



# SHADOWS OF CENTRALIS MONTHLY MAGAZINE®

#24

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PUBLISHING

# **Shadows of Centralis Monthly Magazine: Issue #24 (April 2024)**

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Book front cover artwork: © John Blanche

# SHADOWS OF CENTRALIS MONTHLY MAGAZINE<sup>®</sup>

Issue: #24 (April 2024)

Cover by John Blanche

Weary warriors and tired travellers, jaded journeymen and questing knights, sheath your swords and lay down your burdensome loads, and take rest as you enjoy the latest issue of Shadows of Centralis Monthly Magazine! Before we explore the contents herewithin, let us first pay tribute to the legend that is John Blanche; this issue's fantastic cover is adorned with awesome artwork by the man himself.

Detailing how they perform in games, while offering background information on respective units, inside this issue there are Shadows of Centralis Faction Focus articles for the Undead (Corpse Dragon) and Lords (Master Surgeon and Bodyguards).

As we celebrate the classic age of pulp publications and weird fiction, we have two special Sci-Fi Fiends articles this month. First, we look at the writer of titles such as *Methuselah's Children*, *Starship Troopers*, and *Stranger in a Strange Land*, winner of several Hugo Awards and Retro Hugos, Robert A. Heinlein. Secondly, we focus on the man considered to be one of the chief architects of the space opera subgenre, creator of the 'Skylark' and 'Lensman' series of stories, the excellent E.E. 'Doc' Smith.

Enjoy!

*John Wombat*



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**"Beware the Shadows..."**

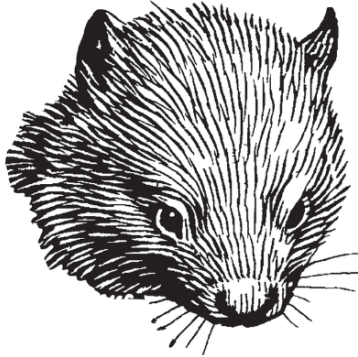
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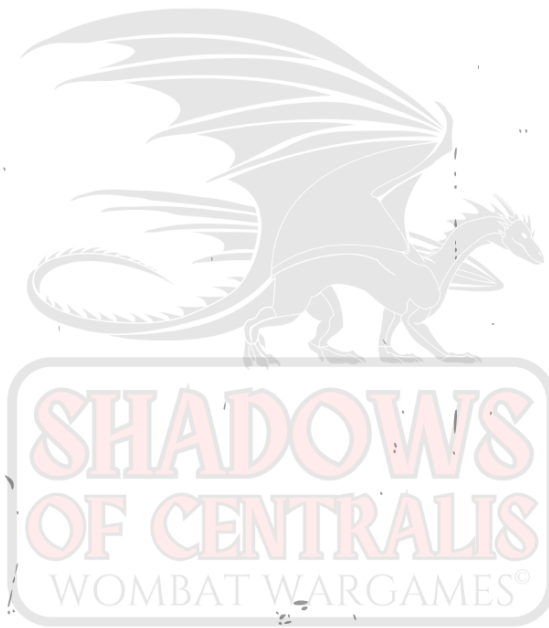


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**“Hear them now, my creatures  
of the night, hear them march,  
for death does not kill.”**



**Mordecai Petofi.**



## UNDEAD – CORPSE DRAGON

Draped with a foul miasma which haunts the olfactory senses of all who traverse its lands, positioned inland, to the south of Futurm Terras, and east of the Konstrato Empire, is Sandor. Once part of the Konstrato Empire, under the charge of the charismatic Mordecai Petofi, a large, well-prepared Undead cult overwhelmed the forces of the Konstrato Empire in a bloody uprising some centuries ago. Upon achieving victory, unwavering in his focus to serve the Undead God, Barnabas, Mordecai Petofi instructed the killing of every Konstrato Empire citizen, soldiers and civilians, adults and children, alike.

Several centuries after the overthrowing of the Konstrato Empire of Sandor, the ancient, yet ageless, Mordecai Petofi continues to govern these pestilent and menacing lands. Like a puppet master who manipulates the strings of his marionette, reigning supreme over an immense, mindless Undead horde, the vampiric Mordecai Petofi is infamous throughout the Orb.

It is not the martial prowess of the Undead which secures them victory in battle, but their sheer weight of numbers as hordes of slain skeletons and zombies can be continually brought back into animated form by their magical masters. Further to this, these unnatural creatures of the night know nothing of fear or panic, making them a difficult force to breakdown, psychologically.



Once proud and noble creatures, corpse dragons are rotting, hulking monstrosities brought back from death by powerful necromancers.

### Corpse Dragon

	M	A	H-t-H	S	Mg	C	W	D	VP
Corpse Dragon	10	4/ -	7+	-	-	6+	4	5+	60

**Equipment:** A Corpse Dragon is armed with fists, teeth, and claws. **Special Rules:** A Corpse Dragon has the *Breathe Fire*, *Terrifying*, *Extra-Large Target*, *Poison* and *Fly* special rules.

***Breathe Fire:*** Dragons are capable of unleashing bursting volleys of white-hot fire. In the Shooting phase of its player's Turn, in addition to the Attacks (A) listed within its Unit Profile, a unit with the *Breathe Fire* special rule can rain fire on an enemy unit. Roll a D10, on the roll of 5+ the enemy unit suffers 3 *Hits* with a -2 modifier to D10 *Durability Test* rolls (this modifier becomes -3 if the unit has the *Flammable* special rule). *Breathe Fire* has a range of 10".

***Terrifying:*** Some beings are so disturbingly hideous or fearsome that those who look upon them are consumed with terror. Before *Charging* a unit with the *Terrifying* special rule, a D10 *Confidence Test* with a -1 modifier must first be passed. If the test is passed, then the unit can *Charge* as normal. If the test is failed, the unit cannot *Charge* but remain stationary.

***Extra-Large Target:*** Such is their immensity, some creatures are easy targets when it comes to missile fire. A unit *Shooting* at an enemy unit with the *Extra-Large Target* special rule gains a +2 modifier to D10 *Shooting* rolls.

***Poison:*** Some creatures secrete a natural poison or carry weapons which use poison, such as poisoned darts or pistols loaded with toxin-infused ammunition. Successful D10 *Durability Test* rolls for Wounds (W) caused by a unit with the *Poison* special rule or from a weapon with the *Poison* special rule are re-rolled.

***Fly:*** Covering creatures and machines alike, a unit with the *Fly* special rule does not suffer adverse Terrain Movement Modifiers. An enemy unit can only *Charge* a unit with the *Fly* special rule if it also has the *Fly* special rule.



Positioned high in the chill night sky, partially draped with nightshade-toned, ghostly clouds, the Orb's main moon, Mani, radiated a menacing broken brilliance which cast an unearthly light through the broken, twisted branches of the diseased forest below. As an otherworldly, biting breeze, fetid and evil, whistled its way through the weird woodland, the weary elven traveller clutched his fur-collared robe tighter around his shivering shoulders. With each laboured step, as he battled a body-aching fatigue, the tired traveller considered the inherent evil which tainted the very air he breathed. Here, all surroundings threatened menace.

Though the weatherbeaten face of the lilywhite-skinned journeyman bore livid scars of war, it was his eyes, two inky black pools, which spoke of loss most profound, that told of the true horrors of battle which haunted him. But that was a different time, a different life, for many long years now the former warrior had wandered the Orb as a religious vagabond, spreading the teachings of the goddess of the elven race, the great and just Dagnr.

Treading cautiously through the strange half-light, as he struggled to negotiate the thick, thorny undergrowth, as wicked branches appeared to claw at him with supernatural vigour, the traveller placed an unsteady foot through a soft and squelchy object which gave way to a sickening crunch. As uneasy anxiety bled into agitated panic, looking down, the once warrior, now wanderer, curiously eyed the ground underfoot. It was at this moment that the clouds overhead cleared so that Mani's full luminescence shone onto the jaded journeyman, allowing him to observe beneath his feet a nightmare sight, Pustuled and pestilent, engorged, loathsome maggots, which writhed in a seeming ecstasy of gross fulfilment, feasted greedily on the gory remains of a torn and shredded human torso. Like a ruined rampart, broken and twisted, fleshless ribs teemed with these devourers of disease. A few feet to the left of the butchered, maggot-infested carcass, with its cap hewed clean off, exposing a pulpy mess of decomposing brains, a semi-fleshed skull rested in a puddle of blood and filth.

In petrified silence, casting his disbelieving eyes over the corrupted ground, turning left and right, the traveller's eyes fell upon scene after scene of macabre massacres. Filled with revulsion, as he suppressed his nauseated retchings, the elven traveller whispered a prayer to Dagnr, "Priestess of fortune, purest of heart, great goddess of all that is holy, watch over me. Guide me through this land of abomination. Blessed are those under the guidance of Dagnr."

Still digesting the unhallowed, sickening scene which tempered his heart to a pulsating panic, choking back his shaking fear, there came to the traveller's ears a sound which seared his soul. Colouring the air with tones of unspeakable horror, a hellish, bloodcurdling roar echoed loudly through the forest. This din of untethered evil inspired within the traveller a depth of terror never before known to him.

In response to the unholy roar which so terrified the traveller, there awoke from lands afar savage creatures innumerable. Bearing beady, bloodred eyes, gigantic, chittering rats with crooked tails and filth-matted fur emerged from their underground nests in a wave of wickedness. In a scream of savagery, a score of enormous, evil-eyed bats descended from the skies above. Leaving their dark dens, pacing through the thick forest with heavy padded paws, packs of great wild wolves howled in excited anticipation. Many were the denizens of darkness which came to answer the cruel call.

Nearer and nearer, louder and louder, this nauseating noise, awesome and awful, vicious and vile, came upon the traveller until the unwholesome source of the malevolent sound came into his shaking vision. Standing before him was a sight most hideous and picture most foul. Winged and serpentine, with four powerful legs and an enormous gaping maw, this creature of darkness resembled in most basic aspects a dragon. But whereas dragons are ancient and wise and graceful in their powerful movements, this abomination from the nethermost pit of hell inspired the most extreme feelings of disgust. Folded like broken beggars, the beast's torn and tattered wings were held tightly to its splintered and sickly spine. Its immense, scaled hide was rent with unhealed blows of old and pitted with great holes of rancid decay. An animated carrion which bred disease and gestated decay, this towering spawn of all that is unholy was fuelled with a blasphemous, undead vitality.

With thick coils of acrid smoke spiralling upwards from the snorting nostrils of its long and leathery, rotting face, with glowering yellow eyes which spoke of an all-consuming hatred for all living beings, with jaws of jagged, filth-encrusted teeth, having long ago been risen from the peaceful slumber of death by foul necromancy, this maleficent monster was a diabolic parody of a dragon. Having followed the scent of the journeying elf for some time, stalking in the shadows, now able to cast its unearthly glare fully upon the petrified traveller, the fetid and fearsome dragon drew its gigantic jaws wide open and propelled a torrent of raging fire towards the trespasser.

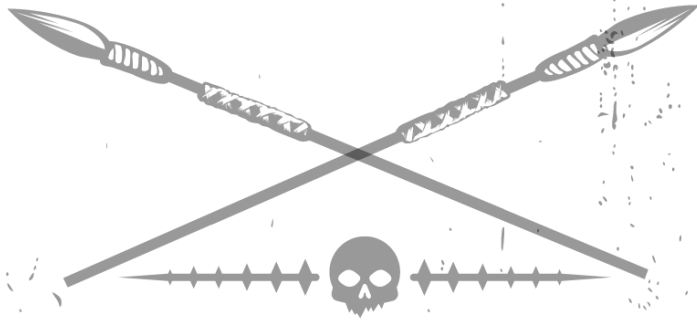
"A corpse dragon!" gasped the traveller as he drew back in terror. "Dagnr, goddess of purity and light, be with me! I pray thee, bless my blade my and strengthen my shield as I purge this evil in your name." The traveller then reached behind and grabbed from his back a rune-inscribed circular, silver shield. Quickly, the traveller held this before him as he knelt to the ground and readied himself to be receive the unfurling bolt of white-hot fire.

With the traveller's mighty, thrice blessed shield saving him from all but a scorched brow and singed hair, as the corpse dragon exhausted its fiery breath, the embattled elf whispered another prayer, "Great goddess, Dagnr, bless this blade." Then, with shield on arm and gleaming sword in hand, through curtains of unholy smoke which burned and blistered his throat, while stinging his eyes, with unnerving pace the traveller tore towards the dragon of undeath. With elven pace the traveller was upon his abominable adversary. With his powerful right arm, he cleaved his heavy sword deeply into the neck of his monstrous foe; slicing through flesh and crushing bone. "Cursed creature! Foul fiend! I swear unto Dagnr that I will slay thee, lest my soul be forfeit to the foul powers that gave rise to your being!"

Snarling in rage, as its neck buckled beneath the blow of the traveller's mighty sword, using its huge, spiked tail, the undead beast struck at the elf with such ferocity and force that his sacred shield folded like crumpled parchment. With its runic adornments shattered and its blessings broken, the elf's shield was now useless. Casting down his broken protection, breathing deeply as he pictured in his mind the slaying of this beast of hell, the elf took his sword in both hands, then ran pell-mell towards his fiendish foe. Like a leaping salmon throwing itself upstream, the traveller threw himself into the air and hewed his blade into the corrupted chest of the fire breathing beast. As a thick tar-black blood issued forth, the blow ripped open the beast's great breast. But before the traveller could land another blow, apoplectic with anger, throwing back the elf with a swipe of his powerful front claws which ripped through the elf's leather jerkin and deeply lacerated his torso, the enraged corpse dragon cast its adversary high into the air. Crashing to the corpse-strewn ground, smashing his head against a large rock, the traveller lay in a broken, moaning heap.

Breathing deeply, with fresh fire brought from within its inner furnace, the unhallowed undead beast belched another torrent of fire towards the crumpled elf. Unable to shield himself from the flames, the elf yelled out in a paroxysm of agony. Rolling around the gory ground in a frenzy of pain, the elf desperately tried to extinguish the flames which ravaged his form, but his efforts to douse the flames were stillborn. With his body ablaze, unable to quell the caustic terrorism of the flames which engulfed him, as his snow-white skin melted and became as wax of a lit candle, the traveller's death throes were a sight most ghastly.

Tearing into the blackened body of the defeated traveller, the corpse dragon ate hungrily. Upon having had its grisly fill, the undead monster then tossed the bloody and ragged remains across the already gruesome forest floor, adding further decoration to a carpet of horrors. There followed a frenzied feast of leftovers for the creatures of darkness that had earlier been awoken, as rabid rats and beastly bats satiated their dark hungers, while snarling wolves tore at the remains with frenzied bloodlust.





## LORDS – MASTER SURGEON AND BODYGUARDS

Strictly speaking, the Lords are part of the human race. However, be it through mental or physical altering, almost every inhabitant of their kingdom has been changed in some way. Under the banner of progress, and in the belief that the wishes of their god Berossus are being followed, Lords' people are often exposed to brutal biomechanical experimentation. Sometimes, this results in physical advancements, other times the subjects are left gibbering wrecks at the hands of crazed surgeons. Almost deified themselves, surgeons are both held in high esteem and considered with much fear within the society of the Lords.

When it comes to a player of the Lords selecting a General unit for his army, he has two different types of leader to consider; a Vindex Immortalitatis and a Master Surgeon. While a Vindex Immortalitatis can be taken on foot or mounted on a horse, a Master Surgeon can be taken alone on foot, or on foot with bodyguards. Each of these different options will be covered in future issues of Shadows of Centralis Monthly Magazine; this issue focusses on a Master Surgeon with Bodyguards unit.

Both a Vindex Immortalitatis and a Master Surgeon have the *Inspiring* and *Immune to Fear* special rules. Meanwhile, though a Vindex Immortalitatis is the more proficient fighter (with a Hand-to-Hand (H-t-H) value of 5+, compared to a Master Surgeon (holding a Hand-to-Hand (H-t-H) value of 6+), the latter comes with the additional *Medic* special rule.

Allowing for greater durability and impact in close combat situations, the Master Surgeon with Bodyguards unit allows the Master Surgeon to be bolstered by the support of two Bodyguards, each of whom is armed with a sound gun and sword. Meanwhile, the Master Surgeon is armed with a pistol and sword or axe. Offering only minimal

protection, both the Master Surgeon and Bodyguards have light armour coverings, allowing for a Durability (D) value of 8+ each.

### Master Surgeon with Bodyguards

	M	A	H-t-H	S	Mg	C	W	D	VP
Master Surgeon	5	2/ 1	6+	6+	-	4+	2	8+	60
2 x Bodyguards	5	1/ 1 per model	6+	6+	-	-	1 per model	8+	-

**Equipment:** Wearing light armour, a Master Surgeon is armed with a pistol and sword or axe. Wearing light armour, each Bodyguard is armed with a sound gun and sword.

**Special Rules:** A Master Surgeon has the *Inspiring*, *Medic* and *Immune to Fear* special rules. Bodyguards have the *Follow the Leader* and *Look Out* special rules.

***Inspiring:*** The ability to inspire troops on the field of battle is essential if a general or champion is to be a successful leader. A unit with the *Inspiring* special rule inspires confidence in others. All friendly units within 10" of a unit with the *Inspiring* special rule gain a +1 modifier to their D10 Hand-to-Hand Combat, D10 Shooting and D10 *Confidence Test* rolls.

***Medic:*** *Medic* is a special rule that covers apothecaries, battlefield medics, and such like. If a unit with the *Medic* special rule comes into base contact with a friendly unit which has lost Wounds (W), then it can restore 1 lost Wounds (W) to that unit for each Turn it is in base contact. A unit's restored Wounds (W) cannot exceed its original Unit Profile value.

***Immune to Fear:*** Some warriors have such a steely mindset they refuse to allow fear to govern their actions. A unit with the *Immune to Fear* special rule does not need to pass a D10 *Confidence Test* before *Charging* a unit which has the *Fear* special rule.

***Follow the Leader:*** This special rule typically applies to units which include bodyguards, slaves, or animals, and a respective general, wizard, slave master, or animal handler.

All D10 *Confidence Tests* for the bodyguards, slaves, or animals, are rolled against the respective general, wizard, slave master, or animal handler's Confidence (C) value.

**Look Out:** This special rule typically applies to units which include bodyguards, slaves, or animals, and a respective general, wizard, slave master, or animal handler.

Providing there is at least one bodyguard, slave, or animal in the unit, this model suffers *Hits* that would otherwise be directed towards the respective general, wizard, slave master, or animal handler.

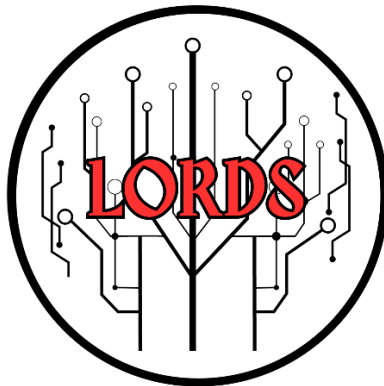
When there are no bodyguards, slaves, or animals left, the respective general, wizard, slave master, or animal handler suffers the *Hits* as normal.

**Sword:** This bladed hand-to-hand combat weapon can range from broadswords and machetes to katana and sabres, with much in between. An enemy model that receives a *Hit* from a sword suffers a -1 modifier to its D10 *Durability Test* roll.

**Axe:** From felling axes to tomahawks, hatches and meat cleavers to pick axes, axes come in all manner of shapes and size. An enemy model that receives a *Hit* from an axe suffers a -1 modifier to its D10 *Durability Test* roll.

**Pistol:** From duelling pistols to horse pistols, harmonica pistols to revolvers, pistol types can vary greatly. A model that receives a *Hit* from a pistol suffers a -2 modifier to its D10 *Durability Test* roll.

**Sound Gun:** Firing beams of high-power sound waves, sound guns cause extreme pain and disorientation to victims. *Hits* from sound guns do not cause Wounds (W), instead, if at least one model in a unit is *Hit* by a sound gun, the entire unit gains the *Stunned* special rule.



## **Official Shadows of Centralis Miniatures via RPE Miniatures & Games**

Regular readers of Shadows of Centralis Monthly Magazine will know how much we value RPE Miniatures & Games; as well as providing fantastic figures, ranging from dwarfs to elves, orcs to trolls, and with so much in between, the company also offer wonderful and highly knowledgeable customer service. In addition to selling models, the guys behind the scenes at RPE Miniatures & Games are all avid collectors and gamers themselves.

For those yet to visit the RPE Miniatures & Games website, you won't be disappointed. Headed by Paul Reid, the Liverpool-based model manufacturer boasts thousands of superbly detailed metal miniatures which, in addition to being wonderfully crisp castings (white metal, tin-rich, with a small trace of lead, ensuring a superior casting finish), are also highly competitively priced.





**Trolls, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.**



**Trolls, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.**



**Trolls, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.**



**Trolls, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.**



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**Keys of Damnation,  
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**Orcs, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.**



# Ogres, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.



Ogres, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.



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**Zombies, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.**



**Giants, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.**



**Giants, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.**



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**Giants, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.**



**Giants, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.**



**Priest of Darkness,  
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Witches, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.



Witches, models by RPE Miniatures & Games.



## **Official Shadows of Centralis Miniatures via RPE Miniatures & Games**

Though games of Shadows of Centralis can be played using 28mm miniatures from any manufacturer, old or new, there is a growing range of official miniatures available exclusively via RPE Miniatures & Games.

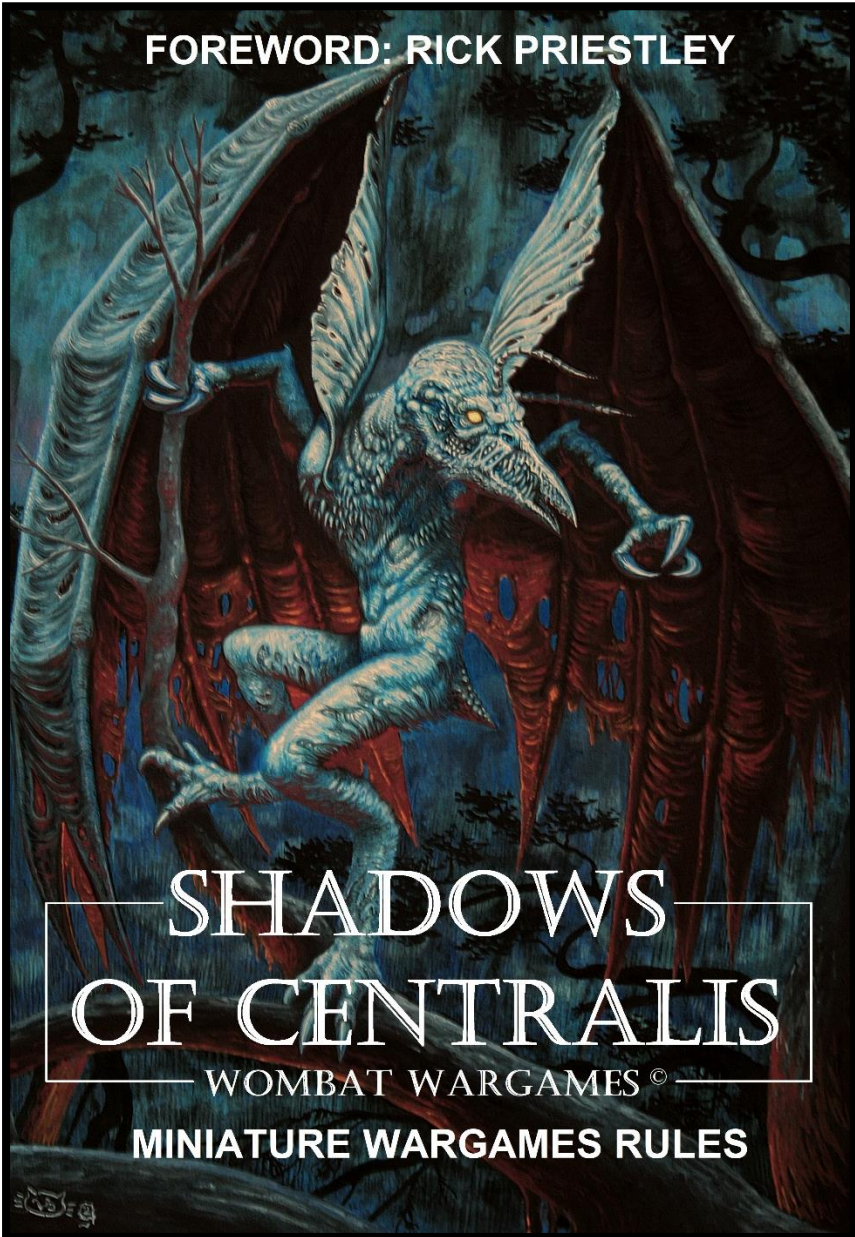
Highly detailed, all-metal 28mm scale models, new additions to the official range of Shadows of Centralis miniatures are added to the RPE Miniatures & Games website each month.

To receive regular updates on official Shadows of Centralis miniatures release details, sign up for our free monthly newsletter, e-mail: [contact@wombatwargames.com](mailto:contact@wombatwargames.com)

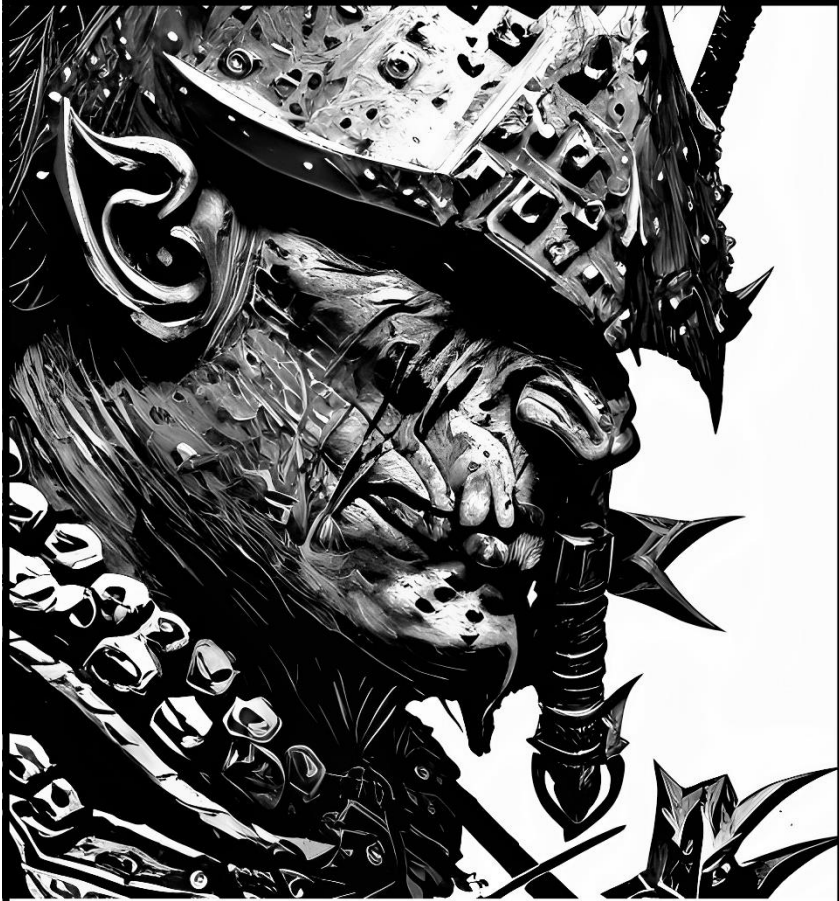


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FOREWORD: RICK PRIESTLEY



*“Beware the Shadows and their corrupt genesis. Consumers of souls and usurpers of hope, Centralis’ Shadows are the spawn of darkness. Instead, know of the Others, know them by their many names, the Maidens of Light, the World of Light, the First Creation, the Greater Beings...”*



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## OFFICIAL SEAS OF THE ORB MODEL RANGE BY BOB NAISMITH

Designed by renowned modelmaker Bob Naismith, available exclusively via [www.bobnaismith.com](http://www.bobnaismith.com), there is a growing range of exciting, official Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb miniatures and playing pieces. Ranging from huge warships to ornithopter carriers, sea monsters to magic spells effects, with much in between, these dynamic models and components form part of a continually expanding range of official Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb miniatures and gaming components.



*A Damned Troll Barge powers through the waves.*

Set in the violent and perplexing Cattus Occuli galaxy, upon the restless waves of the dark and mysterious world of the Orb, Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb is the first in a series of exciting expansions for the Shadows of Centralis tabletop wargame.

While Shadows of Centralis uses 28mm miniatures to reflect everything from small-scale skirmishes through to massed battles which involve hundreds of models, Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb, allowing players to command fleets of ships, underwater vessels, terrifying monsters, and flying machines, uses models of a 6mm (1:300) scale.

Such is the uniqueness of the game, coupled with the scale of models used, Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb has its own range of official miniatures, sculpted by renowned modelmaker Bob Naismith.

Sharing the same world and lore as Shadows of Centralis, Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb can be incorporated into campaigns involving the Shadows of Centralis game. Working equally well, Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb can also be played as a standalone system.

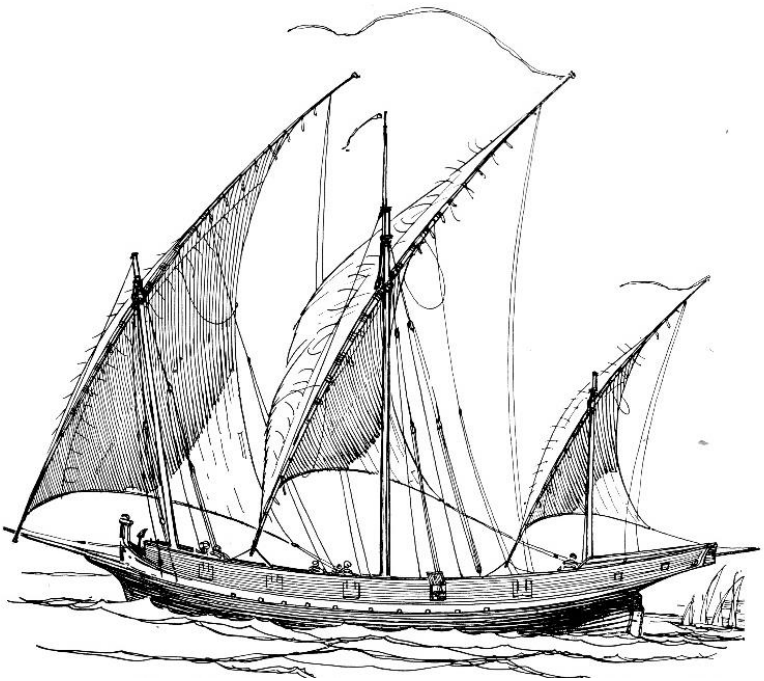
Designed to be flexible and to encourage greater inclusivity, Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb can be played with just a handful of models per side, through to players taking part in largescale battles with dozens of models involved. Expanding on the innovative gaming features of the original Shadows of Centralis game, and with numerous races to choose from, Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb offers both experienced wargamers and newcomers to the hobby exciting and challenging tabletop conflicts.

In games of Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb, taking on the role of a marauding chieftain, piratical warlord, or savvy military commander, opposing players control model navies of fantastical ships, terrifying monsters, flying engines of war, and powerful users of magic. In addition to the violent destruction of naval warfare, there is the capricious and vengeful interference from countless warring gods to consider, too; the Shadows see all.

Sharing the Shadows of Centralis background, with a unique slant on fantasy and science fiction tropes, and providing richly detailed

background stories, *Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb* is an immersive strategy naval wargame which offers players the opportunity to field a range of different seafaring navies.

From the disease-imbued vessels of the Damned, fused with a supernatural strength of structure, to steam-powered engines of the Dwarfs, from the reed ships of the Followers of the Eye to the creaking and rotting nightmarish seacrafts of the Undead, *Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb* offers players a plethora of units to consider from a total of fifteen different navies.





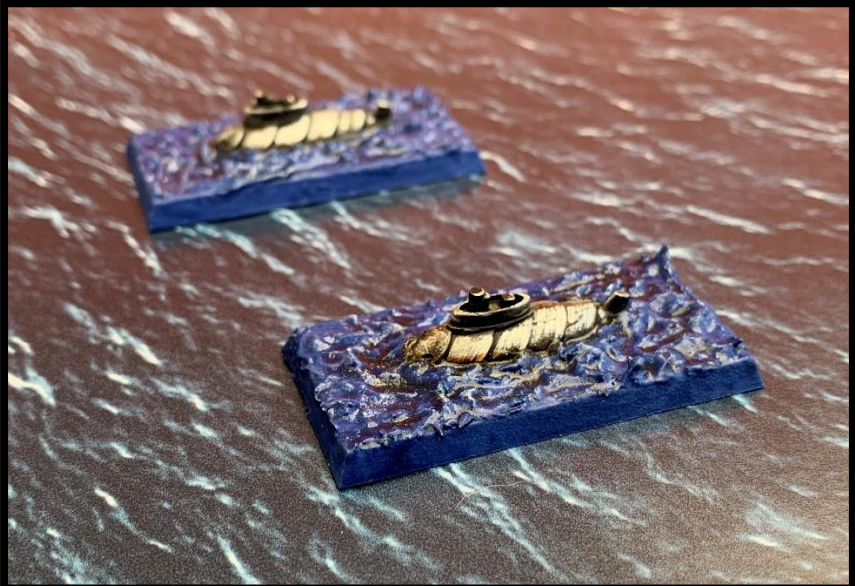
*Carrying hulking trolls, Damned Troll Barges are hard-hitting units.*

Unlikely seafarers, given their subterranean existence, having carved their own world of refuge from the Orb's very bedrock, the sickly and diseased Damned do still command a presence on the planet's many oceans. With their expansive, underground realm positioned on the south east coast of Coelum, the Damned have easy access to the sea, though they have no traditional harbours or ports. Instead, the Damned house their sailing vessels beneath the earth, within dedicated sections of their dark and dank labyrinthine domain. When called upon, these vessels are hauled out of the ground by huge packs of giant rats, with felled trees serving as assisting rollers.

Typically utilising mortise and tenon joints, reenforced with strengthening dowels, the ships of the Damned are generally of wooden construction, with the majority of building materials coming from fir, pine, and cedar trees. Fashioned onto these floating structures, seeking to praise their god T'Zor, the Damned adorn their ships and boats, which themselves are imbued with contagion and corruption, with all manner of diseased decorations and shrines in worship of their saviour.

Treading the pestilent planks of their rotting, yet supernaturally strengthened, naval crafts, the Damned set sail aboard warships and boats armed with ballistae, naval rams, and canisters of ravaging infection, while corvus equipped barges, manned by hulking trolls, provide melee-focussed offensive options.





*The might of the Dwarfs: Submarine (top) and Ornithopter (bottom) units.*

With their displaced and fractured, mountainous kingdoms of western Coelum offering the merest glimpse of the powerhouse they once were, the Ystrad-worshipping dwarfs are one of the oldest of the Orb's many races. Widely considered quick-tempered and cantankerous, grudge holding and difficult, dwarfs are stoical warriors and fearsome fighters, a reputation they bring to the seas of the Orb.

Much like their powerful land armies, with their steam-powered warships all loaded with far-reaching cannons, smaller vessels filled with formidable warriors, ornithopters which can rain fire from the sky, and steam-propelled submarines which can strike from beneath the water's surface, a Dwarfs navy is a formidable force.

Constructed using a combination of iron and timber, the mightiest of dwarven vessels are Steam-powered Dreadnoughts; huge, flat-bottomed, multi-levelled behemoths, loaded with a total of ten cannons. In addition to their awesome firepower, the tall sides of these ships offer greater protection from would-be invaders. Meanwhile, smaller but pacier than Steam-powered Dreadnoughts, holding a total of four cannons, Cannon Crafts are essentially cut-down versions of their larger naval cousins.

Intended to transport soldiers onto enemy vessels, carrying troops of melee-focussed dwarven warriors, all of whom are also armed with firearms, Warrior Crafts are small, steam-powered ships.

With their preference for steam propulsion over the use of sails and masts when constructing their ships, dwarfs have progressed their underwater and flying crafts to utilise such technology also. Spending much of their time beneath the waves, proving a frustrating bane for opposing forces, dwarven submarines are stealthy underwater seacrafts armed with powerful steam-powered rocket launchers.

Crewed by a pilot and gunner, Dwarf Ornithopters are quick moving flying machines armed with deadly rocket launchers. Providing landing pads and maintenance for the ornithopters, when fielding these flying crafts, a dwarven fleet typically includes Ornithopter Carriers as well.



*Naval power of the Elves: Tiamat (top) and Leviathan (bottom) units.*



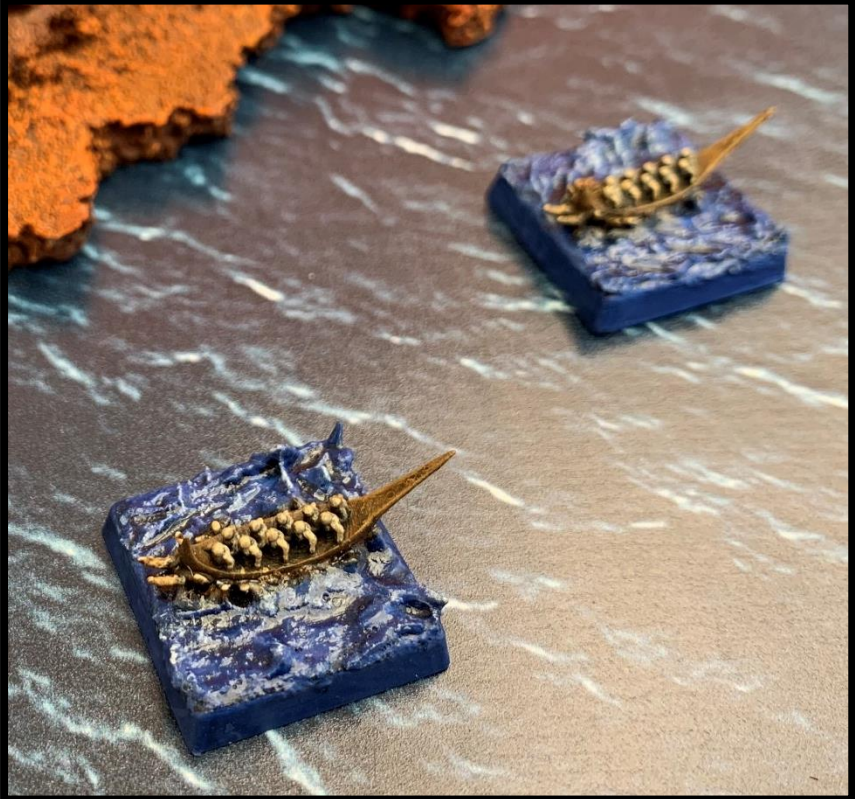
To the north west of Coelum, surrounded by the shimmering Elven Seas, which wash into the mysterious Whispering Seas and the tumultuous Seas of Madness, the snow-capped Taklamakan Highlands is home to the elves. Natural seafarers with an affinity with the waves, the elves are considered some of the finest sailors of the Orb. Sailing magnificent crafts known as crystal ships, though their armada is a shadow of its former self, much like the elven race as a whole, the elves do still command a dominant presence on the seas.

Extremely capable in both close combat and shooting, elven warriors are well-disciplined and highly trained; typically carrying sturdy shields, wearing lightweight but dependable scale mail armour, and armed with the finest weapons. Led by tactically astute and resolute commanders, elven troops are noted for their fighting capabilities.

With their awe-inspiring design developed and refined over many ages, constructed using only the finest materials, including many rare and exotic wood types, iron and, in some cases, copper sheathings, elven vessels are slender, ornately decorated warships. These pacey ships, fitted with a number of large white sails which gleam in response to the Orb's dominating sun, and carrying power ballistae, are manned by the finest and most experienced crews.

Unique, and presenting various tactical considerations, an Elves navy differs from other forces as it tends to be concentrated on several types of warship, so disregarding smaller vessels, submarines, and flying machines. Centred around their various warships, fleets of elven sea crafts are often smaller than other navies, however their incredible power and swift movement more than compensates for this.

Sensitive to the ways of nature, with an unfathomable ability to communicate with all manner of creatures, elves hold close associations with many magical and mysterious monsters, one which is commonly taken to war is the ancient dragon. Revered within elven society, dragons sometimes serve as the mount for a general, mage, or other important character. A juxtaposition of elegance and ferocity, dragons are fearsome flyers which breathe fire; these creatures can terrorise enemy forces with a graceful, yet terrifying, ease.



*The Fiends: Khainag (top) and War Canoe (bottom) units.*

Inherently evil, savage, and bloodthirsty, Fiends are a grotesque amalgamation of human and beast. An unholy fusion of human and animal, Fiends come in many oddly bodied forms. Some Fiends have a bovine appearance, others resemble rodents or goats, some are fishlike, others are feathered. Differing in countenance, all Fiends share evil and savage characteristics, and fight with extreme ferocity.

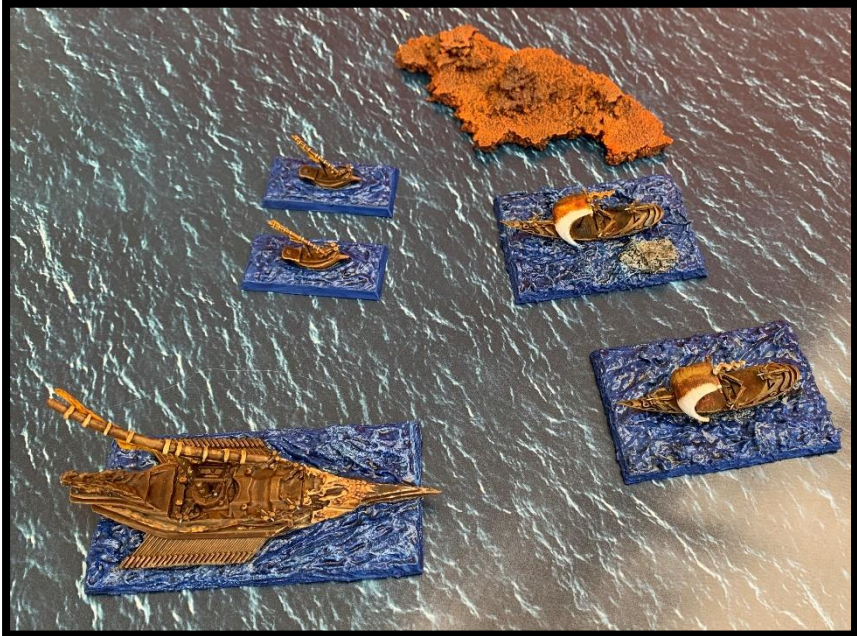
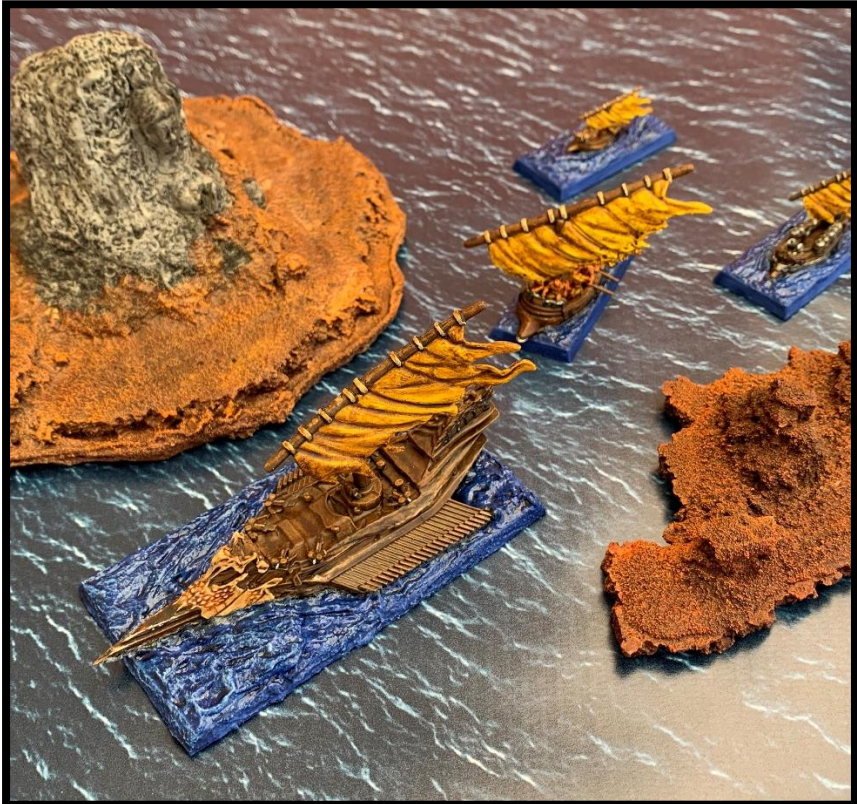
Fiends are not natural seafarers, nor are they great users of technology, though their sycophantic, dark-hearted cultists are. Fusing the crazed ferocity of monstrous creatures with the unhinged, more dexterous cultists, a Fiends' fleet can make for a terrifying and surprisingly effective naval foe.

Each fitted with a combat-assisting corvus, constructed from wood, natural fibres, and animal skins, using a combination of wooden pegs and stitching, Fiends' warships are quick-paced sailing vessels. Crewed by cruel cultists, varying in size, each warship carries troops of ferocious, frenzied Fiendish Fighters, as well as units of bloodthirsty Minotaurs.

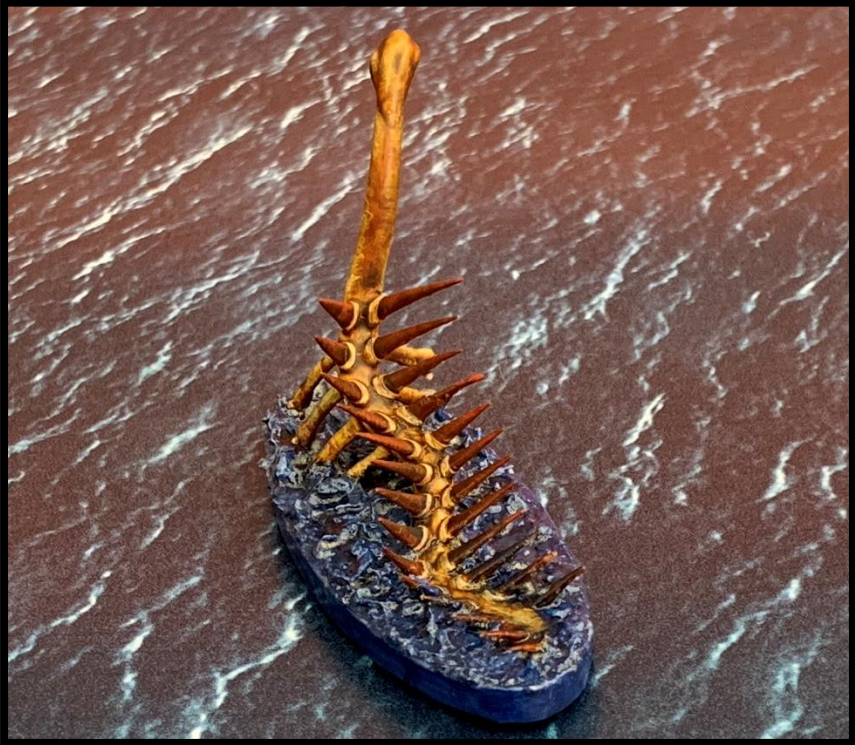
In addition to manning the larger warships of the Fiends, cultists also take to the waves in simple but highly manoeuvrable War Canoes, as they provide missile support via their assorted firearms.

In addition to their sailing vessels, Fiends often enter into battle on the waves supported by monstrous creatures, such as jabberwocks and packs of harpies. Crusted in filth and carrying a fetid stench, swamp-dwelling jabberwocks are an ancient form of dragon. Though they do not breathe fire, and because of their corrupted shape can only fly over limited distances, these ill-tempered creatures are still capable of tearing apart crews and vessels alike.

Sometimes described as human-vultures, other times called torture beasts, with large and powerful feathered wings protruding from their backs, their hands and feet more like giant talons, and sometimes bearing huge, razor-sharp beaks, harpies are an evil mix of human females and oversized birds.



*Damned fleet (top), Damned and Elven vessels (bottom).*



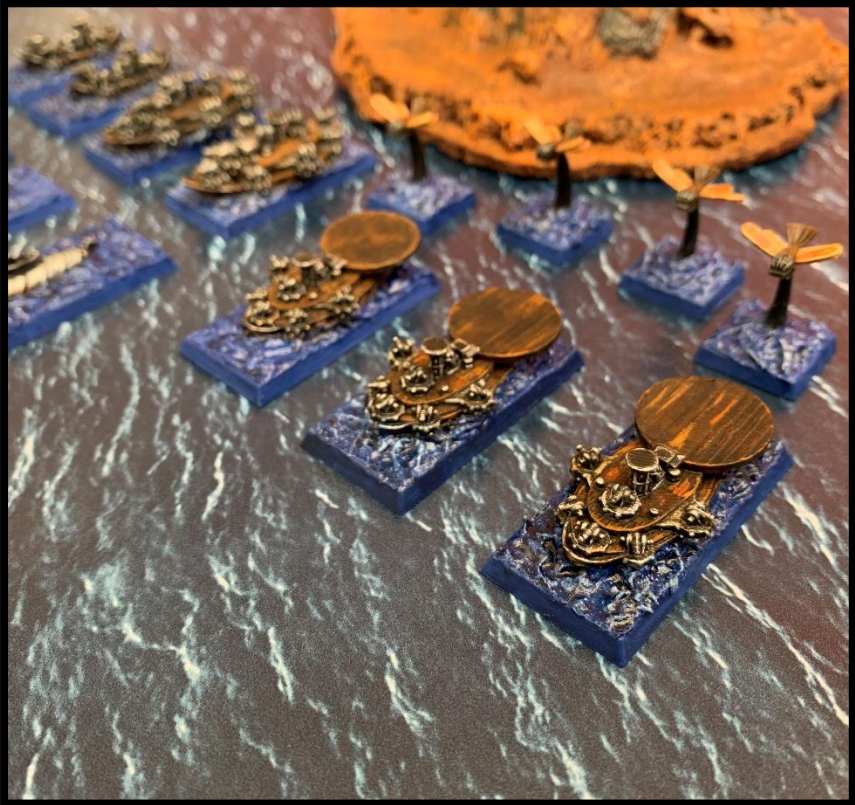
*Monster of the Damned: Gigantic Hallucigenia.*



*Dwarfs: Ornithopter Carrier (top) and Ornithopter Carrier with Ornithopter (bottom).*



*Fleet of the Fiends (top) and Giant Flamingos of the Followers of the Eye (bottom).*



*Fleet of the Dwarfs (top) and Ornithopters facing a Giant Flamingo (bottom).*



Buffo's servants on the Orb, the Followers of the Eye, are a strange humanoid race whose physical appearance bear exaggerated reptilian and amphibian characteristics. These strange beings inhabit a large, exotic tropical island called Insula Buffo, a mysterious land to the south east of Infernum.

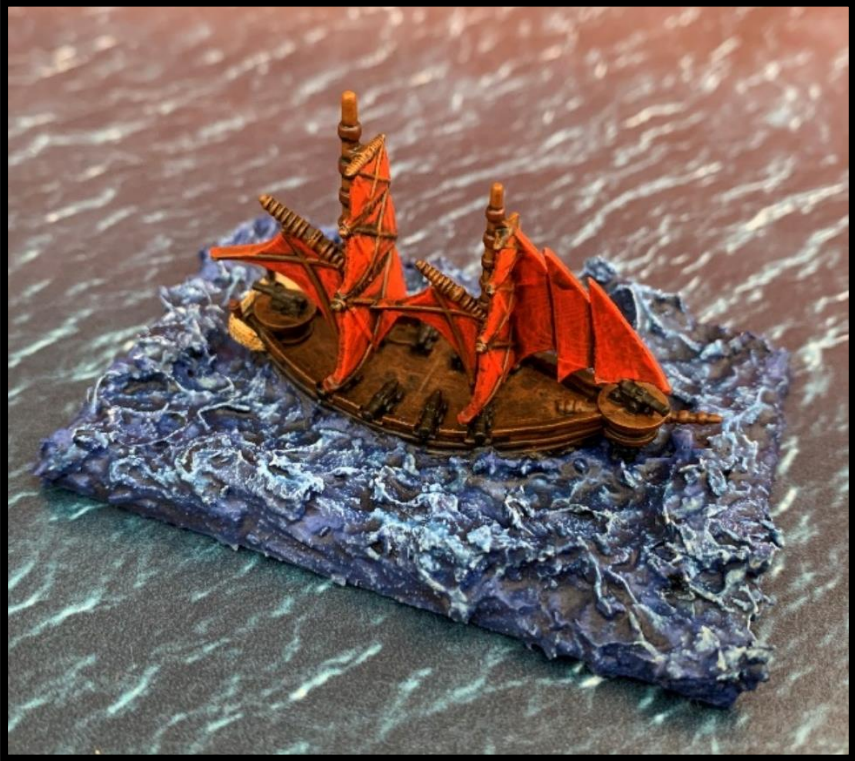
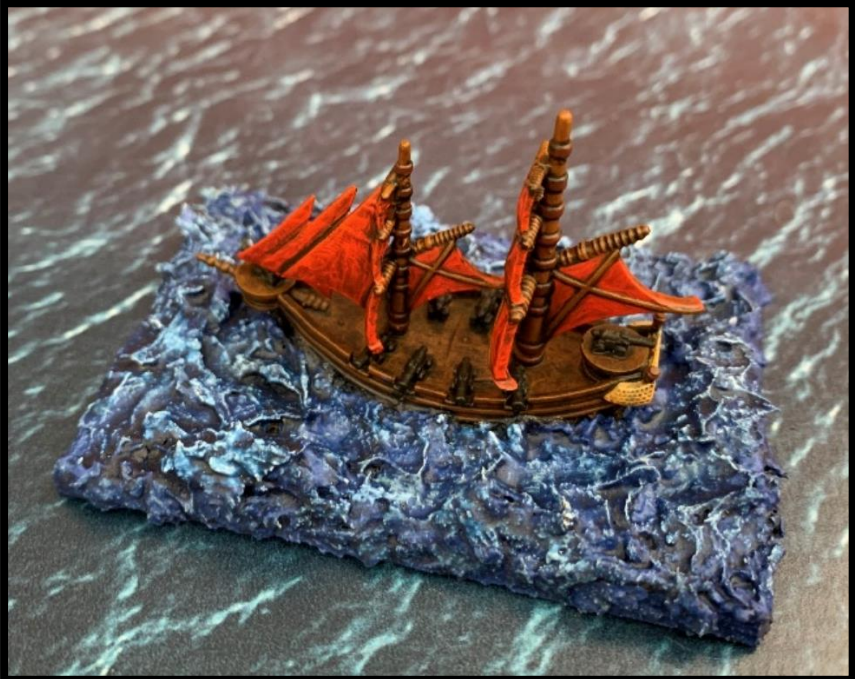
Typically, the Followers of the Eye construct their fleets of ships and boats using papyrus reeds and lengths of bamboo, sometimes adding extra waterproofing through the use of moss and seaweed-based tar. Though their seacrafts tend to lack sophistication, they are highly manoeuvrable, and the Followers of the Eye do share an affinity with the waves.

Warships for the Followers of the Eye can vary in type and size, though each feature a corvus, and their sail-propulsion is often supported by tethered slave oarsmen. These large vessels, carrying melee-focused fighters, are designed to take the onboard warriors into close combat fighting as quickly as possible.

Constructed from reeds and bamboo, woven into a waterproof mesh, providing missile support, in addition to their warships, fleets of the Followers of the Eye include ballista-armed sailboats.

Mounted upon giant flamingos, Tegu Warriors, armed with clay pots of poisonous snakes which they drop onto the enemy below, though less than reliable in close combat, excel in harrying enemy troops from the sky.





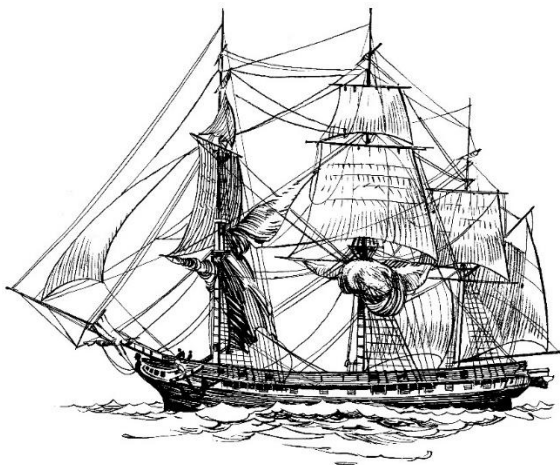
*Konstrato Gunship.*

The pious and crusading Konstrato Empire stretches across dark waters as it encompasses sections of both the Coelum and Infernum regions of the Orb. With the devout realm bestrewn with temples and shrines, worship of the god Endovelicus forms the structure of Konstrato Empire society. With religion driven laws mingled with tones of indoctrination, citizens of the land range from the most faithful to the most fearful.

Well-disciplined and dependable, soldiers of the Konstrato Empire are solid performing fighters whose dedicated worship to the god Endovelicus sees them battle with heightened determination. Each of the force's seafaring vessels are blessed by venerated monks before embarking on the waves. Led by veteran sea-travelling generals, supported by grizzled champions, in addition to carrying soldiers, often fleets of the Konstrato Empire will include zealous witch hunters, skilled surgeons, and powerful wizards.

Brigantine style vessels, armed with a number of cannons, the most powerful of all the Konstrato Empire's ships are its Konstrato Warships and Konstrato Gunships. Meanwhile, as the Konstrato Empire advocates that corrupt souls should be cleansed through fire, Fireships, complete with their fire-throwing ballistae, prowl the Orb's waters.

Viewed as abominations of nature, the teachings of Endovelicus include the condemnation of all non-human lifeforms; the Konstrato Empire do not field any Monster units.





*Goblins: Swimming Giant (top) and Goblin Warship (bottom).*

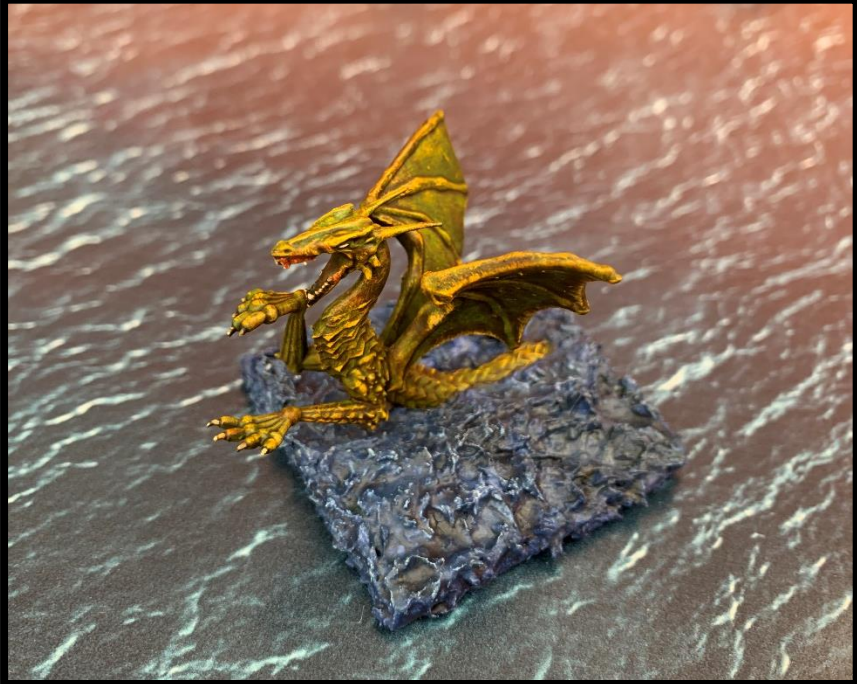
The Orb plays host to three established goblin kingdoms, all of which exist within the Coelum region, though such is their number, scattered like loose corn, many lesser tribes can be found throughout the lands. Like the elves and dwarfs, the goblins are one of the Orb's oldest races.

Often overindulging in alcoholic beverages and consuming vast quantities of stimulants and mind-altering substances, goblins are enthusiastic inventors who tend to disregard safety considerations, this is evident in the race's fleets of ships and boats. With no thought given to traditional naval design, warships sailed by goblins are like no other; circular seacrafts of wooden and metal construction, powered through the use of multiple sails, and armed with a range of missile weapons, Goblin Warship units are floating fortresses.

Seeing it as an opportunity to praise their god Puck, goblins revel in the chaos and cacophony of war. Some of the especially maniacal goblins within a navy will board small vessels called Kamikaze Boats, which are packed with explosives. These boats, typically of wooden construction, propelled by an above-water fan, are launched directly into opposing ships; the gleeful goblin crew sacrificed in the process. Meanwhile, like Kamikaze Boats, Raucous Rafts are small, single-sailed vessels, which are armed with a single ballista.

As well as fielding various crafts for use upon the waves, a Goblins navy also has access to underwater vessels, as well as flying crafts, in the form of Goblin Submarine and Balloon Bomber units, respectively. Meanwhile, another unorthodox unit, which is unique to navies of Goblins, is the force's Swimming Giants; often fuelled with copious amounts of highly alcoholic beverages, these enormous humanoids can prove devastating for enemy units, providing they do not fall prey to exhaustion.

Maniacal, frenzied, and often unstable, when a Goblins navy enters into battle, it typically does so under the heady influence of strongly intoxicating psilocybin-based punches or wines, as well as chewing on the roots of the excitement inducing chicoi plant. For goblins, war is an opportunity to revel in celebratory excesses; as the First Divine Law of Puck teaches, "Eat, drink, laugh, and fight!"



*Dragon of the Hag Elves.*

In recent times, tainted by the dark gods N'kish and Tarannix, as well as a swathe of vile demigods, there has been a breakout of evil cults within the elven race. Known as hag elves, such is the dark nature and intense drug focus of these cults, the elves within them have become corrupted in body and mind. Rejecting the virtuous teachings of Dagnr, hag elves are fuelled with an unquenchable thirst for the spilling of blood. Debauched, murderous pleasure-seekers who revel in bloody carnage, hag elves are the antitheses of their once noble roots.

Physically, hag elves largely resemble their Dagnr-following cousins. In mindset, though, they are polar opposites, something which is made evident in their skull-adorned armour and in their wicked, hooked blades. Delighting in slaughter, and eager to display their grisly trophies of war, hag elves often attach decapitated enemy heads to their belts. Meanwhile, their bodies of lily-white skin are often tattooed with all manner of evil prayers and arcane symbols.

Murderous marauders, hag elves have a reputation for cruel and piratical practices upon the seas of the Orb. With their senses and tempers inflamed through the use of various stimulants, hag elf warriors board clipper style ships which are adorned with evil decorations. Armed with far-reaching ballistae, Hag Elf Titans and Hag Elf Slaughter Ships form the navy's warships options.

Known as Murder Crafts, some Hag Elf fleets include smaller boats which carry deadly crossbowmen. These sharp-eyed killers are adept at raining down armour ripping bolts upon enemy vessels.

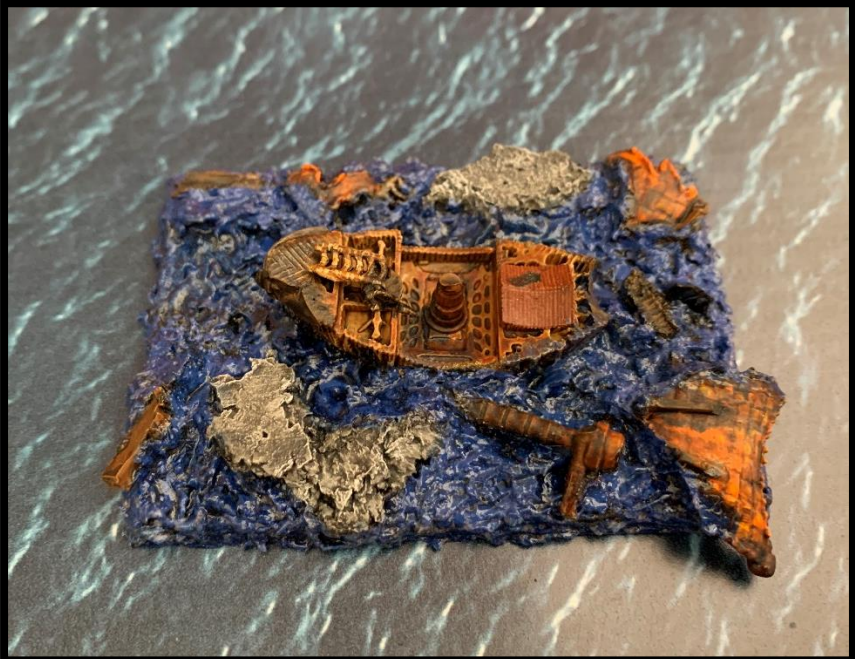
Much like their Dagnr-worshipping elven cousins, hag elves hold close relationships with dragons, and often take them to war. Such is the dark and infectious nature of hag elves, evil can leach into the creatures which serve them; the dragons of the hag elves, corrupted through association, are evil shadows of their once graceful selves.



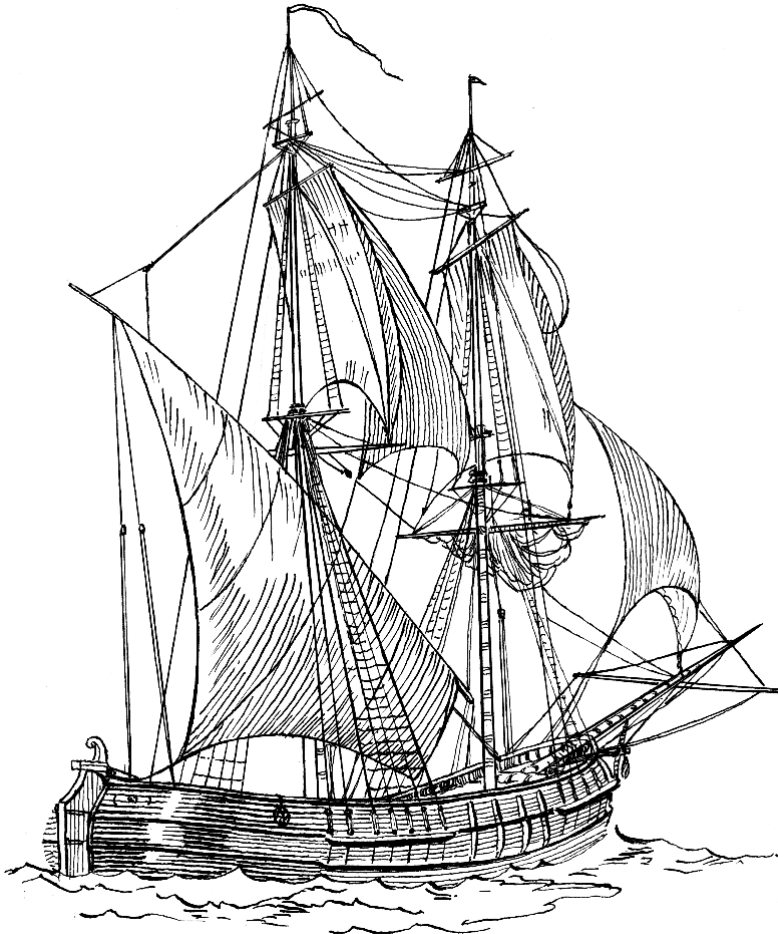


*Destroyed vessel of the Elves.*





*Destroyed vessel of the Followers of the Eye.*



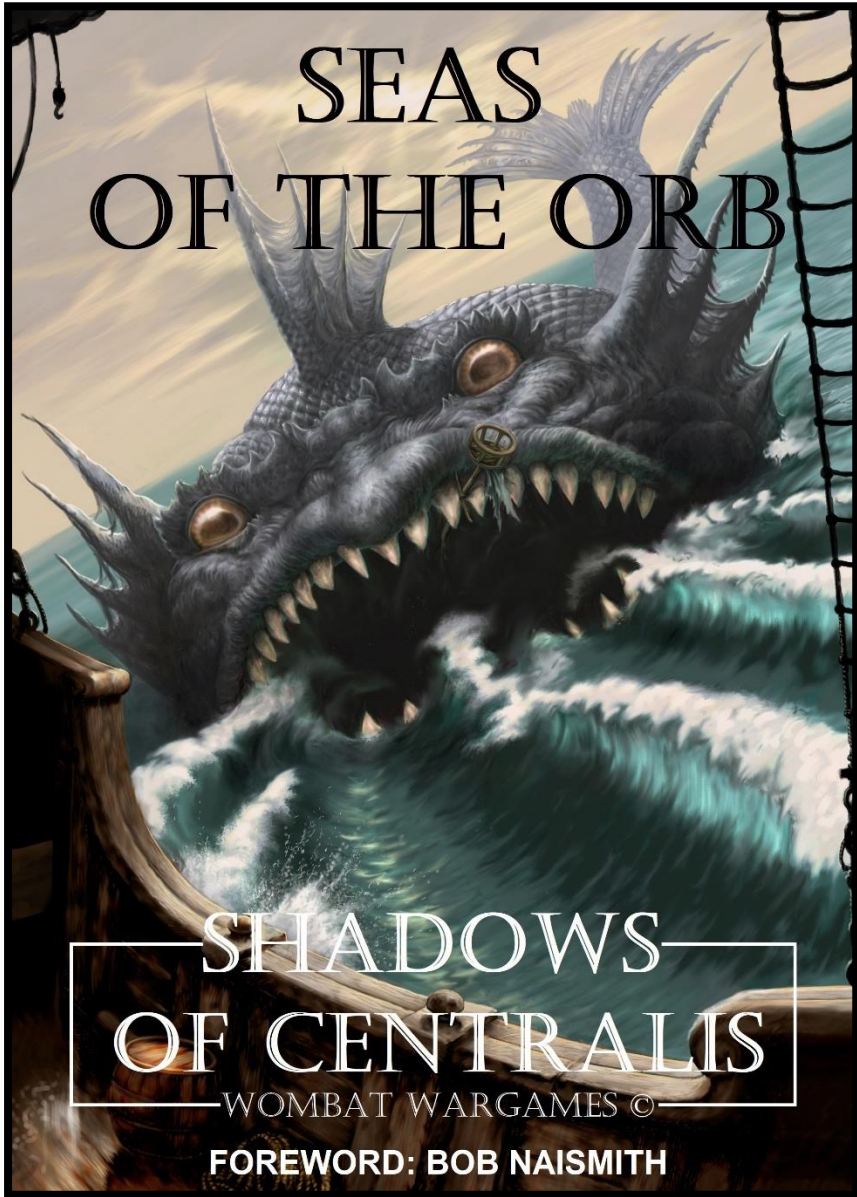
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## ROBERT HEINLEIN

Winner of four Hugo Awards and several Retro Hugos, while named the Science Fiction Writers Grand Master of 1974, Robert A. Heinlein is considered one of the original powerhouses of science fiction literature.

Holding German ancestry, Robert Anson Heinlein, typically referred to as Robert A. Heinlein, was born in Butler, Missouri, U.S.A. on July 7, 1907, to parents Rex Ivar Heinlein and Bam Lyle Heinlein. It was in the midwestern state of Missouri that Heinlein grew up, living first in Butler, then Kansas City.

The appearance of Halley's Comet in 1910, witnessed by a three-year-old Heinlein, triggered the beginning of the future author's lifelong enthusiasm for astronomy. As a youngster, Heinlein, a studious and creative boy with a stammer, read many books on astronomy as he looked to learn more; he was a frequent visitor to Kansas City's Public Library. Holding eclectic tastes, among Heinlein's other books of interest were works by H.G. Wells and Jules Verne, as well as William Shakespeare.

Aged sixteen years old, reporting himself as older, in early-1924 Heinlein enlisted with the Missouri National Guard; he was later discharged as a staff sergeant. Heinlein graduated from Kansas City Central High School in 1924. Hoping to attend the United States Naval Academy, but finding his initial efforts unsuccessful, Heinlein attended Kansas City Community College. Such was the persistence of his efforts to be appointed to the Naval Academy, as he petitioned Missouri Senator, James A. Reed with several letters, Heinlein was finally admitted to the military establishment in the summer of 1925; he later graduated (in 1929) with the equivalent of a Bachelor of Arts in engineering.

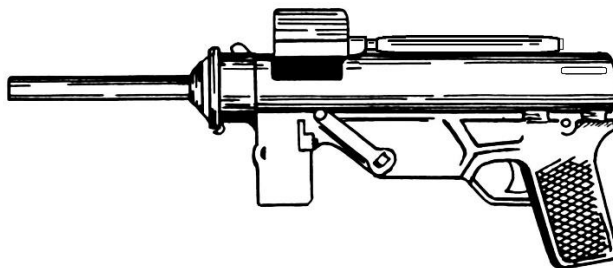
In 1929, Heinlein married his fiancé Elinor Curry, though the two divorced after just a year of marriage. Then, in 1932, Heinlein remarried as he wed Leslyn MacDonald.

Following his graduation from the United States Naval Academy, the U.S. Navy commissioned Heinlein as an ensign. Heinlein served aboard the U.S.S. Lexington, followed by time with the U.S.S. Roper, where he progressed to the rank of lieutenant. On medical grounds, with Heinlein suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis, he was discharged from the U.S. Navy in 1934.

After his time in the U.S. Navy, Heinlein worked in a variety of roles, including time as an estate agent, as well as working in silver mining. Meanwhile, Heinlein was politically active; he supported Democrat, Upton Sinclair, while, in 1938, he also unsuccessfully campaigned to secure himself a position in the California State Assembly.

In an effort to bring money into the household, Heinlein set about authoring science fiction short stories; Heinlein's first published piece was entitled Life-Life, and was included within the August 1939 issue of Astounding Science Fiction. Heinlein's second published work, the short story Misfit, appeared a few months later (in the November 1939 issue of Astounding Science Fiction). Primarily published via Astounding Science Fiction, over the following two years, Heinlein wrote several more science fiction pieces.

Exploring various ideological themes, Heinlein's writings have been both criticised and praised for their varying political leanings. Though his earlier political position was centred around liberalism, it would be argued that he later came to hold more conservative views. Of his political position, Heinlein labelled himself a "libertarian."



### **'Life-Line'**

*"A new author suggests a means of determining the day a man must die – a startlingly plausible method!" 'Astounding Science Fiction', August 1939.*

Centred around Heinlein's fictional character Professor Pinero, 'Life-Line' details a machine that can predict a person's lifespan.

Heinlein was initially inspired to write 'Life-Line' in response to an article published in 'Thrilling Wonder Stories' magazine, which was looking for new writers. However, Heinlein instead submitted the short story to 'Astounding Science Fiction', which saw him earn \$70.00, more than he would have earned with 'Thrilling Wonder Stories'.

*"I will repeat my discovery. In simple language, I have invented a technique to tell how long a man will live. I can give you advance billing of the Angel of Death. I can tell you when the Black Camel will kneel at your door. In five minutes' time, with my apparatus, I can tell any of you how many grains of sand are still left in your hourglass." He paused and folded his arms across his chest. For a moment no one spoke. The audience grew restless."*

Taken from 'Life-Line' by Robert A. Heinlein.

During the time of the Second World War, Heinlein operated as an aeronautical engineer at the Navy Materials Centre, located at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard in Pennsylvania. Serving in this role prompted a break in Heinlein's writing.

In 1947, Heinlein and his wife Leslyn divorced, the following year Heinlein married Virginia Gerstenfeld, a chemical engineer he had first met during his time working at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. Wedding in New Mexico, Heinlein and 'Ginny' settled in Colorado (the couple lived here until 1965, when Heinlein and his wife then relocated from Colorado to California). Also that year, Heinlein's science fiction short story *The Green Hills of Earth* was published in the February 8, 1947 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*. Two of Heinlein's other short stories featured in *The Saturday Evening Post* later that year; *Space Jockey* (April 26, 1947 issue) and *It's Great to Be Back* (July 26, 1947 issue).

Prolifically creative, Heinlein worked on the final draft of the script for the film *Destination Moon*, which was released in 1950. Produced by

George Pal, with Irving Pichel serving as director, Destination Moon was loosely based on Heinlein's 1947 novel Rocket Ship Galileo.

Comprising several of the author's previously published works, along with a new story (which serves as the book's cover title), The Man Who Sold the Moon is a collection of Heinlein short stories. Published by Shasta Publishers, featuring cover artwork by Hubert Rogers, The Man Who Sold the Moon was first released in 1950. Containing two previously published Heinlein short stories, also published in 1950 (via Doubleday) was Waldo and Magic, Inc. Heinlein's third volume of collected works, The Green Hills of Earth, was published by Shasta Publishers in 1951. Over the years that followed, several other collections of Heinlein's short stories were published.

Originally serialised in summer 1941 issues of Astounding Science Fiction, with some amendments made, Heinlein's novel Methuselah's Children was published via Gnome Press in 1958.

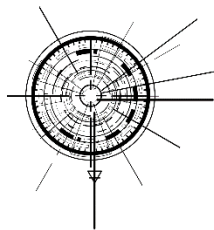
#### **'Methuselah's Children'**

*"A tale of an epic exodus, when the long-lived members of the Families fled the hatred of the normal people of all Earth."* 'Astounding Science Fiction', July 1941.

'Methuselah's Children' combines themes of selective breeding, space travel, mind coalescence and conflict.

"Among the healthy normal members of the Families it was unusual to find a person sensitive to telepathy. But the very sort of selected breeding which had produced the long-lived group had inevitably produced an abnormally high percentage of defectives, especially in the second and third generations, before sufficient data had been accumulated to permit elimination of defective germ plasm. The Families had their "God's Innocents," their spoiled clay, their broken shards."

Taken from 'Methuselah's Children' by Robert A. Heinlein.



First appearing in serialised form in The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction, Starship Troopers is a military science fiction novel by Heinlein, which was published by G.P. Putnam's Sons in 1959. The novel won the Hugo Award for Best Novel in 1960.

### **'Starship Troopers'**

Heinlein's 1959 novel 'Starship Troopers' first appeared in serialised form within issues of 'The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction', where it was entitled 'Starship Soldier'.

Following the journey of Juan 'Johnny' Rico and his progression through the mobile Infantry, as he advances from new recruit through to officer, 'Starship Troopers' describes a global militaristic government called the Terran Federation. Within the Terran Federation, certain social liberties, such as voting rights, are limited to those who serve the global organisation, primarily through military service.

In addition to the human race which makes up the Terran Federation, two other alien races are detailed, the 'Bugs' and the 'Skinnies'. Conflict unfolds between the Terran Federation and the 'Bugs', while the 'Skinnies' switch allegiance during the story; initially, the 'Skinnies' back the efforts of the 'Bugs', before switching to support the Terran Empire.

### **The boardgame**

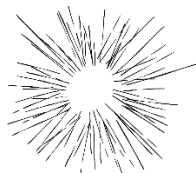
Comprising a richly decorated, hexagon-based board, complete with supporting game counters, 'Robert Heinlein's Starship Troopers', a strategic wargame based on Heinlein's novel, was released by Avalon Hill in 1976.

### **The miniatures game**

'Starship Troopers: The Miniatures Game' is a 28mm scale tabletop wargame by Mongoose Publishing. Released in 2005, the game was discontinued a few years later.

### **The role-playing game**

'Starship Troopers: The Roleplaying Game' is an RPG released by Mongoose Publishing in 2005.





### **'Stranger in a Strange Land'**

Published in 1961, 'Stranger in a Strange Land' tells the story of Valentine Michael Smith, a man born aboard a human spacecraft, but raised by aliens on Mars.

Discovered by the crew of a different human spacecraft, Smith is removed from Mars and taken to Earth. Following a period of celebrity, as he researches different religions and creates his own, Smith ends up dead at the hands of a frenzied mob. In esoteric form, Smith then returns to his religious followers.

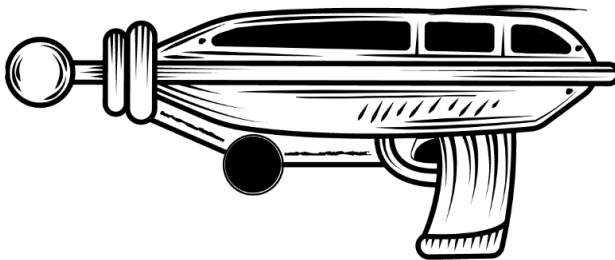
In 1961, as with *Starship Troopers*, Heinlein's novel *Stranger in a Strange Land* was published by G.P. Putnam's Sons. Also like *Starship Troopers*, *Stranger in a Strange Land* won the (1962) Hugo Award for Best Novel. A few years later (1966), again with G.P. Putnam's Sons serving as his publisher of choice, Heinlein saw his novel *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress* released; the novel won the Hugo Award for Best Novel in 1967.

### **Apollo 11**

Operated by NASA, the Apollo 11 spaceflight project saw man first step upon the Moon, in July 1969. For Heinlein, a lifelong enthusiast of astronomy, this monumental achievement was seen as the "greatest event in all the history of the human race."

*"This is the greatest event in all the history of the human race up to this time... Today is New Year's Day of the year one. If we don't change the calendar, historians will do so... We are going to go on out, not only to the Moon, to the stars, we're going to spread... We're going to spread through the entire universe... The human race will not die, even if we spoil this planet, the human race will not die, it's going to go on and on and on."*

Robert A. Heinlein talking with CBS, July 20, 1969.



### **'The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress'**

First appearing in serialised form within issues of 'If Worlds of Science Fiction' magazine, Heinlein's novel 'The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress' was published via G.P. Putnam's Sons in 1966.

Set in the year 2075, humans have colonised the Moon, using Earth's satellite as a penal state. Outside of the prison system, existing in an anarchic society, humans live within subterranean cities. Meanwhile, general infrastructure of the Moon is governed by a master computer, HOLMES IV, which becomes self-aware.

In 1976, the thirty fourth World Science Fiction Convention was held in Kansas City, Missouri. Returning to his roots, having grown up here, Heinlein was the convention's Professional Guest of Honour.

Equipped with an alarm clock, so that he would not run over his allotted thirty minutes time, Heinlein gave a speech. "It's great to be back," Heinlein began, his words brought much applause. Over the course of his speech, Heinlein commented on his departure from Kansas City over fifty years prior, detailing he had never expected to come back in such a fashion. Other topics covered during Heinlein's half-hour speech included the development of Kansas City, references to H.G. Wells, his stammer, science fiction, his wife Ginny, and, most controversially, war. Unapologetic to those in the audience who booed his argument that peace is something you fight for, Heinlein stood firm, "Yes, I heard both the applause and the boos... The only peace that a man who won't fight ever gets is the peace of the grave."

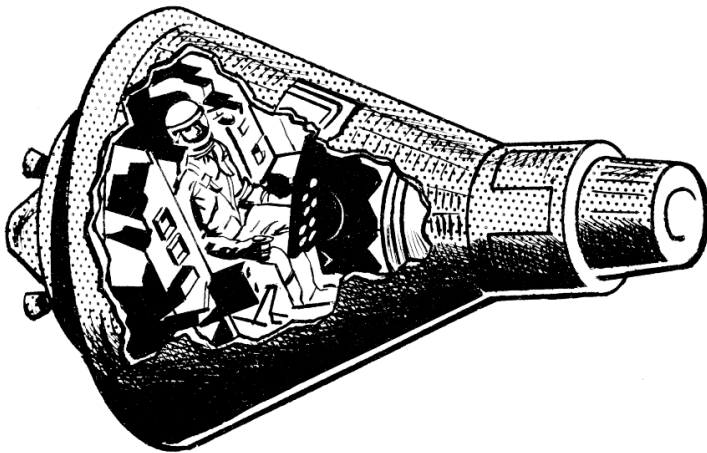
*"The cowards never started, and the weaklings died on the way. And that is what will happen with the human race with respect to going on out into space."*

Robert A. Heinlein, speaking at the World Science Fiction Convention, 1976.

With substantial portions of the book first appearing in winter 1979 issues of Omni magazine, Heinlein's novel *The Number of the Beast* was published via New English Library (U.K.) and Fawcett (U.S.A.) in 1980. Over the next few years that followed, three more Heinlein novels were published; *Friday* (1982), *Job: A Comedy of Justice* (1984), and *The Cat Who Walks Through Walls* (1985).

In addition to writing under his own name, Robert A. Heinlein used several pseudonyms, including Anson MacDonald, Lyle Monroe, Caleb Saunders, Simon York, and John Riverside.

Released in 1987, with its title inspired by a line of Alfred Tennyson's *Ulysses*, *To Sail Beyond the Sunset* was the last novel of Heinlein's to be published (G.P. Putman's Sons) before his death. Having suffered with various health complaints, Heinlein passed away peacefully in his sleep on May 8, 1988, in Carmel-by-the-Sea, California; he was aged eighty years old. A decade after his death, Heinlein was posthumously inducted into the Science Fiction and Fantasy Hall of Fame.



#### **Robert A. Heinlein posthumous releases**

Originally written in 1938, 'For Us, the Living' was published by Scribner in 2003.

Published by Tor Books in 2006, 'Variable Star' is built upon an incomplete Heinlein novel written in 1955, expanded and completed by author Spider Robinson.

Linking to Heinlein's 1980 novel 'The Number of the Beast', from which it takes a partial structure, published by CAEZIK SF & Fantasy in 2020, 'The Pursuit of Pankera' features previously unpublished Heinlein writings.



## E.E. 'DOC' SMITH

With a forty-year literary career centred around his respective 'Lensman' and 'Skylark' series, E.E. 'Doc' Smith is a science fiction writer who is widely considered to be one of the original architects of the space opera subgenre.

Edward Elmer Smith, later coming to be known as E.E. 'Doc' Smith, was born in Sheboygan, Wisconsin on May 2, 1890, to parents Fred Jay Smith and Caroline Mills Smith. His father was a sailor, then later a farmer, while his mother was a teacher. Brought up in a strict but loving household, both of Smith's parents were deeply religious, following Presbyterianism. Though born in Wisconsin, as his parents relocated the family when he was around six months old, Smith grew up in Spokane, Washington. Here, as well as attending school, Smith also sold newspapers. Of this time, Smith later described himself as "a husky kid living on the wrong side of the tracks."

When Smith was aged twelve years old, his parents moved the family to Pend d' Oreille River, Idaho. As well as continuing in his schooling, a young Smith also embraced physical work, with this ranging from land clearing to harvesting, hay-baling to lumbering, with much in between. One of five children (with an older brother and two older sisters, as well as a younger brother), Smith, in his own words, let his "older brother and sisters back me into a stiff collar and ship me to the prep school of the University of Idaho. From 1907 until 1914 I was either in school or earning money to go back." A multifaceted individual, in addition to a keen interest in science, Smith was also an enthusiastic chess player and musician. Smith progressed through the University of Idaho, where he graduated in chemical engineering.

Following his graduation from the University of Idaho, Smith obtained

a position in the Bureau of Chemistry, located in Washington D.C. While here, building his knowledge of chemistry still further, Smith studied at the George Washington University, concentrating on organic and food chemistry. Then, in 1915, Smith married his fiancé, Jeanne Craig MacDougall, a young woman originally from Glasgow, Scotland, now living in Boise, Idaho. Enjoying a long-lasting marriage, the couple later had three children together; Roderick, Verna, and Clarissa.

A few years later, Smith began working as a Chief Chemist for F.W. Stock & Sons in Hillsdale, Michigan. His role with the company saw his focus directed towards doughnut recipes and cereal mixes. Smith was with F.W. Stock & Sons from 1919 through to 1936.

While providing for his wife and young family as a professional chemist, Smith was also writing science fiction short stories. Partially co-written with Lee Hawkins Garby, Smith completed writing *The Skylark of Space* in the early-1920's. Though he presented the story to a number of book and magazine publishers, all initially passed up on publishing the piece. Unperturbed by the constant rejections, Smith held with his efforts to see the story in print; it was eventually published in serialised form in autumn 1928 issues of *Amazing Stories*. This marked the beginning of Smith's literary career.

While his career as a science fiction writer was developing, Smith left his position with F.W. Stock & Sons in 1936, instead becoming a production manager for Dawn Donuts of Jackson, Michigan; a position he held until 1941. It was around the time of his appointment with Dawn Donuts, in the mid-1930's, that Smith began working on his 'Lensman' series of stories. Moving on from Dawn Donuts, Smith entered into employment at the Kingsbury Ordnance Plant, La-Porte, a location within rural Indiana. Here, his roles included, among other things, working as a senior chemical engineer. Progressing with the Kingsbury Ordnance Plant, Smith was appointed head of the Inspection Division; a position he held only briefly, as he was fired in 1944.

After his time with the Kingsbury Ordnance Plant, Smith briefly worked as a metallurgist for American machine manufacturer Allis-Chalmers, before becoming a manager within the cereal division of

J.W. Allen & Company; a job which prompted Smith and his wife to move to Chicago. Smith continued working in 'traditional' employment until 1957, at which time Smith could finally focus entirely on his science fiction writing.

#### **'Skylark' series**

**'The Skylark of Space'** First serialised in 1928 issues of 'Amazing Stories', later released as a standalone novel by The Buffalo Book Company (1946).

Co-written with Lee Hawkins Garby, wife of his friend Carl Garby, 'The Skylark of Space' was written between around 1915 and 1920. Centred around the characters Dick Seaton and Marc 'Blackie' DuQuense, pitting 'good' against 'evil', 'The Skylark of Space' combines science, treachery, kidnap, alien races, and star travel.

**'Skylark Three'** First serialised in 1930 issues of 'Amazing Stories', later released as a standalone novel by Fantasy Press (1948).

Continuing from where things were left off in 'The Skylark of Space', 'Skylark Three' holds with the main characters of Dick Seaton and Marc 'Blackie' DuQuense, along with their respective allies. Describing further interstellar travels and alien races, 'Skylark Three' also tackles darker themes, such as mass war.

**'Skylark of Valeron'** First serialised in 1934 and 1935 issues of 'Astounding Science Fiction', later published as a standalone novel by Fantasy Press (1949).

Dick Seaton and his fellow Skylarkers explore the further depths of space, while Seaton also makes inroads with the idea of thought forming part of the 'Sixth Order'. Elsewhere, with Seaton believing him dead, Marc 'Blackie' DuQuense utilises advanced technology to position himself as the worldwide dictator of Earth.

**'Skylark DuQuense'** First serialised in 1965 issues of 'If Worlds of Science Fiction', later published as a standalone novel by Pyramid Books (1966).

In the final instalment of Smith's 'Skylark' series, arch-enemies Dick Seaton and Marc 'Blackie' DuQuense unite and form an unlikely alliance in an effort to entirely rid the world of the alien race, the Chlorans.

In addition to adding to what became his respective 'Skylark' and 'Lensman' series, Smith also penned other science fiction stories, such

as Spacehounds of IPC, which was serialised in 1931 issues of Amazing Stories.

#### **'Subspace' series**

**'Subspace Explorers'** First published in variant form ('Subspace Survivors') in the July 1960 issue of 'Astounding Science Fiction', later published as a standalone novel by Canaveral Press (1965).

The first of two books which complete Smith's 'Subspace' series, essentially, 'Subspace Explorers' details 'good' versus 'bad', while played out against a 'space' background.

**'Subspace Encounter'** Posthumously released in 1983, published by Berkley Books.

Published almost twenty years after his death, 'Subspace Encounter' sees Smith fuse multiple dimensions, faster than light technology, psychic skills, and an assassination plot to remove a tyrannical leader.

Following its initial release via Amazing Stories magazine in 1931, featuring the artwork of A.J. Donnell, Spacehounds of IPC was published as a standalone novel by Fantasy Press in 1947.

Centred around its title character, a smith of medieval times who undergoes special training from a time traveller, Smith's fantasy short story Tedric was published in the March 1953 issue of Other Worlds magazine. A follow-up to this tale, Lord Tedric was published in the March 1954 issue of Universe Science Fiction. In these later years, Smith also developed a short 'Subspace' series.



## **Gordon Eklund**

Published some years after Smith's death, writer Gordon Eklund revived the author's Tedric character. While Eklund's works are centred around the foundations laid down by Smith, with his 'Tedric' and 'Lord Tedric' stories, Eklund's works are all penned by himself.

### **Eklund's 'Tedric' stories:**

'Lord Tedric', 1 (1978)

'Space Pirates', 2 (1979)

'Black Knight of the Iron Sphere', 3 (1979)

'Alien Realm', 4 (1980)





### **'Lensman' series**

**'Triplanetary'** First serialised in 1934 issues of 'Amazing Stories', later released as a standalone novel by Fantasy Press (1948).

Featuring selective breeding, space pirates, alien races, interstellar war and super weapons, Smith reworked 'Triplanetary' following the story's initial 1934 publication via 'Amazon Stories' magazine, incorporating it into his 'Lensman' series which later followed.

**'The First Lensman'** This was published by Fantasy Press in 1950.

Detailing the First Lensman, Virgil Samms, 'The First Lensman' describes the founding of the militaristic, interplanetary governmental organisation the Galactic Patrol. Virgil Samms is gifted with a special device, the Lens, by a good-willed alien, which allows for telepathic communications with various beings; human and alien.

**'Galactic Patrol'** First serialised in 1937 and 1938 issues of 'Astounding Science Fiction', later published as a standalone novel (1950).

Incorporating space pirates and tractor beams, 'Galactic Patrol' sees Smith develop new characters for his 'Lensman' series, as he brings in the charismatic Kimball Kinnison. Over the course of the story, Kimball Kinnison progresses within the Galactic Control, achieving the rank of Grey Lensman.

**'Grey Lensman'** First serialised in 1939 and 1940 issues of 'Astounding Science Fiction', later published as a standalone novel by Fantasy Press (1951).

Continuing on from 'Galactic Patrol', 'Grey Lensman' focusses on Kimball Kinnison, following the Galactic Patrol's struggles with the super criminals of the galaxy, the Boskonians. In efforts to deal with their criminal enemy, using antimatter technology, new weapons are developed for the Galactic Control.

**'Second Stage Lensmen'** First serialised in 1941 and 1942 issues of 'Astounding Science Fiction', later published as a standalone novel by Fantasy Press (1953).

'Second Stage Lensmen', which sees the final appearance of character Kimball Kinnison, follows the adventures of advanced Lensmen, the Second Stage Lensmen, and the Galactic Patrol's continued struggles with the piratical Boskonians.



### **'Lensman' series**

**'The Vortex Blaster'** Comprising three previously published stories; 'The Vortex Blaster' ('Comet Stories', July 1941 issue), 'Storm on Cloud Deka' ('Astonishing Stories', June 1942 issue), and 'The Vortex Blaster Makes War' ('Astonishing Stories', October 1942 issue), 'The Vortex Blaster' novel itself was published by Fantasy Press and Gnome Press in 1960.

This collection uses the series' general setting, while focussing on a different character, Neal 'Storm' Cloud, a nuclear engineer and failed Lensman.

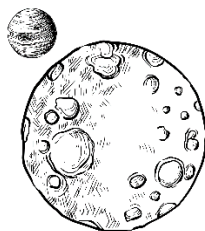
**'Children of the Lens'** First serialised in 1947 and 1948 issues of 'Astounding Science Fiction', later released as a standalone novel by Fantasy Press (1954).

The final part of Smith's 'Lensman' series, 'Children of the Lens' follows the children of Kimball Kinnison. Unique individuals with Second Stage Lensmen abilities, these children develop their special skills yet further, progressing to become Third Stage Lensmen.

Now living in Florida, spending more time with his wife, as well as having the ability to focus on his writing without the distractions of other work duties, Smith was enjoying life. In recognition for his longstanding contribution to the world of science fiction literature, held in Washington D.C. in 1963, the twenty first World Science Fiction Convention saw Smith honoured with a Hall of Fame Award (First Fandom).

Completing his 'Skylark' series of stories, Smith's Skylark DuQuesne was serialised in summer issues of If Worlds of Science Fiction; the story was later published as a standalone novel by Pyramid Books in 1966. This was the final of Smith's stories to be published during his lifetime; aged seventy five years old, Smith died in Seaside, Oregon on August 31, 1965.

Authors which Smith especially enjoyed reading himself included H.P. Lovecraft, Robert A. Heinlein, A.E. van Vogt, and A. Merritt, among others.





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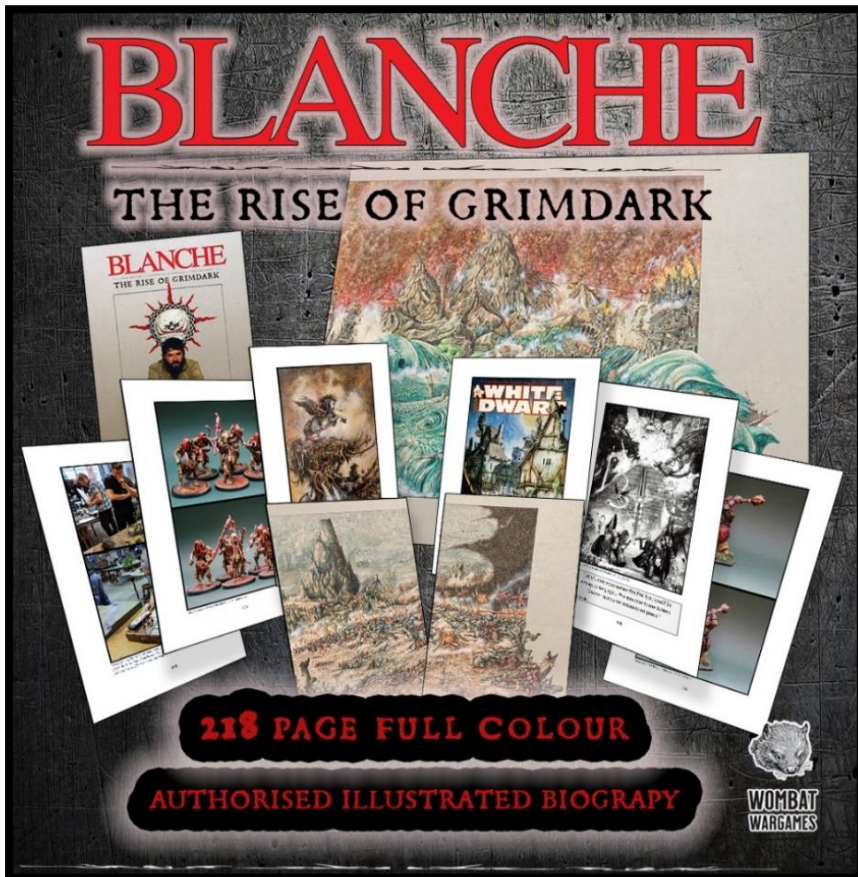
**Contributors include:** John Blanche, Lin Blanche, Alan Merrett, Tim Pollard, Rick Priestley, Tuomas Pirinen, Tammy Nicholls, Ian Miller, Adam Wier, Eric Wier, Gregory Wier, Trish Carden, Tim Molloy, Alasdair Farrell, Jes Goodwin, Jon Flindall, Victoria Hayward, Lincoln Barnwell, Julian Barnwell, Tom Evans, Paul Bonner.

John's Blanche's career, which includes an unprecedented forty-year collaboration with Games Workshop, spans five decades. During this time, his work has adorned a plethora of book covers and interiors, record covers, postcards and posters, while also serving as concepts for a swathe of wargaming miniatures, often inspiring whole new ranges of figures. John Blanche is one of the most remarkable and prolific fantasy and science fiction illustrators of his, or any other, generation. This book, his official and authorised biography, tells the story of the master of grimdark himself, the visionary that is John Blanche.

This book has been written with the intention of offering an insight into John, the person. So, in addition to copies of many of his wonderful illustrations, some previously unpublished, there are pictures of some of his models too, as well as an extensive selection of John's personal photographs, which document both John and his family.

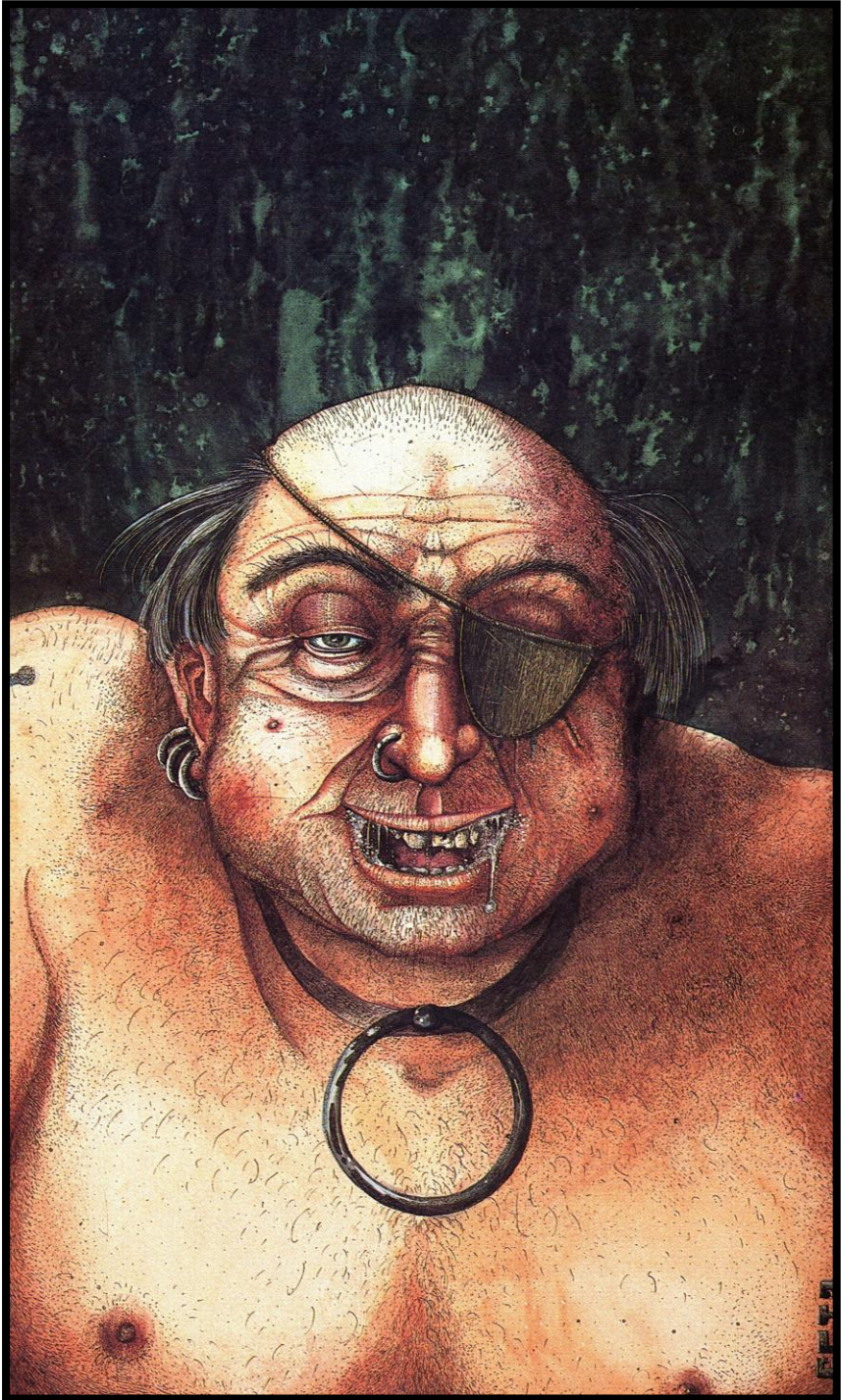
*“Speaking for both myself and Ruth Moreira (co-author), it has been a great privilege to work side-by-side with John Blanche in writing and producing his official, authorised biography; an illustrated document of the life of one of the most important fantasy and science fiction artists of his, or any other, generation. Such is John Blanche’s reputation, he could have chosen to work with any number of high-profile publishers, for him to have chosen us, drawn to our punk-style independence and joyfully unorthodox approach to things, has been a wonderful honour.*

*Such was the close collaboration between parties, everything from the book’s cover, which holds great personal significance to him, through to general book layout and ratio of pictures to text, John Blanche has approved all aspects of this title... All hail the architect of grimdark, a visionary gentleman!” John Wombat.*





*Model painted by John Blanche. © Tom Evans.*



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*“By the pricking of my thumbs,  
Something wicked this way comes.”*

Taken from 'Macbeth' by William Shakespeare.

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# HORROR FIENDS

## VOLUME I

Originally published in issues of Shadows of Centralis Monthly Magazine, featuring some of the greatest characters from the classic age of horror, Horror Fiends: Volume I is a compilation of Horror Fiend articles. Featured in this book: H.P. Lovecraft, Edgar Allan Poe, Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Algernon Blackwood, Boris Karloff, Hieronymus Bosch, Arthur Machen, Clark Ashton Smith, Frank Belknap Long, Robert Bloch, Vincent Price.

Comprising 114 pages, adorned with cover artwork by renowned fantasy and horror illustrator Tony Hough, this premium paperback is the first in a series of special compilation titles from Wombat Wargames.



**H.P. Lovecraft** (August 20, 1890 – March 15, 1937): Using insular landscapes and often exploiting one's fear of the unknown, in addition to pointing to the relative fragility of mankind both physically and mentally, Lovecraft's writings tend to be viscerally textured and cultivate feelings of dread. To read Lovecraft is to enter a world in which horror is far more nuanced and blended with a growing sense of menace.

**Edgar Allan Poe** (January 19, 1809 – October 7, 1849): An American writer whose dark and brooding stories of suspense, terror, and gothic horror have influenced a swathe of other writers, and later filmmakers, such as H.P. Lovecraft and Alfred Hitchcock, as well as a plethora of others, Edgar Allan Poe is a master of the macabre.

**Peter Cushing** (May 26, 1913 – August 11, 1994): Along with his close friend and colleague Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing is a name synonymous with the films and works of 'Hammer Horror'.

**Christopher Lee** (May 27, 1922 – June 7, 2015): Appearing in numerous films together, for many, the pairing of Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee is synonymous with British horror films of the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's.

**Algernon Blackwood** (March 14, 1869 – December 10, 1951): Algernon Blackwood is one of the chief architects of supernatural horror and weird fiction. Such was his appetite for the paranormal and knowledge of the occult, Blackwood spent time in the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and was also a member of The Ghost Club.

**Boris Karloff** (November 23, 1887 – February 2, 1969): Following his appearance as Frankenstein's monster in Universal Pictures' Frankenstein in 1931, followed by Bride of Frankenstein (1935) and Son of Frankenstein (1939), Boris Karloff was an icon of early horror movies.

**Hieronymus Bosch** (circa 1450 – 1516): With his artworks typically considered part of the Flemish Primitives school, Bosch was a deeply creative visionary whose paintings are often viewed as an insight into the human condition, with an emphasis on desire and death.

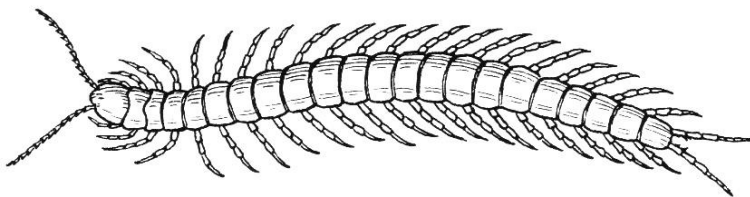
**Arthur Machen** (March 3, 1863 – December 15, 1947): Born in Monmouthshire, Wales in the 1860's, the son of a clergyman, Arthur Machen was a prolific writer who channelled his interests in spiritualism, occultism, mysticism, medievalism, and intense love of his homeland into a number of short stories, novels, articles and more.

**Clark Ashton Smith** (January 13, 1893 – August 14, 1961): Later coming to be referred to as part of *Weird Tales*' 'illustrious triumvirate', with his name placed alongside H.P. Lovecraft and Robert E. Howard, Clark Ashton Smith was a prolific writer of poetry and weird fiction.

**Frank Belknap Long** (April 27, 1901 – January 3, 1994): Over the course of the 1920's – 1960's, establishing himself as a prolific contributor to such pulp magazines as *Weird Tales*, *Astounding Stories of Super-Science*, *Unknown*, and *Satellite Science Fiction*, Long wrote a plethora of fantasy, horror, and science fiction tales.

**Robert Bloch** (April 5, 1917 – September 23, 1994): Robert Bloch was a prolific writer of crime, fantasy, science fiction, and horror stories; elevating him from his early cult-pulp status, many of his tales were later adapted for film and television, as well as radio.

**Vincent Price** (May 27, 1911 – October 25, 1993): Encompassing the stage, film, television and radio, Price's acting career boasted more than five decades, while he also featured in several audiobooks. Drawing on his interest in animals, cookery and art, Price penned several books. And so it is that, across a swathe of creative platforms, Price lives on; a multi-faceted individual, consummate gentleman, and one of the original icons of the classic age of horror.





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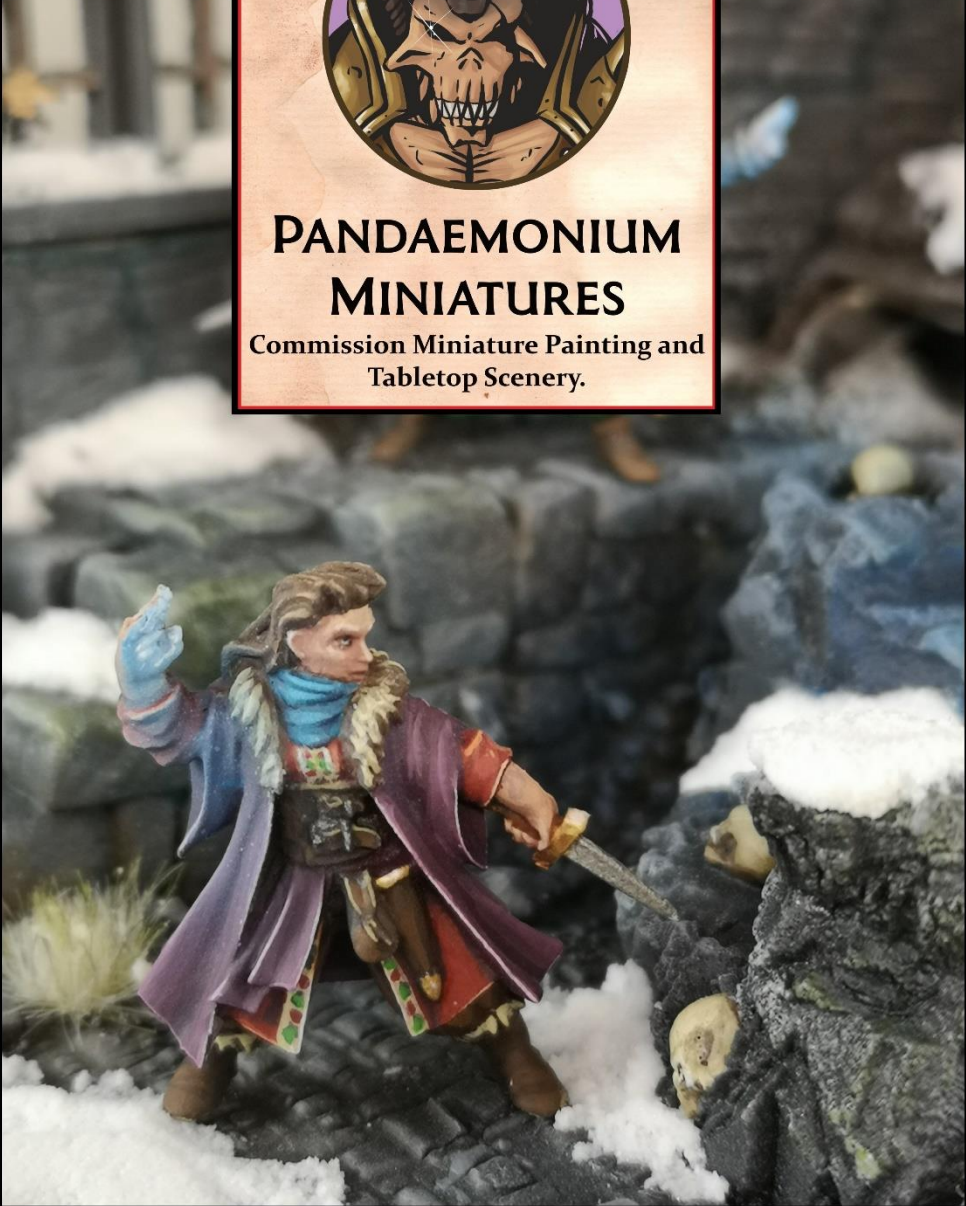


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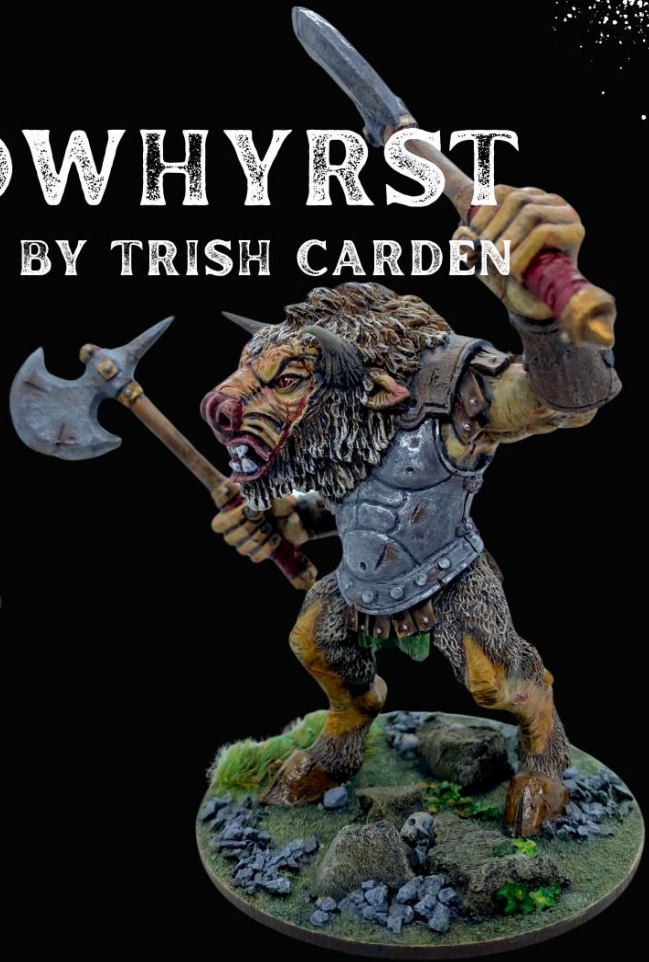
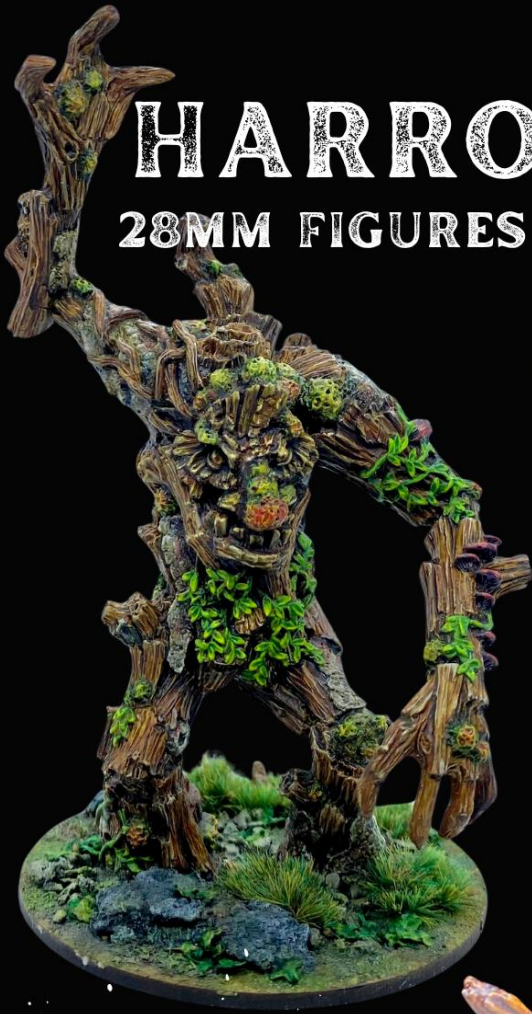
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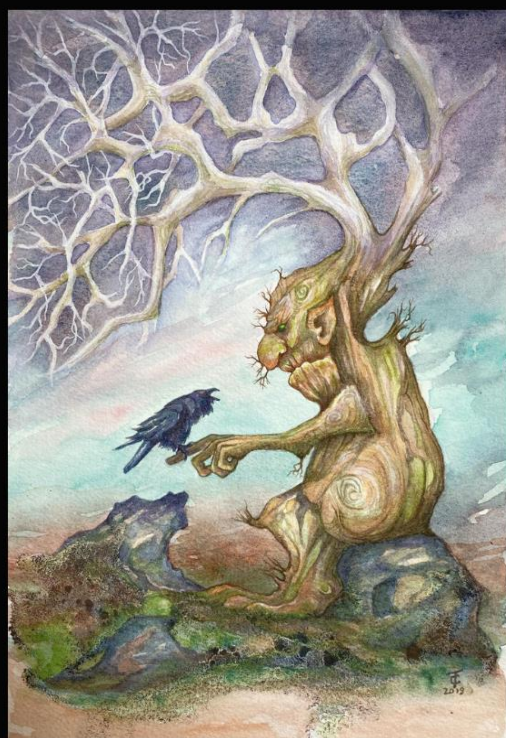
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## The Broken Diary:

Ian Miller is best known for his surreal and grotesque illustrations for people like Tolkien, Lovecraft, Peake and others. He collaborated on the graphic novels 'The Luck In The Head' with M John Harrison, and 'The City' with James Herbert. His work has been collected, most notably in the book 'Green Dog Trumpet'.

With 'The Broken Diary', Miller takes us on a labyrinthine journey through 'almost familiar' places, meeting with disturbing often hilarious characters - all intercut with entries from the author's diary, in such a way that the everyday melts into the phantastic.

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# TONY HOUGH

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Tony Hough.

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# Fragments: The Fantasy Art of Tony Hough

With such an extensive body of work behind him, and being an artist still very much in demand, it is perhaps not surprising that Tony should have his own book of artwork out. Available via Blurb, *Fragments: The Fantasy Art of Tony Hough* is a 54-page book which offers stunning examples of the artist's fantasy illustrations. Drawn from various years of his illustrious career, this book boasts many of Tony's evocative illustrations of dragons, faeries, robots, and more.

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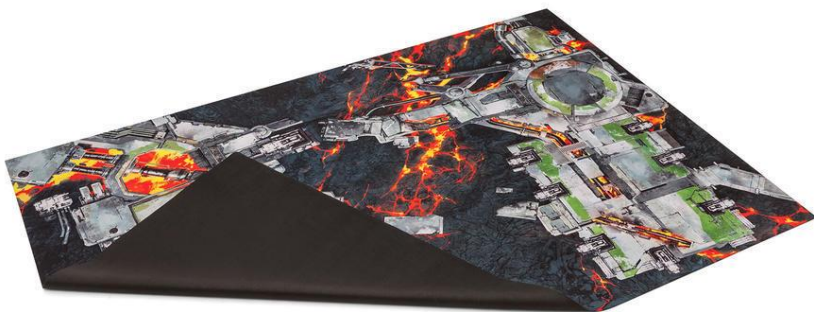
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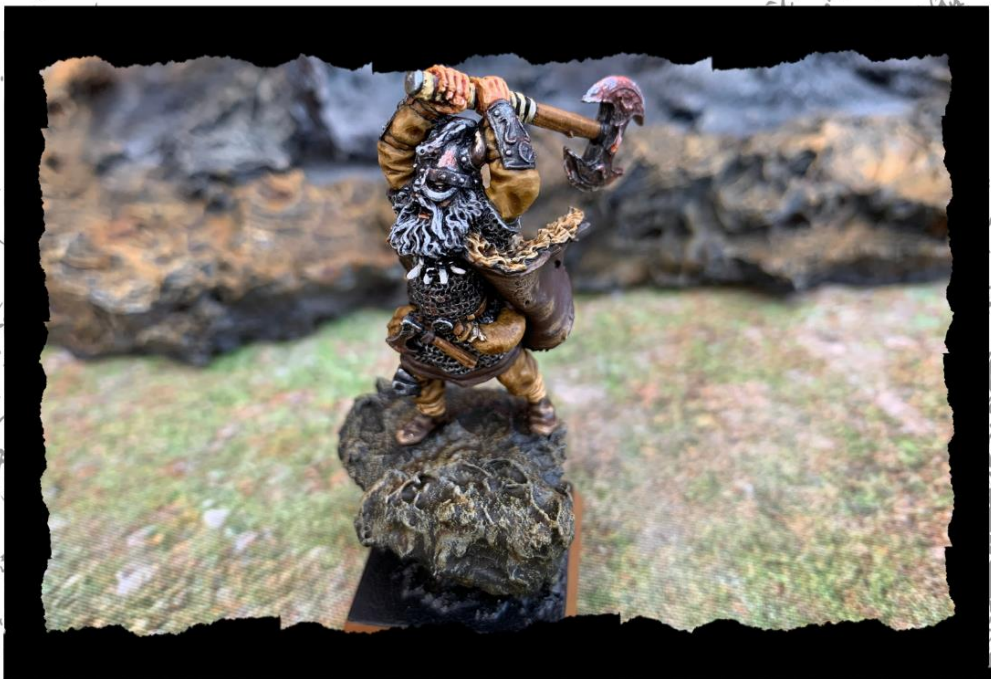


# SHADOWS OF CENTRALIS

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From sample Army Lists to downloadable Magic Cards and counters, the official Shadows of Centralis website is regularly updated with special features which can be used to further enhance your games of Shadows of Centralis and Shadows of Centralis: Seas of the Orb.

Bringing together likeminded enthusiasts, and offering a platform for their Shadows of Centralis projects, the website provides links to the game's online community.



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