

# DEATHWATCH

## RISING TEMPEST



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

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# RISING TEMPEST

Welcome to Rising Tempest, a three-part adventure supplement for the DEATHWATCH Roleplaying Game. The missions within take the Kill-team to all corners of the Jericho Reach, to hunt out and exterminate an ancient evil species aiding the Tau in their bid for the Jericho Reach. The Kill-team faces not only savage xenos, but opposition from within the Imperium itself.

## RUNNING RISING TEMPEST

These missions require Battle-Brothers who have a well-rounded set of abilities. Therefore it is recommended for characters Rank 3 and above, after they have had time to access a wider range of options. No particular Speciality is essential for completing Rising Tempest, although having at least one character with social or investigation skills will be beneficial. Additionally, large-scale battles are involved, and characters will find that the Tactics Skill provides valuable insight in how to succeed. If the Kill-team is lacking in either Skill area, the GM should be prepared to compensate by making information easier to come by: NPCs more readily share information, and he may choose to give some information to the Battle-Brothers that would normally require a Skill test. The adversary numbers assume a Kill-team size of 5. Most encounters will not suffer if the team size is different, except the Turning Points in the large battles. The GM should modify the Magnitude of the Hordes in the Turning Points if his group is larger or smaller.

## BACKGROUND

The Ghanathaar were a powerful alien race that dominated the area now known as the Jericho Reach for thousands of years, long before humanity walked the stars. These bizarre invertebrates didn't appear threatening by any means, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Their advanced—but dangerous—technology was fueled by the race's strong connection to the warp. It enhanced their abilities to intrude into and manipulate the minds of other sentient beings, bending entire species to their will. Using their formidable power, the Ghanathaar thrived in their corner of the galaxy, building plans for greater expansion beyond their empire.

At the very height of their power, the Ghanathaar unexpectedly came to an ignominious end. There is no evidence of what unravelled this mighty empire, but within a matter of centuries they were all but destroyed. As they saw their empire collapsing around them, a small group of the most powerful

and gifted of the Ghanathaar banded together. Using their advanced technology and its perilous link to the Warp, they crafted gateways into the Immaterium through which to flee from their impending doom. With not much time left as their fate bore down on them, they sealed themselves inside these gateways, waiting for the threat to pass. However in their rush to build the gateways, the Ghanathaar made a grievous mistake, underestimating the terrible power they were harnessing. Once they reached the other side of the gates, the Ghanathaar found themselves unable to cross back over, trapped in the Immaterium they had thought was under their control.

The former rulers of the Reach were not gifted with stasis or even a dream-wracked slumber. Nor did they possess the final release of mortality. Century by century, their sanity ebbed as they had nothing but their own bitterness, the howls the warp, and the whispers of its dark gods for company. Their already inhuman bodies have become mutated horrors that reflect their inner depravity. For thousands of years they watched the ruins of their empire, covetous and angry, from inside the warp prisons they had forged.

The Imperium first discovered the Javar Gates as they colonised the Jericho Reach. These technological wonders still buzzed with the energy of the warp, corrupting the weak of heart if they came into close contact with them. The Inquisition quickly realised the threat this technology posed and ordered the devices destroyed, leveling cataclysmic firepower at the heretical xenotech. But the Ghanathaar's technology would not be so easily dispatched and withstood everything the Imperial forces threw at it. Unable to move or destroy the dangerous devices, the Inquisition and the Adeptus Mechanicus crafted immense mechanical seals to lock the Gates from the rest of humanity. These seals became known as the Javar Wards, and stand to this day, keeping the threat of the Ghanathaar from the Reach.

## IMPERIAL DATE STAMPS

The Mission handout includes several dates. Players not familiar with the Imperium's dating system may want details on what each date stamp means. A typical Warhammer 40,000 date is composed of 7 digits followed by the millennium designation (M) and then two more digits representing the millennium. The dates in the handout all follow the format #####817.M41, indicating that the events occurred in the 817th year of the 41st millennium. The three numbers before the year are the year fraction, which runs from 001 to 000. The first digit is the check number. This number indicates the level of confidence that the date is actually correct with regards to Terran time. The lower the number, the more accurate the date. For example, 0 means an event that occurred on Terra, while 8 means a date reference recorded without being able to verify the actual date on Terra for more than 10 years. Therefore, if an event is dated 5500817.M41, the person recording it was able to validate through an indirect but unbroken chain of psychic contact back to Terra that it is the middle of the 817th year of the 41st Millennium.

## THE JAVAR GATES

The technology of the Ghanathaar is an unholy fusion of machine and the Warp, and the Javar Gates stand as a testament to their achievement. These ominous devices appear as a dark black metal archway, crackling with the energy of the warp. If activated, the arch would fill with energy, opening a gateway directly into the Empyrean, similar in many ways, to the webway gates of the Eldar.

## THE JAVAR WARDS

After the Imperium discovered the Javar Gates and realised how dangerous they were to humanity, they ordered them sealed. The Inquisition put together teams of the best and most trustworthy members of the Adeptus Mechanicus and Imperial Guard to assist in the construction of giant mechanical devices to seal away the dangerous energies of the Gates from the populace of the Imperium. These devices were called Javar Wards.

The first portent of release came to the Ghanathaar late in the fourth century of M41. A period of abatement in the Reach's warp storms corresponded to a sudden weakening of the Javar wards. This event was quickly followed by the arrival of the young race known as the Tau. When their expansion fleet crossed the void and settled the Velk'Han Sept, they chose an uninhabited world of violet seas as a retreat for their Ethereal caste. This world, which the Tau named Ea, was once an important world of the Ghanathaar empire and remains home to many of their edifices—including the ninth Javar Gate.

The Ghanathaar saw an opportunity in this new, idealistic race. Those members of the trapped Ghanathaar that still held onto their sanity pooled their psychic will into a single consciousness, a being powerful enough to extend his will beyond their prison in the warp and touch the minds of these newcomers. Called the Tal'ek by the Tau, this psychic emissary whispered in the ears of the Tau leaders, searching for a mind willing to let it in.

Within the devoutly defended towers of Ea, the Tal'ek found his ally. For long years he whispered of common intent to a young Ethereal, earning trust and sympathy from the earnest Tau. Eventually the Ethereal was not so young anymore, but instead a well-respected leader named Aun'O Ea KarHe'Or. Aun'Kar knows only what the Tal'ek has told him of the Ghanathaar. He sees them as a race eager to join the Greater Good, whose gift of empathy could greatly aid the Tau in winning over the Jericho Reach.

Aun'Kar does not realise that the Ghanathaar are corrupted and mad. They have no interest in the Tau, in peace, or the Greater Good. They no longer even seek to rule the Reach, for their numbers are far too few to ever reclaim their former glory. Now, the Ghanathaar's only ambition is madness. Once the surviving Ghanathaar re-emerge from their prisons, they seek to enslave the teeming billions populating the Reach—man and xenos alike—that they might twist their captives into the same warp-spawned nightmares which haunted their aeons-long captivity.

## OVERVIEW OF THE ADVENTURE

Rising Tempest introduces a new play for dominance by the Tau. They have made contact with the Ghanathaar, an alien race long thought vanquished, and are seeking to incorporate them into the Tau Empire. The Ghanathaar are small in number, but their telepathic abilities would lend a dangerous advantage to the Tau's infectious doctrine. Worse, they have a secret and destructive agenda of their own—one which threatens the entire Jericho Reach.

## CHAPTER I: THE DEPTHS OF TREACHERY

The Battle-Brothers receive a request from the Canis Salient's infamous Lord Commander Ebongrave. He believes that the Tau have been fomenting rebellion and sedition on the world of Spite. After recent attempts on his life, the Lord Commander is convinced that the Tau have sympathisers among the military and the populace. As a result, Ebongrave does not trust the local forces to root out the alien agitators, and those few men he does trust are tied up guarding their Lord Commander from assassination. Ebongrave's heavy-handed rule has created an air of paranoia on Spite, where his allies are few and his enemies many. The information the Battle-Brothers need is layered between civil unrest and military politics.

Eventually the Battle-Brothers discover that—with the help of a dangerous group of rebels called the Vengeance Sept—aliens of the Tau Empire have infiltrated the fortress world. The Tau's goal is to unlock a mysterious portal called the Javar Ward beneath the city of Javar Prime. To do this, they need to capture one of a small group of soldiers who were involved in a secret operation decades ago. The Battle-Brothers are now in a race to reach the Tau before they can unleash whatever evil the Javar Ward contains.

Depending on how swiftly the Kill-team acts and how successful they are in thwarting the Tau's preparations, the Battle-Brothers may keep the seal from ever being opened, or they may fail and be forced to fight a war on two fronts. In either event, in the aftermath the Kill-team begins to piece together the unsettling truth: this operation is only part of a greater plan to awaken a lost xenos race. The immediate consequences would give the Tau a strong advantage in the Canis Salient, but the naive aliens are unaware that the greater consequences could spell disaster for the entire Reach.

## CHAPTER II: ASSAULT ON JAVAR NIL

The Battle-Brothers follow the Tau to Eleusis, a shrine world rebuilding after being cleansed of centuries of corruption. No one seems to know much about the Kill-team's Objective, but there is no shortage of rival religious factions trying to use the Battle-Brothers to advance their own ends.

Through investigation or perseverance, diplomacy or violence, the Battle-Brothers identify the next target as Mount Siff, the home of an insular group of Adepta Sororitas. Unfortunately the Battle Sisters have vowed to allow no one on the mountain, even the Adeptus Astartes. To overcome this obstacle, the Battle-Brothers must either entrench themselves deeper in religious politics, or defy the Battle Sisters and risk their wrath. The Tau arrive shortly after the Battle-Brothers,

and this time their presence is anything but covert. They launch a full assault on Mount Sifr. The Kill-team must defend the mountain shrine complex, lest the unwitting Tau return more of the vile Ghanathaar to the Jericho Reach.

### CHAPTER III: EXTERMINATUS

After a debriefing back on Watch Fortress Erioch, the Battle-Brothers have some time to recover their strength and analyse the findings of their most recent mission. During their time aboard the Watch Fortress, the Battle-Brothers are attacked in the heart of their domain and uncover vital information and an unexpected ally.

Acting on the information they uncover, the Kill-team makes an assault on a fortress world held in the clutches of a dread Traitor Legion. There they must destroy another gateway of the Ghanathaar before the Chaos warlord can unlock its secrets and free yet more of the vile xenos into the Jericho Reach. During their trials on the fortress world, the Battle-Brothers discover the final, desperate attempt of the Ghanathaar and their Tau allies.

To stop the mad xenos once and for all, the Kill-team must travel deep into the Hadex Anomaly, a ferocious warp storm in the heart of the Jericho Reach. There, they must board a Watch Station of the Deathwatch, long lost to time itself, and stop the Ghanathaar from completing a ritual to shatter the remaining Javar Gates spread throughout the Galaxy. Should the Ghanathaar succeed in their endeavour, their numbers would swell into the thousands; they would become a force to be reckoned with in the Jericho Reach, something the already beleaguered forces of the Imperium can hardly afford.

### VEHICLES IN RISING TEMPEST

Throughout the course of this adventure, the Battle Brothers encounter a number of different vehicles, from Tau armoured fighting vehicles and daemonic Defilers to a Venerable Dreadnought wreathed in glory. While vehicles have a number of specialised Characteristics that reflect their powerful nature, the two most important in *Rising Tempest* are Armour and Structural Integrity. Like personal body armour, a vehicle's armour reduces the damage from an accident or attack by the number of Armour Points it possesses. Much like an Acolyte's Wounds, any Damage that isn't soaked by the vehicle's armour is subtracted from its Structural Integrity. Once a vehicle has taken an amount of Damage equal to its Structural Integrity it is destroyed.

This is an extremely simplified version of the vehicle combat rules presented on page 164 of the *DEATHWATCH* supplement *RITES OF BATTLE*. The Game Master does not need *RITES OF BATTLE* to play this adventure, but if he has access to it and the vehicle rules contained therein, he should feel free to utilise those rules to bring an extra layer of immersion and excitement to his game.

