



BLACK LIBRARY



# ***LEGENDS OF THE SPACE MARINES***

*A Space Marine anthology*

*Edited by Christian Dunn*

Space Marines and their evil counterparts, the Traitor Marines, epitomise the war-torn Warhammer 40,000 universe. This short story collection focuses entirely on these superhuman warriors, telling high-action tales of heroism and savagery. Combining the talents of Black Library favourite authors such as Graham McNeill and James Swallow with hot new talent, this collection is truly not to be missed!

## **About the Editor**

After cutting his teeth on *Inferno!* and *Warhammer Monthly* (the only comic book ever to win an Eagle Award and get cancelled in the same week), Christian Dunn spent many years as the Commissioning Editor of both *Black Flame* and *Solaris*. He is now safely ensconced back in the bosom of Black Library as their Range Development Editor where runs the e-book, Print on Demand and audio ranges, as well as being responsible for unearthing new writing talent.

He lives in Nottingham, England and always keeps a freshly greased chainsaw under his pillow in anticipation of the inevitable zombie apocalypse.

• **SPACE MARINES** •

**HEROES OF THE SPACE MARINES**

Edited by Nick Kyme and Lindsey Priestley

**SALAMANDER**

By Nick Kyme

**SONS OF DORN**

By Chris Roberson

• **SPACE MARINE BATTLES** •

**RYNN'S WORLD**

By Steve Parker

**HELSREACH**

By Aaron Dembski-Bowden

**HUNT FOR VOLDORIUS**

By Andy Hoare

**THE PURGING OF KADILLUS**

By Gav Thorpe

The following is an excerpt from *Legends of the Space Marines*, edited by Christian Dunn.

Published by the Black Library. Games Workshop, Willow Road, Nottingham, NG7 2WS, UK.

Copyright © Games Workshop Ltd, 2010. All rights reserved. Reproduction prohibited, in any form, including on the internet.

For more details or to contact us visit the Black Library website: [www.blacklibrary.com](http://www.blacklibrary.com).

### From *ORPHANS OF THE KRAKEN*

by Richard Williams

I AM NOT yet dead.

I am only on the brink. I cannot tell anymore how long I have been here. My first heart begins its beat. I count the minutes until it finishes and begins again. I clutch at the sound as long as I can. It is my only reminder that I am still alive.

It is not fear that holds me from the edge. I see what is ahead and it welcomes me. But I have made an oath. Until I have held to my word, I cannot allow myself to fall.

THE TYRANID HIVE ship drifted silently in space. I watched it through my window. It was vast and it was an abomination, ugly beyond description, organic but no creation of any natural god. It was also, as best as we could determine, very, very dead.

My name is Brother Sergeant Tiresias of the Astartes Chapter Scythes of the Emperor, and I came here searching for legends.

I command the 21st Salvation Team, and if that sounds like a grand title then let me correct you now. It is not. There were eight of us at the beginning, myself and seven neophytes. Battle-brothers in training, youths, juveniles, children. I am told that they are our future. I know better; we do not have a future.

By that day I had been in their company, and they in mine, for over two years. Our time together had not been easy, nor without loss. The three empty seats beside me were testimony to that. But the three we had left behind had not disappointed me nearly as greatly as the four who remained. They had slunk to the far end of the assault boat, gathered around one of their number who was making some small adjustment to the squad's heavy bolter. They spoke softly, thinking they would not be heard.

'There... I think it'll work better that way.'

'Are you sure, Brother Narro? It is not Codex.'

'Of course he's sure, Hwyygir. Who're you going to trust? Your brother here who's been slicing up these vermin as long as you have, or a book written by some hoary old creaker? These bugs weren't even around back then so the codex is as much use as a—'

'Show some respect, Vitellios,' the fourth of them interrupted. 'The sergeant can hear you.'

'Pasan. I tell you, after all he's put us through, I don't give a scrag if he does.'

It had not always been like this. At the start, in our first few insertions, their voices had been full of hope and they had spoken of what we might find. They had repeated the stories they had heard during their training: rumours of Space Marines wearing the insignia of the Scythes still alive inside the tyrannid bio-ships; stories of naval boarding parties surrounded, nearly destroyed, before being saved by such warriors who then disappeared back into the depths; stories of bio-ships convulsing and crumpling in the midst of battle, though untouched by any external force. Stories. Legends. Myths.

They believed, though. They fantasised that, in every dead bio-ship we sought, whole companies of Astartes waited. That they had not been annihilated in the onslaught of Hive Fleet Kraken at all. That Hive Fleet Kraken, that almighty judgement upon us which had destroyed fleets and consumed worlds, might have simply overlooked them. And so they had

survived, forgotten, until these seven brave neophytes arrived to rescue them and become heroes to the Chapter, and become legends themselves.

Myths. Fantasies. Lies. As I already knew and they, once they stepped aboard a bio-ship for the first time, quickly discovered.

‘Ten seconds!’ the pilot’s voice crackled over the intravox. ‘Brace! Brace! Brace!’

I braced. Here we went again. Another legend to chase, another myth to find, another lie to unmask. How many more before we finally accept it? How many more until we finally decide to end it all?

MY WARDS ADVANCED cautiously from our insertion point into the ship. They fell into their formation positions with the ease of long experience. The hivers, the up-spire Narro and the trash Vitellios, took turns on point and edge. The trog savage Hwylgir carried the heavy bolter on his shoulder further back as snath. Pasan, one of the few of the neophytes to have been born, as I, on noble Sotha, walked in the tang position to allow him to command.

If our auspices and scanners had not already told us that the hive ship was dead, we would have known the instant we stepped aboard. The corridors were dark; the only light our own torches. As they illuminated our path ahead we could see the skin of the walls sagging limply from its ribs, its surface discoloured and shrivelling. The door-valves gaped open, the muscles that controlled them wasted.

We waded through a putrid sludge. Though it moved like a sewer it was no waste product, it was alive. It was billions of microscopic tyrannid organisms, released by the bio-ship at the moment of its death and designed solely to consume the flesh of their dead parent, consume and multiply. More creatures, gigantic to the microbes, tiny to us, floated amongst them, eating their fill, then were speared and devoured by larger cousins who hunted them.

The hive ship was dead, and in death it became filled with new life. Each creature, from the sludge-microbe up, was created to feed and to be fed upon in turn, concentrating the bio-matter of the ship into apex predators that would bound gleefully aboard the next bio-ship they encountered to be re-absorbed and recycled. In this way, the tyranid xenofoms transformed the useless carcass of their parent into another legion of monsters to take to the void. The carcass of their parent, and any other bio-matter foolish enough to have stepped onboard.

‘Biters! To the right!’ Vitellios called. The lights on the gun barrels swung around in response. I heard the double shot as Vitellios and Pasan fired and then the screech of their target.

‘Step back! Step back!’ Pasan ordered automatically. ‘Narro!’

Scout Narro had his bolter ready and triggered a burst of fire at the creatures. The shells exploded in their midst, bursting their fat little bodies and tossing them to the side.

The shots would alert every active tyranid nearby. Pasan swivelled his shotgun with its torch across the leathery walls of the chamber, searching for more. Vitellios simply blasted every dark corner. There was another screech for his trouble. The Scouts swung their weapons towards the noise, illuminating the target with blazing light.

There was nothing there. The corner was empty. The sludge rippled slightly around the base of the armoured buttress supporting the wall, but that was all.

I waited for Pasan to order Vitellios to investigate. I saw the acolyte’s helmet turn to the hiver, his face shining gold from his suit lights. I waited for him to give the order, but he did not. He turned his head back and started to move out of position himself.

‘Scout Pasan, hold!’ I ordered angrily. ‘Scout Vitellios, assess that area.’

Vitellios, expecting the order, stepped forward with a confidence no one in his situation should have. He enjoyed it,

though, defying the others' expectations, claiming that places like this reminded him of home. Though having seen myself the lower hive levels on the planet where he was born, I would not disagree.

Vitellios prodded the floor beneath the sludge to ensure it was solid and then stepped right into the corner. He shone his torch up to where the armoured buttress ended just short of the roof.

'Vitellios!' Narro whispered urgently. 'It's moving!'

Vitellios had an underhiver's instincts. He did not question. He did not waste even a split-second to look at the buttress that had suddenly started shifting towards him; he simply ran.

'Hwygir!' he called as he sprinted clear, kicking up a spray of sludge behind him.

Hwygir pulled the trigger on the big gun. The hellfire shell sped across the chamber and smashed into the buttress even as it launched itself at the Scout fleeing away. The sharp needles within the shell plunged into the creature's body, pumping acid, and it spasmed. It tore itself from the wall, revealing the tendrils and sucker-tubes on its underside and collapsed into the sludge, there to be recycled once more.

What it revealed, what it had slowly been consuming, was even more horrific. Three metres high, even collapsed against the wall, was a tyranid monster the size of a Dreadnought. Its skin was armoured like a carapace, its limbs ended in claws like tusks, its face was all the more dreadful for having been half-eaten away.

'Fire!' Vitellios shouted, and he, Pasan and Narro poured a half dozen rounds into the juddering, foetid corpse.

'It is dead already, neophytes. Do not waste your ammunition.' Shaking my head, I rechecked the auspex for the beacon's signal. 'This way.'

I HAD BEGUN with seven neophytes under my command. On the hive ship identified as #34732 Halisa, we stumbled across a colony of dormant genestealers and Neophyte Metellian was



killed. On #10998 Archelon, Neophyte Quintos lost an arm and part of his face to a tyranid warrior corpse that had more life in it than he had assumed. It almost bested me before I caught it with my falx and finally put an end to it. On #51191 Notho, Neophyte Varos slipped through an orifice in the floor. When we finally located him in the depths of the ship, he had been crushed to death.

We have inserted into over a dozen dead hive ships now. We Salvation Teams have probably stepped aboard more bio-ships than any other human warrior. Perhaps more than any alien as well. When I speak it is with that experience. For all the vaunted diversity of the tyranid fleet, for all that Imperial adepts struggle to catalogue them into thousands of ship classes; the truth is that once you are in their guts they are all the same: the same walls of flesh, the same valve portals; the same cell-chambers leading to the major arteries leading to the vital organs at the ship's heart.

But for all the now routine horrors I have witnessed within these ships, on occasion they can still surprise me.

From *THE RETURNED*  
by James Swallow

THE SKIES ABOVE the Razorpeak range wept oil. Low cowl of cloud, grey as ancient stone, ranged from horizon to horizon, grudging to allow only a faint glow of sunlight to pierce them from the great white star of Gathis. The clouds moved upon the constant winds, the same gales that howled mournfully through the jagged towers of the mountains, the same heavy gusts that reached up to beat at the figure of Brother Zurus.

The slick rain, dark with the metallic scent of oceans and the tang of rotting biomass, fell constantly upon the landing platform where he stood. Zurus watched it move in wave fronts across the granite and steel. The storms hammered, as they always did, against the constructions men had built high up here in the tallest crags. The platform was only one of many extensions, cupolas and balconies emerging from the sheer sides of the tallest fell among the Razorpeaks. The earliest, most primitive tribes of Gathis II had christened it the Ghostmountain, a name not in honour of its white-grey stone, but in recognition of the many dead that haunted it, so lethal were its slopes. Thousands of years later and the name was, if anything, more fitting.

Once, before men had come from Terra to colonise this world, there had been a true peak atop the Ghostmountain, a series of serrated spires that rose high enough that they could pierce the cloud mantle. Now a great walled citadel stood in their place, the living rock of the peak carved and formed by artisans into halls, donjons and battlements of stark, grim aspect. At each point of the compass, a hulking tower rose, opening into the sculpted shape of a vast raptor screaming defiance at elements and enemies. These warbirds put truth to the name of the great fortress-monastery atop the Ghostmountain: the Eyrie.

One of the great eagles stood at his back, and like the raptor, Zurus was watchful. He peered out from under the hood of his heavy, rain-slick over-robe, waiting for the roiling, churning sky to release to him his responsibility. In the far distance, down towards the settlements of Table City and the lowhill coasts where the tribals lived, great jags of bright lightning flashed, and on the wind the grind of thunder reached his ears a few moments later, cutting through the steady hiss of the falling rains.

Zurus was soothed by the sound. He found it peaceful, and often when he was far from Gathis, perhaps upon the eve of battle at some distant alien battleground, he would meditate upon the sounds of the rainfall and find his focus in it. And so, when he had awoken at dawn this day, he had at once sensed something amiss. Zurus exited his sleeping cell and found only rays of weak sunlight reaching down the passages of the dormitoria; and outside, a break in the clouds, and a silence in the air.

A rare thing. By the ways of the Gathian tribes, an omen of ill fortune when the eternal tears of Him Upon The Throne ceased to fall, and with them the protection the God-Emperor of Mankind provided. After a time, the rain began again, as constant as it ever was, but Zurus had witnessed the moment of silence, and was on some level unsettled by it.

AS HE HAD crossed through the gate to venture out to the landing platform, a figure in red-trimmed robes was waiting for him in the lee of the entranceway.

Thryn, the Librarian Secundus. The old warrior's sallow, bleak features always measured Zurus whenever he turned to face him. The look in his eyes was no different from the expression he had shown when the battle brother had first seen the psyker, on the fateful day the Chapter had recruited Zurus into their fold. Many decades ago now.

Thryn nodded towards the open gate and the sky beyond. 'The rain returns,' he noted.

‘It never leaves,’ Zurus replied. The exchange of words had a ritual quality to them.

The Librarian’s lip curled in something that a generous observer might have considered a smile. ‘If only that were so. The light of naked sun upon the peaks... It does not bode well.’

Zurus gathered in his robes, unfurling the hood. ‘I have no time for omens.’

Thryn’s mouth twisted; the old warrior could sense a bald untruth even without the use of his witch-sight. ‘You are ready for this, brother?’ he asked, turning to stare out at the empty landing pad. ‘You did not need to take on this duty alone. Other men—’

‘It is right that I do it,’ Zurus spoke over the Librarian. ‘It is right,’ he repeated.

Thryn turned back to study him for a long moment, then stepped away, out of his path. ‘As you wish.’ The Librarian banged his fist against the inner door of the gateway and halted. Metal gears began to grind as the saw-toothed hatchway drew open. When Thryn spoke again, he did not face him. ‘But remember this, Zurus. What comes today, what you go to meet... You have not faced the like before.’

Something in the other warrior’s tone chafed on him. ‘If you think I will falter when... if the time comes, you are mistaken. I do not shrink from death.’

Thryn gave a low chuckle. ‘That much is certain. We are Doom Eagles, brother. Death is part of us.’

‘I know the difference between friend and foe,’ Zurus insisted. ‘I know what the Archenemy looks like. I can tell a traitor when I see one.’

The inner gate clanged open. ‘I have no doubt you believe that. But Chaos has faces it has never shown to you, kinsman. Do not forget that.’ Thryn walked away, back into the fortress.

THE THUNDER WAS closer now, sullen and deep enough to echo in his bones. His companion rains drew hard across the metal decking as if they were scouring it, preparing it for the

arrival; and then it came to him that the tone of the storm-sound had changed, a new note growing loud, fast approaching.

Zurus looked up, following his hearing. The oily rain touched his face, streaking over an aspect that was a maze of scars. He saw a shape up there, only the suggestion of it really, a shadowed thing with broad wings and a hooked profile. A vast eagle, falling towards him, talons extending.

The sound was strident, and it opened the cowl of cloud cover for a brief instant. On pillars of orange fire and hard jet-noise, a gunmetal-silver drop-ship suddenly emerged from the haze, dropping fast. Rain sluiced from the steel wings and across the blocky, rigid angles of the Thunderhawk's blunt nose. Zurus's robes snapped and billowed as the thruster backwash buffeted him, but he did not move from his sentinel stance.

The drop-ship landed firmly, the slow impact resonating through the landing platform. Engines keening as they powered down, the craft settled on hydraulic skids, lowering itself to the deck as if it were thankful to have completed its journey. Zurus saw motion behind the windows of the cockpit, but nothing distinct. He found he was holding his breath, and chided himself, releasing it. The Astartes warrior resisted the urge to throw a glance over his shoulder, back towards the Eyrie. He had no doubt Thryn was at some gallery window far above him, watching.

With a crunch of cogs, the Thunderhawk's drop ramp unfolded, a mouth opening to show the dark interior of the transport craft. A servitor was the first to shamle out, head bobbing as it chewed on the punchcard containing its command strings. The machine-slave dragged a wheeled trolley behind it, half-covered by the tattered remains of a war cloak.

Zurus's gaze was momentarily drawn to the trolley as it was pulled past him; he saw the distinct and unmistakable shape of ceramite armour heaped within the wheeled container. The silver wargear, the trim of red and ebon, as

familiar to him as the scar-patterns on his own face. Doom Eagle armour, but corroded and damaged in a fashion no son of Aquila would ever willingly countenance.

When he looked back there was a hooded man at the top of the ramp. He was looking down at his hands, and the streams of rainwater spattering off his upturned palms. He resembled a pilgrim accepting a benediction.

The Thunderhawk's sole passenger spoke, after a moment. 'The rains,' he began, in a low, crack-throated voice. 'I thought I might never see them again.' He took in a deep, long breath through his nostrils. 'On the wind. I smell Chamack.' There was a smile in the words.

Zurus nodded. Down in Table City, leagues away from the Eyrie, the great bio-matter refineries that fabricated lubricant oil from the fibres of the sinuous Chamack sea-plant worked night and day, and the heavy, resinous odour was always present in the air. Zurus only ever noticed it by its absence.

The moment passed and the new arrival bowed his head. He began to walk down the ramp, but in two quick steps Zurus had crossed to the bottom of the gangway and stood blocking his path. The other man faltered, then halted.

'Who are you?' said Zurus. 'Let the ghosts of the mountain hear your name.'

From beneath the other man's hood, eyes narrowed and became cold. 'The ghosts know who I am, brother. I am a Gathis-born son, as you are.'

'You must say the words,' insisted Zurus. 'For protocol's sake.'

Hands tightened into fists, before vanishing into folds of the dripping robes. 'The protocols of which you speak are for outsiders. Strangers.'

Zurus searched the face concealed beneath the hood for any sign of subterfuge or malice. 'Say the words,' he repeated.

The other man said nothing, and the moment stretched too long. Then finally, with a fall of his shoulders, the new arrival relented. 'My name is Tarikus. Warrior of the Adeptus

Astartes. Brother-Sergeant of the esteemed 3rd Company of the Doom Eagles Chapter. And I have returned home.'

*Tarikus.* Zurus had been there on the day that name had been added to the Walls of Memory in the great Relical Keep. He had watched with due reverence as a helot carved the name into the polished black marble, etched there for eternity among the hundredfold dead of the Chapter. Zurus had been there to hear the Chaplains announce Tarikus's loss, and cement it in the annals of Doom Eagle history. Two whole Gathian cycles now, since he had been declared Astartes Mortus. Many seasons come and gone, his life become a revered memory among all the honoured fallen.

The other man drew back his hood for the first time and walked on, down towards the end of the drop ramp.

Zurus took a wary step backwards and met the gaze of a dead man.

***LEGENDS OF THE SPACE MARINES*** can be purchased direct from this website and GW mail order, Games Workshop and other hobby stores, and better bookstores.

In the UK: Price £7.99

ISBN: 978-1-84416-561-2

In the US: Price \$8.99 (\$10.99 Canada)

ISBN: 978-1-84416-552-0

- Online: Buy direct care of Games Workshop's webstore by going to [www.blacklibrary.com](http://www.blacklibrary.com) or [www.games-workshop.com](http://www.games-workshop.com).
- 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