

*It Is the 41st Millennium. For more than a Hundred centuries the Emperor Has sat immobile on the Golden Throne Of Earth. He is the master of Mankind by will of the gods, and master of a million worlds by the might of his inexhaustible armies. He is a rotting carcass writhing invisibly with power from the Dark Age of Technology. He is the Carrion Lord of the Imperium for whom a thousand souls are sacrificed every day, so that he may never truly die.*

*Yet even in his Deathless state, the Emperor continues his eternal vigilance. Mighty Battlefleets cross the Daemon-infested miasma of the warp, the only route between distant stars, their way lit by the Astronomican, the psychic manifestation of the Emperor's will. Vast armies give battle in his name on uncounted worlds. Greatest amongst his soldiers are the Adeptus Astartes, the Space Marines, bio-engineered super-warriors. Their comrades in arms are legion: the Imperial Guard and countless planetary defense forces, the ever vigilant Inquisition and tech priests of the Adeptus Mechanicus to name only a few. But for all their multitudes, they are barely enough to hold off the ever-present threat from alien, heretics, mutants- and worse.*

*To be a man in such times is to be one amongst untold billions. It is to live in the cruelest and most bloody regime imaginable. These are the tales of those times. Forget the power of Technology and science, for so much has been forgotten, never to be re-learned. Forget the promise of progress and understanding, for in the grim dark future there is only war. There is no peace amongst the stars, only an eternity of carnage and slaughter, and the laughter of thirsting gods.*

# **Cut Off the Head**

*by Tom Bisbee*

## **For Warhammer 40,000 - Dark Heresy**

Inquisitor Storm uncovered the conspiracy to mutiny on the battleship Dominatus Aquila. Inquisitor Storm rallied the Imperial fleet in time to drive off the Dark Eldar raiders around Ceres VII.

Inquisitor Storm ferreted out the Genestealer Cult on the forgeworld Primax. He defeated the foul xenos Patriarch in single combat.

Inquisitor Storm personally carried the teleport homer to call a squad of Grey Knight terminators down on the foul Daemon Garthaxis. The Knights asked him to keep the homer as a trophy of his unyielding resolve in the face of horror.

Inquisitor Storm hunted down the rogue Inquisitor Merkados and killed him in a duel on top of a burning Imperial Leviathan.

*Inquisitor Storm lies dead at your feet. Blood is pooling around him and beginning to thicken. He has been torn to shreds and you are standing in a circle around him.*

### **Sound Effect: Pounding on table.**

There is demanding pounding at the ramp door of the ship! The Lieutenant Governor of Junos has been waiting for at least 15 minutes for the Inquisitor to emerge and be welcomed to the planet.

Inquisitor Storm thought it best to let the welcoming party sweat it out a while. Waiting makes guilty men talkative...and jumpy.

As for why you're on Junos, there has been a rash of bombings: sabotage! Originally thought to be a result of typical civil unrest, the bombings have coincided with a massive rise in Cultist activity on the planet. Inquisitor Storm is here to solve the problem.

*Inquisitor Storm is dead.* (GM, see the section "The Teleporter" on page 9 to find out why)

You (select a Player at random) found him here, by the back hatch of the lander. None of you heard anything or saw anything. No shots were fired and there were no screams.

### **Sound Effect: Pounding on table.**

#### **What's in His Pockets, Precious?**

The Inquisitor is wearing light carapace armor. Normally, it's 4 points in all locations. It's been torn up and cracked in several places. 2 pts in all locations except the head (none). He has an autopistol with a full clip, his Inquisitorial Rosette, The Emperor's Tarot in a pack made from the skin of a flayed heretic, his teleport homer memento and his bionic eye contained a digital laser.

Apart from the armor, most things are intact.

### **The Scene of the Crime**

It's only logical to assume that the Players are going to have a lot of questions. It's perfectly fine to give them any of the information below but be sure to keep up the pressure! The longer the Lt Governor has to wait, the angrier he will be. And the Inquisitor is no longer here to intimidate him.

- The Inquisitor's body is not cold yet. The murder happened very recently.
- There is a lot of blood, all of it his.
- Any wounds that are examined appear to be claw marks made by large claws.
- An expert on xenobiology might even identify the beast as a quadruped.
- None of the Inquisitor's known possessions were taken.
- There no surveillance devices onboard the small landing craft.
- The pilot of the craft is a servitor who is bolted to his cockpit area.

### **Meeting the Welcoming Party**

How they handle this is up to the PCs. One of them may impersonate the Inquisitor. They may act tough and blame the locals for the murder. Unless someone is convincingly impersonating the Inquisitor, the Lieutenant Governor will not be impressed with a group of attendants and lackeys. He will make sure they know he is not impressed.

**Junos:** A hiveworld in the Malfian subsector, Junos would be a serious power in the region if its mining operations were more profitable. Junos exports several rare metals to planets closer to Scintilla and the Lathe Worlds. However, piracy has become such a problem for the sector that they are now losing seventy percent of their exports to raids.

The result of the pirates' predations is a hiveworld on the decline. Hab levels are in disrepair and even the armorplas walls that separate the hive from the harsh elements of Junos are suffering. The Spire (where the PCs landed and are greeted) has suffered the least, but even the painted nobility of Junos are showing signs of strain.

**Lt. Governor Slake Zarado:** Slake Zarado made a name for himself in the PDF and has the medals and augmetic arm to prove it. He is very no-nonsense, a holdover from his military days. He never goes anywhere without Vrak, his wired bond-guardian. Junos does not have a sufficient gross planetary income to warrant a full Planetary Governor and that fact is a giant chip on Zarado's shoulder.

### **Slake Zarado**

<b>WS</b>	<b>BS</b>	<b>Str</b>	<b>Tou</b>	<b>Ag</b>	<b>Int</b>	<b>Per</b>	<b>WP</b>	<b>Fel</b>
45	45	30	47	35	37	39	45	23
<b>Autopistol</b>	1d10+2	Impact	0	30m	S/-/6	18	Full	Reliable, Best Quality

**Wounds: 13**

**Move: 3/6/12/24**

**Skills:** Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Planetary Administration) (Int), Concealment (Ag), Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Speak Language (High Gothic) (Int)

**Talents:** Basic Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP).

**Vrak:** Vrak is a tall and very pale human. Armor plates have been implanted just under (and in some cases, over) his skin to protect vital areas. Wires run from a nest in his head to his limbs and torso. His reflexes have been superhumanly enhanced. A small, red LED scars the side of his head: a summons beacon, Zarado has the transmitter.

### Vrak

WS	BS	Str	Tou	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
50	31	40	40	50	27	24	25	20
<b>Autopistol</b>	1d10+2	Impact	0	30m	S/-/6	18	Full	Reliable

**Wounds: 19**

**Move: 3/6/12/24**

**Skills:** Awareness (Per), Climb (S), Concealment (Ag), Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int).

**Talents:** Basic Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP).

**Guards:** The Lieutenant Governor is also accompanied by twenty PDF troops in carapace armor. They are armed with a mix of auto-shotguns and las-carbines.

### Guards (20)

WS	BS	Str	Tou	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	40	30	27	33	45	23
<b>Autoshotgun</b>	1d10+4	Impact	0	30m	S/3/-	18	Full	Scatter
<b>Las Carbine</b>	1d10+2	Energy	0	60m	S/2/-	40	Full	Reliable

**Wounds: 9**

**Move: 3/6/12/24**

**Skills:** Awareness (Per), Ciphers (Occult) (Int), Climb (S), Common Lore (Power grid rituals) (Int), Concealment (Ag), Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int).

**Talents:** Basic Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP).

### Black-Out

As they walk through the spaceport, the PCs should notice (Easy Perception test) that the normal lights are out and the place is running on emergency lighting. Zarado explains that the city has been experiencing black-outs fairly frequently these days.

### Palace Bound

The Lt. Governor will escort the PCs to an armored limousine to drive back to the Senatorial Palace. On the way there, the PCs can spot graffiti (Alertness or Perception) saying “**Propero dominus furor**”. (High Gothic for ‘Hasten the coming of the lords of madness’)

### The Problem on Junos

In short: people have been dying. In a city of millions and millions, this is not normally cause for alarm. But the ways in which they have been dying are impossible. The first instance was at a grox processing plant that provides food to the PDF and is charge of feeding the Imperial Guard units that are raised from Junos (in fact, they are due for a Raising next year). The compound for the plant was heavily guarded by (bored) PDF

troops. A saboteur got past the defenses and set a large explosive charge at the heart of the plant. He also apparently made his escape before setting off the explosive.

The next case was at a water filtration and distribution plant. Again it was heavily guarded (more bored PDF troops) and no one saw anything before or after the poisoning. But chemicals were found in the water upon investigation. (Luckily, only a few thousand people had died from the poison by that point).

Meanwhile, cult activity in the city is at an all-time high and the city's astropaths are in a near panic. They have been having psychotic dreams and several of them have been heavily sedated for their own good. This has resulted in less communication between ships of the fleet and exacerbated the piracy problem that plagues Junos.

### **Investigation**

This is to be guided largely by the PCs. Below are some places they can visit during their investigation. They can be visited in any order; however, at some point during the investigation, the PCs will learn that a cultist has been captured (see **News** below.) They should learn this **before** they visit the City Power Grid Facility.

### **Places:**

Other grox processing plants  
Other water processing plants  
Interview Astropaths  
Interview with a Cultist  
City Power Grid Facility

**Event:** The PCs are contacted by the Lt Gov and/or the Adeptus Arbites. The Arbites just dragged in a live cultist prisoner (they usually don't get taken alive). They think that the PCs will be interested in what he has to say. \*This information should be shared with the PCs before they visit the City Power Grid.\*

If the Acolytes want to see the cultist before exploring any other locations (apart from the power grid facility), then skip to *Interview With a Cultist* below.

### **Other Grox Processing Plants**

These slaughter houses are lively places, filled with the appalling smell of grox feces and the lowing of terrified grox. The house foreman, Dreenbal Porge, is a stout man, barely five feet tall. His arms are covered in grox gore up to his shoulders as (he explains) he still likes to "keep a hand in".

In fact, does the Inquisition have any need of a man who knows his way around a slaughtering servitor? No? He also served almost three months in the PDF.

Security at the plant has been doubled and all of the guards look alert. There are no real clues here for the PCs and Dreenbal Porge is pretty harmless, unless you're a grox. Mostly, he'd just like to be working anywhere besides a grox processing plant.

### **Other Water Processing Plants**

Ordained Purification Recycling Substation 7 is in a state of panic. Someone at the Lt Governor's office let slip that they are considered a potential target and the Substation Director, a woman named Vachanis, is determined to terrify her people into new levels of security and productivity.

Vachanis is old by hive standards (she is 51 standard years old) and she does not scare easily. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of her employees. They are frantic and will all but genuflect before anyone displaying any kind of authority (especially Inquisitorial).

Unfortunately, there is nothing new for the Acolytes to learn here. Vachanis is a loyal Imperial subject, as are her employees. They are not hiding anything and have seen nothing of note.

### **Interviewing Astropaths**

By the time the Astropaths and their handlers can be summoned or tracked down, warp activity is worse than ever and the only Astropath still reasonably coherent is a man named Caesar Zarkov.

Even he is raving by the time the PCs meet him. But he is clearly repeating "Propero dominus furor" quite often. Also, "They can reach me, they can reach me." Having some spooky warp phenomena accompany his ravings is also a nice touch. For example, having Caesar collapse while thousands of tiny, black spiders pour out of his mouth might be a good way to signal that the interview is over.

### **Interview With a Cultist**

The cultist, **Prex Sodogar**, has been severely beaten in accordance with standard Arbites policy. Despite his bloody and bruised condition, he is laughing and almost...triumphant.

"You're all grasping at straws because your precious Lieutenant Governor is dead. You're lost without him. Cut off the head and the serpent dies! Hahahahaha!"

Although he is corrupt, tainted and crazy, Prex does have some information worth knowing. His cell leader (no one uses names in the cult cells for security reasons) said that the power outages lately are to power a new weapon of the Ruinous Powers. The cult has their hands on some kind of weapon and Prex is convinced that it was used earlier today to kill the Lt. Governor. If "persuaded", he may even let slip that the cult has agents at the city power grid facility.

### Prex Sodogar

WS	BS	Str	Tou	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	40	30	27	33	45	23

**Wounds: 9**

**Move: 3/6/12/24**

**Skills:** Awareness (Per), Ciphers (Occult) (Int), Climb (S), Common Lore (Power grid rituals) (Int), Concealment (Ag), Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int).

**Talents:** Basic Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP)

### The Power Grid Facility

Techpriest **Mons Shad** runs the facility. He's clean and a loyal servant of the Hive and the Ommissiah. He can auger with the spirit of the power grid if the PCs request (and the Lt. Governor approves), to see what exactly happened when the black-outs occurred. He has been too busy trying to adjust to cover the blacked out areas to investigate properly.

### Disgruntled Employees

It will take some time for Techpriest Mons Shad to run his tests (perform the ritual of electrical cognition). The retinue is free to tour the facility and speak with the workers.

During this process, two cultists disguised as workers pull out snub-nosed auto-pistols and start firing! They are soon joined by four more from a balcony above! A Very hard Perception test will allow an Acolyte to dive for cover before the shooting begins.

### Cultist (6)

WS	BS	Str	Tou	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	40	30	27	33	45	23
<b>Autopistol</b>	1d10+2	Impact	0	30m	S/-/6	18	Full	Reliable

**Wounds: 9**

**Move: 3/6/12/24**

**Skills:** Awareness (Per), Ciphers (Occult) (Int), Climb (S), Common Lore (Power grid rituals) (Int), Concealment (Ag), Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int).

**Talents:** Basic Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP).

### Ogryn Intervention

At one point (hopefully), one of the armed saboteur cultists in the facility will get the drop on a PC. Before he can execute the hapless Acolyte, however, his head is crushed by a large wrench. An Ogryn is holding the wrench and grinning.

This Ogryn is **Dimz**. Dimz is a faithful member of the Imperial Cult and is thrilled to have a job working above ground. He wants to talk to the Inquisitor because several of his cousins who work in the tunnels beneath the city have gone missing. It isn't safe down there and Dimz would like the Inquisitor to tell the Emperor.

### Dimz

WS	BS	Str	Tou	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	60	50	30	19	13	30	43

**Wounds: 20**

**Move: 3/6/12/24**

**Skills:** Survival (Int).

**Talents:** Basic Weapon Training (Primitive), Natural Weapons (Fists)

**All-Out Attack:** +20 WS, but may not Parry or Dodge until next turn.

**Charge:** +10 WS, up to 12”

**Berserk Charge:** +20 WS on a charge

**Tech Priest Results:** Mons Shad is more than a little alarmed at the cultist activity in his own shop! He assures the PCs that there will be a full purge immediately (although he does not offer details on what that entails). He also has the information they requested.

The missing city power gets routed to a network of old steam tunnels beneath the city. Mons Shad has a street junction address (level 43, sub level Beta) where there is an access hatch closest to the final destination of the rerouted power. Not sure how close, though.

### In The Tunnels

In the tunnels, the PCs face stiff resistance from poorly armed but fanatic cultists. If the PCs opt to enlist PDF of Arbites troops as support, raise the number of cultists accordingly and have the PC retinue form their own “unit” in radio communication with the rest of the force.

### Cultist (one for each PC and/or support troop)

WS	BS	Str	Tou	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	40	30	27	33	45	23
<b>Autopistol</b>	1d10+2	Impact	0	30m	S/-/6	18	Full	Reliable

**Wounds: 9**

**Move: 3/6/12/24**

**Skills:** Awareness (Per), Ciphers (Occult) (Int), Climb (S), Common Lore (Power grid rituals) (Int), Concealment (Ag), Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int).

**Talents:** Basic Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP).

### Vox Traffic

If the PCs brought backup in the form of Arbites or PDF troops, the leader of those troops will request a vox channel be kept open to relay orders and findings as they advance.

Soon, they can hear the screams over the vox of the Arbites/PDF squads being killed by...something. The only gunfire that can be recognized is that of Imperial weapons.



## Family Matters

Dimz's cousins show up...massive Ogryn chaos cultists armed with tools and crude mauls. Their rockcrete-tough skin has been pierced with jutting shards of metal and cryptic looking machinery. Tattoos adorn their exposed flesh, but cannot be looked upon long by the sane. Sacks of rough cloth hood their misshapen heads.

They bust through a wall to attack the PCs while they are shooting at Cultists. (If the PCs brought those backup troops, these are the Ogryns that killed them)

### Chaos Ogryns (5)

WS	BS	Str	Tou	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	60	60	30	17	13	25	13
Maul	1d10+6	Impact	Primitive					

**Wounds: 20**

**Move: 3/6/12/24**

**Skills:** Survival (Int).

**Talents:** Basic Weapon Training (Primitive), Natural Weapons (Fists)

**All-Out Attack:** +20 WS, but may not Parry or Dodge until next turn.

**Charge:** +10 WS, up to 12"

**Berserk Charge:** +20 WS on a charge

### Veins of Power

Eventually, the PCs encounter large power cables that are spliced into the city's main conduits (Tech Use Roll to identify\confirm that the Machine Spirit travels these paths).

They all lead the same place, a large intersection at the heart of the steam tunnels. In this intersection is the cult HQ and Magus, Pater Andronicus. (and his pet Chaos Hound)

Andronicus has turned this unassuming intersection into a temple of the Ruinous Powers! Obscene sigils are daubed on the walls and the floor bears a symbol that defies both description and sanity. If a character tries to identify or otherwise scrutinizes the symbol of Tzeentch on the floor, he must make a Willpower test or suffer 1d5 Insanity points.

The floor is also covered in several places by mutilated corpses. They look like factory workers, underhive dregs, no one that would be missed from the hive above.

### The Teleporter

The cult has managed to build a large teleporter device. It is set up in the middle of the "room". The teleporter uses theories and designs inspired by the warp itself. Anyone studying the teleporter too closely (using Tech Use, for example), needs to make a WP test or suffer 1d5 Insanity Points. In a cage on the far side of the room from the PCs is a Chaos Hound, heavily mutated.

The cult has been using the teleporter to send commandoes to sabotage the various industrial and utility plants in the city. This accounts for the black-outs and power drains.

The teleporter was used to retrieve the cultists as well, removing the culprits from the scene of the crime.

The recent upsurge in cult activity was to generate enough warp activity to summon the Chaos Hound. The next step was to send the Hound to kill the Lieutenant Governor. But it got pulled off-course by the teleport homer that Inquisitor Storm wears. Taken by complete surprise, the Inquisitor was torn to shreds. The hound was then teleported back to its master.

### **Pater Andronicus**

Pater Andronicus is an unregistered psyker. The warp gauntlet bonded to his right hand mainly channels his power. He also has a psychoactive staff (psy-focus) that grounds his powers and makes them “safer” to use (foci). A burnished bronze helmet is welded to his head and his robes are dyed red with the blood of sacrificial victims.

There are also three cultists in the room. They are armed (poorly) and in positions of cover.

It is a free action for Pater Andronicus to release the Chaos Hound from its cage (remote control or even some minor form of telekinesis). This should preferably happen after a suitable insidious speech about crushing the rule of the false Emperor. An example might be something like:

“Ah, the lap dogs of the corpse Emperor have finally run me to ground. Well, as you can see, you’re not the only dogs in this hive, not anymore! My lord, my REAL lord, has gifted me with a weapon. A weapon from the empyrean that has allowed me to topple the tyrannical regime on Junos!

I can only imagine the scene uphive, right now! The Planetary Governor is dead! The military is in disarray! Armed gangs run riot in the streets! Run for your lives! Ah, it must be glorious. And as soon as my weapon...my pet, devours your souls, I’ll be ascending to see it in person!”

Pater Andronicus’s powers are a gift from his lord, Tzeentch. They are awarded randomly, in addition to being taught to the heretic by various proscribed magical tomes in his possession. Andronicus will fight to the death if need be, but is not above using the teleporter for an escape if things are going poorly for him. (Although for a one-shot game, the closure of killing him might be more satisfying for the Players)

### Pater Andronicus

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
37	42	31	42 (2)*	42	42	30	65	35

**Move:** 2/4/6/ 12

**Wounds:** 20

**Skills:** Awareness (Per), Ciphers (Occult) (Int), Climb (S), Occult Lore (Tzeentch) (Int), Concealment (Ag), Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int)

**Talents:** Basic Weapon Training (Primitive), Heightened Senses (Sight) Pistol Training (SP), Psyker Level 2

### PSYCHIC POWERS

Power	Threshold	Sustained	Range	Notes	Page
Bio Lightning	14	No	10m	1d10+6 dmg	169
Burning Fist	10	Yes	You	Melee 1d10+3 Dmg	174
Telekinetic Shield*	21	Yes	You	2 pts armor, already cast	177
Wall of Fire	17	Yes	60m	1d10+5 Energy, up to 60m long	175

### Cultist (3)

WS	BS	Str	Tou	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	25	30	40	30	27	33	45	23
Autopistol	1d10+2	Impact	0	30m	S/-/6	18	Full	Reliable

**Wounds:** 9

**Move:** 3/6/12/24

**Skills:** Awareness (Per), Ciphers (Occult) (Int), Climb (S), Common Lore (Teleporter rituals) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int).

**Talents:** Basic Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP)

### Chaos Hound

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
38	-	40	35	40	15	45	35	10

**Move:** 8/16/24/48 **Wounds:** 18

**Skills:** Awareness (Per)+20, Concealment (Ag)+10, Silent Move (Ag), Tracking(Int),

**Talents:** Berserk Charge, Heightened Senses (all), Sprint, Talented (Silent Move), Takedown

**Traits:** Daemonic (TB 8), Dark Sight, Daemonic Presence, Fear 2, From Beyond, Natural Weapon (teeth), Warp Instability

**Daemonic:** Double Toughness bonus against attacks that are not force weapons, psychic attacks or holy attacks.

**Daemonic Presence:** All creatures within 20m are -10 WP.

**Fear 2:** WP test at -10%. Failure means roll on table on p233 (Shock Table)

**From Beyond:** Immune to Fear, Pinning, Insanity and mind-affecting powers.

**Warp Instability:** If it takes damage, it needs to deal damage on its next turn. If not, WP test. Failure = 1 Wound + 1 Wound for every degree of failure. If out of Wounds, sucked back into the Warp.

**Berserk Charge:** +20 bonus when charging

**Takedown:** If you hit and do 1 point of damage, that point is ignored and the target is Stunned.

**Aftermath**

Pater Andronicus can be successfully identified by Arbites forensic specialists once his helmet is removed. He was one Belwar Zrink, a worker in the hive power substation 174. He called in sick for a few days last year and then disappeared. No one ever came forward to report him missing. In a hive city, this is not unusual.

Lt Governor Slake Zarado should, of course be advised of what happened in the tunnels. As Planetary Lieutenant Governor, he is cleared to hear about even the chaos hound. He will be extremely grateful that the power drops and acts of terror on his facilities will now stop.

If told about the chaos hound, he will ask that all of the PC Acolytes keep that information to themselves. Rumors of monsters in the steam tunnels are bad enough in a large hive city. Proof of monsters in the steam tunnels could cause a serious panic.

Apart from that, the wrap-up for the game is really up to the PCs and how they handled things on Junos. They should probably let someone in the Inquisition know about Inquisitor Storm. Will they be assigned to a new Inquisitor? What will happen while they are waiting to be “reactivated”? Clearly, that is for you to decide.

Have fun...