

RETURN OF THE WARLORDS

A TALE OF BATTLES, COCK-UPS AND FAMINGO'S



Volume 2

Forward

Well, here we are at the start of Volume 2 of the campaign and the mystery deepens.

We have Delaques acting by 'The Code', Ex-Guard sponsored by Goliaths and hints of several nasty things waiting in the shadows.

Will we ever find out what is truly going on?

I don't know. But I'm sure it'll be a blast finding out.

Just getting the games in has been a struggle on a par with 'Extreme Ironing', only without the hanging upside down from trees.

But the upshot is that we have been able to concentrate on the narrative.

So for your enjoyment, here are the continuing adventures of The Warlords.

And hopefully there are no flamingo's in this one. ;)

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June 2018 - S Brambley & L Robb

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Domino

Game 6: The Rescue of Kid Tuesday Pre Battle Narrative

I was lucky and rolled a 6 for number of fighters so my hardest decision is who to leave behind. I decided on Joss Swanson even though he has a slightly better profile than Rufus, Rufus has the skills.

Also, Ulysses Krouse is slightly better on his profile with the bonus of range should it be needed.

Wash made it back to the rendezvous with his report. 'I've scouted out the territory and managed to get some info from one of the local drinking holes. My own observations and what I've been told suggest the Kid is in Janus' hands.'

'OK. It's as we suspected.' Vic responded, 'We'll wait for Joss to get back and then make our move.'

'Wash. I want you to act as spotter for Lucifer. Your talent for spotting things will be useful.'

'Yes Guv.' Wash checked his Lasgun as he listened.

'I want Rufus to accompany you Two Fry as our assault unit. You're both good up close, but don't get excited. We need to play this cool if we're not going to set off the alarms.'

'Ulysses and I will be close by acting as sweepers to take out the tougher threats and finish off anyone else.'

Suddenly Wash's head jerked up and he signalled that he could hear something. The others looked out to see Joss returning. Vic was pleased to see that he was using the cover to mask his movements, though he would have to work on his stealth a little more as he made too much noise as he moved.

'Welcome back lad. Anything to report?'

'Not a great deal.' Joss replied, 'The rumours are that Diablo Nova have someone, but not much more than that.'

'That's good enough. I want you to return to base and keep an eye on things.'

'But...'

'No buts. This is something that requires a little more experience.' Vic continued, 'You'll get your chance, but for now do as I request.'

'Yes Guv.' Joss knew not to argue. After all, The Whisper Men had risen quickly from obscurity to a crew to be reckoned with under Vic Bascombe's guidance.

'Right. Time to move out.' Vic directed them, 'Keep low and use the cover, keep to the shadows and watch out for each other. Good luck to you all.'

'Joss, same goes for you. Don't feel left out.' Vic placed his hand on Joss' shoulder, 'I've given you a great responsibility. Watch our holdings and run things till we get back. All right, get going and take care.'

Joss scuttled away, disappearing into the shadows as Vic watched.

'He still needs to work on keeping the sound down' Vic mused.

Stubram

Game 6: The Rescue of Kid Tuesday Pre Battle Narrative

Sachus, face discoloured with bruises and still limping from his encounter with the Commissar, walked up to Brockus

'Where's the prisoner? He's not where I chained him'

Brockus smirked. 'He was looking lonely, so we stuck him in with the psycho'

Sachus rounded on him 'you WHAT?!'

Brockus shrugged. 'The boys were getting bored waiting for those Delaques to show up, so we made a little fun'

Sachus was incredulous 'and what if he's killed? All gangs are bound by code. If we break it, it will be open war. I'll report this to Janus!'

‘Word is, Commissar Janus hasn’t got your back anymore, old man. What do you think he’ll do?’ Brockus leaned in closer ‘and what do you think we’ll do, if you rat on us?’

Sachus looked up at the brute, unblinking. He held Brockus’ stare until the smirk began to fade. Brockus stepped back, doubt beginning to erode his hubris, but Sachus closed the distance once more.

‘You think Janus is protecting me from you?’ His contempt was clear. ‘Don’t think anything has changed down here in the underhive, maggot! I’ve seen more war than you’ve had head lice. I trained you! I tell you when to jump, I tell you when to march, and I tell you when to die. Now get out of my sight before I show you what a real soldier is capable of!’

Brockus retreated with a snarl, no doubt to spread the word that ‘Old Man’ Sachus still had some teeth.

Brockus was an animal - vicious, violent, and always willing to twist the knife if he thought he had an advantage. The fact that he felt bold enough to cross Sachus was bad - he’d never do it without support. If he had backing from some of the other thugs they had rounded up, that was one thing, but if The Commissar himself had given approval, Sachus was in real trouble.

A roar from the direction of the Cage disturbed his thoughts, and Sachus lumbered into a run as he remembered that he had more immediate problems.

Breathless, Sachus arrived at The Cage - the enclosure that had been built to keep the worst of Phorus’ rages in check.

Most of the crew were there, including Brockus, who was in animated conversation with Mithus, Atticus and Carus. Their eyes widened as they spotted Sachus, and their chatter ceased. He graced them with an evil smile; it was good to know who his enemies were. Several others were watching the spectacle; Remus, who gave Sachus a shallow nod, and Igneous Golem - standing apart from the others, giving nothing away as usual.

A body slammed against the side of the cage. A bald, scrawny youth, he clambered up and frantically rolled out of the way as Phorus - a mass of muscle and scars, missed him by a breath and swung around to pursue the terrified Delaque.

The crowd roared once more.

Stubram

Game 6: The Rescue of Kid Tuesday Battle Report

Wow. One of our best games yet, which means that I naturally got too caught up to take many photos. I’ll try to explain the gaps, and hopefully Domino took extra pics to round us out. This is also the first game we’ve had that used both Events and Terrain Condition cards, which really had an impact. Anyway, on to the fight and the post battle report-



Mithus, Atticus and Igneous were picked up by local Enforcers and didn’t make the fight. No doubt an unsubtle reminder from Sachus that he maintains some friends in high places.

Planning to keep the prisoner up high (and away from Phorus!), things begin to go wrong for Diablo Nova as gale-force winds drive everyone to ground. A freak condition or a Delaque manipulation of the air systems?

The two sentries on guard ('Dead Meat' Carus - steering clear of the Commisar as usual, and Phorus - looking to 'play' with the prisoner some more), both wander around aimlessly, oblivious to the enroaching danger.

Confusion reigns as Carus goes down to a toxic dart, but the hapless Phorus doesn't raise the alarm. Kid Tuesday looks on, realising that help is coming...



Miraculously recovering from the posion, Carrus stumbles blindly around whilst danger draws closer...



The Whisper Men carefully set their positions, ready to pounce....



Until Delaque super-juve and notorious hot-head Rufus Johns fires a shot at the drug-addled Carus, missing wide and setting off the alarm! This isn't the first time Rufus' impetuoussness has cost the Whisper Men...



Diablo Nova Reinforcements swiftly come on, and between the insane Phorus and 'Zerker chipped Janus, the Delaque leader goes down. All that's in the way now is a feable Whisper Man Juve against three close combat monsters. This is going to be bloody....





...for the monsters! The plucky Juve floors Phorus and Brockus, finally going down to Janus himself, though only just...



More Goliath reinforcements trickle in, though Sachus and Remus conspicuously fail to arrive in time. The 'Novas have position, but the Whisper Men have numbers. It all hinges on Lucifer Squibb's nerve, now his boss isn't there to back him up....

And the Whisper Men Bottle (double sixes, naturally)! Kid Tuesday is left to his fate.

An excellent game which could have gone either way. Really looking forward to the 'fluffy' write up on this one.

Post Battle, everyone who went out managed to make a Full Recovery - this is a first as I don't think I've had a single ganger escape a permanent wound. The boys also came across an old power Sword, which Janus swiftly picked up. This means that a Berzerker Chipped Janus now hits with 5 St 7 hits! Oh yeah...

Domino

Game 6: The Rescue of Kid Tuesday Battle Report

As mentioned by @Stubram, we had two firsts in this game with the introduction of Treacherous Conditions and the Event Cards.

@Stubram opponent rolled 21 for howling winds and a 2 on D3 for his cards which gave him an 'Out of Ammo' card which he played on my sniper rifle, his other card I don't know as he didn't play it.

I rolled a 3 for my cards and received Shakedown, Secret Target and Toxic Waste. Three members

of Diablo Nova got taken into custody and missed the fight, I failed to get my secret Target (Janus) and didn't get to play the Toxic Waste card.

As the Whisper Men approached the stronghold of Diablo Nova the soft breeze normally present from the fans seemed to change direction and picked up to a buffeting crescendo that could knock a man flat.



Due to this, Vic signalled for Wash and Lucifer to stay low and flank round to the left in an attempt to use the sniper rifle to take down the sentries quietly. When a target presented, Lucifer fired and hit his target watching with satisfaction as the sentry went down. Sadly the rare and notoriously cranky rifle died as the power-pack registered empty.



Quickly hiding the rifle in some debris for later retrieval, he set his mind on getting close enough for his trusty flamer. Signalling Wash, he moved on.

On the other flank, Vic led the other Whisper Men forward. They ran from bulkhead to bulkhead, trying to keep to the shadows out of sight of their quarry.

Vic was pinning his hopes on taking out the sentries without raising the alarm, but was unaware that problems had already started to dog their mission.



Wash and Lucifer were hugging cover as they got into position to perform a 'coup de grâces' on the downed ganger when suddenly he got up. Using 'battle language', Lucifer signalled that the toxins were obviously too weak. He would have to check the weapon over and see if he could fix its quirks later.

Through a gap in the terrain he could see Rufus getting into position with his plasma pistol drawn. 'What the f**k is he doing!' Lucifer thought.



Nearing the place where the Kid was hiding

from the madman, Bloody Phorus, Vic and Joss readied themselves to charge forward, but hesitated when they realised who they would be facing.



Then the Alarms went off...

Lucifer and Wash signalled 'No!' repeatedly at Rufus as he aimed his pistol and released a hissing ball of plasma, the alarms hot on its boiling heels. Rufus' target went down, but the damage was done as re-enforcements started to arrive.

Vic took the full force of an enraged Phorus and Janus as they charged in, the two seemingly too much for him as he went out of action to repeated blows. Only Joss was left to valiantly fend off the increasing amount of Nova's as Phorus, Janus and another met him in combat.

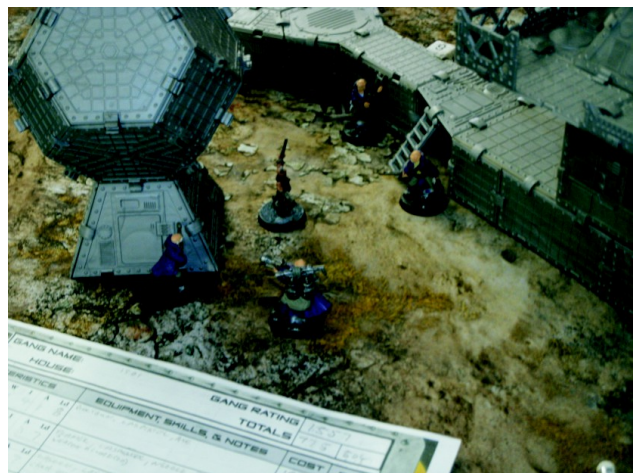


Much to Janus' consternation, desperation

As usual, we made some mistakes such as the fact that Rescue is on the exempt list for Treacherous Conditions and getting the break point wrong for the bottle test, but it was a great game none the less. Almost worth the loss of Kid Tuesday.

spurred Joss into action as he quickly put down two of his opponents only to fall to the leering Commisar.

Lucifer, Wash, Rufus and Two Fry moved forward towards the downed Nova, honour holding their fire for now. Vic took the underhive code seriously and wouldn't tolerate the deliberate breaking of it. The Nova started to get up, obviously playing possum, to be met by a shot from Wash putting him down again (I was starting to think this guy was like the Terminator. He kept trying to get back up.)



Two Fry let loose with his shotgun at long range using scatter shot and took down the Nova's heavy, but with a third of their number out of the fight the Whisper Men retreated away.

They'd failed the Kid...

Stubram

Game 6: The Rescue of Kid Tuesday Post Battle Narrative

A fine rain fell; a freak microclimate within the dome itself - a cocktail of heat and steam and pollutants all mixed together and then condensing high overhead. It leant a suitably sombre cast the events unfolding.

‘What do you think the guilders will do to him?’ Remus asked softly, looking on as ‘Kid’ Tuesday was dragged away. The boy didn’t even have enough fight left in him to resist. Goliaths crowded round, jeering and laughing.

Standing next to Remus, Sachus hawked and spat on the floor. ‘Guilders? They aren’t guilders, son. They’re something much worse. Pray you don’t give Janus cause to let them cross your path’.
‘Then what ...?’

‘Well that was a shit-show’. Ever gruff, Forvus Gorge lumbered up with the juve Ferrus in tow. ‘What the hell happened, old man? We did everything like you said. That damn Delaque kid should have been back at home, suckin’ at mumma Bascombe’s milky bald teat before lunchtime, and now...’
Forvus’ voice trailed off as he indicated the sinister captors bustling Tuesday away.

Sachus sighed. ‘I know, Forvus. I didn’t count on Phorus trying to hunt the poor wretch, or Carrus’ loyalty to his damaged friend. They shouldn’t have even been there.’

Remus elbowed Sachus ‘We have more immediate problems, look’. Sachus followed his protege’s gaze to see the crowd part to make way for the Commissar himself.

The assembled gang roared their approval, slapping their leader on the back and competing to voice their praise. By all accounts, Janus had single handedly defeated his arch rival Vic Bascombe in combat. Then, when all other ‘Novas had fallen, it was the Commissar who had stood alone against the Delaque guns and stared them down.
The story was doing the rounds in the local

drinking holes, and it was spreading.

The Commissar disengaged from the crowd, and walked up to Sachus and his small group. ‘Not celebrating our glorious victory, Sachus? Non-participation seems to be becoming a habit with you. We missed you at the fight’
‘Apologies sir. The old battle wound was playing up. I hear you handled things well enough without me’.

Farrus, who had been there, reported a slightly different story. Apparently the Commissar had entered a berserk rage and charged into combat with the Delaque leader, but had nearly had his head severed from his neck by the veteran Whisper Man. It had been ‘Bloody’ Phorus who’d put Vic Bascombe down, not that anyone would dare contradict the popular version of events.

Sachus changed the subject. ‘Bought something for yourself at the trader’s market, sir?’
Janus followed his second’s gaze to the new sword at his belt.

‘A gift from our patrons’ Janus said. ‘For protecting their...candidate’.
‘Didn’t figure you to be coy with words, sir. Why not call it what it is? A sacrifice’.

‘Don’t push my good mood, sargeant. We’ve won a solid victory here today. Be content with that, and don’t lay your saccharine morality issues on a situation with no bad side. Our enemies are weakened, we grow stronger, and our cause is advanced.’

The Commissar turned to leave, but then wheeled back.

‘Incidentally; Mithus, Atticus and Igneous claim the local enforcers picked them up after an anonymous tipoff that they were running a ‘Slaught ring. An unfortunate occurrence, wouldn’t you say? That the three guards posted to watch our prize tonight were all detained, at the same time?’

Sachus was stoney faced ‘very unfortunate, sir’

‘Furthermore’, continued the Commissar,

‘Brockus seems to have been suffering some kind of mild poisoning. Not fatal in itself, but it certainly debilitated him enough that a mere Delaque juve was able to lay him low’
‘Must’ve been something he ate, sir’

‘Even the elements themselves were against us, it seems, with the wind driving our prisoner to the lower levels, within easy reach of any rescue attempt. Why, it reminds me of the story you told me about the air filtration plant that you infiltrated only recently’
‘An amazing coincidence sir’

The Commissar gave him an appraising stare with his one remaining eye. Sachus didn’t blink. With a sneer, the Commissar finally walked away to enjoy more exultations from his men.

Forvus let out a long breath. ‘You’ve got balls, old man, I’ll give you that. You’re playing with fire there. It’s going to burn you soon enough’.

‘We have our parts to play, Forvus, and when the time comes, I’ll gladly walk into the flames myself’

Domino

Game 6: The Rescue of Kid Tuesday

Post Battle Narrative

After updating my gang sheet and collecting income, I managing to get just enough credits for the new heavy that I was saving for.

A couple of advances made up for the losses with Joss having perhaps the most logical advances with his WS and Ld raising by +1 each (he was the one who took on three combat monsters on his own and nearly caused an upset).

I finally got a result from the territories I hold with a free Juve at long last (thought I’d never get one the way things were going). Lucifer has become a Weapon-smith which will be useful in future combats and the whole gang is starting to gain that signature Delaque feel as the ‘stealth’ skills are now becoming more prevalent.

Lucifer could hear Vic dressing down Rufus as he checked over the Needle Rifle that had failed to perform as expected. He had faced that wrath himself earlier.

It wasn’t that they hadn’t performed as expected. It was the loss of a man, and the Kid had shown promise. And Vic hated to leave a man behind.

Suddenly the sound died followed by the solid sound of a door closing signalling the final round of Rufus’ dressing down.

‘Lucifer!’

Quickly he picked up the rifle and headed for Vic’s office. At least he had some good news to take the edge off.

As he entered, Vic was sat behind his desk. A gesture indicated that he should take the seat opposite. Laying the rifle on the desk, he sat down and assessed Vic’s mood.

Vic eyed the rifle, ‘Thank you. She’s cleaned up nicely.’

‘There were a couple of problems, but hopefully they’re ironed out.’

‘So its ritual,’ he thought waiting for Vic.

‘Any good news?’

‘My inquiries have born fruit, a specialist going by the name Humphrey Barnardson has joined us, though it took most of our credits to get him. We also have a volunteer from one of the settlements, one Kitt Grayson,’ he shifted in his chair. ‘Don’t know how we’re going to equip him though, not enough cash even for a pistol.’ Vic stood and took the rifle and headed for his secure storage locker, opened it and put the rifle inside. As he closed it, he produced a pistol.

‘Give him this. It’s used, but served its previous owner well until his demise.’

‘Thank you Guv.’

‘Now I want you to check out this,’ Vic passed over a data slate. ‘It’s important, and hopefully will lead to the loss of the Kid not being totally valueless.’

Lucifer nodded in response.

Vic returned to his seat, ‘Ok, dismissed.’

Lucifer stood and started to leave.
'Send in Humphrey. I want to get to know our new specialist before our next mission.'

'Sir,' came the response as Lucifer stepped out...

Stubram Background The Story of Janus

Slightly off-topic, but thought it may be of interest -

I've recently bought 8th Ed Astra Militarum and thought it'd be fun to create a small patrol force based around Commissar Janus and the men of the 6th, before they ended up in the underhive. It kinda prompted me to fill in some of the backstory in my head that I've alluded to with some of my ramblings.

Janus was a zealous officer of the Commissariat. Full of fire and fury, he led from the front, earning many awards as well as injuries. He used his salary and influence to add muscle grafts and chemical infusions to grow in strength and size, adding to his fearsome reputation. All he cared for, however, was the ability to kill. To set himself against any foe, and destroy them.

By appealing to martial pride, he gathered around him like minded individuals - survivors and devotees who's desire to cut flesh matched

his own. The Emperor was portrayed as a vengeful god, bloody and warlike. Slowly, the men of the 6th were led into iconoclasy and viewed war as the only form of prayer.

Eventually, after many pyrrhic victories where the slaughter was great on both sides, resentment and suspicion amongst the high command was enough to bring Janus under review from a tribunal of his peers. The review never took place, as the Commissar, along with his chosen few, his 'Diablo Nova', escaped and fled to the bowels of a great Hive.....

Anyway, that's the short version. The Patrol I've created consists of a platoon of men (including Sergeant Sachus and Astorus, before his mutilation by the guild), an armoured sentinel, a squad of Arbites (veterans), set to watch the Commissar on behalf of the high command, a squad of Crusaders, doing the same, but on behalf of the inquisition, and of course the commissar himself. I've given them the Catachan doctrine as it fits their fluff (+1 strength).

Basically, this is set just before things go south (hence the suspicion, but reluctance to move on such a celebrated soldier without evidence). I hope to have some fun, themey games with them.

On another note, i'm also making an inquisitorial retinue who will be used in 40k, but also for Inquisimunda, reflecting the relentless chasing after the heretic 'Commissar' Janus.

Domino Game 7: Ambush in the Dark - Part one Pre-Battle Narrative

Lucifer had tracked down a Guilder who was nervous about events that were in motion and had worrying information to pass on about the plight of Kid Tuesday.
'I'll give you one thing, you've got balls

venturing out alone,' the guilder stated as their clandestine meeting started, his guards stroking their Las Guns as though ready to kill at the slightest provocation.
'Who said I'm alone?' he responded as two

rifles poked through gaps up high and Joss and Rufus stepped out behind the guilders guards.

The Guilder and his henchmen looked round uneasily, taking in their situation.

‘You think you can intimidate me with these youngsters?’ Spat the Guilder.

‘No. But don’t underestimate them.’ He indicated with his right hand, ‘To your left is Rufus Johns, a bit quick to the trigger and famous for killing a cyborg and the ‘beauty treatment’ on Janus face.

‘And on your right is Joss Swanson, who, contrary to Diablo Nova’s claims, took down two of their close combat experts in hand to hand when outnumbered three to one.’ His hand scanned over to Joss, ‘The ‘Commissar’ himself only just survived that one.’

The guards started looking nervous. They knew about Rufus’ reputation, and if the information on Joss was true, it was possible they were outclassed.

‘Words!’ spat the guilder. ‘You failed to get your man back and reports suggest that Janus took care of Vic and his escort on his own.’

Lucifer settled back on his heels and hooked his thumbs into his belt, smiling with confidence.

‘If that’s what you think,’ he stated.

Lucifer eyed the Guilder, letting the information sink in. They weren’t the usual scum and villainy the Guild dealt with and though they didn’t normally show respect to the gangs, respect was due.

‘Alright. I’ll give you the information you want, though you’ll owe me a favour.’

‘Incorrect,’ replied Lucifer. ‘This mess is down to your people. If we clean it up, you’ll owe us, big time!’

‘Fine. I’ll tell you what I know,’ replied the guilder, knowing what Lucifer said to be true.

Then he recited all that he knew about recent events...

Lucifer sat in Vic’s office drinking a colourless

liquid that seemed to taste of water, but warmed the body as it went down.

‘What do you think?’

‘It’s different. What is it?’

‘It hasn’t got a name yet. It’s something the settlers of Stealers Pass have started distilling from a fungi they found.’

Lucifer put his shot tumbler down on the desk and pulled out his Data slate.

‘I’ll read it later,’ Vic stated as he took the slate.

‘For now, what is your personal report and opinion?’

‘As suspected from our own inquiries, Janus and his boys are ex guard, drummed out under suspicious circumstances.

‘They’re involved with some cult that has connections high up, higher even than the guild, hence why they got away with the cyborg when we presented evidence against them.

‘The kid was sold to the Guild, but never made it to conversion. He disappeared before even getting into the Guilds hands. Evidence suggests some sort of outlawed organization, but it’s not solid enough to act on.

‘Out in the wastes, reports are coming in of strange sightings and sacrifices. Nothing concrete, but it could be connected.

‘Finally. That tremor that ran through the dome recently was down to a massive explosion to the south. Reports of religious zealots torturing and burning mutants and outlaws are reported to have started soon after. It could be a crusade and come to us eventually, but if manipulated correctly could aid our own aims.’ He settled back in his chair after recounting the key points. Vic settled back too and put his feet on the desk. ‘Thank-you Lucifer. I need to think on this, but get the boys ready and pass them all a bottle of best each.’

Lucifer stood noticing the unspoken dismissal in the voice, ‘Thank-you Guv.’

As he turned to leave, he noticed that Vic was studying the picture of Janus that hung on the wall alongside several propaganda flyers on the Imperial creed.

Quietly he exited, leaving Vic to his thoughts...

Stubram

Game 7: Ambush in the dark (part 1)

Pre-battle narrative

Left eye covered, the ruined socket of Janus' right was exposed to the gloom of the tunnel ahead.

The Commissar walked a path untraveled, that only he could see.

Sachus had protested at being left behind at the last checkpoint, but the Commissar had insisted. No one unchosen could enter these territories and hope to live.

Janus suppressed a snort at the thought of his second in command.

Sachus. Dutiful, loyal Sachus. Even though he hated the Commissar with all his being, he would serve to the end.

Janus returned the animosity, but couldn't but help but respect the man. It occasionally irked him that Sachus couldn't be convinced as to the rightness - the necessity - of his methods. The sergeant still didn't understand; their destination was the same, no matter the journey each took to get there.

It was that failure; that lack of vision, which had seen Janus given seniority over the mission. Something that he was sure still rankled the former Master Sergeant.

Lost in his reverie, Janus took a misstep. The temperature dropped suddenly. Cursing, he fumbled to unsheathe his powersword and activate it. An ancient thing, runes blazed along the blade, though cast no shadow in the confines of the tunnel.

He stood stock still. A feeling of threat washed over him, and the sword glowed brighter. After a moment, the ominous sensation lessened, and the temperature began to climb once more.

Releasing a breath he didn't realise he'd been holding, Janus scolded himself for his inattention and pressed on to his goal.

Soon enough, the tunnel opened up into a cavern. Janus readjusted his bandages to free his

good eye and cover the mangled right. Watery light filtered down from high above, allowing Janus to pick his way through the detritus to an enclosure in the centre.

As he drew near, he could discern a hushed muttering. He wrapped on the steel barrier of the enclosure. After a moment, a panel slid back to reveal a cowed figure. Eyes hidden, Janus nonetheless could feel its penetrating stare.

The panel slid closed, and the great doors swung open. A group of robed figures surrounded a naked man, covered in filth, cuts and bruises. The man was squatted, chained, rocking on the floor. The mumbling originated from this battered form.

As he neared, the mumbling became decipherable.
'...ss..stone. Fire and Stone. Fire and Stone. Fireandstonefireandstone'.

The words tumbled and fell together in an endless stream.

'What is this?' Growled the Commissar. 'I asked for soldiers, and you give me this broken thing'. He kicked the wretch for emphasis. It hissed and scampered as far away as its shackles would allow.

One of the cowed figures came closer. 'Cease, Warlord, you have asked and we have delivered. You have more than a soldier, you have a believer! The former will fight for you; but the latter will die for you. Though this first iteration is admittedly a little...rough'.

The mantra-like mumbling had started again, and was building in volume.

'Future endeavours will breed greater stability. In the meantime, take what was once your enemy's and use it against them. They will see the price of their defiance'.

The Commissar stood over the wretch, musing

on its fate.

‘All right, I’ll take it, on one condition’

The robed figure tilted its head quizzically

Domino

Game 7: Ambush in the Dark - Part two Pre-Battle Narrative

Vic stepped out of his office after a full day studying the information he and Lucifer had gathered. Little things started to make sense, but he required something solid.

Now he had a plan.

It was risky as it put all his men on the line, even the latest additions.

Everything pointed to Janus being behind something nasty.

Dark.

Unsavoury.

Proving it was his problem.

So he had a plan.

As he walked into the square of Sterling Falls, the new base of operations for the Whisper Men, and took note that his men were checking over their equipment.

Lucifer, ever watchful, noticed him and quickly moved to round all the men up in front of him.

Once arranged, Lucifer walked up to Vic. ‘All yours Guv.’

Vic nodded and Lucifer fell in next to the new recruits.

‘Some of you have been with me since the beginning and know some of what has been going on.

‘Well the rat hole goes deeper than you might think,’ he scanned the line of men as he spoke.

‘We can’t prove anything because there are events hidden, even from us.

‘Gather round,’ he said taking a rusty rod and scribing a rough map on the ground as his men closed in.

‘This is an area near the border of Diablo Nova’s holdings and, from reports, a place that certain members of that gang frequently pass

‘Shut that damn noise up’.

The hunched thing didn’t even scream as they began stitching its mouth closed.

through. But only when accompanied by Janus,’ he paused for effect.

‘We are going to enter this area here,’ the rusty rod traced the route, ‘and set up at key positions in order to attempt to capture and or kill key persons in Diablo Nova’s hierarchy.

‘This is possibly our most dangerous mission, because if it backfires, we could end up with enemies in high places.

‘But if we succeed, we may finally get the proof we seek.’

Vic studied the faces of his men as the news went home. All but the new recruits took it in their stride, but Humphrey and Kitt had only heard of Diablo Nova by reputation.

‘I want you all ready to go in fifteen. I want to scout the area before Diablo Nova arrive,’ he paused. ‘Humphrey, Kitt, with me!’ He turned and stalked off towards his office, the bewildered looking newbie’s in tow.

Lucifer took his cue and called out, ‘OK you lot, suit up.’

The scouts came in giving Vic a detailed picture of the area they had chosen for the ambush. One piece of information was of a hard to find access tunnel to the North West that seemed to go down into the bowls of the dome.

He decided to give it a wide berth for now.

Caution was required.

Quietly Vic divided his men into teams and indicated where he wanted them.

As they set up, he proudly noted their professionalism as they blended into the shadows.

Then the dim lights went out...

Stubram

Game 7: Ambush in the Dark - Part two

Pre-battle narrative

Ever alert, Sachus was the first of the guards to spot The Commissar winding back through the tunnels in the gloom.

‘Sir?’

The Commissar was quiet; withdrawn. He didn’t spare a glance for Sachus or the other three members of the team, but instead walked past, lost in his own thoughts.

‘Sir! Did you get what you were after?’

Janus pulled up short and turned to face his second.

‘After a fashion’ was all he said, clearly distracted.

There was a shifting of rubble behind them, and four guns came up: Sachus, Igneous, Brockus and Mithus.

‘Calm!’ barked the Commissar. ‘We have a new member, though I suspect that he’ll keep to himself. Lower your weapons - he’ll cause no harm to those loyal to me.’

Sachus thought his leader’s gaze lingered on him for just a moment too long.

Fire and Stone

The words blazed across his mind. The truth had been revealed.

The terrible, liberating truth.

Nothing else mattered; his previous life, who he had been - all meaningless.

The symbol of that truth was carved onto his very flesh.

The Stone - a circle representing endurance, eternity: the order of death.

The Fire - emanating at eight cardinal points around the Stone; fury, passion: the chaos of life.

The fulcrum on which all existence balanced, and he had glimpsed beyond it.

What were old loyalties in the face of such a revelation? He had a new name, to go with his

new face. He was honoured to carry both. It made the detachment from his previous life easier.

‘Maritus! Show yourself!’

His master’s call. An eye had been taken, a mirror to the Anointed. Through the ruined socket, Janus blazed like lit promethium fields. Commissar was his title. A title had meaning; it defined the person, and sent echoes into the aether. Given a glimpse of possible futures, Maritus knew that ‘The Commissar’ would not remain as such for long. He would rise, or he would die and another take his place.

Three others stood with the Anointed. Stone men. They had been touched by the divine. One carried purpose in his name and felt the breath of destiny. The other two were oblivious, but would learn soon enough.

There was one more. This one wore his age in the scars he carried, both on his flesh and on his soul. He would be the catalyst. The flint that was both the flame and the rock

Maritus stumbled from the shadows to the sight of four gun barrels, though they were quickly lowered at the Anointed’s command.

A collective intake of breath greeted his emergence. Maritus’ form had been shaped by those who had taken him. Gone was the whip-thin youth with the sunken eyes. Muscles bulged on his yet still meagre frame. A swollen neanderthal brow, cheekbones and jaw framed his eyes - one clear, pale green. The other a milky white orb. A metal device - used during the Enlightenment Process, remained lodged in the side of his skull. Most shocking of all, however, were the three thick cords that were threaded through his lips, turning his monologue into relentless mumbling and hissing.

‘What is it?’ Asked Igneous Golem.

‘The first’ replied the Commissar. ‘But there will be more- those who by thought or deed are worthy of elevation’.

He turned to Sachus.

‘My resolve is fortified. Another link in the chain has been revealed to me. Sachus, you must put aside your distaste of me and trust me as you once did. I need something from you. I need you to give it willingly’.

The Commissar loomed. Mithus, Igneous and Brockus closed in, with the wretch staying in cover nearby.

Suddenly, Sachus felt less the head of a bodyguard, and more a lone soldier - lost, abandoned and surrounded in enemy territory.

‘What is it you want from me?’

‘The boy, Sachus. Give me the boy.’
Sachus shook his head, confused, but the Commissar was relentless.

‘Remus. Remus has been chosen next. You must give him up. Your patronage gives him a

protection of sorts over those that would elevate him. Give him up, and let him fulfil his potential. Give him up, and earn my trust again, retaking your rightful place at my side in what’s to come’.

‘Sir, he’s too young, he’s not...’

‘Give him to me sergeant, or else he will be ripped from you, and made in the likeness of the creature that follows in the shadows’.

Master Sergeant Paulo Sachus took stock of his predicament, of the cost of defiance - to himself, the boy, and to the cause which, despite his moderating influences, Sachus believed in utterly.

Decision made, he took a deep breath, ready to speak...

The lights went out, plunging them into darkness.

Domino

Game 7: Ambush in the Dark - Part three

Pre-battle narrative

Just a little appetizer for those who are avidly following this thread.

I want to keep the mystery going, and I hope I succeed with the following piece of narrative.

Complex machinery fed power from the main fusion generator through conduits that supplied much of the dome with light and heat. It also was the primary source of the Guilds forges, flesh vats and slave conversion processors. Several slave servitors monitored the machinery under the watchful eye of Guild techs, making sure that the reactor and the slaved mechanical devices functioned smoothly.

It started with a flicker on the dials.

Just the normal glitch that occurred every so often when a process needed a little more or less power for its function.

Slowly the reactor began to increase output. The gauges showing the steady increase, but the feeds showed the power dropping.

All the Guilds machinery shut down as panicked Guilders attempted to stabilise the power flow.

‘What’s happening?’

‘I don’t know!’

The techs tried everything they knew short of a complete shutdown.

Nothing worked.

‘This is strange,’ one of the techs stated. ‘Power seems to have been diverted into the Badlands.’

‘Well shut it off!’ the senior tech shouted.

‘Sir!’

The tech flicked switches and dived onto a consol keyboard, frantically typing commands into it.

The power still continued to build and feed into the conduit.

Then the tech pulled a lever for the main servo...

The EMP blast at its epicentre was so strong that

it not only fried the electrical systems, but burnt out the synapses and neurons of the biological creatures caught in the blast. It included the Guilder techs and their servitors.

Further out, all active electrical systems shut down, plunging the dome into darkness.

Out in the Badlands, something was waking...

Stubram Photo Call

Hi. I'm the Kid formally known as Tuesday, what's your name?



Any super nerds out there may like to know that Kid Tuesday's new name is a play on his old one. Tuesday is a derivative of the old English word Tewesday, meaning "Tīw's Day", the day of Tiw or Tyr the god of single combat and law and justice. In Norse mythology Tiw was equated with Mars.

Therefore Maritus is a nod to his old name, whilst making it fit with my gang (all Latin-sounding, ending in 'us').

So there you go!

Domino

Game 7: Ambush in the Dark

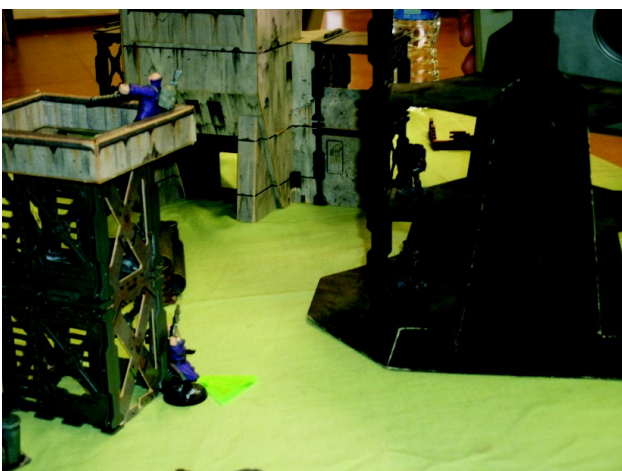
Battle Report

What an interesting game.

We both rolled well for Event Cards, getting three each. I received True Grit, Spare Clip and Lucky Escape with Stubram receiving, I believe, Spare Clip, Blood Feud and Honour Debt giving him a free Scum this game. During the game though I kept forgetting mine, ending up with Joss going onto the serious injuries when he needn't have done and I passed my leadership making my other card useless. Also, we forgot to roll Treacherous Conditions, though this may have been a blessing for both of us.

p.s. We both thought this game would be a blood bath, but as it turned out it wasn't as bad as we thought.

The set up led to most of Stubram's gang spread broadly in the centre amongst loads of scatter terrain with my gang set up in teams covering roughly three sides. His remaining two men set up behind Humphrey's position.



I received first turn and as I had set up my men a little outside 12", it enabled me to move forward into place to draw first blood.

Humphrey crossed from the far side of his high vantage into view range, to hide overlooking the mass of Diablo Nova, while Vic and Joss got into position on the ground.

Lucifer along with newbie Kitt Grayson, moved

up in the cover of a building ready for the next turn.

On the other flank, Rufus and Two Fry moved in low with Wash and Ulysses moving in on the first level of the building they were in.

It was Two Fry who put the first man down, followed by Vic. All other shots were pretty poor, either missing or just not wounding.



In response, Diablo Nova moved cautiously into position to fire back while taking the chance of charging in at some point into account. Bloody Phorus, who was subject to stupidity this game, meandered around seemingly confused by the noise and darkness.

The return fire of the 'Nova's' was fairly ineffectual apart from the first true casualty of the game, Joss Swanson, being taken out by a tough shot (he was in hard cover).



The next turn, Lucifer moved up into range for his flamer with Kitt in tow. Wash and Ulysses climbed up to the 2nd level of the building they were on, deliberately standing on the hatches to force those Diablo Nova moving up to have to

take the longer route up if they wished to follow. Meanwhile Rufus and Two Fry jockeyed for position behind cover to get more Novas in sight and Vic, now on his own, advanced up along the cover he was behind.

Lucifer started proceedings by torching a Nova, wounding and setting him on fire at the cost of all his promethium (I failed his reload roll). The ganger in question went down for the rest of the game, succumbing to the flames, but showing the Goliath resilience by refusing to 'go out of action'.

Vic let loose with his Boltgun putting another man down, while Humphrey let loose with his Heavy Stubber (6 shots) putting the Scum down with his first and using the remainder on Phorus to get just one wound.

Wash took a shot from his high point, but Ulysses couldn't see anything and Joss and Two Fry were unable to wound their targets this turn.

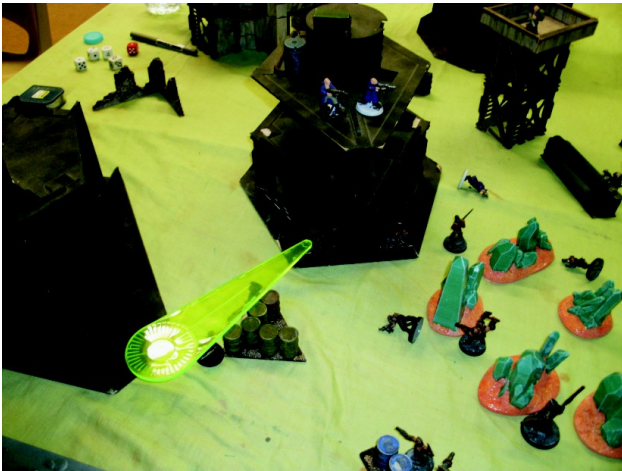


Diablo Nova continued to spread out and advance towards positions where Whisper Men were holed up with Janus, The Commissar, seeming to head in the direction where no Whisper Men were present. Hmmm?

Shooting wise, the Juve with the hand flamer had flanked Two Fry's position and torched him and Rufus, putting Rufus down and pinning Two Fry. He then passed his ammo roll.

Next was the heavy stubber, who tried to shoot Vic in the back. We went through the whole deal of number of shots etc. with Vic being put 'Out of action' and then realised that, by quirk of fate, Vic had moved 1" beyond visual range of the Nova's Stubber during his move phase. Phew! That was close.

All of Nova's pinned fighters stood up and the turn passed over.



He took a Leadership test for his gang to see if they would continue, and they bottled.



I passed my bottle test as I had 25% Down and Out and just repositioned my gangers slightly to keep targets in view and then continued firing. Most of my shots just pinned or missed the Nova's but Humphrey finally put Phorus down taking another five shots to do it. I recovered my pinned gangers thinking that I may hold out another turn before the Nova's felt that charging in may be a good risk, the conditions being likely to cause them to stumble, and passed over to my opponent.



Checking for downed fighters, most avoided the Serious Injury chart with those that went on to it getting Full Recovery. So not all that bloody at all.

This was a fun game, with my men unable to make full use of their range effectively whilst Diablo Nova worried about tripping up if they charged in to make best use of their strengths.

Stubram

Game 7: Ambush in the Dark Battle Report

Domino has done his usual stirring job, so I thought I'd remain 'fluffy' throughout the battle description (as people can see what actually happened through Domino's account!). This also allows me to paint my sub-par performance in a more dramatic light!



In the sudden, stygian darkness, something moved.

Janus cursed.

‘Brockus, we’re out of time. Take Forvus and retrieve the next key. Go!’

Brockus hurried off with the heavy in tow.

‘NOVAS, TO ME!’ The Commissar’s voice boomed.

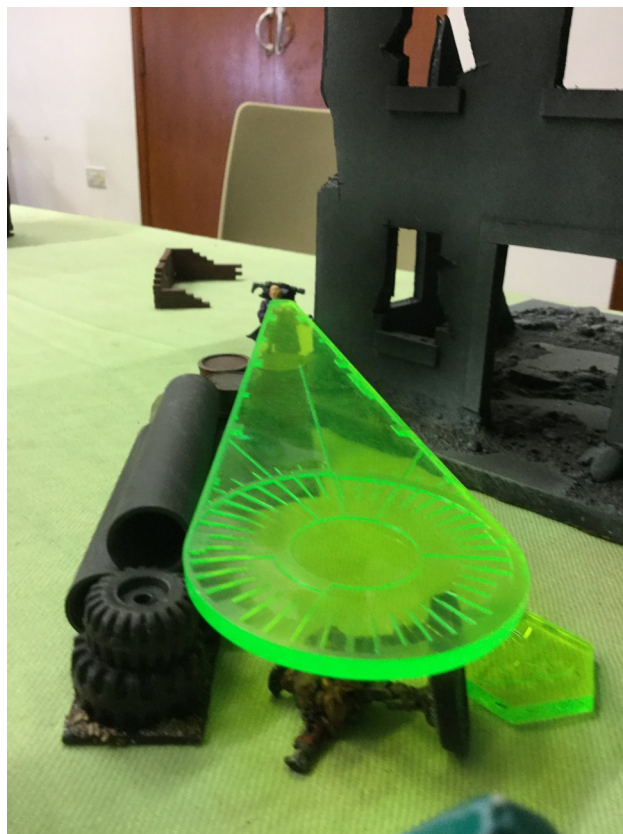
The crew came in from their outlying positions and took cover around a cluster of stalagmites - natural formations of effluent and pollution, crystallised over the centuries.



The air was close, tense. Something was ne...



Dark became day as a fusillade of shells, cartridges and las bolts furrowed into the hunched Goliaths. To the rear, a familiar hiss alerted the Commissar to the threat. He wheeled around to bellow a warning to Igneous but it was too late, and the Lucifer Squibb claimed another victim.



A new figure appeared in the darkness, clothed in the amethyst long coat of the Delaques. Ferrus raised his gun to put down the interloper, when the stranger flourished a pair of twin bolt pistols from a bandolier around his waist, and set to against the Whisper Men. Ferrus couldn’t see the results of the volley, but he did hear a high pitched howl of pain and the thud of a body hitting the ground -



‘Forward!’ cried The Commissar. ‘They have no heavy support, into them Diablo Nova! Fire and Stone! FIRE AND STONE!’

The weighty staccato of a big stubber opened up. Behind his mask, the Commissar's face split into a fierce grin. If Forvus was already back, then Brockus had retrieved the prize and their victory was assured.

'Bloody' Phorus, dazed and confused by the ambush, was ambling around nearby. A trace of heavy slugs dug into the ground in front of him.

The Commissar's joy turned to disbelief, as the line of bullets continued their path, slamming into the hapless ganger three, four, five times. By the end of the volley, Phorus was prone though still moving, but the anonymous bolt pistol toting figure was sprawled in the dirt.

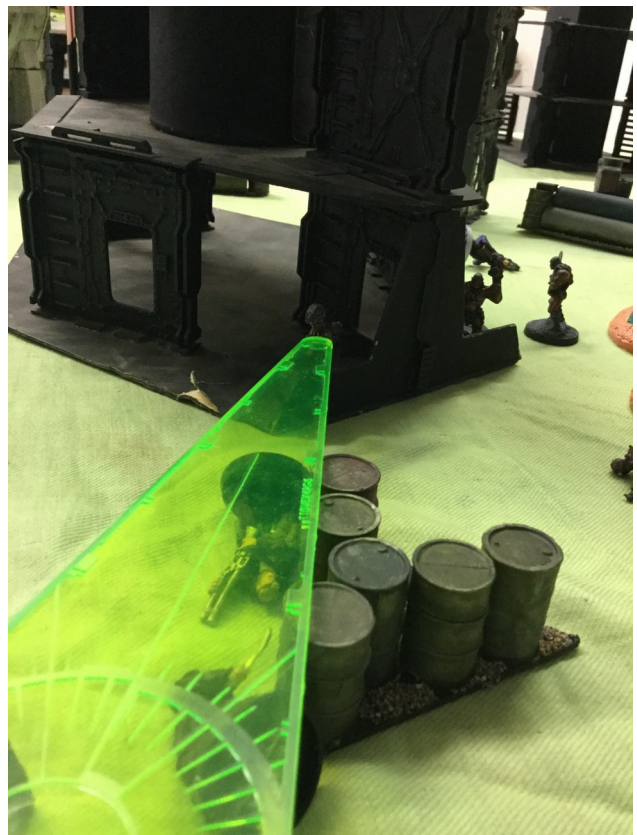


'Scatter! Take the high ground and flush them out!'
But the firestorm came from all directions.



'Go lad, I'll cover you!' Sachus let rip with his big bolter as Remus crawled forward. Atticus 'Ricochet' Hex saw what Sachus was trying to do and added his own weight of fire, causing the nearby Delaques to duck, but inflicting no injuries.

Whisper Men arrogance was soon ended when Remus appeared on their flank and let rip with his hand flamer -



In the distance, Brockus and Forvus reemerged. Bloody, battered, but alive. Brockus had a weighty item, wrapped and hidden, attached to his belt. They came at all speed to relieve the

Commissar.



Hearing Brockus' call, the Commissar took stock of the butcher's bill. His men were closing on the the Delaque scum, but blood had been spilled, and more blood would need to be spilled, with no guarantee of success.

With the return of Brockus and Forvus, there was nothing further to be gained here. There was more at stake.

'Novas! Pick up those still breathing and move!'

The darkness hid their retreat, as it hid their motives.

Really good game, and very much a continuation of how Domino and I like to play - if unsure, give your opponent the benefit of the doubt. He kindly favoured some 50/50 cases of my guys being in hard cover, and I argued in others that my guys were in the open when I could possibly have claimed at least partial.

We made less 'rules' mistakes this game, which was great and really allowed me to focus all my mistake making on strategy and placement.

I actually set my guys up in groups of 'who's friends with who and would want to stick together' rather than any tactical choices.

I should possibly have been more aggressive and ran a bit, but with the chance of tripping, I was really worried. I also stuck Brockus (short range weapon) and Forvus (heavy long range weapon) together, which meant that Brockus was out of range of everything, and Forvus had to move (so couldn't fire) to keep up. Pretty dumb, but as they were the only group that the rules allowed me to set up outside of standard deployment, I at least wrote up a fluffy reason for it

As an aside, the mysterious 'amethyst stranger' with the great coat was a scummer I managed to draw from a Random Event. Luckily I had several hired guns drawn up, so just used the first on the list - Oda Bochese.

More on him, and Brockus' mysterious quest to follow!

Stubram

Game 7: Ambush in the Dark

Post Battle Narrative

As the crew entered the outer limits of the Horned Church, a distant 'yap' could be heard, as of some small canine scavenger. 'Sounds like the sentries have spotted us' mused Mithus.

Nobody commented. Even after discovering that no one was badly hurt from the ambush, the

mood of the gang was still muted. The cause for this suppressed atmosphere was apparent. Second-to-last in the trailing group, Brockus walked, like an automaton; head down, unseeing. One step followed the other, but there was no higher cognisance. His attitude was not what was most alarming, however.

Brockus had changed.

In the short time he'd been away, he had aged by some degree. His once black hair now streaked with grey. Lines were etched in his face. He had grown in stature, too. Always amongst the largest of the group, Brockus now towered over all but the Commissar himself.

His heavy, measured footfalls had the rest of the 'Nova casting glances behind them at the brute who professed to be their comrade, and to the clothed bundle he held fast in one giant fist.

Forvus Gorge followed last. He hadn't yet spoken about what had occurred, but had simply taken the rearguard 'in case any trailing Delaques caught up with them.'

None failed to notice, however, that the man's heavy stubber was not pointed behind him to ward against following enemies, but at the back of his fellow Goliath.

The Horned Church.

After the betrayal of Gallows Cross, the Commissar decided that they couldn't trust the locals for succour any more. Events were speeding up, and the objectives of the group risked a higher chance of discovery.

To that end, he had founded a new settlement, deep in the wastes. The centre of which was a large stone structure. It appeared to be almost natural; a great edifice, sculpted like melted wax, with no sign of join or mortar. At each gable end of the building, a great, curved spike thrust into the air by some ten feet.

After discovering the building some months before, the gang had used it as a drop off and store for a 'slaught distribution racket, until the local enforcers had begun applying more pressure and it had to be shut down. There it had remained, until the Night of Betrayal. Hastily built walls were thrown up, fungus vats were cultivated, workshops added, and slowly the settlement came to life. To populate the settlement, Janus had opened the doors to the outlaws, mutants, and other undesirables to be found in the wastes.

The arrangement was clear- here, you have shelter and food. Cross the 'Novas, and death will be your reward.

Janus had proven his point by the introducing the Lottery - every member of the settlement was obliged to take part. The 'winner' was executed in front of the church, and impaled on the northern spike of the building.

Janus had promised another lottery to adorn the southern spike, should there ever be the slightest murmur of unrest. So far, there had been none.

Great rusted gates swung open, and the men of the Diablo Nova tramped in to the settlement. As the gates closed with a crash, the gang visibly relaxed. Janus headed towards the church.

'Sachus, come. Bring the merc.'

He passed by Atticus, and said in a low voice 'watch Brockus. If he....well, you know what to do'.

The heavy nodded.

Janus sat at his desk. Sachus stood beside him, with the mercenary before him.

'Oda Bochese. You're lucky we didn't shoot you, dressed up in rival gang colours.'

The merc gave Janus a toothy grin and slipped off the Whisper Man long coat, letting it fall to the floor.

'Only way I could get close to 'em. Do you have any idea how hard it is to sneak up on a Delaque? Anyway, you boys could never hit the broad side of a water still, so I wasn't too worried.'

The Commissar snorted.

'What brings you here, Oda? Bold as balls, in my encampment. I told you what I'd do to you, the next time we met'.

'Now, now, Commissar. I come to make amends. I messed up, I grant you. The information was bad, and you lost your boy Astorus because of it. I come, and I make them Whisper Men pay - downed one of 'em, I did.'

'And then hit the deck for the rest of the fight when that damned stubber opened up!'

Oda Bochese shrugged. His answer was

obvious. He was a hired gun, not a soldier.

‘Do you think this makes us even, Oda? You cost me a veteran, and injure a Delaque brat in recompense?’

‘No sir, Mr Commissar sir, but I’m hopin’ it proves that I got some usefulness still. So I’m hopin’ you’ll see clear to stop sending your boys after me and shooting up my places of business.’

Janus leaned back in his chair. Minutes passed.

‘They do say hope springs eternal. As it happens, I have bigger fish to fry right now, so you can keep your head for the moment, but you still owe me. Get out.’

The scummer stood unblinking at the gang leader, then realising that he’d escaped with his life, made a hasty retreat.

‘Sir.’ begun Sachus, who hated the mercenary for the bad lead that cost them their chance to rescue Astorus.

‘Not now, sergeant. I meant what I said. Get Forvus in here next.’

The heavy thumped in. Janus noticed that, although Forvus remained an outward appearance of a calm, professional soldier, his knuckles were white around the gun-grip, and his eyes darted around the room. He was bloody, filthy. He showed wounds - some were still weeping. Others had scabbed over, as if inflicted hours or days before.

Forvus and Brockus had been out of sight for less than thirty minutes.

‘Forvus, what happened out there?’

Forvus’ eyes snapped to the Commissar. Haunted.

‘We followed the path you set out. We got to the tunnel. Brockus went in first - to clear the way with his shotgun. There were a few dregs in there - scavvies, mutants. Families mostly. No real people. We put them down quick and pressed on.’

Forvus was getting more animated.

‘We walked for hours. The tunnel changed. Less metal and rust, more stone and dripping water. Brockus pushed ahead, said he was nearly there - that he could feel it. I couldn’t keep up.’

Eyes wide, now.

‘There were things out there, but not in front anymore, behind. They got behind us! I shouted to Brockus to stop, to help, but he was gone. They came at me! They were trying to stop us. They told me. In my head! I opened up with big sister. They had nowhere to manoeuvre, ha! I blew ‘em apart, but they didn’t hit the ground. Dissolved, blew away. I kept firing. Burnt through my reloads. Broke out little brother’

He waved a stub pistol in front of the Commissar. Forvus was barely in the room now. He was back there, in the tunnels.

‘Bang! Bang! I kept going, dropped big sister and broke out my gutting knife. Fought them, fought them for hours. They were thin, weak but quick and sharp. Smelt of sweets and corpses. There were too many! I couldn’t fight them. Couldn’t get away. I was trapped, oh by the Fire I was trapped!’

This man- a veteran of war zones, hand picked to accompany Janus and Sachus on their journey. This man was openly weeping.

‘I fell. Don’t remember how, but my arm was opened up and I dropped my stub. They came at me. I just wanted it to be over. Do you understand? I wanted it to stop, and then he came back.’

Janus leaned forward, finally at the crux of the conversation

‘Brockus, do you mean Brockus?’

Forvus nodded, then frowned.

‘Yes. No! Brockus, but not Brockus. He was different. In size, looks, but also how he moved. He carried a star in his hand. The things shrieked. Nothing under the Emperor’s suns can make noises like that, I tell you! He set into them. They died- burned, hacked up. He killed them all. Once he was done, he just stood there, breathing heavy. I picked up my stuff, moved up to him. Tried talking - nothing. I moved past him, and he followed, like a dog. We walked back. It took minutes, where before it took hours, and we came out where you found us, with Whisper Men all around in the dark.’

Story told, Forvus seemed to deflate. The

Commissar rocked back in his chair, digesting the tale, lost in his own thoughts. It was Sachus who spoke.

‘All right, lad. You did well. Go rest up and get some food into you.’

Relieved, the big heavy practically fled the room. Sachus turned to his senior.

‘Mad. The poor bastard’s mad’.

Broken from his reverie, Janus met his sergeant’s eyes.

‘Mad? Maybe, but that doesn’t mean he’s not telling the truth.’

‘But sir! He spoke of being gone for hours. The whole fight took less than one’.

‘And that, Sachus, is why you’ll never lead. You cling to what you ‘know’ like a drowning man to a sinking ship. Did you think the prize would be secured by normal means?’

Rebuked, Sachus didn’t speak.

‘And now for the finale. Bring him in.’

Sachus returned moments later with Brockus in tow. The brute had to duck under the doorframe. As the curtain closed, Janus was gratified to see Atticus and Mithus nearby outside, in case things went south.

He was near catatonic. Nothing like the loud

mouth, arrogant braggart that he had been before.

Janus stood, very slowly, and unsheathed his sword. Brockus’ eyes followed the blade, but he didn’t move.

Janus walked around the desk, and held the sword up, close to his face. He stood in front of Brockus, inches away. Brockus’ eyes were affixed to the sword.

‘Show me.’

The heavy wrap fell from Brockus’ hands, and he presented an axe. A power axe of immense size. It was adorned with stylised skulls and symbols of death. The second the axe head was revealed, it blazed with a blinding light. Janus’s sword followed suit and Sachus had to shield his eyes from the spectacle.

‘Brockus, you’ve been chosen. Are you with us? Will you fight for them as their avatar in this world?’

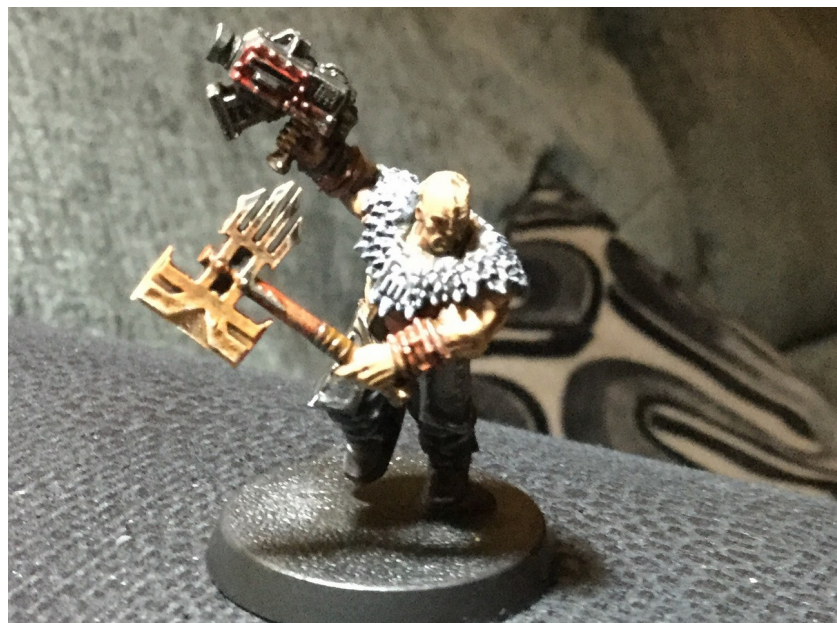
With a voice like gravel, coming from an impossible distance, the ganger reborn said three words.

‘For the Antecedent’

Stubram

Photo Call

Brochus The Traveller



Domino

Game 7: Ambush in the Dark

Post-Battle Narrative

As the sudden darkness enveloped them, Vic took out a small light and signaled his men to hold and keep calm. He knew their quarry would be here soon.

In the darkness, figures illuminated by dim torches moved.

They were up to something, but Vic couldn't make out what.

From what he could see though, most of Diablo Nova were making their way to the area he suspected they would pass through.

There's no replacement for good intelligence, he thought to himself grimly as he readied his Bolter.

It was Janus' call that concentrated the Nova's in the crystal formations and the sound of Vic's Bolt gun signaled his men to open up with continuous fire into the mass of men.

It was over quickly.

Janus slithered out of the trap with his men in retreat behind him and it became apparent to Vic that they hadn't had the impact he had hoped for.

He had more questions to find answers to.

Who was the mysterious stranger who had the gall to wear Whisper Men colours?

What was the meaning of Janus' new battle cry?

Just what happened to the lights and who was responsible?

Once back in Stirling Falls he requested reports from everyone. He always tried to remember everything he saw and heard, but he knew that you couldn't see and hear everything. Especially once the bullets started to fly.

Lucifer entered his office with Rufus who held a stack of data-slates and papers.

'Ah. Guv. Hope I'm not disturbing you?'

'No. Not at all. Are those the reports I

requested?' he responded cordially.

'Yes Guv,' Rufus responded.

'Well pass 'em over,' Vic said taking hold of the stack. He quickly dropped them in a drawer and secured it. 'I'll read them later.'

'So what do we do now Guv?' Lucifer asked as Vic headed for the door.

'I Want you to take the lads out for a few rounds on me while I go over the reports and intelligence I received in town. If what I've heard is correct, the new hole that Diablo Nova have squirmed into may yield great reward.'

'Is that the place?,' Lucifer indicated a spot on one of the many maps.

Vic nodded.

'Guv! That's a bad area,' Rufus piped up, sounding concerned. 'No one in their right mind goes there.'

Vic stood calmly as he spoke, 'We may have to. 'Do as I've asked Lu. Give the lads a great night out.'

Vic started pacing as he sometimes did when he was planning something big.

'Still here Lu?'

'No Guv.' Lucifer put up a finger to keep Rufus quite and pointed to the door.

They left.

'What's going on?' Rufus asked as they walked to the rest of the gang

'There's a lot going on that you don't know about,' Lucifer stated. 'Even I don't know the half of it, and I'm privy to more of what's going on than the rest of you.'

'So what do we do?'

'Just what Vic said. Pub!' Lucifer responded.

'Let the boss worry about the rest. That's his job.'

'Lets get the rest of the lads and enjoy ourselves.'

Rufus grinned, 'Fine, lets go.'

