Attack, Meditation, Melee Weapon Training (All), Mental Fortress, Resistance (Psychic Powers), Strong Minded, Swift Attack, True Grit, Two-weapon Wielder (Melee), Wall of Steel

DEATH CULT ASSASSIN

Former Career: Assassin

Characteristics: +20 WS, +10 Strength, +10 Toughness, +20 Agility, +20 Perception, +10 Willpower +7 Wounds

Starting Gear: Two best-Craftsmanship power swords, best-Craftsmanship synskin or common-Craftsmanship hardened bodyglove, injector with three doses of Slaughter, Badge of Office, micro-bead

Starting Skills: Acrobatics (Ag) +20, Awareness (Per) +20, Chem-use (Int) +20, Climb (St) +20, Common Lore (Imperial Creed, Imperium, Underworld) (Int) +10, Concealment (Ag) +20, Contortionist (Ag) +20, Deceive (Fel), Disguise (Fel), Dodge (Ag) +20, Drive (Ground Vehicles, Hover) (Ag), Forbidden Lore (Cults) +10, Intimidate (S) +20, Scrutiny (Per) +10, Search (Per) +10, Secret Tongue (Acolyte), Security (Ag) +10, Shadowing (Ag) +20, Silent Move (Ag) +20, Slight of Hand (Ag), Swim (Ag), Tracking (Int)

Starting Talents: Ambidextrous, Assassin Strike, Berserk Charge, Blademaster, Catfall, Crippling Strike, Dark Soul, Deflect Shot, Disarm, Dual Strike, Fearless, Furious Assault, Hard Target, Heightened Senses, Jaded, Leap Up, Light Sleeper, Lightning Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Power, Primitive, Shock), Precise Blow, Quick Draw, Rapid Reaction, Sprint, Step Aside, Sure Strike, Swift Attack, Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive), Two-weapon Wielder (melee), Unremarkable

DESPERADO

Former Career: Scum

Characteristics: +20 BS, +10 WS, +20 Toughness, +15 Agility, +15 Intelligence, +10 Perception, +20 Fellowship, +5 Wounds

Starting Gear: Two common-craftsmanship bolt pistols or two best-craftsmanship laspistols with overcharge packs (or stub automatics with man-stopper ammunition). Best-craftsmanship flak armour, multikey, Badge of Office, micro-bead

Starting Skills: Acrobatics (Ag) +20, Awareness (Per) +20, Barter (Fel) +20, Blather (Fel) +10, Carouse (T) +10, Charm (Fel) +20, Chem-use (Int) +10, Climb (St) +10, Command (Fel) +10, Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites, Imperium, Underworld) (Int) +10, Concealment (Ag) +10, Deceive (Fel) +20, Disguise (Fel) +20, Dodge (Ag) +20, Drive (Ground Vehicles, Hover) (Ag) +20, Evaluate (Int) +20, Forbidden Lore (Cults, Heretics, Mutants) +10, Gamble (Int) +20, Inquiry (Fel) +20, Intimidate (S), Pilot (All) +20, Scrutiny (Per) +20, Search (Per) +10, Secret Tongue (Acolyte), Security (Ag) +10, Shadowing (Ag) +10, Silent Move (Ag) +10, Slight of Hand (Ag) +20, Survival (Int) +10, Swim (Ag), Tech Use (Int), Tracking (Int)

Starting Talents: Ambidextrous, Basic Weapon Training (Any three), Crack Shot, Deadeye Shot, Die Hard, Double Team, Dual Shot, Gunslinger, Hardy, Heightened Senses (any one), Hip Shooting, Independent Targeting, Jaded, Light Sleeper, Marksman, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Power, Primitive, Shock), Mighty Shot, Nerves of Steel, Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, Melta, Plasma, SP), Quick Draw, Rapid Reload, Step Aside, True Grit, Two Weapon Wielder (Ballistic), Unremarkable

HIEROPHANT

Former Career: Cleric

Characteristics: +20 WS, +10 BS, +10 Strength, +20 Toughness, +20 Willpower, +20 Fellowship, +6 Wounds

Starting Gear: Best-Craftsmanship chainsword, flamer or hand flamer, carapace armour or Rosarius, Badge of Office, micro-bead

Starting Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Barter (Fel), Blather (Fel) +10, Carouse (T) +10, Charm (Fel) +20, Command (Fel) +10, Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy, Imperial Creed, Imperium) (Int) +10, Deceive (Fel) +10, Dodge (Ag) +10, Drive (Ground Vehicles) (Ag), Forbidden Lore (Cults, Heresy), Inquiry (Fel) +10, Intimidate (S) +10, Medicae (Int) +20, Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed, Philosophy) (Int) +10, Scrutiny (Per) +10, Speak Language (Int) (High Gothic)

Starting Talents: Air of Authority, Armour of Contempt, Basic Weapon Training (Flame plus any three), Battle Rage, Berserk Charge, Blademaster, Cleanse and Purify, Crippling Strike, Crushing Blow, Fearless, Flagellant, Frenzy, Furious Assault, Hatred (select any three), Heavy Weapon Training (Flame), Insanely Faithful, Into the Jaws of Hell, Iron Discipline, Jaded, Lightning Attack, Litany of Hate, Master Chirurgeon, Master Orator, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive, Power, Shock), Pistol Training (Flame plus any one), Swift Attack, True Grit, Unshakeable Faith



INQUISITOR

Former Career: Arbitrator

Characteristics: +10 WS, +10 BS, +10 Strength, +10 Toughness, +10 Agility, +20 Intelligence, +15 Perception, +20 Willpower, +10 Fellowship, +6 Wounds

Starting Gear: Best-Craftsmanship autopistol or common-Craftsmanship bolt pistol, power sword or chainsword, Inquisitional rosette, one digital weapon of choice, micro-bead.

Starting Skills: Awareness (Per) +20, Charm (Fel) +10, Ciphers (Secret Society, Underworld) (Int) +10, Command (Fel) +20, Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites, Administratum, Imperium, Tech, Underworld) (Int) +10, Concealment (Ag), Deceive (Fel) +10, Dodge (Ag) +10, Drive (Ground Vehicles, Hover) (Ag) +10, Evaluate (Int), Forbidden Lore (Cults, Inquisition, Ordos) (Int) +10, Inquiry (Fel) +20, Interrogation (WP) +10, Intimidate (Fel) +20, Logic (Int), Pilot (Flyers) (Ag), Scholastic Lore (Judgement, Tactica Imperialis), Scrutiny (Per) +20, Search (Per), Secret Tongue (Acolyte), Shadowing (Ag), Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (High Gothic), Tracking (Int) +10

Starting Talents: Air of Authority, Ambidextrous, Armour of Contempt, Arms Master, Basic Weapon Training (Any two), Blademaster, Concealed Cavity, Crack Shot, Crippling Strike, Decadence, Die Hard, Disturbing Voice, Fearless, Foresight, Hardy, Insanely Faithful, Into the Jaws of Hell, Iron Discipline, Iron Jaw, Light Sleeper, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive, Power, Shock), Mental Fortress, Orthoproxy, Pistol Training (Any two), Quick Draw, Rapid Reaction, Resistance (Psychic Powers), Strong Minded, Swift Attack, Takedown, Total Recall, Two-weapon Wielder (Melee and Ballistic), Wall of Steel

INTERROGATOR

Former Career: Guardsman

Characteristics: +10 WS, +10 BS, +20 Toughness, +10 Agility, +20 Intelligence, +10 Perception, +20 Willpower, +10 Fellowship, +6 Wounds

Starting Gear: One basic weapon of choice (may not have an Availability of greater than Rare), one melee weapon of choice (may not have an Availability of greater than Rare), and best-Craftsmanship flak armour, Badge of Office, micro-bead

Starting Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Blather (Fel) +10, Carouse (T) +10, Charm (Fel) +10, Ciphers (War Cant, Secret Society, Underworld) (Int) +10, Climb (St), Command (Fel), Common Lore (Imperial Guard, Imperium, War) (Int) +10, Concealment (Ag) +10, Deceive (Fel), Demolition (Int) +10, Dodge (Ag) +20, Drive (Ground Vehicles, Hover, Walker) (Ag) +10, Inquiry (Fel) +10, Interrogation (WP) +20, Intimidate (S) +20, Pilot (Flyers) +10, Scrutiny (Per) +20, Search (Per) +10, Secret Tongue (Acolyte), Silent Move (Ag) +10, Speak Language (High Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int) +10, Swim (Ag), Tech Use (Int), Tracking (Int)

Starting Talents: Armour of Contempt, Basic Weapon Training (Bolt, Flame, Las, Melta, Plasma, SP), Crushing Blow, Decadence, Die Hard, Double Team, Exotic Weapon Training (Any two), Foresight, Insanely Faithful, Melee Weapon

Training (Chain, Primitive, Power, Shock), Marksman, Mighty Shot, Nerves of Steel, Paranoia, Pistol Training (Any two), Resistance (Psychic Powers), Strong Minded, Swift Attack, Total Recall, Two-weapon Wielder (Melee and Ballistic), Unshakeable Faith



JUDGE

Former Career: Arbitrator

Characteristics: +10 WS, +20 BS, +10 Strength, +20 Toughness, +5 Agility, +15 Perception, +10 Willpower, +20 Fellowship, +8 Wounds

Starting Gear: Best-Craftsmanship combat shotgun with Executioner rounds, common-Craftsmanship bolt pistol, Common-Craftsmanship Arbites carapace armour, power maul, Badge of Office, Arbites Badge

Starting Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Charm (Fel) +20, Ciphers (Underworld) (Int) +20, Command (Fel) +20, Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites, Imperium, Underworld) (Int) +20, Deceive (Fel) +10, Dodge (Ag) +10, Drive (Ground Vehicles, Hover) (Ag) +20, Evaluate (Int), Forbidden Lore (Cults, Mutants) (Int) +10, Inquiry (Fel) +20, Interrogation (WP) +20, Intimidate (Fel) +20, Scholastic Lore (Judgement, Tactica Imperialis) +20, Scrutiny (Per) +20, Search (Per) +20, Shadowing (Ag) +20, Speak Language (High Gothic), Tech Use (Int), Tracking (Int) +10

Starting Talents: Air of Authority, Armour of Contempt, Basic Weapon Training (Any four), Crack Shot, Crushing Blow, Deadeye Shot, Die Hard, Disarm, Furious Assault, Hardy, Hip Shooting, Insanely Faithful, Into the Jaws of Hell, Iron Discipline, Iron Jaw, Jaded, Master Orator, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive, Power, Shock), Mighty Shot, Nerves of Steel, Pistol Training (Any four), Quick Draw, Rapid Reload, Swift Attack, Takedown, True Grit, Unshakeable Faith

MAGOS

Former Career: Tech-Priest

Characteristics: +10 WS, +10 BS, +10 Strength, +20 Toughness, +20 Intelligence, +10 Wounds

Starting Gear: Best-Craftsmanship carapace armour or common-Craftsmanship power armour, power axe or power maul, best-craftsmanship hellgun or common-Craftsmanship bolter with red-dot laser sight, two best-Craftsmanship bionic implants or cybernetic limbs of choice, Badge of Office, Auspex, Combi-tool, Vox-caster

Starting Skills: Awareness (Per), Chem-use (Int) +10, Ciphers (War Cant) (Int) +10, Common Lore (Machine Cult, Imperium, Tech) (Int) +20, Demolition (Int) +10, Dodge (Ag), Drive (All) (Ag) +20, Evaluate (Int) +20, Forbidden Lore (Adeptus Mechanicus, Archeotech) +10, Intimidate (S) +10, Logic (Int) +20, Medicae (Int) +10, Pilot (All) (Ag) +10, Search (Per), Security (Ag)

Starting Talents: Autosanguine, Basic Weapon Training (All), Binary Chatter, Bulging Biceps, Crushing Blow, Disturbing Voice, Electrical Succour, Electro Graft Use, Energy Catch, Feedback Screech, Ferric Lure, Ferric Summons, Gun Blessing, Hardy, Heavy Weapon Training (Any two), Iron Jaw, Jaded, Luminen Blast, Luminen Charge, Luminen Shock, Maglev Grace, Maglev Transcendence, Master Chirurgeon, Mechadendrite Use (Ballistic, Medicae, Optical, Utility), Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive, Power, Shock), Pistol Training (Any three), Prosanguine, Rite of Awe, Rite of Fear, Swift Attack, Technical Knock, True Grit, Unshakeable Faith

PRIMARIS PSYKER

Former Career: Imperial Psyker

Characteristics: +10 WS, +10 BS, +10 Strength, +10 Toughness, +10 Agility, +20 Willpower, +5 Wounds

Starting Gear: Common-craftsmanship force weapon or best-Craftsmanship power weapon, common-Craftsmanship bolt pistol or hellpistol, best-Craftsmanship flak armour, psy-focus, Badge of Office, micro-bead.

Starting Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Chem-use (Int) +10, Ciphers (Any one) (Int) +10, Common Lore (Imperial Guard, Imperium) (Int) +20, Deceive (Fel), Dodge (Ag) +10, Evaluate (Int) +10, Forbidden Lore (Psykers, the Warp) +10, Inquiry (Fel), Invocation (WP) +20, Medicae (Int) +10, Navigation (Surface) (Int), Psyniscience (Per) +20, Scholastic Lore (Chymistry, Occult) +20, Scrutiny (Per) +10, Search (Per)

Starting Talents: Blademaster, Corpus Conversion, Dark Soul, Discipline Focus (Any one), Disturbing Voice, Favoured by the Warp, Insanely Faithful, Jaded, Light Sleeper, Meditation, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive, Power, Shock), Mental Fortress, Minor Psychic Power (Any twelve), Paranoia, Power Well, Psy Rating 5, Pistol Training (Any four), Psychic Power (Any six), Resistance (Psychic Powers), Strong Minded, Swift Attack

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

The Magos Ascended Career may use his Intelligence instead of his Fellowship to qualify for the prerequisites of all Peer and Good Reputation Talents.

SAGE

Former Career: Adept

Characteristics: +10 BS, +15 Toughness, +10 Agility, +20 Intelligence, +20 Perception, +20 Willpower, +5 Wounds

Starting Gear: Best-Craftsmanship hellpistol, best-Craftsmanship flak armour, one best-Craftsmanship cybernetic implant of choice, auto-quill, Badge of Office, data-slate, micro-bead

Starting Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Barter (Fel) +10, Blather (Fel) +20, Chem-use (Int), Ciphers (All) (Int) +20, Common Lore (All) (Int) +20, Deceive (Fel), Dodge (Ag) +10, Drive (Ground Vehicles, Hover) (Fel) +10, Evaluate (Int) +10, Forbidden Lore (Any four) +10, Inquiry (Fel) +10, Logic (Int) +20, Medicae (Int) +10, Navigation (Surface) (Int), Scholastic Lore (Any five) +20, Speak Language (High Gothic)

Starting Talents: Concealed Cavity, Dark Soul, Decadence, Exotic Weapon Training (any one), Foresight, Hard Target, Jaded, Light Sleeper, Master Chirurgeon, Meditation, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive, Power, Shock), Mental Fortress, Mimic, Orthoproxy, Paranoia, Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, Melta, Plasma, SP), Resistance (Psychic Powers), Strong Minded, Swift Attack, Total Recall





STORM TROOPER

Former Career: Guardsman

Characteristics: +10 WS, +20 BS, +20 Strength, +20 Toughness, +10 Agility, +5 Perception, +10 Willpower, +10 Wounds

Starting Gear: Good-craftsmanship Storm Trooper carapace armour, good-craftsmanship hellgun, good-craftsmanship hellpistol, three frag grenades, 3 krak grenades, Badge of Office, The Imperial Infantryman's Uplifting Primer (Calixis Edition)

Starting Skills: Awareness (Per) +20, Carouse (T) +20, Chem-use (Int), Climb (S) +10, Command (Fel) +20, Common Lore (Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, Imperium, War) +20, Concealment (Ag), Demolition (Int) +20, Demolition (Int) +20, Dodge (Ag) +20, Drive (All), Gamble (Int), Interrogation (WP), Intimidate (S) +20, Medicae (Int) +10, Pilot (Flyers) +10, Search (Per) +20, Security (Ag), Survival (Int) +20, Swim (S) +10, Tech-use (Int), Tracking (Int) +20

Starting Talents: Arms Master, Basic Weapon Training (Bolt, Las, Melta, Plasma, SP), Bulging Biceps, Crack Shot, Die Hard, Double Team, Hip Shooting, Iron Discipline, Jaded, Light Sleeper, Lightning Reflexes, Marksman, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive, Power, Shock), Precise Blow, Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, Melta, Plasma, SP), Quick Draw, Rapid Reaction, Resistance (Psychic Powers), Sharpshooter, Sprint, Step Aside, Strong Minded, Sure Strike, Swift Attack, True Grit, Unshakeable Faith

VINDICARE ASSASSIN

Former Career: Assassin

Characteristics: +10 WS, +20 BS, +15 Strength, +15 Toughness, +20 Agility, +20 Perception, +20 Willpower, +7 Wounds

Starting Gear: Stealth suit, spy mask, Exitus Rifle, Exitus Pistol, one Exitus hellfire, shield-breaker, and turbo-penetrator round

Starting Skills: Acrobatics (Ag) +10, Awareness (Per) +20, Climb (St) +20, Common Lore (Imperial Creed, Imperium, Underworld, War) (Int) +10, Concealment (Ag) +20, Deceive (Fel), Disguise (Fel) +20, Dodge (Ag) +20, Drive (Ground Vehicles, Hover) (Ag), Forbidden Lore (Cults, Heretics, Mutants) +10, Intimidate (S) +20, Scrutiny (Per) +20, Search (Per) +20, Secret Tongue (Acolyte), Security (Ag) +10, Shadowing (Ag) +20, Silent Move (Ag) +20, Swim (Ag), Tracking (Int) +20

Starting Talents: Ambidextrous, Armour of Contempt, Basic Weapon Training (Bolt, Las, Melta, Plasma, SP), Catfall, Crack Shot, Die Hard, Fearless, Hard Target, Heightened Senses (Sight, Smell, Sound, Touch), Hip Shooting, Leap Up, Light Sleeper, Lightning Reflexes, Marksman, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive, Power, Shock), Mental Fortress, Precise Blow, Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, Melta, Plasma, SP), Quick Draw, Rapid Reaction, Resistance (Psychic Powers), Sharpshooter, Sprint, Step Aside, Strong Minded, Sure Strike, Swift Attack, Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive), Total Recall

SILENT DEATH

The Vindicare Assassin Ascended Career gains the Exotic Weapon Training Talent (Exitus pistol and Exitus rifle) for free at Rank 9.

MIND CLEANSING

"I often praise the Emperor's mercy that I have been freed from my own memories. Despite my transgressions I have been given a chance to serve. I am free of my own guilt but I strive to remember the shame I should feel."

—Acolyte Heronius Dyle

Individual Inquisitors have different opinions on the process of mind cleansing; often, this involves complex psychoviral, mimetic, and telepathic alteration to selectively edit a subject's memories and thought patterns. Whilst mind cleansing can be a useful tool, it is a process that requires a not-insignificant investment of time and resources. Many Inquisitors have no trouble using every tool at their disposal, but others are more select about the application of their influence, particularly when it comes to adjusting the minds of loyal servants or retainers.

The benefits of mind cleansing are quite evident; those who have witnessed secrets too terrible for sanity to bear can be rehabilitated, whilst others who have learned that which is forbidden or better left forgotten may be reclaimed from what would otherwise be an automatic death sentence for knowing too much.

In addition, the mind-cleansed individual often retains his skills (often rare or specialised talents that are in such demand that the individual warrants mind-scrubbing rather than death!). In some cases, mind cleansing is a form of reward to a loyal retainer, eliminating harrowing experiences and curing chronic nightmares of the dark things that Inquisitors and their allies must confront as a matter of course.

More often, mind cleansing is used as a safeguard or a punishment for those the Inquisitor finds weak-willed, untrustworthy, or worse. In such cases, these individuals are often executed once their effectiveness comes to an end.

However, mind cleansing also presents a number of drawbacks, not the least among them that the process makes it difficult for a loyal and able servant to learn from his own mistakes or those of his predecessors. The process can render an Acolyte unable to draw important correlations between past events, and there are some Inquisitors who refuse to subject their agents to mind-cleansing, preferring a cadre than can think on their feet.

In the Calixian Conclave, the process of mind cleansing is used with some regularity by many Inquisitors. These Calixian Inquisitors tend to follow a vaguely defined methodology for mind-scrubbing that generally falls into one of three separate categories:

FORBIDDEN LORE

In the course of serving the Inquisition, an acolyte often encounters many terrible facts, not the least of which is the certain knowledge that the Imperium is under constant threat from heresy, aliens, and daemonic influence. From the Ruinous Powers who lurk within the warp to the numberless hordes

of alien fleets on the fringes of the galaxy, there are some things man was simply not meant to understand. Whilst an Inquisitor may trust a chosen few with such knowledge, for many others, it ranges from distraction (at best) to outright panic on a planetary or system-wide scale. High rank, wealth, and authority is little protection from the sanity-twisting horrors the Inquisition keeps at bay, and even such heroes as Imperial Guard Generals and, in rare cases, Space Marines must have their memories expunged to remain a trustworthy servant of the Emperor.

DARK SECRETS

There are some mysteries that the Inquisition considers too dangerous to be known, some revelations too destructive to witness. Nevertheless, from time to time, agents of the Holy Ordos stumble onto the solution to one of these enigmas—and thus, they must be silenced, their memories stolen and locked away. The Inquisition knows well the maxim that "knowledge is power," and they consider certain knowledge so powerful it requires—nay, demands—to be kept hidden.

BANEFUL INFLUENCE

Faith is the greatest strength of those who serve the Inquisition, but sometimes even faith is not enough. Possession, xenos pheromones, and the mind-warping powers of a rogue psyker are merely a few of the pitfalls that an Acolyte of the Inquisition may encounter during his service. When an Inquisitor's servant falters, mind cleansing is often as much a blessing as a curse, for it can sometimes remove or mitigate the corrupting influence wielded by the Emperor's foes.

