

# DARK HERESY™

# ASCENSION™



ROLEPLAYING IN THE GRIM  
DARKNESS OF THE 4<sup>1</sup><sup>ST</sup> MILLENNIUM

# CREDITS

## LEAD DEVELOPER

Ross Watson

## WRITTEN BY

Alan Bligh, Andy Hoare, John French, and Sam Stewart

## ADDITIONAL WRITING BY

Owen Barnes

## EDITING

Leigh Anne Gross

## DARK HERESY DESIGNED BY

Owen Barnes, Kate Flack, and Mike Mason

## GRAPHIC DESIGN & LAYOUT

Kevin Childress, Mark Raynor  
& Rory McCormack

## COVER ART

Henning Ludvigsen

## INTERIOR ART

Mark Bedford, John Blanche, Alex Boyd, Matt Bradbury, Kevin Chin, Victor Corbella, Paul Dainton, Sascha Diener, Simon Eckert, Wayne England, David Gallagher, David Griffith, Illich Henriquez, Imaginary Friends Studio, Nuala Kennedy, Igor Kieryluk, Anton Kokarev, Karl Kopinski, Clint Langley, Fares Maese, Aaron Panagos, Adrian Smith, Greg Smith, Theo Stylianides, Tiernan Trevallion, Andrea Uderzo, Kev Walker, John Wigley, and Liu Yang

## ART DIRECTION

Zoë Robinson

## PRODUCTION MANAGER

Gabe Laulunen

## MANAGING RPG DEVELOPER

Michael Hurley

## PUBLISHER

Christian T. Petersen

## GAMES WORKSHOP

## LICENSING MANAGER

Owen Rees

## LICENSING & ACQUIRED RIGHTS MANAGER

Erik Mogensen

## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY MANAGER

Alan Merrett

## HEAD OF LEGAL & LICENSING

Andy Jones

## PROOFREADERS

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

## SPECIAL THANKS

Craig Williams with Cheona Crabb, Stefan Elliot, Leonard Goulds, David Thatcher, Danica Zuks, "Bring the Noise" James Savage with Davie Gallacher, Thomas S. Ryan, Stewart Strong, "Curious Pastimes" Paul Tucker with Ben Cawkwell, Sarah Cawkwell, Pel Pearcey, "Sons of a Rogue Trader" Robin Everett-McGuirl with Chris Brandmeier, Adam Hargraves, Peter Larotta, Bob Leuzarder, Matthew Robenhymmer, Nate Taylor, David Schumpert with David Hudock, Martin Linde, Adam Schumpert, Pierre Wagenseil, Benn Williams with Gary Beller, Chris Lancaster, Aric Wieder, Rebecca Williams, Eric Young, and Bo Hasle Buur



Cubicle 7 Entertainment  
Ltd, Unit 6, Block 3, City  
North Business Campus,  
Gormanston,  
Co. Meath. K32 DP60,  
Ireland.

Warhammer 40,000: Ascension © Copyright Games Workshop Limited 2019. Dark Heresy, the Dark Heresy logo, GW, Games Workshop, Space Marine, 40k, Warhammer, Warhammer 40,000, 40,000, the 'Aquila' Double-headed Eagle logo, and all associated logos, illustrations, images, names, creatures, races, vehicles, locations, weapons, characters, and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are either ® or TM, and/or © Games Workshop Limited, variably registered around the world, and used under licence. Cubicle 7 Entertainment and the Cubicle 7 Entertainment logo are trademarks of Cubicle 7 Entertainment Limited.

All rights reserved.

[www.cubicle7games.com](http://www.cubicle7games.com)

**Introduction**

What is in this Book? ..... 5

**Chapter I: Additional Rules**

Expanded Ranks and Experience Scale..... 9  
 Fate Points for Ascended Characters ..... 10  
 The Gift of Fate..... 10  
 Spending Fate Points..... 11  
 Burning Fate..... 11  
 Influence and Acquisition ..... 13  
 Measuring Influence ..... 14  
 Using Influence ..... 15  
 Manipulating Others ..... 16

**Chapter II: Inquisitor and Cadre**

Forming a Team of Agents..... 20  
 Creating New Ascended Characters..... 23  
 Acolytes to Agents ..... 23

**Chapter III: The Path to Ascension**

Transition Packages..... 30  
 Using Transition Packages ..... 30  
 Crusader Packages ..... 30  
 Death Cult Assassin Packages ..... 31  
 Desperado Packages ..... 32  
 Hierophant Packages..... 34  
 Inquisitor..... 35  
 Interrogator..... 37  
 Judge..... 38  
 Magos ..... 39  
 Primaris Psyker ..... 40  
 Sage..... 42  
 Storm Trooper ..... 43  
 Vindicare Assassin..... 44  
 General Transition Packages..... 46  
 Ascended Careers..... 49  
 Skills ..... 49  
 Ascended Traits ..... 49  
 Crusader ..... 50  
 Death Cult Assassin ..... 54  
 Desperado ..... 58  
 Hierophant ..... 62  
 Interrogator..... 66  
 Judge..... 70  
 Magos ..... 74  
 Primaris Psyker ..... 78  
 Sage..... 82  
 Storm Trooper ..... 86  
 Vindicare Assassin ..... 90  
 Inquisitor..... 94

**Chapter IV: Ascended Skills and Talents**

The Purpose of Ascended Skills and Talents.. 100  
 Mastered Skills ..... 101  
 Using Mastered Skills..... 101  
 Gaining Mastered Skills ..... 102  
 New Skill Groups..... 103  
 Paragon Talents ..... 104  
 Gaining Paragon Talents..... 104

Talents of Influence..... 110  
 Positive and Negative Influence ..... 110  
 Peers and Enemies ..... 112  
 Reputation and Power..... 113  
 Other Ascendant Talents..... 120

**Chapter V: Ascended Psychic Powers**

Manifesting Psychic Powers ..... 124  
 Psychic Ascendancy..... 125  
 Special Rules of Ascended Psychic Powers .... 126  
 Stormwroth..... 128  
 Maelstrom of Destruction ..... 129  
 Will Unleashed ..... 129  
 Burning Apocalypse ..... 130  
 Daemonsbane ..... 131  
 Witchesbane ..... 132  
 Psychokinesis ..... 132  
 Temporal Manipulation..... 133

**Chapter VI: Ascended Armoury**

Commissioning Items and Weapons..... 136  
 New Weapon Special Qualities ..... 137  
 Ranged Weaponry..... 138  
 Melee Weapons ..... 141  
 Armour ..... 143  
 Force Fields..... 144  
 Gear ..... 145  
 Unusual Ammo..... 147  
 Implants and Augmetics..... 148

**Chapter VII: Serving the Inquisition**

The Holy Remit ..... 151  
 Sanctions ..... 154  
 The Bearers of the Seal ..... 157  
 Factions ..... 160  
 The Balance of Power ..... 165  
 Becoming an Inquisitor..... 165  
 The Inquisitorial Rosette..... 166  
 Inquisitorial Cadres..... 167  
 The Inquisitorial Household..... 168  
 The Ordos..... 169  
 Interaction..... 174

**Chapter VIII: Game Mastery**

The Inquisitor and His Cadre..... 182  
 Power and the Inquisitor..... 183  
 How the Cadre Functions..... 185  
 Threats and Challenges..... 187  
 There is No Satisfaction Without Toil..... 187  
 There is Always a Bigger Fish..... 188  
 The Immediate Threat ..... 188  
 The Conspiratorial Threat..... 189  
 Running a Campaign..... 191  
 The Campaign Focus..... 191  
 Campaign Types..... 192

**Chapter IX: Ascended Adversaries**

Ordo Hereticus Adversaries ..... 197  
 The Burning Princess ..... 197  
 Eversor Assassin ..... 198  
 Governor Malaki Vess ..... 199  
 Magos Vathek ..... 201  
 Zashlun, Shroud Mistress of the Pale Throng ..... 202  
 Ordo Malleus Adversaries ..... 203  
 Herald of Khorne ..... 203  
 Marabas, Lord of Change ..... 204  
 Ordo Xenos Adversaries ..... 206  
 Dire Avenger Exarch ..... 206  
 Slaught Intendant Recusant ..... 207  
 Slaughter Warrior Vassal Construct ..... 209

**Chapter X: The Red Wake**

The Setting ..... 212  
 GM's Briefing ..... 212  
 Synopsis of the Adventure ..... 213  
 Lords of the Imperium ..... 213  
 GM Resources ..... 215  
 The Principal Actors ..... 215  
 Sydom's Conspiracy ..... 215  
 The Noble Houses of Malfi ..... 216  
 The Temple Aleph ..... 218  
 Dramatis Personae ..... 219

Part I: A Feast Among Vipers ..... 227  
 You are Cordially Invited ..... 227  
 What the Holy Ordos Knows ..... 228  
 What the Holy Ordos Wants to Know ..... 228  
 The Burning Parade ..... 229  
 The Feast of Welcome ..... 230  
 The Festivities ..... 230  
 Part II: Death at High Mass ..... 235  
 The Ceremony of Investiture ..... 236  
 Darkness, Panic and Murder Most Foul ..... 236  
 The Breaking Storm ..... 237  
 Part III: Cause and Consequence ..... 242  
 Going After Ensor ..... 242  
 Into the Catacombs ..... 242  
 Ceremonies of Mourning and Guilt ..... 244  
 Rewards ..... 245  
 Matters of Church and State ..... 245  
 Antagonists & NPCs ..... 246  
 The Clergy and their Servants ..... 246  
 The Noble Houses ..... 248  
 The Commercia ..... 249  
 The Powers of Ruin ..... 250  
 Map of The Temple of Aleph ..... 251  
 Map of The Tabernacle ..... 252  
 Ascension Character Sheet ..... 253



# INTRODUCTION

*"This time you will stand alone and fight for yourselves. Now you will pay the price of your freedom in the currency of honest toil and human blood."*

—Inquisitor Czevak, address to the Council of Ryanti

**A**SCENSION is a book about power. It is about playing characters who wield great and terrible powers; the power of a master of the arts of death to strike down enemies, the power of those who are peers of the Imperium with the right and duty to exercise that power for the protection of the Imperium of Mankind. Characters using the tools within this book have entered a new realm of possibility where they wield the power of the Inquisition unmediated by others, but not without consequence. The power of life and death now rests within the character's hands, for good, or for ill.

Having ascended to a new plane of personal power and authority it might, perhaps, be tempting to think that the darkness subsides—that the problems one faced when one was merely an Acolyte will dissolve in the face of the great power the characters now possess. This is a lie. The Calixis Sector is a dark and dangerous place for an Acolyte, and it is no less so for those who ascend to be masters of the Imperium. The darkness deepens, the dangers become more complex. Who do you trust? What will the consequences of your actions be? The possession of unlimited power is simply a door into a world of lies, treachery, and uncertainty where the newly ascended would be well advised to follow the wisdom of the ancients: trust no one and assume nothing.

## WHAT IS IN THIS BOOK?

ASCENSION contains all the tools needed by both players and game masters to play ascended games of **DARK HERESY**, which is a shorthand way of saying the characters will possess either full Inquisitorial rank or similar power. These tools include wider and more powerful personal abilities and rules for how characters can wield and develop their political and temporal power within the Calixis Sector. The process of a character transferring to the ascended realm of play is addressed both in terms of the mechanics of **DARK HERESY**, and the in-game transition for the character. Also provided is guidance for a game master wishing to run an ascended game, a selection of suitably powerful adversaries, and an adventure that showcases the ascended game of **DARK HERESY** itself and the perils of high politics and religion in the 41st Millennium.

## CHAPTER I: ADDITIONAL RULES

Chapter One introduces new rules for use in ascended games of **DARK HERESY**. Here you will find the rules for expanded Characteristic increases and gaining additional ranks beyond the eighth rank. It also features new options for spending and burning Fate Points and rules for a new game system called Influence, which represents an ascended character's ability to wield authority.

## CHAPTER II: INQUISITOR AND CADRE

Chapter Two looks at the formation of a cadre of Throne Agents around an Inquisitor. It presents the options available to characters that ascend from the careers in the **DARK HERESY** Rulebook to ascended careers. Guidelines and advice are also presented for those who wish to create brand new characters at the ascended tier.

## CHAPTER III: THE PATH TO ASCENSION

This chapter begins with Transition Packages for each ascended career, representing how a character ascends from Acolyte to Throne Agent. Chapter Three contains twelve ascended careers: Inquisitor, Interrogator, Crusader, Death Cult Assassin, Desperado, Hierophant, Judge, Magos, Primaris Psyker, Sage, Storm Trooper, and Vindicare Assassin.

## CHAPTER IV: ASCENDED SKILLS AND TALENTS

Chapter Four presents a broader, more powerful form of skills; Mastered Skills. It also presents a new type of talent—the Paragon Talent—and a number of other new talents for use by ascended characters. Also presented in this chapter are talents that characters can take to enhance and personalise their influence within the Calixis Sector.

## CHAPTER V: ASCENDED PSYCHIC POWERS

Chapter Five presents new ways for ascended psykers to use their powers, and presents new potent psychic powers.

## CHAPTER VI: ASCENDED ARMOURY

Chapter Six contains information and rules for iconic weaponry and equipment used by Inquisitors and Throne Agents. A wide variety of equipment, from combi-weapons to the specialised gear of the Vindicare Assassin, may be found here.

## CHAPTER VII: SERVING THE INQUISITION

Chapter Seven delves into the secrets of the Inquisition and how it operates within the Imperium of Mankind. It focuses on the place of an Inquisitor as a peer of the Imperium, the power of Inquisitor Lords, and the nature of the Ordos.

## CHAPTER VIII: GAME MASTERY

Chapter Eight focuses on the challenges faced by a Games Master running an ascended game of **DARK HERESY**. How to deal with issues of player-character authority within the game universe, as well as advice on creating wide-ranging threats and running long-term campaigns are all discussed in detail.

## CHAPTER IX: ASCENDED ADVERSARIES

Chapter Nine presents new adversaries for Throne agents to face. From the influential and corrupt Imperial Commander to the remorseless Eversor Assassin, ascended characters will not lack for enemies to match their ascended power.

## CHAPTER X: THE RED WAKE

Chapter Ten is a complete adventure designed for ascended play. Murder comes to the great temple Aleph on Malfi during the investiture of a senior priest of the Ecclesiarchy. With power, wealth and treachery in abundance the Inquisitor and Throne Agents find a way out of the maze of lies and blood, and if they find the truth, do they let it be known—or substitute their own?

## DESIGNER'S NOTE

ASCENSION takes **DARK HERESY** characters from the position of Acolytes working for an Inquisitor and propels them into the position of Throne Agents, working directly for the Holy Ordos. No longer will the characters simply take orders from invisible patrons. Instead, the Inquisitor himself is by the Throne Agents' side every step of the way. Thus, this book is written with the understanding that one of the player characters will take on the role of an Interrogator or an Inquisitor. Therefore, if the group does not possess an Interrogator or Inquisitor amongst them, the GM may need to make some appropriate adjustments. The GM should keep in mind that a sufficiently authoritative Throne Agent such as a Judge or Magos can also effectively fill the required role.

*"Some may question your right to destroy ten billion people. Those who understand realise that you have no right to let them live!"*

—In Exterminatus Extremis

