

# ONLY WAR™



ROLEPLAYING IN THE GRIM DARKNESS  
OF THE 4<sup>TH</sup> MILLENNIUM

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# INTRODUCTION

*“They will wish to take this star fort from us, men. The Imperial dogs fear our glorious Duke. Seeing the rightness of our lord’s cause, they cannot but question their own claim to the Emperor’s domain and tremble at the realisation that they are unworthy. We stand guardian against those who fear change out of ignorance. We will teach the Emperor’s misguided children to embrace their fate, or accept our judgement!”*

—General Frederique Constantine, commander of the Severan forces aboard the *Lycurgos* Star Fort

**N**O SURRENDER is an extended, three-chapter adventure for **ONLY WAR**. Through the course of the scenarios within, the characters face situations, locales, and personalities their training could never have prepared them for. The entirety of this adventure centres around the *Lycurgos* star fort, a titanic orbital fortress used by the Severan Dominate in their war of secession from the Imperium of Man. This setting provides the Imperial Guard with unique challenges as they attempt to reclaim the ancient battle station.

The circumstances change, however, when the Imperial Guard and the forces of the Severan Dominate find that they are no longer the greatest threat to one another aboard the star fort. A terror from the last days of the Horus Heresy, a Chaos Space Marine Warpsmith, is loose in the twisting corridors of the *Lycurgos* and seeks to twist the archaic fortress to his own ends.

The adventure is designed to accommodate Player Characters from myriad different regiments. As such, certain NPCs are deliberately left open, so that the Game Master can insert characters whom he has already established. Similarly, at different points throughout the adventure, there are suggestions for revising scenes to accommodate regiments with particular skills. Game Masters are strongly encouraged to thoroughly review this adventure prior to the first session of play so that they can prepare any appropriate materials.

## CHAPTER I: THE BEACHHEAD

The adventure opens with the Player Characters inbound to the objective of their mission, the *Lycurgos* star fort. Amidst overwhelming opposition and through withering fire, the Player Characters make their landing aboard the orbital station. Fighting alongside the Vostroyan 1054th company, the “Void Shrikes,” they must secure a landing zone for the remainder of the attacking force. Their efforts are stymied as much by the Severan Dominate troops aboard the fort as by ill fortune.

Their beachhead secured, the Player Characters take part in the action to cordon off a defensive perimeter around the makeshift base and defend against the single-minded counter-attack of the star fort’s forces.

## CHAPTER II: SOMETHING WICKED LURKS

The second chapter begins as the Player Characters face stiff opposition from the Severan Dominate soldiers. This takes the form not only of all-out attack, but sabotage and infiltration as well. Once free from these threats, the Imperial Guard must investigate their surroundings and reconnoitre the numerous twisting corridors that wind their way around the secured landing zone.

During their expeditionary forays, the Player Characters find evidence of a much greater evil aboard the star fort. A hellish Daemon Engine being brought to a vile form of life deep in the bowels of the star fort hints at a much more sinister heresy than political dissidence. Under orders to apprehend General Constantine, the commander of the Severan Dominate forces aboard *Lycurgos*, the Player Characters take part in a massive infiltration of the station to bring him to justice. The chapter comes to a close as the Player Characters come upon the Severan General, and must rescue him from attack by the Daemonic monstrosities they suspect him of creating.

## CHAPTER III: MECHAMORPHOSIS

With the general in their custody and the truth of the Chaos presence uncovered, the Player Characters make their way back to headquarters to report their findings to their commanders. From there, they are sent into the belly of the star fort to find the extent of the corruption and to deal with the Warpsmith behind it.

To their horror, the Player Characters discover that the corruption runs much deeper than they suspect. The Warpsmith, Arkturian, has begun the ritual to spread the Warp-taint throughout the star fort and to take the fortress as a weapon for his warband. Armed with this knowledge, the Player Characters must set in motion the destruction of the station, lest it fall to the servants of the Ruinous Powers. The climax of the adventure comes as the players and their allies make their desperate escape from the *Lycurgos* in the last moments before the star fort, and the foul beasts that now prowl its corridors, are annihilated.

# WARZONE EPSILON

*"There can be no glory in the absence of the Emperor."*

—Commissar Horace Barrgraves

Originally named Helena II, Warzone Epsilon was a moderately colonised world in the Periphery Sub-Sector. Initially discovered by St. Drusus during the Angevin Crusade, it remained largely forgotten for several centuries. During a period of Calixis expansionism in late M40, Helena II was colonised at the same time as several other highly regarded worlds within the Periphery. Administratum projections gave the colonisation effort a high probability of success due to its amenable agricultural conditions. Consequently, the Administratum sent a large initial wave of colonists. Additional supplies and the protection offered by a small Imperial Navy presence enabled the colonists to transform Helena II into a thriving agri-world in a remarkably short period of time.

Over the course of just a few centuries, the planet's harvests began to provide adequate supplies for several of the Periphery's worlds. Some even dared to hope that it could eventually become

a breadbasket for the Periphery, while still providing much needed foodstuffs to the greater Calixis Sector. Additional assets were accorded the world, including the manpower to revitalise the *Lycurgos* star fort that had been abandoned in the system during the Angevin crusade. With the star fort's refit complete, Helena II was regarded as one of the most productive and best defended worlds within the sub-sector. Even the most aggressive xenos forces in the region recognised the star fort's might and chose to target worlds less well defended.

Not surprisingly, maintaining the relative prosperity of Helena II and its continued security required additional colonists from within the Calixis Sector. The Administratum gathered population-tithes from dozens of surrounding worlds and reassigned them to the agri-colonies of Helena II. Those tithe-serfs constituted a massive influx to the population of the isolated planet. The world's existing resources were soon strained trying to accommodate the newcomers. Settlements that had been intended for hundreds of colonists had to instead serve as residences for thousands. Many who appeared to have escaped the overcrowded hive worlds from which they had been plucked began to despair at their newfound conditions.

The planetary governor's initial reaction to this new population was despair: after all, how could they be fed without affecting the amount of foodstuffs exported to other

## A LARGER SAGA

Game Masters can choose to use **NO SURRENDER** as a standalone campaign in three acts. Over the course of the segments, the Player Characters have ample time to develop their abilities. The resistance they face is consistently relentless, posing sufficient threat to novices as well as more experienced Player Characters. Once the campaign to retake the star fort is complete, Game Masters could easily continue the story arc by focusing on the recapture of the Warzone Epsilon agri-world that it orbits.

Alternatively, some Game Masters may prefer to integrate these adventures with a preexisting campaign. This could involve one of the Game Master's own design or ones that have previously been published. If using this approach, modifications may be necessary to the adventures based upon the rank that the Player Characters have previously achieved. If the characters command a platoon or company, their roles in coordinating the campaign are very different than if they all belong to a single squad.

Game Masters who choose to add this adventure to an existing campaign are encouraged to use their own discretion in connecting the different segments. A few possible suggestions on different methods follow, but these may need to be modified based on the past experiences of the Player Characters.

**Eleventh Hour:** Characters who participated in the sample adventure—freely available for download from [www.fantasyflightgames.com](http://www.fantasyflightgames.com)—fought a battle against a seemingly endless tide of Orks on the jungle moon Aeryas. After this scenario, High Command may have reassigned their regiment. Perhaps the Imperial Navy's merciless orbital bombardment was enough to break the Ork infestation. Cleaning up the few survivors proved a manageable task.

**Against the Savages:** The adventure included in the **ONLY WAR** Core Rulebook includes battles against the Ork hordes on the planet Skrynne. As an important frontline world in the battle against Waaagh! Grimtoof, a recall from this world requires extenuating circumstances. This could be due to the critical nature of the battle for Warzone Epsilon. Alternatively, if a regiment more experienced or specialised in fighting Orks became available, High Command might have decided that the Player Characters' unit could be safely reassigned.

**Old Soldiers:** The adventure packaged with the **ONLY WAR GAME MASTER'S KIT** presents battles against the combined Dark Eldar and Severan Dominate forces on Virbius. In the scenario, the characters have an opportunity to capture a key secessionist general and discover the Dark Eldar presence. If the general is taken into custody, the intelligence he provides could transform the war. High Command might decide to withdraw the regiment, as their presence is no longer deemed necessary.

**Final Testament:** This standalone set of three adventures introduces the mining world of Hervara, where Ork forces have captured an Imperial Ordinatus. Characters who remained loyal to the Imperium severely damaged both the secessionist and xenos armies. They could have been transferred from the world as heroes. Characters who chose to change their allegiance to the Severan Dominate might also have been desperate to flee. They might now be serving with the forces aboard *Lycurgos*—playing this adventure from the opposite side.

worlds? The initial focus became to expand the planet's cultivated land, so that food production could be dramatically increased. Labourers worked around the clock, some in fields hundreds of miles from their assigned residence. Over the course of the next several harvests, Helena II increased its production enough to offset the newfound demand.

Additional habs were never actually constructed for the new residents. Instead, the new colonists—and many of the original serfs—became wandering hordes of conscripted labour. Land was set aside for tent cities around the borders of all of the planet's cultivated land. Labourers would work a field during the planting and sowing seasons, then move on to work another field during the next season. Sometimes they might return to a field at harvest time, but in other instances they would continue to migrate as other labour-hordes would arrive to harvest and process the fruits of their rivals' drudgery.

As a colony world, Helena II had only limited access to technological resources. Domestic animals were also a precious commodity. Consequently, the labour force was expected to travel on foot from place of toil to place of toil. Over the course of generations, most of the world's inhabitants became nomadic clans. They would work a few weeks at each farm, and then travel to another farm where they could pitch their tents and live. Over the course of each year, these tribes would migrate thousands of kilometres, often crossing the planet's equator so that they were always in a place that had an active growing season.

With such a nomadic lifestyle, the colonists acquired few physical possessions. Most owned only their clothing, their family tent, and a few symbols of their faith in the Emperor. In return for their daily backbreaking labour, the planetary government provided the bare necessities for life. Each tent city was provided with a supply of fresh water and food—the nomads were forbidden, on pain of excruciation, from eating any of their harvest.

Annually, the planetary governor demanded that the planet provide a tithe of capable men and women into the Helena II Harvest Guard. All members of the guard were expected to be familiar with the standard Imperial armaments provided as part of the regular Imperial deliveries to the colony. Their primary role was to remain prepared to defend the planet against any xenos incursion. As part of their continuing physical training, these units remained active in the effort to plant and harvest Helena II's crops. Their secondary role was to assist the governor in dealing with any dissident uprisings. Fortunately, due to the exhausting nature of life on the agri-world, any attempts at revolution have been ineffective and swiftly crushed.

## THE WARP JUNCTION

Over the centuries since the agri-world was first colonised, traffic to Helena II gradually increased. Initially, the only regular traffic was vessels retrieving foodstuffs for export to other worlds. However, the proximity of *Lycurgos* earned it a reputation as an ideal location in the Periphery for Imperial Navy and Rogue Trader vessels to refit prior to their exploratory expeditions towards the systems beyond the sub-sector.

This soon revealed that the system's location was ideally proximal to the Warp route to the Scarus

Sector. Vessels travelling to the Calixis Sector or preparing to embark on a voyage the other way would often refit in the system. Within a few decades, the system garnered a reputation as a key Warp junction. Consequently, most vessels travelling through this region of the sub-sector at least make a brief transition into the system prior to continuing their journey. Though hardly well trafficked by the standards of a more civilised region, the number of vessels passing by the planet were uncommonly high for a colonial world.

Some of these craft—particularly those owned by Rogue Traders—began to engage the colony world with trade as their vessels underwent refit at the star fort. A broad range of unusual objects—including some xenotech—began to enter circulation within Helena II's cities. Merchants were satisfied with the surprising quantities of foodstuffs that they could obtain for seemingly minor trinkets. The colonists, in turn, soon became obsessed with these otherworldly artefacts.

Prior to the formation of the Severan Dominate, Helena II was well on its way to becoming a key port in the Cold Trade. Naval officers manning the star fort, and the local rulers, turned a blind eye to the crimes, which took place with a disturbing frequency. Some rumours indicate that the very artefacts they were meant to prohibit had corrupted the rulers and officers. Were it not for the secession of the Severan Dominate as a whole, it is likely that this influx of anathema devices might have eventually led to a major Inquisition cleansing of the world. As it stands, many among the Imperium have made clear that once the world returns to the Imperium's fold, an extensive investigation will be required.

## THE SECESSION

When the Severan Dominate seceded, the Imperial forces in the Spinward Front immediately recognised the strategic value of the Helena system. Designating the agri-world Warzone Epsilon, a substantial contingent was assigned to recapture the world quickly. The fate of that force was never discovered, as it was never known to complete its Warp transition—even several years after departing from the heart of the Calixis Sector. Yet, as long as the Severan Dominate controlled Warzone Epsilon, they could use it as a way point for deliveries to and from the Scarus Sector. As commerce with that region had become a critical element to the fledgling domain's stability, security had become absolutely vital. Were control of the system and the associated Warp junction to fall out of the hands of the Severan Dominate, it could prove disastrous for the Imperium.

This combination increased the value of the asset in Imperial eyes as well. Disrupting the secessionist's supply lines could cause the secession to crumble far more quickly. The capability to more easily connect with Imperial assets in the Scarus Sector could be a tremendous boon to the war effort. Initial projections indicated that the Helena II Harvest Guard would be incapable of resisting the might of the Imperial Guard. Early expectations were that the planet could be swiftly retaken with a minimum of loyalist losses. In reality, fighting on the planet has been brutal. Further, Severan Dominate forces have been better supplied and more quickly replaced due to the tactical advantage that the star fort offers.