

# ***BLOOD RAVENS: THE OMNIBUS***

*By CS Goto*

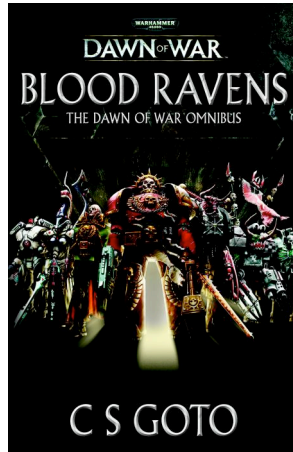
Contains the novels *Dawn of War*, *Dawn of War: Ascension* and *Dawn of War: Tempest* plus a brand-new short story and introduction by the author.

Follow the adventures of the Blood Ravens Space Marines as they battle to protect humanity. This omnibus collects together the three novels that tie in to the acclaimed computer game from THQ, Dawn of War.

**Dawn of War** – Brother-Captain Gabriel Angelos throws his men into a last-ditch defence of Tartarus – a planet with a long and troubled history. A brutal ork invasion has left the world in ruins, and there are more ancient evils at work.

**Dawn of War: Ascension** – When the Blood Ravens race to defend one of their worlds against marauding aliens, it looks as if the ancient eldar are to blame, but appearances can be deceiving, and Captain Angelos has to get to the bottom of the mystery before the galaxy is plunged into all out war.

**Dawn of War: Tempest** – Battling to save the Blood Ravens' precious gene-seed, Librarian Rhamah is sucked into the Eye of Terror and crashes down onto a bizarre planet of alien libraries and museums – an ancient eldar world hidden in the tempests of the warp. His battle-brothers mourn the passing of this hero, but his fate is far worse than death...



### **About the Author**

Cassern S Goto has published short fiction in *Inferno!* and elsewhere. His work for the Black Library includes the Warhammer 40,000 Dawn of War novels, the Deathwatch series, the Necromunda novel *Salvation* and the epic *Eldar Prophecy*.

**• BY THE SAME AUTHOR •**

**• DEATH WATCH •**

Warrior Brood  
Warrior Coven

**• OTHER WARHAMMER 40,000 •**

Eldar Prophecy

The following is an excerpt from *Blood Ravens: The Omnibus* by CS Goto. Published by the Black Library. Games Workshop, Willow Road, Nottingham, NG7 2WS, UK.

Copyright © Games Workshop Ltd, 2008. All rights reserved. Reproduction prohibited, in any form, including on the internet.

For more details email [publishing@games-workshop.co.uk](mailto:publishing@games-workshop.co.uk) or visit the Black Library website [www.blacklibrary.com](http://www.blacklibrary.com)

IN THE THICK of the fighting on the front line, an axe flashed down a fraction too late as Brom rocked onto his back foot, unleashing a spray from his hellgun at close range. As the ork smashed its weapon into the deck the blade caught in the rockcrete and the creature roared with frustration. Brom's hail of fire strafed up the ork's bulging abdomen, riddling it with holes.

The colonel sighed slightly, propping himself up on the barrel of his gun for a moment, before hefting it once again and opening up at yet another of the greenskinned beasts.

All around him was the constant roar of battle. He could hear the cries of his sergeants rallying the troopers against wave after wave of ork assaults, and he could hear the screams of men as they fell beneath the monstrous blows from the inhuman creatures. Explosions filled the air with concussions and the ground shook under the constant impacts of mortars, grenades and rockets.

'Colonel!' cried Ckrius, staring in horror at Brom as his hellgun coughed savagely into the gut of a charging ork, dropping it to the ground amidst squeals of frustration.

Brom stole a glance at Ckrius, but he couldn't tell what the trooper was trying to tell him.

A projectile zipped over the colonel's head – Brom could feel the heated air sizzle as it shrieked past him, singeing his closely cropped white hair. He turned his head, following the flight of the bolter shell as it punched into the face of the ork behind him. The creature was already riddled with gunshot wounds all the way down its chest, but it had freed its axe from the rockcrete and was holding

it high in the air, ready to hack down into Brom's back. The bolter shell buried itself into the beast's skull and then exploded into tiny lacerating fragments that shredded the thick bone instantly.

Before Brom had chance to react, a huge red-armoured warrior pounded up to his side, loosing showers of bolter shells into the frenzied mobs of orks that charged and lumbered towards the line. And the stranger was not alone, squads of similar figures deployed themselves into position in the heart of the defensive formation, towering head and shoulders above the Imperial Guardsmen around them.

In only a few moments the ork charge collapsed, and the chaotic assault seemed to fall into a frenzied retreat. The Space Marines pressed their advantage, striding forward of the Tartaran line and pressing the defensive action into an assault of their own.

By now the orks were in even more disarray: charging shoota boyz skidded to a halt and others ploughed into the back of them, unable to stop in time. The cleaver wielding slugga boyz had already turned tail and were lumbering back into the midst of the mobs of orks in the mid-field and the snivelling gretchin were diving for whatever cover they could find as the Space Marines' barrage continued relentlessly.

For the first time, the Imperial forces started to make ground against the orks. Blood Ravens strode forward at the head of the counter-offensive, scything their way through the disorganised greenskins with sputtering chainswords and disciplined volleys of bolter fire. The retreat rapidly collapsed into a rout, as the orks abandoned their positions and ran in erratic, wailing mobs.

Brom watched the fleeing orks with something approaching amazement, but was overcome with relief. He turned to the Space Marine who had saved his life and bowed deeply.

'I am Colonel Carus Brom, and you are most welcome here, captain.'

The Space Marine eyed him sceptically. 'Captain Gabriel Angelos of the Blood Ravens Third Company. What is your status?'

'The Tartarans have suffered terrible losses, captain, but they have fought bravely and with honour... in the main,' said Brom,

trying to draw himself up to a more respectable height before this giant figure.

Gabriel surveyed the ruins of the spaceport. It was spotted with ordnance craters and speckled with the corpses of Guardsmen – some of whom were facing back towards the centre of the compound with gunshot wounds in their backs. But he couldn't see a single greenskin corpse inside the defensive perimeter.

Nodding slowly, he turned back to Brom. 'You stood your ground in the face of the Emperor's foes. You have done your duty, colonel.'

Brom nodded and let out a brief sigh of relief as he realised what the Blood Raven was looking at. 'Thank you, captain.'

'I am not here for thanks, colonel. This spaceport must be held if we are to maintain troops and supply lines to planet's surface. It is only by the provenance of the Emperor that we arrived in time,' replied Gabriel, already scanning the scene for signs of supplies in the compound itself. 'And what of the wounded and the civilians?' he asked.

'They are stranded, captain. The Tartarans have few ships, and most were destroyed by the orks during the initial stages of the invasion,' explained Brom, feeling rather too much on the defensive.

'Then you shall have more ships,' said Gabriel simply, turning to Brother-Sergeant Corallis. 'Sergeant, contact the Litany of Fury and order that Thunderhawks are deployed to evacuate the wounded. Meanwhile,' he added, turning back to Brom with the hint of a smile, 'we will dispatch the ground forces.'

'But captain,' replied Brom, slightly confused. 'The orks have retreated. The ground forces are already broken.'

The Blood Ravens captain turned away from Brom and watched the greenskins scrambling away into the mountains on the horizon. His Marines had driven them out of the combat theatre, but then had broken off the pursuit, firing volleys at the heels of the scampering vermin just to keep them moving.

'If you are to defeat your enemies, colonel, you must first understand them. The orks have a saying: never be beaten in battle. Do you know what this means?' Gabriel returned his searching gaze

back to the colonel, who shook his head nervously. Its meaning seemed obvious to him.

‘It means, Colonel Brom, that orks never retreat, they only regroup. If they die in battle, then they do not think that they have not been beaten – they are only beaten if the battle itself defeats them. War for its own sake, colonel. The orks will be back, and they will keep coming until you or they are all dead.’

IN THE DISTANCE there was a constant rumble of thunder as artillery fire and pockets of fighting continued. But the spaceport was secure and, tucked into the cliffs behind, the city of Magna Bonum remained relatively unscathed by the ravages of war. Its gleaming white buildings shimmered with bursts of red as the setting sun turned to orange and bounced the dying light off the bloody battlefield. Nothing moved in the streets, and an eerie calm had descended on the city.

The Blood Ravens were making preparations for their pursuit of the orks, overseeing the fortification of the spaceport in case the greenskins returned while they were away. Gabriel had already dispatched a squad of scouts into the wilderness to locate the rallying point of the foul aliens, and he was awaiting the return of Sergeant Corallis with impatience. He was certain that the warboss would be regrouping his forces for another assault, and was eager to thwart it before it began. The best way to beat orks was to prevent them from forming their forces in the first place.

‘Prathios, my old friend,’ said Gabriel as the Chaplain walked into the spaceport’s Imperial shrine. ‘It is good to see you.’ The two Marines bowed slightly to each other, showing a respect suitable to a holy place.

‘It is good to be here, Gabriel. It has been a long time since I saw planet-fall. How can I serve you, captain?’ The huge, old Marine looked down at Gabriel with compassionate eyes. ‘Why are you so troubled?’ he asked.

Gabriel turned away from the Chaplain to face the altar, dropping to his knees before the image of the Emperor’s Golden Throne. It was encircled by a ring of silver angels, their wings

tipped with blood. Facing away from the throne in the middle, their mouths were open and their heads thrown back, as though they were singing to the whole galaxy.

‘I just need to be calm before the battle. I am impatient to deal with these orks, and impatience does not become me. I would not like to err in my judgment,’ said Gabriel, admitting more than he would to anyone else.

‘Your concern does you credit, captain,’ answered Prathios, kneeling into prayer beside Gabriel, gazing at the images on the altar. ‘It is a beautiful sight, is it not?’

For a moment or two Gabriel said nothing; he just stared straight ahead, as though his gaze was trapped in the icon. ‘Yes, indeed it is. But tell me, Brother Prathios, haven’t you ever wondered what it might sound like?’

The Chaplain continued to look at the image, considering the question. ‘I wonder every day, Gabriel, but I will hear it soon enough, when the Emperor finally calls my soul to him.’

COLONEL BROM LOOKED over his men in the remains of the spaceport. They were tired. Exhausted. The ork invasion had taken them by surprise and it had been more severe than any of the previous incursions into the Tartarus system. The Tartarans’ small space-bound force had been virtually annihilated in the orks’ attack run, and then the giant, clumsy kill kroozer had plunged into the planet’s atmosphere, spewing an invasion force of orks onto the surface. The greenskins had no need for the spaceport, which the Tartarans had defended so desperately. They had just attacked Magna Bonum because that was where the Tartarans’ Fifth Regiment had dug in – so that was where the good fighting was to be found. Brom shook his head at the irony: if they hadn’t tried to defend the city, perhaps the orks would have just ignored it.

‘Colonel Brom,’ said Trooper Ckrius, flicking a sharp salute as he snapped to attention.

‘Yes, trooper. What can I do for you?’ Brom was getting a little tired of Ckrius’s enthusiasm. The young Guardsman had fought bravely against the orks, standing his ground with Brom himself,

albeit after attempting to desert the battle. This was as much as Brom could ask of any of his men, but Ckrius seemed to think that he owed more than any of the others. As though his moment of hesitation had condemned him to a lifetime of penitence and of service to the officer who had made him see the light.

‘I have brought you some recaff, colonel,’ said Ckrius, thrusting a battered, tin cup towards his commanding officer.

Despite himself, Brom was grateful. It had been a long day and, although the sun was setting in a dazzling array of golds and reds, he knew that there would be no sleep for them tonight. Perhaps never again.

‘Thank you, Trooper Ckrius,’ he replied wearily, reaching out and taking the hot cup from the young man, who was still saluting. ‘You can relax, soldier.’

‘We can sleep when we’re dead, right colonel?’ said Ckrius eagerly, excited that Brom had remembered his name. He nodded his head energetically towards the recaff cup as though it contained the elixir of life.

Brom glanced down at the steaming liquid and raised it to his lips. It was so hot that it burnt his throat as he swallowed a large mouthful. He didn’t care. If that was the worst pain he would feel today, he would have no complaints.

‘Let’s hope that we don’t have to wait that long,’ replied the colonel, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand and looking levelly at the young trooper. The young man looked terrible, running on hysteria and nervous energy. ‘You fought well today, son. Get some sleep, and you will also fight well tomorrow.’

‘But there is no time for sleep,’ protested Ckrius, twitching his head excitedly from side to side, taking in the flurry of activity around the spaceport. ‘There is so much to do.’

‘The orks will not be back for a while yet. Captain Gabriel tells me that they will have to regroup at a safe distance and then reorganise before they will return to face the Tartarans again. Evidently, the reorganisation of a mob of orks can take a long time. We will be ready for them,’ said Brom, hoping that the Blood Raven was right.

‘Captain Gabriel?’ asked Ckrius, as though he had heard a secret password. ‘Is that the Space Marine captain?’

‘Yes, Captain Gabriel is the Space Marine commander. He is here to help us with the ork problem,’ explained Brom carefully, conscious of the excitement in the young trooper’s face.

‘The boys... that is, we were wondering who they were, colonel,’ said Ckrius self-consciously. He looked back over his shoulder to a group of troopers who sat around a small fire on the hard-deck, sipping recaff from mangled tins. They all pretended to be chatting casually or looking elsewhere when Brom followed his gaze.

‘I see,’ said Brom as the real motivation for bringing him the recaff dawned on him. He smiled – these troopers had probably never even seen a Space Marine before. ‘They are Blood Ravens, trooper. The Blood Ravens Third Company.’

Ckrius’s eyes lit up. ‘I’ve heard of them,’ he blurted excitedly. Then he paused for a moment and a shadow fell over his face as his thoughts caught up with him. ‘Aren’t they–’

‘Yes, I dare say you have, trooper. Their reputation precedes them wherever they go, I’m sure. The Adeptus Astartes are justly exalted throughout the Imperium. As I say, they are here to help us with the orks, and we should thank the Emperor for that.’ Brom cut Ckrius off, aware of the rumours about the Cyrene affair but unsure of the facts himself. ‘Now I suggest that you get some sleep, trooper. Tomorrow will be a long day, and you will need all of your strength if you are to show the Blood Ravens the worth of the Tartaran Fifth.’

‘Yes, colonel,’ replied Ckrius, saluting weakly and turning away. Brom watched him walk back to his friends around the fire, and smiled to himself as they crowded around the trooper, pestering him with questions.

THE BLOOD RAVENS scouts swept back into the spaceport on their bikes, engines roaring with power. Against the setting red sun, the ruby bikes seemed to fluoresce with energy, and the heat haze from the exhaust vents blurred into the fading daylight. Brom watched

them slide the huge machines to a halt, and shook his head in faint disbelief. Those assault bikes were faster than a Sentinel walker and packed an awesome amount of firepower. And just one Marine sat stride each of the awesome machines, throwing it around as though it were nothing.

The Marines climbed off their bikes and pulled off their helmets, apparently enjoying the last rays of sunlight on their faces. The air was cooling rapidly as the night drew in, and Brom could only imagine how hot the Marines must have been inside that heavy armour all day. But the faces of the scouts were even and unbothered. Their hair was not matted to their heads, and they looked perfectly comfortable. The colonel shook his head again, wondering what he could achieve with a squad of such soldiers.

There were mutterings and faint whistles from some of the Guardsmen as they saw the bikes roll onto the hard-deck. At the end of a day like this one, the sight of nine Blood Raven assault bikes riding out of the sunset was more than any of them could have expected, and they didn't try too hard to hide their awe.

Brom cast his eyes over his men once again, still shaking his head. They certainly needed this kind of inspiration. It had been a bad day for the Tartarans. Hundreds of men had fallen – good men who had stood their ground in the face of the alien onslaught. Many bad men had fallen too; he had dispatched them himself with own pistol as they had tried to run from their duty.

He had not known that the Tartaran Fifth boasted so many cowards. His men had stood defiantly in the face of many foes before today. They had confronted insurrections and rebellions. They had cleansed cities of perverted and mutated cultists. They had even met orks before, when greenskin raiders had tried to plunder the resources of Tartarus. And always his men had stood firm – fighting for their honour, for the Emperor, and for their homes.

Something was different about this invasion. Although the arrival of the Blood Ravens was welcome, and their timely intervention had been decisive, the Tartarans had dealt with orks before, even without the help of the Adeptus Astartes. This glut of greenskins was no bigger than any they had faced before. But

something was different. The men were whispering amongst themselves, casting furtive glances at each other, muttering quiet suspicions around the camp fires. Brom couldn't help but wonder whether the presence of the Space Marines actually made the men more suspicious: if the Adeptus Astartes are here, this must be some serious shit.

And Captain Angelos didn't help – his haughty attitude was almost insulting. He hadn't even included the Tartarans in his plans for the fortification of the spaceport; the Blood Ravens were doing everything. In truth, most of Brom's men were grateful for the chance to rest, but he had heard some of them grumbling about not being good enough for the Space Marines.

A shiver ran down his back as Brom realised what Angelos's first impression of the Tartarans must have been. In his mind's eye, he could still see those men laying face down on the ground with his pistol wounds in their backs.

Then a realisation struck him. Something had been different even before the Space Marines had arrived. Some of his men had been defeated even before the battle had started. He had heard them talking about the voices in the wind. Some of them had heard warnings whispered in the breeze ahead of the ork assault – whispering songs and choruses that echoed into their ears from everywhere at once. Even Brom had convinced himself that he had heard something.

The scouts were striding over to the Blood Ravens' encampment around the spaceport's shrine, while a team of other Marines walked back towards their bikes, presumably to make the necessary offerings to their machine spirits before they would be ready to go out again.

Watching the scouts, Brom noticed a group of Blood Ravens emerge from the shrine to greet them. One of them caught his eye immediately – slightly taller than the others, his armour was the colour of a clear blue sky. He bore the insignia of the Blood Ravens on his auto-reactive shoulder guard, and his gleaming armour was studded with purity seals. In place of the grey raven that adorned the chests of his battle-brothers, the figure had a starburst of gold and,

although he had no helmet, his face was obscured by an ornate hood that was somehow integrated into his armour. In his hand he held a long staff, crested with the wings of a raven with a glowing red droplet in its heart.

---

*Blood Ravens: The Omnibus* can be purchased in all better bookstores, Games Workshop and other hobby stores, or direct from this website and GW mail order.

Price £9.99 (UK) / \$11.99 (US) / \$15 (CAN)

ISBN 13: 978 1 84416 535 3

- Bookshops: Distributed in the UK and the US by Simon & Schuster Books.
- Games & hobby stores: Distributed in UK and US by Games Workshop.
- UK mail order: 0115-91 40 000      US mail order: 1-800-394-GAME
- Online: Buy direct care of Games Workshop's web store by going to [www.blacklibrary.com/store](http://www.blacklibrary.com/store) or [www.games-workshop.com](http://www.games-workshop.com).