

WARHAMMER[®]

THE HORUS HERESY[®]



Assault on Castrum Velx



EXEMPLARY BATTLES OF
The Age of Darkness

EXEMPLARY BATTLES OF THE AGE OF DARKNESS

ASSAULT ON CASTRUM VELX

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



Talassar is a storm-wracked ocean world in the southern reaches of the stellar realm of Ultramar that served as a recruitment vigil and gene-seed store for the Ultramarines Legion (XIIIth). All contact with it was lost following the events of Calth, as the southern reaches were subjected to the horrors of the Shadow Crusade and then the emergence of the Night Lords Carrion Realms. Talassar was one of several planets to which fleets were dispatched, tasked with securing XIIIth Legion genetic material to facilitate the rapid recruiting of its Legionaries following the losses the Legion had suffered at Calth.

In late 010.M31 the Blood Angels Legion (IXth) came to Talassar, led by Judiciar Aster Crohne. The sons of Sanguinius followed the decree of Guilliman and the orders of their Primarch, one fleet amongst many who sought to acquire a panacea for the Ultramarines Legion's losses. They descended upon Talassar in full combat drop, nine gunships and a dozen Xiphons breaking through the planet's rain-heavy atmosphere carrying one hundred and fifty Legionaries gathered from the orphaned remnants of companies that had emerged from the carnage of Signus. The flight of aircraft swept across the grasslands of Talassar then over siege lines constructed on the outskirts of Velx City. There, Basilisk tanks of the 209th Gilded Sentinels Solar Auxilia Cohort, deployed in advance of the Legion's assault, had begun to unleash their fury upon the distant fortress of Castrum Velx, a relentless rain of shells hammering into the shields of the bastion. Clusters of red figures stood guard around the grey and gold of the 209th Artillery, a one hundred strong Blood Angels reserve

deployed as a firebreak against the battle that raged deeper in Velx City. The flight of Blood Angels aircraft moved onwards into the smoke-filled skies above the city streets, passing over the embattled 246th 'Luminous Host' Solar Auxilia Cohort, bound to the IXth Legion by ancestral bonds and sworn oaths, and the ruins of buildings that had stood tall only hours before. The Auxilia fought those of Talassar who had betrayed their oaths to Emperor and Imperium, militia once loyal to Ultramar who now proclaimed the Night Lords Legion (VIIIth) as their masters. Their new patrons stalked the fringes of combat, packs of midnight-clad Legionaries descending to seize victims and drag them into the shadows, the screams of the unfortunate amplified by vox networks to ring out louder than the roar of battle itself.

Intent upon assaulting Castrum Velx, Crohne ignored requests for aid from the 246th and words of caution offered by Caphziel, a Seraph of the Sanguinary Guard,

first amongst the seven who had been tasked with accompanying the Judiciar and now stood with the Blood Angels' rear elements. Records indicate that during the invasion's planning Caphziel had espoused a slow push into Velx City followed by the besieging of its fortress, now a den for the Night Lords who had seized Talassar as their own. Crohne's assault had disregarded such advice and did so again, for the Judiciar was a commander of bloody-minded tenacity; the fortress held the prize he had been sent for, and so the fortress was his target. Before taking to his gunship, Crohne's final words were that if the Seraphs wished to delay, they would stand vigilant against assaults upon the Auxilia rearguard, until such time as war had need of them.

Castrum Velx stood tall atop a promontory on the coast of Velx City, the shadow of its armoured walls and keep looming over the surrounding city. Walls that had stood for centuries were now pockmarked by craters where artillery shells had struck, and burning gun batteries atop the parapets marked places where the shield-aegis had faltered. Yet the defences of Castrum Velx had not been fully cast down and the report of artillery fire was joined by the thundering booms of anti-aircraft guns as the Blood Angels neared. Tracer rounds and flak fire filled the air, a deadly storm of munitions that tore aircraft from the skies, raining flaming debris down upon Traitor positions within the city streets. Crohne knew not if any passengers had survived the crashes, for the closer they came to Castrum Velx, interference escalated across the vox network, crackling static laced with the echoes of his own words and whispered chants alternating between Low Gothic and Nostraman. *Llansahai*, the chants said. *He who had ensnared them. He who awaited them. He who would flay them.*

Crohne's own Thunderhawk would not survive the fury directed against it, one wing shorn off by a lancing beam of light and the pilot fighting to angle the plummeting aircraft towards the fortress in a final effort to land beyond the wall. The gunship fell short, slamming into the causeway that wound its way upwards through the rock face of the promontory, coming to rest fifty metres down from the fortress gate. Crohne emerged from the wreckage of his Thunderhawk to see the ruins of his strike force scattered on the approach to the fortress, the full complement of its gunships having been struck from the sky to crash upon the cliff face and the city streets around it. Legionaries were punched from their feet as they sought cover, those too slow torn apart by the hail of bolter fire unleashed by Night Lords atop the distant parapets. Others fell to the shrapnel and rock fragments that scythed through the air as heavy defence guns bombarded the Blood Angels and rock face. No calls for aid could be issued, for the vox networks were overwhelmed by the Traitors' interference shroud. The sole cover for Crohne and his warriors was the smouldering debris of their aircraft, scant defence against the guns of the Traitors.

INTO THE STORM

To advance meant almost certain death for Crohne and his warriors, barely four-score in number; to remain was to be picked apart and to withdraw down the causeway was to accept defeat and still expose themselves to the enemy guns. Seeing no alternative save the slimmest hope of victory, Crohne rose from his position behind the crumpled cockpit of his Thunderhawk, enemy fire ricocheting from his power field and armour. The Judiciar raised his shard axe and shouted an order, his words drowned out by the roar of guns around him. Crohne charged up the stone causeway, eyes fixed upon the gatehouse at its end; behind him, his warriors saw their Judiciar rise and joined the charge.

As Crohne and his warriors moved upwards, the air above them was rent by the wall guns of Castrum Velx, anti-air batteries tracking not the ground troops but incoming aircraft, a new flight of Thunderhawks and Storm Eagles vectoring towards the fortress. At their fore came an armoured behemoth – a Sokar-pattern Stormbird, its wings trimmed with finery of gold and the winged-mask of the Sanguinary Guard emblazoned upon its fuselage. A halo of light surrounded the Stormbird, its void shields flaring as they absorbed and deflected the fire turned upon it, the defences ignoring those behind it as they sought to bring down the vast gunship. Missiles and lascannon beams spat forth from the Stormbird in answer, a dozen gun batteries reduced to fire and broken metal. Gunships dove in to land at the promontory's base but the Stormbird carried on, streaking over the Blood Angels charging upwards, the causeway already littered with the corpses of a dozen red-armoured Legionaries. Overhead, the rear door of the Stormbird opened, and from it plummeted a towering form. Stone cracked as Hamonah crashed into the causeway, the dreadnought-bound warrior standing tall before Crohne and his handful of warriors. The Contemptor's assault cannon opened fire upon the wall, suppressing the Night Lords on it and shredding those who did not seek cover fast enough. With thundering steps, Hamonah led the charge towards the gatehouse, his armoured form a bulwark which drew the ire of the fortress' defenders.

The Stormbird had carried onwards, passing over the gatehouse as its void shields strained with brilliant light under the deadly attentions of the bastion's anti-air guns; from this shining glare emerged golden figures. They descended upon the wall and its defenders, Caphziel landing first, his spear piercing clean through the eye lens of a Traitor before his foot touched stone. As the Night Lords Legionary toppled, Caphziel pulled his spear free, a blow from its shaft pitching a Traitor over the wall, then a thrust impaling another Legionary as the Seraph's Perdition weapon blazed into life, consuming its target in flame. The other Seraphs landed around their leader as the Night Lords atop the wall section drew chainsword and blade. A knot of gold amongst the ranks of midnight blue, the Sanguinary Guard carved a bloody path along the gatehouse walls as they struck down the Night Lords, casting the bodies of Traitors from the walls with precise blows from their swords and axes. Angel's Tears landed with them, unleashing bursts of volkite fire upon the Night Lords in the courtyard below, driving them back

from their defence positions around the gatehouse. The Stormbird carried onwards, overpressure from its failing shields shattering windows from courtyard buildings. Its final act was one of sacrifice, a volley of missiles and lascannon bursts spearing into an array of communication towers hidden in the shadow of the keep silencing the vox interference, Baalite voices and orders replacing the Nostraman chants. Its cargo delivered and duty done, the Stormbird attempted to peel off but its shields were dead, its hull rent and engines ablaze. Flak fire chased it and tore through layered armour and the Stormbird plunged downwards, ploughing a furrow amongst the stonework of the courtyard.

The efforts of the Sanguinary Guard had drawn away the focus on Crohne's forces, and at the gate Hamonah slammed into the metal doors, tearing them from their mountings. Momentum carried the dreadnought forwards, Hamonah's armoured bulk ploughing into the Night Lords exchanging fire with the Angel's Tears atop the wall. Traitors were pulped by Hamonah's sweeping fist and gunned down by the bolters of Crohne's warriors that followed the dreadnought through the gate. The few Night Lords that remained gave flight, a fighting retreat firing boltguns at the Blood Angels as the Traitors sought the safety of the courtyard's buildings. Crohne forbade pursuit, marshalling the warriors by his side to secure the gatehouse against counter-attack until reinforced by the reserves that had landed at the base of the causeway.

KEEP ASSAULT

The Blood Angels assembled in the shadow of the gatehouse as the remaining strength of Crohne's force made its way into the courtyard of Castrum Velx. Nearly half of Crohne's strike force had already been wounded or slain in their assault, and so the Judiciar disbanded the most afflicted of squads, reconstituting them with reserve elements. Atop the gatehouse wall, Caphziel stood silent, watching Legionaries with pitted armour and bloody wounds mustering alongside the unmarred red and gold of their brothers, his Seraphs scanning the courtyard for signs of a counter-attack that did not come. With no foe in sight, Crohne ordered his warriors to encircle the keep that stood at the courtyard's centre, a grand bastion in which aspirants of the Ultramarines had once been trained. Only when Crohne had mobilised his forces before the bastion's grand entrance did the Sanguinary Guard move to join his assault force, descending from the wall to stand amongst the ranks of the Blood Angels arrayed before the doors.

The metal entrance towered over the Legionaries, the doors twice their size and engraved with images depicting the Emperor's coming to Macragge, a glorious relief marred by the flayed corpses that hung on chains above it. Breachers locked shields before the entrance, Crohne standing with them as Hamonah strode forwards, his fist hammering into the plasteel door. Metal buckled and the dreadnought pulled his arm backwards for a second blow; before it could land, stone and fire engulfed the dreadnought as explosions tore through the door's structure. The dreadnought's arm was ripped from its shoulder, its armoured form buried to the waist in rubble and the barrels of the Contemptor's assault cannon bent and broken. Those Blood Angels closest to the door were pulverised by the shockwave and Crohne was thrown from his feet, protected only by the field of his iron halo. Shrapnel and rubble scythed into the ranks of the Blood Angels arrayed further from the door, breaking bones and tossing Legionaries aside. Stone-dust filled the air as Blood Angels line officers shouted orders to reform as, from beyond the obscured threshold, bolter and plasma fire was unleashed, killing Legionaries as they moved to push towards the now broken doors, forcing the survivors to scatter in search of cover. The Blood Angels unleashed volleys back into the haze, firing upon the vague outline of foes displayed by helmet targetters, few registering hits and none of the outlines falling. In small numbers, Legionaries pushed forwards, only to be pinned down in the rubble-strewn courtyard by the volleys directed against them, blood-soaked masonry and the corpses of their brothers the only cover afforded to them.

Atop the threshold's rubble itself, scant metres from his warriors, Crohne pushed himself to his knees, his helmet shattered and his shard axe lost beneath the ruins of the door. Stray fire impacted his armour but none targeted him directly; hands reached for him instead, grasping his legs then dragging him into the keep.

Each of Crohne's assailants was clad in piecemeal armour the cobalt blue of the Ultramarines, yet though they wore the panoply of a Legionary and matched them in size and strength, their majesty was far diminished. All were helmetless and bore scars on their flesh, while into their skulls had been driven gilded metal wires, shaped into the Nostraman sigil for 'thrall' - Inductii of the Night Lords, broken souls fashioned into blunt instruments. The Inductii dragged the Judiciar through the gunfire, and where one was hit they showed little sign of pain, their eyes holding only a dead gaze that spoke of great woe and shattered minds. Crohne kicked out in an attempt to free himself, but more of the hunched Legionaries fell upon him, the pack dragging the Judiciar towards the Traitor line.

As the Judiciar disappeared from his view, Caphziel took flight, plunging blindly into the fading haze and though no order was given, his Seraphs followed him into the maw of the enemy domain. The golden warriors burst into the grand hall beyond, the once welcoming chamber of marble pillars and finely-wrought tiled floors now occupied by barricades of stone and ceramite. Their arc of flight carried them over the first line of defences and into the midst of the Night Lords' ranks, their armour deflecting shots turned against them, cutting their jump packs' propulsion to land amongst the pack of Inductii that had dragged Crohne deep within. Bursts from inferno pistols drove the Night Lords around them back, atomising both flesh and armour where they struck, while the blade of Seraph Taerwelt bisected the Inductii that held Crohne down. The golden warriors formed a ring around the fallen Judiciar as he pulled himself to his feet, eight warriors standing tall in the room's centre, Traitors all around them.

JUDGEMENT

Surrounded by foes on all sides, Crohne and the Sanguinary Guard had but a moment to assess the threat and decide on a course of action. At the threshold, the Blood Angels pushed forwards to secure a beachhead, Legionaries with flamers unleashing a wall of fire to push back the Traitors behind the barricades and create room for Blood Angels to move in. Closer to the Seraphs, groups of Night Lords began withdrawing towards the walls, turning their guns from the door to those in their midst. Deeper in the room, near two-score of the Night Lords' Inductii gathered at the foot of a dais, their armour a haphazard mix of colours and marks, all bearing the scars of battles they were no doubt scavenged from. Atop the dais stood a throne, the stone chair flanked by a pair of Terminators, their bulky midnight-clad armour contrasting with the pale-skinned Night Lords Legionary who sat upon the throne. The mark of an apothecary was upon the pauldron of the seated Legionary and ident tags registered him as Llansahai of the VIIIth Legion, a mocking sneer plastered across his unhelmed face. Caphziel looked to Crohne for orders, and the Judiciar barked forwards in the Baalite battle-cant, the knot of red and gold charging towards the throne.

A pair of Seraphs moved right and another left, each set charging a group of Night Lords to buy time for their brothers to make for the throne. Their movements lent speed by jump pack bursts, the Seraphs closed with the Night Lords before the Traitors could scarcely open fire. Perdition weapons alight, each pair of Seraphs fought shoulder to shoulder, the superior artifice of their blades carving through Traitor armour and hewing limbs, their own golden panoply near-proof against the blows of chainswords and serrated knives. Yet it was four against two dozen, and soon the Seraphs were encircled by foes that struck from every angle, falling into defensive patterns as they sought now to survive and hold the ground. The first Seraph fell to a chainglaive punched through his side, the second to a spray of point-blank bolter fire that cracked open his damaged helmet. Then the centre of the Night Lords line, mere paces from the duelling Seraphs, bowed, then broke open. Volkite fire burned flesh from bone as the Angel's Tears pushed through the gap, and the Seraphs were free, the two left standing charging into the mass of Night Lords to hold the breach in the Traitor line open. Blood Angels followed the path carved by the Angel's Tears, stowing boltguns and drawing chainswords in a single practised movement, the roar of motors joining the cacophony of battle that echoed around the hall.

As the Blood Angels swarmed over the Night Lord's barricades, Caphziel and his remaining Seraphs – Taerwelt and Sanlphon – charged the throne, their jump packs lending them momentum to crash into the mob of Inductii with bone-breaking force. The wounded but vengeful Crohne paused only to retrieve a weapon before he too charged, the four becoming a ruthless storm of blades, axe and spear as they cut their way through the poorly-armoured Inductii. Each blow found a gap in their piecemeal armour, and though the Inductii fought with the vigour of frenzied animals they could lay no killing blow. Numbers were the sole advantage the Inductii held, surrounding the Blood Angels as they forged their way to the throne, the apothecary upon it and the Terminators by his side. The advance slowed as the chainswords of the Inductii rained down blow after blow upon the Seraphs, too many for even the most skilled swordsmen to turn aside. The armour of the Sanguinary Guard became dented and battered, the gold all but hidden beneath the blood of their foes. For all their numbers, they proved ill-matched against the greater skill of the Seraphs; ten paces from the throne, the mob of Inductii had been broken, a dozen still standing and the eviscerated remains of the rest carpeting the floor behind the Blood Angels. The few that remained wavered then broke, scattering towards the rear of the hall as they fled the Seraphs' wrath.

Atop the throne, Llansahai had observed the battle with a furrowed brow and the scrutiny of a vivisector dissecting a specimen. As more of his Inductii had fallen, he had motioned for the Night Lords at his side to follow him as he stood and turned away from the battling Seraphs, walking with a mocking lack of haste to the rear of the room. As Inductii sprinted past him he gestured again, and his Terminators turned to meet the Seraphs head-on, while Llansahai continued walking. Sanlphon was the first to reach the Night Lords, slamming his inferno-wreathed axe deep into the layered armour of a Terminator's shoulder. In response, the Night Lords warrior's clawed hand lashed out and punched through the Seraph's torso.

While the second of the Night Lords gave battle to Crohne and Taerwelt, Caphziel met his brother's killer, spear raised. It darted out in a flurry of blows; three were turned aside by his target's bulky armour, while the fourth bit deep into the broken pauldron, the stench of burning flesh rising as the spear's fire spread into the Traitor's wound. The claw of his foe sought the Seraph's blood, but Caphziel pivoted backwards. Movement had caught his eye, as at the rear of the room Llansahai was within an arm's length of a door. In a single fluid motion, Caphziel hefted his spear and hurled it towards Llansahai. The flaming weapon cut through the air, arcing over the Terminator's shoulder to slam into the apothecary's chest, punching through armour, bone and flesh to impale the Traitor into the stone wall behind him. Flame blackened Llansahai's armour as he struggled in vain to rip the spear free but Caphziel could spare no more thought as a lightning claw cut into his side, sending the Seraph sprawling to the floor. The Night Lords Terminator moved to deliver a killing blow only for a flaming axe to cut through his armoured helm, the fallen weapon of Sanlphon wielded by Crohne, the Judiciar's own foe already lying dead. Caphziel moved to stand only to be thrown from his feet again as explosions tore through the room. Above, the ceiling began to crumble and a deluge of rubble rained down upon the grand hall.

The throne dais and area around it were quickly buried beneath rock, with Crohne and the Seraphs barely escaping the avalanche of stone. Towards the threshold, Blood Angels and Night Lords alike dove to avoid the mass of falling masonry, pulling back from battle to avoid being crushed. Though the Blood Angels sought to re-engage their foe the bulk of the Night Lords had already begun to retreat, leaving behind those too wounded to move quickly. The Traitors withdrew into corridors that

branched off from the hall. Where the Blood Angels sought to follow, explosions tore through the corridors, killing Traitor and Loyalist alike as the Night Lords attempted to seal the corridors behind them, no matter the cost. Those left behind were hacked apart by the chainswords of the Blood Angels, with no mercy offered to the Traitors.

A DUTY DONE

In the aftermath of battle Crohne regrouped his warriors, sending strike teams to the catacombs below in search of the bio-vaults they had been dispatched to secure. Some lay open, their gene-locks broken and the contents plundered, but most remained untouched. Pre-loaded encryption engrams unwound the seals, and Blood Angels apothecaries secured the progenoids for transport to orbit. With his task completed, albeit at the cost of a dreadful butcher's bill, Crohne ordered his forces to withdraw from Talassar, passing word to the Auxilia cohort still fighting in Velx City to disengage. The sole delay was afforded to Caphziel's wish to dig through the rubble in the throne room. In doing so they discovered no trace of Llansahai or the spear which had impaled him. Crohne refused any notion of pursuit or further delay. Other forces would come to secure Talassar and to them would fall the task of hunting the Traitors that remained. Sanguinius had ordered the gene-stock secured and returned to Macragge, not a campaign of conquest and occupation, and so Crohne would obey. They left behind a lawless Talassar, the Night Lords' hold upon it broken but no Loyalists present to replace them. Months would pass before new fleets would arrive to restore order, yet the canker of the Night Lords' presence had largely been excised and few of their number left standing, the balance of power in the Realm of Ultramar had shifted, albeit incrementally, in the Loyalists' favour.

HQ

Known also as the Ikisat, or the Burning Ones, the Sanguinary Guard were tasked with the safety of Sanguinius' person. Each Seraph, as an individual Sanguinary Guard was known amongst the Legion, was chosen for their unwavering devotion, sworn to follow their sire into the thick of battle no matter the danger and ensure he lived on, no matter the cost. On rare occasions, they were also assigned as guards for other commanders as a sign of the Great Angel's favour, or served as his heralds, ensuring his edicts were carried out where Sanguinius was indisposed.

O-I SANGUINARY GUARD SQUAD 210 POINTS

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Sanguinary Guard	7	5	4	4	4	2	4	2	9	2+

Unit Composition

- 5 Sanguinary Guard

Wargear

- Bolt pistol
- Perdition weapon
- Artificer armour
- Frag grenades
- Krak grenades
- Legion Warhawk jump pack

Unit Type

- Infantry

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels)
- Burning Ones
- Chosen Warriors
- Support Squad
- Sanguinary Guard Retinue
- Loyalist

Options

- The Sanguinary Guard Squad may take:
 - Up to 5 additional Sanguinary Guard +40 points each
- All models in the Sanguinary Guard Squad may take:
 - Melta bombs.....+25 points per unit
- For every five models in the unit, one model may exchange its Perdition weapon for:
 - Paragon blade.....+10 points each
- Any Sanguinary Guard in the unit may exchange his bolt pistol for one of the following:
 - Hand flamer +5 points each
 - Volkite serpenta..... +5 points each
 - Plasma pistol+10 points each
 - Inferno pistol+10 points each

Sanguinary Guard Retinue

A Sanguinary Guard Squad may be selected as a Retinue Squad in a Detachment that includes at least one model with both the Master of the Legion and Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rules, instead of as an HQ choice. A unit selected as a 'Retinue Squad' must have one model with both the Master of the Legion and Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rules from the same Detachment selected by the controlling player as the Retinue Squad's Leader for the purposes of this special rule. A Sanguinary Guard Squad selected as a Retinue Squad does not use up a Force Organisation slot and is considered part of the same unit as the model selected as its Leader. A Sanguinary Guard Squad selected as a Retinue Squad must be deployed with the model selected as its Leader deployed as part of the unit and the Leader may not voluntarily leave the Retinue Squad during play.

One Sanguinary Guard in a Sanguinary Guard Squad selected as a Retinue Squad may exchange their Perdition weapon for a power weapon and a Legion standard for +15 points.

Burning Ones

If selected as part of a Detachment in an army that includes Sanguinius, all Sanguinary Guard gain +1 Attack while Sanguinius has 4 Wounds or less. If Sanguinius is removed as a casualty, all Sanguinary Guard in that Detachment gain an additional +1 Attack.

If selected as part of a Detachment in an army that does not include Sanguinius, then all friendly units, including Sanguinary Guard units, that are locked in combat and have at least one model within 6" of two or more Sanguinary Guard models may add +1 to the total number of successful Wounds caused for the purposes of resolving which side has won a combat (this does not stack with any other rules that increase the Assault result).

UNIT SHOWCASE

Shown below is an example of the Blood Angels Sanguinary Guard Squad that has been built and painted by Studio staff.

The Sanguinary Guard Squad uses the bodies and jump packs of the Legion MkVI Assault Squad, the banner and helmets from the Legion Command Upgrade set and Perdition weapons from the Armoury of the Blood Angels set.



THE ASSAULT FOR CASTRUM VELX LEGENDARY MISSION

SECURE THE KEEP

The Blood Angels' assault on Castrum Velx was intended to be a rapid assault to purge the Night Lords from Talassar and seize the valuable gene-stock held within the fortress. Instead, it devolved into a brutal affair that forced the Blood Angels to march into the guns of the Night Lords rather than bypass them by aerial assault. The final clash was fought in the grand hall of Castrum Velx, a bitter struggle with neither side offered mercy.

In this mission, one player will be the Defender, representing the Night Lords defending the fortress, and the other will be the Attacker, representing the Blood Angels attempting to capture the fortress and slay the enemy commander.

This Legendary Mission is a **Zone Mortalis Mission**.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: CONTAIN AND DESTROY

Victory in this mission is decided by the control of Escape Routes on the battlefield, and the status of the player's Warlord.

- **Escape Route** – Each Escape Route is an Objective denoted by a diamond on the deployment map. At the end of each Game Turn, each player gains 1 Victory point for each Escape Route they control.
- **Slay the Warlord** – If, at the end of the battle, the Defender's Warlord has been removed as a casualty, the Attacker gains 2 Victory points. If, at the end of the battle, the Attacker's Warlord has been removed as a casualty, the Defender gains 1 Victory point.

The player with the most Victory points at the end of the battle is the winner. If the players have the same number of Victory points, the battle ends in a draw.

SELECTING ARMIES

Both players should select armies with a points limit of 2,000 points using the Zone Mortalis Engagement Force Organisation chart (see page 181 of *Warhammer – The Horus Heresy: Siege of Cthonia*). Both armies must obey the rules for selecting forces for Zone Mortalis games.

SETTING UP THE MISSION

This Legendary Mission uses the deployment map shown on the following page. The Defender's Deployment Zone should be open with no Wall Terrain pieces and no Door Terrain pieces, and instead should be populated with Barricades Terrain pieces.

Wall Terrain pieces should be placed along the outside edge of the Defender's Deployment Zone, with three Door Terrain pieces placed along the wall, one in the wall's centre and the others 12" away from it. The remaining battlefield should be populated with some Wall Terrain and Barricades Terrain pieces.

The battlefield within 15" of the Defender's Battlefield Edge has a Ceiling, while the remainder of the battlefield does not. Models may not activate any Wargear and/or rules, such as Legion Warhawk jump packs, that allows them to set their Movement Characteristic to any value and/or move over intervening models and terrain while in this portion of the battlefield. Furthermore, they may not move into this portion of the battlefield while such rules are in effect (i.e., a model that has activated their Legion Warhawk jump pack cannot move within 15" of the Defender's battlefield edge during the same turn). The remainder of the battlefield has no Ceiling.



REINFORCEMENT POINTS

- The Defender does not use Reinforcement Points and instead deploys their full army during deployment; no units may be placed in Reinforcements.
- The Attacker starts with 8 Reinforcement Points to place units during deployment. Any Reinforcement Points not used to place units in a player's Deployment Zone during deployment are retained.
- The Attacker gains 2 Reinforcement Points at the end of each turn, plus 1 Reinforcement Point for each Escape Route they control.

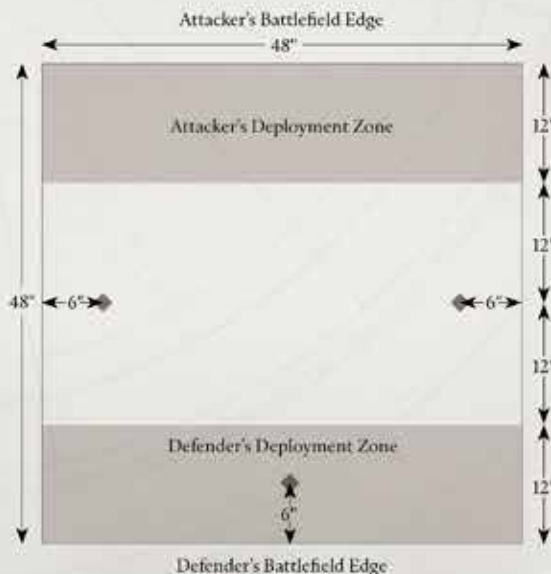
THE FIRST TURN

The Attacker takes the first turn and their opponent cannot roll for First Strike.

GAME LENGTH

The battle lasts for six Game Turns.

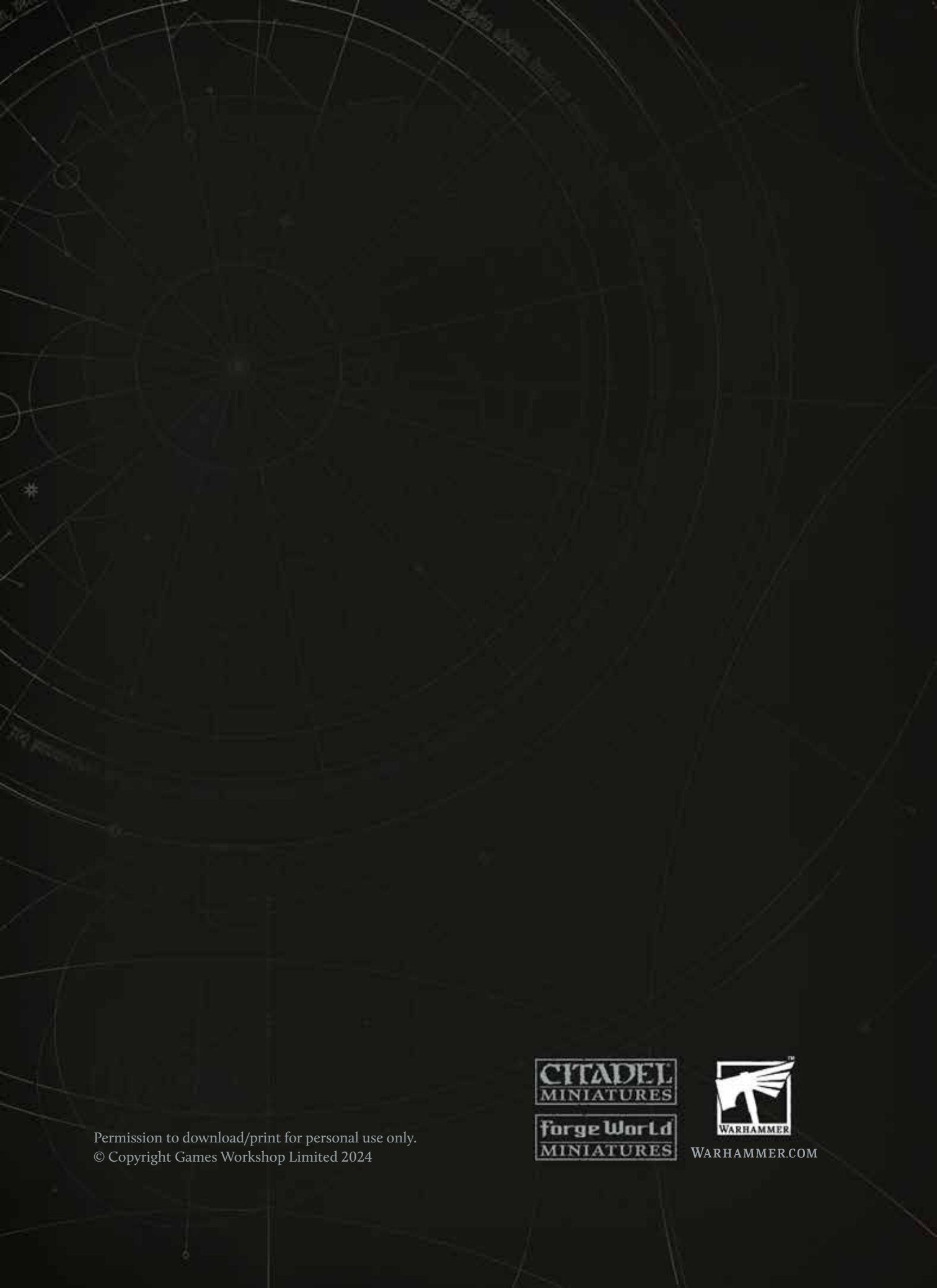
DEPLOYMENT MAP



MISSION SPECIAL RULES

- **System Override**
- **Lockdown Protocol:** At the start of the first turn, before any models are moved, the Attacker may select up to three pieces of Door Terrain to be Locked.
- **Counter Assault:** When deploying units from Reinforcements, the controlling player may choose to expend additional Reinforcement Points to deploy units as a Counter Assault, as per the table that follows.

BATTLEFIELD EDGE	REINFORCEMENT POINTS COST
Controlling Player's Edge	0
Flank Edge	+1
Opposing Player's Edge	+2



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