

# Desecration

An Adventure for Warhammer 40k

## Synopsis

The acolytes are called to investigate the desecration of a smaller shrine on Kuluth, a former hive world that has been a warzone for over 40 years. Only recently, it was discovered that the shrine contained an important document regarding the Tyrant Star and an acolyte of Inquisitor Dalek was sent to recover it. However, contact to the acolyte was lost and there are incoherent tales that the shrine was attacked by a warband of Khorne. The heroes are sent out to investigate the theft and to recover both the book and the missing acolyte.

## Briefing

The acolytes are ordered to immediately go to Kuluth to recover an important book stored in a shrine located in a refugee camp. The shrine is run by Father Caligula. Six months ago, a cleric working in the library of Sentinel found evidence of an **important document regarding the Tyrant Star** being stored in the shrine's pitifully small library. He relayed the information to the Inquisition but it took over a month to finally send an acolyte to Kuluth. **Kaltos Alraun**, a psyker in the service of Inquisitor Dalek arrived on Kuluth and found that the forces of Chaos had been there earlier, stealing the document. Alraun has taken up pursuits but contact to him and his two bodyguards was lost. The guards are twin sisters belonging to an Imperially-sanctioned death cult.

## Initial Situation

When the acolytes arrive on Kuluth, about five months will have passed since the desecration of the shrine. The small shrine is found in a refugee settlement, a chaotic collection of huts, tents, and prefab buildings. The shrine itself is little more than a container filled with heavily damaged sacred items. Its original location was in the

sacked hive of Gismodeus, whose smoldering remains overshadow the camp. However, when the hive fell ten years ago, the shrine was moved into the newly founded camp and taken over by an Imperial Guard chaplain. The locals are quite shocked that it was attacked within their camp and are very afraid of further Chaos attacks.

## Investigating the Shrine

There is little evidence to be found in the shrine, as it was cleaned up a while ago. There are clear burn signs that highlight the outlines of two bodies, though. A **Search(-10%)** reveals that the silhouettes are most likely from females.

However, the local priest, a battle hardened Imperial Guard chaplain called Father Caligula has witnessed the raid. Caligula is a tough man with little patience or doubt. Even the hideous symbol burned into his face has not shattered his face but for now he wears an ill-fitting metal mask with austere features.

He reveals the following facts to the heroes:

- The raiders came five months ago. They were dropped by an anti-grav glider and proceeded towards the shrine.
- They destroyed everything and captured the priest. Caligula did not see what else they did.
- When reserve troops approached the shrine, the cultists retreated with their vehicle.
- Three months ago, under *mysterious circumstances* (when the cultists were torturing prisoners), Caligula was able to escape and reached the frontline. There, Imperial Guard took in the man and brought him to a hospital.
- When he returned, nothing seemed to be missing but a lot was destroyed. He found two charred corpses that were not there when he was attacked. The bodies were put into a mass grave.
- What Caligula knows nothing about: Caligula has not seen the acolyte. He does not know who took the book. In

fact, he had never even heard about it.

Tyrant Star.

Investigations will reveal the following:

## On the Trail of the Headtakers

Some easy **investigation (+20%)** allows identifying the cultists who attacked the shrine as Headtakers, a nasty Khorne cult that has seen major action on the Julius Machenko Hive front. The battle is currently raging in the corridors of that building so it should be easy to get into contact with the Headtakers.

The Headtaker's current headquarter (to be located with a **Tracking(+10%)** check) is an abandoned chemical plant in the lower hive that still smells heavily of chlorine. There are about 20 cultists on the premises, enjoying mock battles fought between aspiring champions (i.e. the cultists with mutations). They have two guards at each entrance, so the heroes might not be able to surprise them.

When defeated, any captured survivors will be easy to interrogate (**Interrogation(+20%)**). They will brag about their vile deeds at the shrine. However, they know nothing about Alraun or the book, mocking the heroes for following the wrong trail. However, they are pretty sure that a psyker has not joined the forces of Chaos on this world as the current general is a follower of Khorne who has decreed that no more witches are to join his forces. The cultists talk openly when they can brag about their god's might. But they do not fear death or torture and will laugh into the acolytes' faces to their last minute.

Should the heroes be disappointed by this dead end, let some of the Imperial Guard troops show them gratitude for killing these fearsome warriors. Also, they now have reason to suspect that Alraun has gone renegade but has not joined the forces of Chaos.

## On the Trail of Alraun

What happened to Alraun? The two corpses from the shrine are indeed Alraun's bodyguards, as an autopsy will easily reveal. The psyker himself has taken refuge in the abandoned hive and is currently working on finding out more about the

One degree of failure	Alraun was seen by some people, but it is not known where he is now. People point out that Chaos regularly abducts people.
1 degree of success	Alraun has bought a combat servitor but afterwards his trail is lost. Abduction is unlikely. There is some evidence that he has joined the forces of Chaos.
3 degrees of success or more	Alraun has bought a combat servitor and has set off for the abandoned hive. A scavenger has seen him and can put the heroes on his trail.

If the heroes know that Alraun is not on Chaos's side but have failed to link him to the abandoned hive, let some friendly NPC help them.

## Showdown in the Ruins of the Hive

The abandoned hive is a terrible place. There are old cave-ins, the stink of million dead and heavy combat damage all over. Servoskulls patrol the tunnels to warn of another Chaos incursion but the current front lines make such an attack very unlikely.

Should the acolytes proceed to fast, however, you can throw in a band of 5 Chaos scouts that use the stats of the Headtakers but who follow Nurgle and show visible signs of rot. Also, they will be less prone to enter melee combat, using their guns instead. The leader is a full character who has unnatural toughness (x2) as mutation due to his advanced state of neural decay.

Alraun's hideout is a small storeroom in the underhive that has been converted to be an acceptable room. Hidden behind crates, Alraun

studies the book on the Tyrant Star. When the heroes arrive, he will first pretend have hidden from Chaos and waited for help to arrive. His skill at deception is not very good and once his lie is seen through, he will use his psychic powers and his combat servitor to cover his flight.

## The Book

The book on the Tyrant Star is an heavily-illuminated Imperial text, clearly not heretical or warp-touched in any way. Inside, there is a lot of information on the theories regarding the Tyrant Star, with a strong focus on Daemonic origin. Reading the book entitles the character to an elite advance (100xp) in Forbidden Lore (Daemonology). However, reading the book also causes 1 insanity point.

## Real Timeline

The following timeline can help the GM keep track of the actual events before the acolytes' involvement.

**6 month ago:** Evidence of the Tyrant Star document is found.

**5 month ago:** The shrine is attacked by the Headtaker cultists.

**4 month ago:** Acolyte Alraun arrives at the shrine's abandoned ruins but is able to recover the book. After killing his bodyguards, he reports it as stolen and claims to have taken up pursuit.

**3 month ago:** Alraun buys a combat servitor and retreats to the abandoned hive in order to study the book.

**2 month ago:** Caligula returns to his shrine and starts cleaning up. At the same time, Inquisitor Dalek asks his colleague to dispatch the acolytes to search for his missing team.

## NPCs

The following NPCs can be encountered by the heroes during the course of the adventure.

## Headtaker Brotherhood Khorne Cultist

The members of the Headtaker Brotherhood are the survivors of an Imperial Guard special unit recruited from Fedrid 20 years ago. The Brotherhood successfully fought against an Ork invasion but their primitive warrior rites eventually sent them into the arms of Khorne and they were declared heretics. The Headtakers deserted and joined the Chaos forces on Kuluth.

Headtakers dress in black flak armour covered with blasphemous runes. They sport various piercings and self-mutilations such as cut off noses and ears or heavy facial scars. Their bones and feather jewellery reveals their Fedrid origin.

The cultists prefer melee combat but make good use of cover to get there. They are minions with a single wound, except for the 3 mutants who count as normal characters.

Headtaker Cultist								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
28	25	42	30	30	24	30	38	25

**Movement:** 3/6/9/18

**Wounds:** 10

**Skills:** Awareness 30%, Common Lore (Imperium) 24%, Dodge 30%, Forbidden Lore (Cults) 24%, Speak Language (Low Gothic) 30%

**Talents/Traits:** Ambidextrous, Basic Weapon Training (SP), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Unshakeable Faith (re-roll fear WP tests)

**Possible Mutations** (group contains only 3 mutants, one of each type):

- **Tough Hide** (+1 AP)
- **Unnatural Strength** (x2)
- **Fleshhound Face:** Fear 1

**Armour:** Flak Body Armour (AP: 3, All)

**Weapons:** Mono Axe (1d10+5 R, Pen: 2), Hand Cannon (Range: 35m, RoF: S, Dam: 1d10+4 I, Pen: 2)

**Gear:** Rotgut booze, Single dose of slaughter.

## Kaltos Alraun

Kaltos is an acolyte of Inquisitor Dalek of the Ordo Malleus. Always rumoured to be a radical, Kaltos has finally decided to go renegade and keep the knowledge about the Tyrant Star for himself.

Kaltos is a small hunchback with misaligned teeth and the facial expression of an idiot. He wears an iron headband inscribed with symbols of warding that has partially grown into his flesh.

Despite his looks, Kaltos is clever and calculating. He has been treated poorly by others and hopes for payback once he has helped the coming of the true Tyrant Star.

Kaltos Alraun								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	35	30	30	30	30	30	43	22

**Movement:** 3/6/9/18

**Wounds:** 12

**Skills:** Awareness 40%, Common Lore (Imperium) 30%, Forbidden Lore (Psykers) 40%, Forbidden Lore (Warp) 30%, Invocation 53% (68% w/ amulet), Psyscience 30%, Speak Language (Low Gothic) 40%, Speak Language (High Gothic) 30%

**Talents/Traits:** Leap Up, Paranoia (initiative 5 and save against surprise), Psy Rating 2, Pistol Training (SP, Las, Flame), Basic Weapon Training (SP, Las), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive)

**Armour:** Mesh Combat Cloak (AR: 4, Arms & Body)

**Weapons:** Hand Flamer (Range: 10, ROF: S, Dam: 1d10+4 E, Pen: 2, Clip: 2, Reload: 2 full, Flame), Sword (1d10+3 R, balanced, primitive)

**Gear:** Amulet of Tzeentch (+15% Invocation. If a check for psychic phenomena is required, add +15% to the roll.)

**Psy Powers:** Fire Bolt (pg. 175), Touch of Madness (pg. 168)

## Combat Servitor

Use the stats found on pg. 338 of the main rule book.