

# BLACK CRUSADE™

## THE TOME OF BLOOD™



ROLEPLAYING IN THE GRIM DARKNESS  
OF THE 41ST MILLENIUM

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# INTRODUCTION

*"Your schemes and sorcery are worthless. This ends simply.  
My Axe. Your Blood. Another Skull for the Throne."*

—Darjok, Reaver of the Rankine Straits

**B**lood can mean different things; for most it is merely a biological fluid, part of organic life. Those who see beyond the mundane know it is much, much more. Blood is energy, and rage, and endless fury, but above all blood is a source of power. To hear blood pumping as a foe is cut in two is to know life and death. To feel blood churning with the fury of combat is to touch upon something that was impossibly ancient before humanity walked upright. To see blood spilling from the bite of an axe is to offer sacrament to perhaps the first god to form in the impossible maelstroms of the Warp, for wherever there is conflict and violence, there is Khorne.

Khorne is the god of crimson ferocity, of murderous carnage, and of martial clashes of arms and shouted battle cries. In his name, untold millions are slain each day, their blood and skulls offered up in sacrifice. For his glory, battles without end wage across the galaxy. Even those who fight and kill with no knowledge of the Blood God serve him, some even through his myriad aspects throughout mortal lands. His followers lead armies of rage and ruin that leave nothing but corpses and destruction in their paths. Khorne is also the god of martial prowess, and prizes combat excellence in all, even in his foes. Should his champions fall in worthy battle, his final blessing is to place their skulls high atop his Skull Throne, there to bear witness to the wars without end that fuel his terrible might.

## WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK?

**THE TOME OF BLOOD** is the second of four books delving into the darkest secrets of the four Chaos powers and their role in the **BLACK CRUSADE** roleplaying game. It is devoted to Khorne, the Lord of Skulls, perhaps mightiest of the Chaos Gods, and his powerful minions who carry his blood-drenched banner across the worlds of the Screaming Vortex. Within its pages, Heretics gain terrible new armaments and weapons to wage war, new devices to carry their wrath across the battlefield, and more to aid them in their struggles against the hated Imperium.

## CHAPTER I: KHORNE

The Chaos God Khorne is the subject of this chapter, and here players find revelations concerning the nature of the Blood God. His demesne within the Realms of Chaos is a land of terrible violence and constant battle, and from his Throne of Skulls his rage and hatred drives a universe of conflict and bloodshed. His minions, both Daemonic and mortal, fight in his name across the stars, waging endless wars against their foes and even each other, for Khorne cares little for causes, as long as blood is shed and skulls are taken.

## CHAPTER II: THE BLOOD-SOAKED WARRIORS

Players gain four new Player Archetypes in this chapter: Khorne Berzerker, Night Lords Chaos Space Marine, Xurunt Frost Father, and Chem-Hunter of Messia. All are powerful fighters, worthy to spill blood either knowingly or unknowingly for the Lord of Rage. It also includes new armoury items including bikes and mounts, rules for creating powerful Legacy Weapons, and expanded Rites and Rituals for calling on the Blood God's favour.

## CHAPTER III: MASTERS OF DESTRUCTION

Chapter III includes expanded rules for Hordes and Massed Combat, so that Heretics can fight truly epic battles in their Path to Glory. Players will also learn more of areas within the Screaming Vortex reflecting the Blood God's nature of violence and conflict, such as the dread War Moons of Talax, the blood-soaked plains of Xurunt, the gladiator pits of Kurse, and more.

## CHAPTER IV: RED DAWN RISING

The adventure within this chapter takes place on the rocky world of Messia, where the Heretics have learned of a potent Daemon Weapon that was lost to the mutant hordes that roam the planet. They must overcome the forces of powerful drill-barons to claim this axe for themselves, for should dawn's light fall on the shambling mutant currently possessing the weapon, he will realise its strength and take over the world himself. The Heretics find that possession of such a weapon is not enough, though, and only through true mastery can they contain the beast within.

### NPC WEAPON TRAINING AND WEAPON DAMAGE

In the cases of all NPC profiles, the GM should assume that they are proficient in any weapon they are equipped with and, in general, any weapon an adversary possesses is one he's prepared to use. In addition, all NPC weapon profiles have any damage bonuses from Talents, Strength Bonus, cybernetics, or other augmentations included.

### INFAMY FOR NPCs

Certain dangerous and powerful NPCs possess Infamy, representing their particularly potent abilities and dread reputations. An NPC with Infamy has Infamy Points equal to his Infamy Bonus, and may be used as if they were Infamy Points at CP Level 2 (21-60 Corruption Points).



# KHORNE

BLOOD AND SKULLS  
•  
WARS WITHOUT END  
•  
THE REALM OF  
BRASS AND BLOOD  
•  
SERVANTS OF  
SLAUGHTER  
•  
OF RAGE AND WAR  
•  
KHORNE AND  
THE LONG WAR



# CHAPTER I: KHORNE

*"Time is at an end for your people. Isolation may have kept you safe for thousands of years, hidden from the view of watchful and bloodthirsty eyes, but it has left you stagnant and unprepared for our arrival. It has not, however, left you without purpose. Through me you shall know your ultimate destiny. Your skulls will rest for all eternity at the feet of my master. Your purpose is to give glory to Khorne!"*

—Lord Argustus, Champion of Khorne,  
before the Slaughter of Philost

**T**he Dark Gods of Chaos are beings of incalculable power and insidious influence who reside in the nightmare dimension known as the Realm of Chaos. It is a place where the impossible is routine and insanity is the norm.

From within this twisted hellscape, the Ruinous Powers reach into the world of mortals, offering a portion of their power to the living in exchange for their loyalty and obedience. Khorne's price for strength and power is simply that his followers engage in constant acts of both violence and rage. The Blood God demands death and destruction, mayhem and warfare. He would see his enemies drained of blood and their skulls harvested in brutal conflict, a galaxy aflame with endless war.

## BLOOD AND SKULLS

**A**ll across the universe, in every galaxy, on every planet, and in every passing moment of time, conflict has steered the course of events. It is conflict that has propelled one species into a position of dominance over another and consigned one man to oblivion while another has triumphed.

There are as many sources of conflict as there are beings in the universe. Jealousy, rage, sport, hunger, political advantage, territory, possessions, or even the simple, innate thirst for domination all breed and foster conflict. It is inescapable. There has never been a time or a place free from it. Even those races claiming to be enlightened and peaceful cannot escape the basic truth that without conflict, their progress would come to a halt, with challenging new ideas being left unconsidered.

The victims and beneficiaries of conflict are not limited to emerging only from simple personal struggles. In the grandest scales, systems of government, even entire cultures and civilisations, are destroyed by stronger ones, often as easily as a Chaos Space Marine reaches out with a power first and crushes the frail frame of a Grot. It is through conflict that the mighty rise and the weak fall. At its most basic level, conflict is the survival of one thing at the expense of another.

Khorne is conflict embodied to its most violent extreme, and thus Khorne is eternal and omnipresent. In all places and throughout every era, Khorne's influence has been felt by all. His attentions have had a hand in determining the outcome of seemingly every antagonistic confrontation, from a disagreement

between two angry scribes, to the galaxy-crushing wars of the Horus Heresy. Reaching out from his Skull Throne, beyond the illusion of reality in which mortal beings live and die, he touches the greatest conflicts. He pushes them forward, encouraging their growth. Driving men to take from their rivals that which they have not the strength to retain, Khorne stokes the fires of their hostility. Where expanding civilisations lay competing claims to new-found resources, he fans the flames of discord. As a brother grows jealous of his sibling's position, he heats the blood to the boiling point. Conflict is embraced as possessions are claimed, resources are seized, and brothers are slain. Through it all, blood flows to Khorne and he laughs as his power grows.

## BLOOD FOR THE BLOOD GOD

The fundamental conflicts that drive mortal life forward sustain Khorne on a base level, much as bread and water might sustain a creature of flesh. But just as a mortal body craves more substantial food, so too does Khorne desire greater conflicts. He is not content to lurk in the background, inciting petty squabbles or drinking in the joys of a remote border dispute. Khorne is not some mere beast or other lowly temporal being. He is a god, and the appetite of a god is terrible and insatiable.

The worship of Khorne takes many forms. Primitive human cultures have followed Khorne since the time they first were able to hunt game and make war upon their neighbours. Many of them are not even aware that the god they venerate is the Blood God himself. Some do not even think of him as a god. To them he is a force of nature to be appeased or a spirit to be persuaded. A common representation of Khorne in these cultures is that of a great beast, such as a shadowy mastiff, eyes ablaze as it seeks prey. Enlisting the aid of such a spirit can ensure a productive hunt or bloody victory in a battle with another clan.

Humans are not alone in following this blood-soaked path. Khorne's favour can also come to the brutal Orks, despite their own gods Gork and Mork. Fierce Nekulli mercenaries, bloodthirsty Rak'Gol hunters, or indeed any warrior from any species can serve the purpose of the Lord of Skulls. They need only pledge blood and skulls to their master to receive his strength in their arms and his rage in their hearts.

Even deep within Imperial space, there are those who would unwittingly turn to the worship of Khorne. On hive worlds, gangs fight one another for territory and supplies. Sometimes they recruit a deadly assassin to eliminate a particularly powerful opposing gang leader. Such an assassin, at the direction of his temple's leadership, may seek a divine hand to guide his dagger's stroke over the throat of his target. In praying for help to commit such a murder, the assassin runs the risk of attracting the notice of Khorne, the Lord of Murder. The assassin's masters may or may not know that they end up serving Khorne. They may think they are offering sacrifices to some other deity, or could simply not care to whom the blood of the kill is consecrated as long as the temple gains power and influence. Regardless, Khorne offers his help and claims the blood in payment.

Regardless of the need that pushes someone to him, no matter the circumstance, or indeed even the name or form by which he is known, one constant binds all to him—blood.



Above all, Khorne seeks the spilling of blood. Through murder, slaughter, and war, servants of the Blood God rip apart the flesh of their enemies, staining the soil on thousands of worlds with crimson gore, all in the name of Khorne. Nothing pleases Khorne more than the free flow of sanguine life force. It gives him his power, sustains him, and eases the spreading of his influence. Those who worship Khorne must ensure that the supply of blood never ceases, for Khorne cares not from where the blood flows, only that it does. A follower who displeases Khorne by failing to provide sufficient blood sacrifices will likely find himself as the next offering, his blood drunk, his soul consumed, and his skull tossed upon the vast mountain of such bones that surrounds the Throne of Skulls.

## WARS WITHOUT END

*"There is no peace. There is only time wasted between battles."*

—Ergathon of the Skulltakers, Champion of Khorne

Though Khorne's influence is a steady, constant tide of aggression pushing the world of mortals to acts of brutality, murder, and bloodshed, this is not enough to satiate the thirst of the Lord of Battle. Minor, isolated, or subtle acts cannot keep the rivers of his realm flowing with blood or elevate his throne ever higher upon a mound of skulls. They cannot fuel the fires of the boundless rage

that exists at the very core of his being. Khorne demands slaughter on a planetary scale, the murder of entire species, and, most of all, unending battle. Warfare—constant, epic, and merciless warfare—is required to reap the blood and skulls required to feed the cravings of a god.

All races wage war upon their rivals, even those that claim to seek unity and enlightenment. Those that do not willingly submit to the cause of another's greater good are brought to heel through armed force. For reluctant soldiers, war is a duty performed in service to a higher cause. It serves its purpose as a means to an end of peace. Many, though, find the means of carnage to become an end in itself.

To those who serve Khorne, war needs no justification or purpose beyond the glorious act itself. Splitting a head with a chainaxe and feeling the blood strike the flesh of the hand that wields it is its own reward. It becomes a compulsion. Killing begets killing. Blood demands blood. Devotion to Khorne is a life, no matter how brief or long, filled with days of brutal destruction, broken up only by the need to gather strength until the assault can be launched anew.

A single rage-fueled man can kill a handful of people before he falls, but when hundreds or thousands of such individuals gather together, cities, planets, and even galaxies shake in fear. Armies of Khorne's devoted worshippers descend upon a planet with a single purpose—to reap skulls and spill blood for their master. Huge Daemon Engines of war, weapons of incalculable destructive power, are granted to the armies that show the greatest devotion and total the largest body counts. As the Doom Mortars of these chosen forces rain gravedigger

## THE FACE OF A GOD

There is no way to know the true face of a Chaos God, for no mortal or machine mind can grasp the unfathomable nature of Chaos. The Four Powers are manifestations of the various aspects of this pure Chaos, and thus they, too, can only be described in limited mortal terms, using words and images that must ultimately fail to perfectly represent the god's actual form.

Despite the inability of crude language to properly describe Khorne's appearance, there are some common points that make it into most accounts. He is described as a gargantuan, imposing warrior with the head of a dog. He wears armour of brass and wields an impossibly massive sword. Red and brass, symbolising blood and warfare, are his chosen colours and feature strongly in the imagery of gibbering artists who render his appearance in devotional tomes. This is the most common image of Khorne, as depicted in blasphemous works, painted upon the unholy war banners of his legions, and burned into the minds of psykers that have peered too deeply into the Warp. It is not the only representation, however. Many accounts are drawn from the last remaining copy of Addrasian's *Knowledge Most Foul*. The writings of this mad remembrancer come from interviews he conducted and from transmissions he either intercepted or accessed by other means. Several Administratum scribes have been purged under suspicion of lending aid to Addrasian in his quest to collect knowledge that would be best left buried and forgotten.

shells down upon the heads of a terrified populace, ranks of frenzied warriors tear into a planet as if it were itself a living thing. Orbital defences are smashed, cities are razed, and enemy war machines are obliterated, clearing the way for the killing to begin in earnest. Destruction inflicted from guns is a start, but true martial achievement can only be realised in close quarters. Each kill committed fuels the greater slaughter. There are no captives taken, no lives spared; Khorne does not abide mercy. As streets become rivers of blood and bones shatter beneath advancing boots, the armies of Khorne push themselves to greater and greater feats of carnage.

At first, pistols are holstered in favour of chainswords and power axes. The blades bite deeply into the chests and necks of terrified enemy soldiers, the resistance of the flesh generating a feeling of grim satisfaction for the wielder. Soon even this sensation is not gratifying enough. The warriors of Khorne need to feel the heat of freshly spilled blood as it pumps out of hearts directly onto their skin. They need to revel in the snapping of arms and ripping of flesh that the jagged bone protrusions cause. In these moments, Khorne and his followers reach a level of communion that gives the Blood God the closest thing he gets to a feeling of being satiated. This feeling, however, is fleeting. As soon as it subsides, Khorne bellows in rage and pushes his followers to regroup and prepare to assault their next target. The warfare never ends.

Even in Khorne's own realm, where enemies only rarely present themselves, there is war. The generals of Khorne's daemonic armies, the mighty Bloodthirsters, lead legions of Bloodletters, Flesh Hounds, and other Daemons into battle against one another. They hone their brutal skills, even as they dull their blade edges against the armour of other Daemons. Axes cut into unnatural flesh in a constant orgy of destruction. Limbs are severed, chests are impaled on horns, faces are ripped apart by teeth and claws. When a battle ends, the wrecked bodies of the fallen are crushed under foot or tossed into great bottomless chasms. The battlefield remains idle for only as long as it takes for fresh legions to mass. Then the battle cries are heard once more and war begins anew. The only respite from the conflict is reserved for the furnace-Daemons who work the forges, creating weapons for the legions to wield in their next battle, be it within Khorne's realm or in the material world.

## THE REALM OF BRASS AND BLOOD

*"I saw constant battle. Man fought Daemon. Lightning fought volcano. Geysers of molten brass fought lakes of steaming blood. There was no respite, no peace. That which emerged victorious was immediately set upon by another foe even more terrible. It was blood, spraying and jetting, and skulls adding to a throne that pierced the red skies. It was endless screams of rage and fury made incarnate. It was... glorious."*

—Desark Slet, vision-geist of the Encrusted Blade

Though the Daemon-filled battlefields of Khorne's realm are many, and each is vast beyond reckoning, there is more to this blasted land than just blood-soaked plains populated with warring Daemons. Violence and despair are constant travelling companions for any unfortunate soul cursed to briefly wander there. Each foreboding hellscape leads to another, more grim than the last. At the heart of it all, Khorne watches from his throne, surveying his lands and pitting his forces against any convenient foe, be they fellow Daemons or foolhardy invaders who seek to wage a doomed war on the Lord of Battle.

It is a realm unlike any other. Storms rage perpetually across crimson skies, sending gale-force blasts seemingly composed of pure rage whipping across the plains and mountains. These angry winds tear into the land itself and rip up great chunks of stone and blood-drenched earth, tossing them violently back down hundreds of leagues away in explosions of raw destruction.

The land, for its part, fights back against the brutal assault of the heavens. Earthquakes send gouts of molten brass skyward, burning up the storm clouds, temporarily ending their rage until the winds re-gather to begin their assaults anew. New mountains erupt from flat land in an instant, some thrusting into the sky like gigantic living swords, others acting as shields against the advance of the storms.



Rivers of boiling blood criss-cross the hellish landscape, dividing the realm into territories over which rival Bloodthirsters wage war. The blood-flows are not content to allow the conquered lands to rest idle. From deep below the ground, new rivers strike through the surface, splitting the lands as easily as an axe opens the bloated gut of a lazy bureaucrat. Each crimson flow sucks down all that once occupied the space, including any Daemon legions that might have been marching there. As with its war against the sky, the land retaliates, pushing the banks of the rivers to close in upon themselves. The brass-spewing volcanoes send liquid metal into the rivers, evaporating the blood within and sealing the wounds with burning fury.

Each piece of the realm of battle constantly fights to obliterate the others. Each acts like a living servant of Khorne, wanting to prove to the master of the land that it is the most worthy of his rewards. A visitor to this nightmare realm would surely be driven mad, knowing that every rock, every breeze, and every drop of what should be water is an enemy, looking to kill him with just as much purpose, desire, and violence as the multitudinous Daemons of the Blood God inhabiting the land. To witness the carnage of the realm of Khorne is to know that conflict is a living, breathing thing and not just a curse that troubles the worlds of men, machines, and aliens. It is to know an eternal truth and, thus, to know despair.

## KHORNE'S RAGE

At the outermost edge of this domain there lies a ring of volcanoes that scholars of the profane have come to call Khorne's Rage. Reaching hundreds of miles into air, they belch their thick black smoke and molten brass skyward, creating an impenetrable border that can neither be seen through nor navigated. Darkness and ash hang there, lit ominously from beneath by gouts of flame that incinerate the loose debris along the sides of the volcanoes. Within the ash clouds, blood storms roil. Red lightning dances across the clouds as thunder cracks and rolls, like the snap of a Bloodthirster's whip followed with the sound of the hooves of a thousand charging Juggernauts.

These peaks stand as a bastion against invaders, their toxic ash and scorching brass flows enough to deter all but the most determined of forces. Those who are arrogant, or foolish, enough to make the attempt to cross the torturous border are met with more than barriers of heat and jagged rock. The very rock and brass of Khorne's Rage itself rises up to crush the attackers. Pieces of the rock break away from the side of the mountains, brass flowing into them in a hellish semblance of life blood. Daemons of stone and liquid metal take form, born of rage and defiance. With mindless fury and unadulterated violence, they bludgeon and scorch their foes. Once their grim task is complete, they fall back into lifeless piles, waiting for the call to reform and defend the borders of their master's realm.

## THE DAEMON FORGES

At the base of the volcanoes are the forges of the lesser furnace-Daemons. In these sweltering workshops, weapons of war are crafted. All manner of axes, swords, hammers, and armour are created to supply the Blood God's eternal wars. Here, too, the components of Khorne's Daemon Engines are made. Assembly of these huge constructs of war is conducted elsewhere, but the cogs, blades, housings, and armaments all have their beginning here, at the foot of Khorne's Rage. It is a dangerous place to reside, even by the standards of the rest of the realm. At any moment a volcano could erupt, flooding the forge with molten brass. It is of no concern to Khorne if a few Daemons are incinerated in such mishaps; others rise from the Blood Pits to take their place, and the forges continue.

Despite the risks, the furnace-Daemons are able to take advantage of the dangers of Khorne's Rage. Across the plains of battle, it is almost exclusively Khorne's own minions that do battle and perish. At the fringes of the realm, however, other warriors die agonising, terrible, bloody deaths. Using tools of fiendish design and rites that even the most depraved Chaos Sorcerers would dare not undertake, the masters of the hell-forges enslave the souls of those mortals who would dare invade the Blood God's realm and fuse them with the anvils of Khorne. The tormented screams of those thus eternally imprisoned blend with the ringing and clanging of each falling hammer that strikes the forge. When white-hot metal is placed on the anvil and pounded into form, the bound soul feels the scorching heat. Thus, as each new weapon or piece of armour is crafted in the Daemon Forges, it is born to the sounds of Khorne's enemies suffering his everlasting wrath.