The Glass Assassin

A Dark Heresy scenario by
Martin Norris

On Scintilla, Hive Tarsus dominates trade off-world and generates large tithes for the Imperium. Traditionally each decade, Lucius, the Lord of Tarsus makes a Progress as he travels the desert in a Leviathan vehicle, collecting the Emperor's tribute and fealty from the lesser habitations throughout his domain. Inquisitor Markus Moncrieff is on the trail of a dangerous cult that has infiltrated the court. He is seriously injured and the Acolytes are enlisted to support his effort.

Introduction

The scenario features a radical Inquisitor using forbidden xeno tech. It is appropriate for characters with two career ranks; though the finale, a chaos ritual, features a daemonhost, there are potential allies to help. It is easy for the Games Master to make the opposition more determined, more numerous and better armed if the Acolytes have more experience. This adventure is a mixture of investigation and action that should take two to four sessions to resolve. This can be extended by adding additional sub-plots and extraneous events.

Background

Inquisitor Markus Moncrieff has been tracking the Cult of Extremesis using the Glass Assassin, an Eldar infinity-circuit servitor that is slowly corrupting his mind. Unfortunately the cult detected his pursuit and he has been seriously injured in a trap. He suspects that the cult is going to strike during the Progress.

Synopsis

The Cult of Extremesis' most successful action has been the recruitment of the heir apparent to Lord Lucius, his son Rodderick. His final induction into the cult will be when he takes part in a ritual to summon and bind a daemon to create a daemonhost.

There are two key events: Emily Mu, the cultist who ambushed Moncrieff is killed the morning after the characters arrive, before they get a chance to interrogate her; and the planned ritual happens at midday when the characters find the link between Rodderick and the cult. Times are Scintilla adjusted Imperial; midday is when the sun is directly overhead; the day is divided into 24 'hours'.

As the Acolytes investigate the leads, they slowly begin to discover Inquisitor Moncrieff's secret and eventually have to decide whether they should inform their Inquisitor or keep the secret to themselves.
The Leviathan

The Leviathan is a gargantuan vehicle, which allows Lord Lucius to travel in style. It is able to transport 20000 people though the court is barely 1000 souls. It is a kilometre long and travels at a steady steady 20 kilometres per hour. The environment of the passenger areas is the same as the privileged areas of Hive Tarsus, the temperature is freezing cold and low illumination in cool colours, pastel mauves, blues and greens. The Acolytes will need warm clothing!

Under the brutal sun of Scintilla the heat is intense. Access is controlled by environmental locks which have one or more emergency silvered cloaks. Exiting abruptly without protection is dangerous, [roll TB or immediately collapse unconscious from the thermal shock], otherwise the effect is like suffocation {see the Dark Heresy rulebook page 210} though the effects are only applied every 10 minutes}. After nightfall, when the temperature abruptly drops, some shutters and walkways are opened so that people can enjoy the cool desert air.

The crew and working areas are regulated to a normal environment. The Acolytes might meet the commander of the Leviathan Captain Theodore Drome, a pleasant looking dedicated gentlemen wearing nondescript void ship fatigues. Adeptus Mechanicus characters will also be interested in the Engineer, Shalmous Crane, who wears the thick shrouding robes of his order, covered with many tinkling brass glorificators.

The Leviathan has a complete range of facilities for entertaining the passengers from chapels to sand-bikes, and carrying the court means that it has been outfitted in high style. Comestibles are carried in stasis rather than basic procarb soup from fermentation vats. The Leviathan only has the most exquisite merchandise in exclusive boutiques, so the Acolytes are going to have to use the gear they thought to bring with them, unless they can borrow or scrounge some from the other passengers.

The Leviathan is enormous, practically empty, and freezing. Emphasize these points as the characters move around by slide-ways, transit tubes, elevators, and long passageways. A journey through the Leviathan can take up to an hour. Skip the journey but sometimes add some atmospheric touches to emphasize the cold empty quietness with background engine mutterings and ventilation system murmurs.

The Court of Lord Lucius

The court of Lord Lucius, their companions, confessors, noble guests and servants are present on the Leviathan. The Acolytes will find that a lot of the time the members of the court are engaged in leisure activities, affairs, duelling etc... The table summarizes those mentioned. To give the characters a feeling that there are many possible sources of information, others are be created from the general profiles and A-Z name list at the end.

There are two groups. The 'serious' group are efficient and practical fulfilling their duties; the other faction are the 'dilettantes', who are more interested in enjoying themselves or using their power to impress on others their importance. The Acolytes should realise that this is the reality of politics in the Administratum, if they have not been victims of the labyrinthine bureaucracy previously, they should realise that the Imperium favours loyalty above effectiveness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position (career)</th>
<th>First impression</th>
<th>Relevance (faction)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lucius Ritter</td>
<td>Lord of Tarsus Hive</td>
<td>A corpulent middle to old aged man. Lackadasical in manner.</td>
<td>(dilettante)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodderick Ritter</td>
<td>Son and heir apparent, currently Calculator Maximus</td>
<td>Middle aged man, steady look, in drab clothing with expensive jewels.</td>
<td>Cultist (serious)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robart</td>
<td>Servant to Rodderick</td>
<td>Nondescript man, greying hair, neutral eyes, modest build. Clean black uniform.</td>
<td>Contact – link from Mu to Rodderick (serious)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartholomew Klinkerman</td>
<td>Guard Commander Chief of security</td>
<td>An old warrior. Bright grey eyes and a penetrating gaze. Uniform.</td>
<td>Potential Ally (serious)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gustav of Thrace</td>
<td>Master at Arms</td>
<td>A languid man, slim in dark leathers, openly wearing a silver hilted duelling sword.</td>
<td>Cultist (dilettante)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Mu</td>
<td>Bursarius Minoris (Water)</td>
<td>A severe blond wearing a thick golden gown trimmed with yellow gleaming fur.</td>
<td>Cultist and the Glass Assassin's first kill (dilettante)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horace Alexander</td>
<td>Chancellorum Titulotionary</td>
<td>Young man, dark but well tailored clothes, fur trimmed, gushes enthusiastically</td>
<td>Gossipy official (serious)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte Lisselette</td>
<td>Ice Maiden – Intenden Lectus</td>
<td>A tall, slim lady with black hair and lavender eyes. Wear a long translucent dress with bare arms, and slippers.</td>
<td>Potential victim (dilettante)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregory Ayson</td>
<td>Consuasor Primus</td>
<td>A long sallow face with a one sided, ironic, smile. Hooded eyes. Thick clothing though un-typical of Tarsus styles.</td>
<td>Cult leader and advisor (serious)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markus Moncrieff</td>
<td>Inquisitor</td>
<td>A grave face and a dark uniform over thick garments.</td>
<td>Protagonist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomas</td>
<td>Servant to Emily Mu</td>
<td>Young thin nervous man. Blond nearly white hair, pale grey eyes. Standard unremarkable grey uniform.</td>
<td>Contact – knows Mu meeting in Blue Room (serious)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrian Utlander</td>
<td>Secretarius Scudi</td>
<td>Wide, brown haired, brown eyed man. Wears a long very thick fur coat. Taciturn.</td>
<td>Contact – knows Mu meeting in Blue Room (serious)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lavender Prentice</td>
<td>Ice Maiden – Secretarius Intimi</td>
<td>Tall, black, green eyes. Wears a white body stocking, jewellery and high white leather boots.</td>
<td>Contact – knows Mu meeting in Blue Room (dilettante)</td>
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The official business of the court revolves around the audience that Lucius holds every day between 10 am and 11am. Nearly everybody will be present for court or will congregate in the areas adjacent to gossip or be available. This gives the characters a chance to find people; or alternatively burgle their rooms when there is a good chance they will not be seen!

Security of the Leviathan is the responsibility of Colonel Klinkerman and two companies of guards. The deserts around Tarsus are infested with bandits and other dregs, but none of them well enough equipped to take on the Leviathan. If the characters impress on the Colonel their Inquisitional authority, they can obtain the help of a squad of PDF troopers.

The Cult of Extremesis

Gregory Ayson is the Magus of the Cult of Extremesis. He first infiltrated the court when he was appointed as Consuasor Primus. His apparent efficiency was appealing to Rodderick and he was drawn into that group. Meanwhile behind the scenes he has attracted many adherents to the cult, including Rodderick.

Rodderick is enthusiastic about the cult and has progressed quickly, embracing the the secrets revealed. The cult presents has a progressive philosophy, advocating the improvement of Mankind through competitive evolutionary change. As members seduced into the cult learn more, they discover that the cult envisages over-throwing the Imperium as a necessary step to allow free rein to their ambitions.

The Shifting Sands

The desert has no specific relevance to the scenario but could be used for some additional events. Properly equipped, the Acolytes can venture onto the sands during the heat of the day, at night the lower temperatures are easily manageable.
The dangers of the wastes include bandits and the few inimical creatures of the deep desert, the venomous spire cactus, the dire cat and the boring silicatalid. These can be used to add colour to the stories of the other passengers. For example, a noble hunter might speak of how she obtained the furs of her gown from hunting a dire cat on a sand bike.

A Trip in the Desert

The most direct way of getting the players involved in the story is by having them directly assigned. They are summoned to a meeting with their Inquisitor. Read or paraphrase the following briefing. Alternatively the Acolytes could have some business in Hive Tarsus, in which case they are directed to report to Moncrieff immediately.

Acolytes, we have received ... indications, that the Lord of Hive Tarsus, Lucius, is going to be killed in the next few days, as he collects the Emperor's Tithe from surrounding habitats. A colleague, Inquisitor Markus Moncrieff, has been hot on the trail of a cult that has infiltrated the court but he has been seriously injured.

The Inquisition has assessed the threat to the Imperium and has decided to dispatch a small group of Acolytes to join the court of Lord Lucius as he travels the desert.

You have been chosen.

One noble is inconsequential to the Imperium but heresy in the Administratum is a threat we cannot ignore. Help Moncrieff. Find what you can and report back. Any questions?

What indications? Seer tarot reading (data slate below)

What equipment are you letting us have? Take what you already have. Inquisitor Moncrieff can remedy any lack. Though (here your Inquisitor smiles) you might want to take warm clothing.

What about money for bribes? The court is too rich for resources we can give you to make any bribe tempting.

Who is part of the court? Lord Lucius is the ruler of Hive Tarsus and ranking Administratum.

Did Moncrieff ask for support? Inquisitor Moncrieff is notoriously a loner. Your help is necessary because of his injury.

You did not answer the question! No, he did not ... but the situation is perilous.

What does he look like? An older man, serious demeanour. Lined face, dark penetrating stare.
The characters will not be assigned any equipment, though they have time to collect their own, scrounge or buy any items they think are necessary. They can also ask after the reputation of Inquisitor Moncrieff.

### Degree of success

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<th>Rumour (accumulative, each success level includes the rumours obtained on fewer successes)</th>
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<tr>
<td>0… earned his Rosette 30 years ago rooting out Daemons worshippers on Laskin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1He has a powerful psychic talent and his dark stare appears to penetrate the soul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2That Ordo Xenos Inquisitor? Was very effective against the Corsairs around 88- Tanstar recently; destroyed and purged several ships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or moreLong journeys into the void seeking heresy among the stars. Last time brought back enough Eldarin artefacts to keep the Laboratorios working for decades.</td>
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A lighter will take the Acolytes straight to the Leviathan arriving in afternoon. Their first impression of the Leviathan is the size. The characters do not disembark until the lighter is in the shelter of a hanger, where even shaded, the air is oppressively hot. Unless the characters pick up on the wry quip of their Inquisitor, then they will not expect the sudden cold as they enter the passenger areas.

A minor functionary, Horace Alexander, greets the characters. He talks about the Leviathan and desert and court and anything else that passes through his mind. He knows that Moncrieff has been injured, this is the major subject of gossip in the court. After a slide-way ride and an elevator descent, the characters are shown to a luxuriously appointed suite of rooms, opposite Moncrieff. Horace leaves them there, too fearful of the Inquisitor to introduce them.

### Moncrieff is Interrupted

Inquisitor Moncrieff is not happy that the Acolytes have been sent. He is becoming proficient at using the Glass Assassin, and though immobilized, thinks this is sufficient for him to hunt down and eradicate the cult. He cannot hide he has been disabled, and does not want to reveal his use of the Assassin to the Inquisition, therefore he will accept the help of the Acolytes with bad grace. After the characters tap at the door they will hear “Enter”. Read or paraphrase the following.

You enter a spacious room, cold and nearly barren of furniture. The room is dimly lit with blue lumo-strips. In an alcove Inquisitor Markus Moncrieff is sitting in a pool of white light. Even from this distance you can see that his body ends at the waist. Chirurgical and medicae machines are attached to his body with wires and tubes. A white sheet is tucked around his torso and he is reading a data slate.

As you get closer, he looks up, his blue eyes fix you with an impassive stare and he says...
“So, my legs have arrived”

“As you can see I have been attacked. The heretic was confident with a blade, but I was better. He was masked, and I was getting the better of him, when he dropped a frag-grenade and we both had to take cover. I was … unfortunate. I sent an armsmen to search the room later and they found one useful piece of evidence.”

Moncrieff takes a folded piece of plastek from the table next to him and offers it to you. In the folds there is a small piece of golden fur.

“Find the wearer of this and you have found our man”.

He looks down at his slate, silently dismissing you. If you have the temerity to question him he looks up with a trace of annoyance.

Where/when did the attack take place? At 10am, 2 days ago, in the Chapel of Lost Saints [this is during court so can eliminate a lot of people]

Why were you there? I always pray at that time, it is quiet and empty.

Who do you think it was? A Cultist.

Which cult is that then? The Cult of Extremesis. They worship a Ruinous Power, seeking to overthrow and change the Imperium.

Do you have any suspects? Not yet.

What information do you have of cult activity? At this the Inquisitor fixes you with his sharp blue eyes. Garbled, encrypted transmissions from this Leviathan to somewhere in Hive Tarsus in a known heretical code.

Our Inquisitor said you had dark eyes. My eyes are not the subject of this investigation.

The change in eye colour is not a mistake but one of the effects of using the Glass Assassin. However the characters question him, the Inquisitor will not tell them anything about the Assassin getting gradually more angry at this irrelevant line of inquiry.

The Glass Assassin is under the small table next to the Inquisitor in cylindrical form. In the dark shadows under the very bright light the characters have a small (Hard Per roll -20%) chance of seeing the object. A proper search easily finds the cylinder; the controlling circlet is in a locked box inside the only drawer of the table. If asked the Inquisitor dismisses the question with “Just a souvenir”.

The Disappearance of Emily Mu

The attempt to kill the Inquisitor was performed by Emily Mu with an electro-sword. The attempt was to appear to be a duel, not uncommon among the court, allowing time for the planned ritual and replacement of Lucius. She was not good enough, and panicking, dropped a frag-grenade to escape through a doorway. A small fragment of fur caught in the door catch.

While the Acolytes are searching for the owner of the fur, Moncrieff has another approach. Psyxiscience tracing has led him to suspect that the Cultists are meeting in an unused part of the Leviathan to perform rituals. He is using the Glass Assassin to observe and follow members of the court around this area. It is during this stake-out that he sees Mu. She meets with Gustav of Thrace and they have a loud argument about the botched attempt. As Mu leaves Moncrieff uses the Glass Assassin to take sanguine revenge, pouncing from the shadows she is quickly slain. Moncrieff directs the Assassin to exit the Leviathan through a duct and dump the body.

Hunting a Dire Cat

The Acolytes can discover that the fur comes from a desert Dire Cat by asking anybody, the colour is so distinctive. The pelt of these desert felines is rare since they can only be obtained from a licensed hunter. Tracing the owner is a matter of foot work. For each person asked roll 1d10 and consult the table.

1 “No idea, can’t help you there. Never really looked that closely at fur y’know”
2, 3 “Try Emily Mu, she always has an exquisite fur jacket like that”
4, 5 “Well they are not common, try ‘X’ or Emily, Emily Mu. They wear something like that.”
6 to 0 “You should talk to ‘X’, I am sure they have a coat like that”

For every ‘X’ substitute a name from the A-Z list! This person has a rock-solid alibi, they were at the audience the morning of the attempt! Allow the characters to continue for as long as they like, checking and double checking stories. The ‘X’ person can be easily found when Lord Lucius holds morning court, attending or in close proximity. At other times only ‘serious’ nobles and Adepts can be found at work; most others are dispersed throughout the Leviathan. This is a good opportunity to use the Ice Ghost incidents detailed
later. Since all of the 'X' people know they were at the audience, no one tries to deny they have a dire cat fur, leaving Mu as the most probable candidate. Suspicious characters might think that it is possible a fur was borrowed, but Moncrieff will point out that since the suspect expected the attack to succeed then there was no reason to hide their identity.

The characters might decide to search Mu's room. The section Background Checks later gives the details for entering rooms. Mu's room is typical of a noble state room. It has rich and ornate furniture with subdued lighting in cool pastel colours. The bed has a huge pile of furs. A jacket trimmed with Dire Cat fur hangs carelessly on a chair back, one cuff ripped.

A successful rummaging through the chests and wardrobes {ROUTINE SEARCH roll +20% or ORDINARY PER roll +10%} finds a wallet of saurian hide carefully placed under a pile of clothes, containing various papers. These are love letters and are signed by Rodderick. The characters will also find a small piece of tech combining a data slate with a vox unit. From the improvised construction this appears to be heretical tech. Pressing buttons makes the unit beep, but does not do anything obvious. A character {TAXING COMMON LORE[TECH] roll} might realise it is a signalling device.

All That Remains

The last time that Emily was seen was before morning audience, leaving in a hurry. Three people can be pressed to discover where she was heading just before morning court.

• Tomas her servant, received an anonymous note, the contents of which he communicated verbally to Emily. He is not involved with the cultists, and is an innocent communication channel they use. The message was simply “The Blue Room, court time tomorrow, Hyacinth”. The last is a cult sign that could be useful later, but Tomas thinks it is the code name of Mu's lover.

• Lavender Prentice overheard the message being passed. She dreamily remembers the situation, but as an Ice Maiden she is vague, and it will take patience and sympathy {ORDINARY CHARM roll +10% or CHALLENGING COMMAND roll} to obtain “Blue Room”.

• Adrian Utlander remembers seeing Mu rapidly leaving the audience chamber before the audience had begun. Distracted she muttered “Blue Room” under her breath as she hurried past.

The “Blue Room” is a dining room for assignations, where members of the court arrange for their own servants to prepare a private meal. When the Acolytes find the room there is a pool of blood on the floor. If the characters have the resources then they can match a sample to the Administratum DNA record of Emily Mu; otherwise they can obtain help from a Technographer Biologis at court. Read or paraphrase the following.

As you enter the room there is a metallic smell. The pale blue lumo-strips and yellow electro-candles flicker to life. The furnishings of the room are simple but elegant, one long table surrounded by a dozen chairs. Everything is covered by a light frost. The light shows a pool of bright red liquid pooling on the far side of the room. The smell and colour leave you in no doubt that the fluid is blood.

Another possibility is to request Colonel Klinkerman to order a search. One of the guardsmen finds all that remains of Emily Mu in a private dining area, “The Blue Room” and rumour quickly spreads. Read or paraphrase the following.

In a private dining room, two guardsmen are holding back a small gathering of minor court functionaries as Colonel Klinkerman bends over a red pool with a Technographer Biologis. The cool atmosphere does not keep the sharp metallic taste of blood from the air. The tech-priest is holding a small instrument that chimes. He speaks through a brass vox

“Matching the holy encypherment of this blood shows a 98.00 percentile correspondence with the Administratum registered identifier for Mu”

The only thing left of Emily Mu is a mixed pool of body fluids. The pool spreads from a floor level exhaust duct. Astute characters will notice {ORDINARY PER roll +10%} that the quantity is the total in a human circulation system, it is as though Emily Mu was squeezed dry of blood. The blood is still wet but medical and other forensic types of investigation must take into account the cold of the room {ALL rolls are DIFFICULT -10%}.

The exhaust duct is only 10cm in diameter. Characters questioning the crew {ORDINARY CONTROL/CHARM roll +10%} discover that the exhaust system is for removing air which passes throughout the Leviathan before being exhausted to the outside. Enterprising characters could lower themselves from the roof of the Leviathan down to where the air is expelled. Here the duct is more than 5m in diameter and there are {ORDINARY PER roll +10%} traces of blood on the bottom. (More that 3 degrees of success: the blood has dripped, not where something has had blood on it’s skin and the blood has wiped off). Following the duct into the Leviathan is impossible as it branches into smaller ducts.
Finding the remains of the body, pulverised and drained of blood in the wastes of the desert is impossible since the silicatalids will have digested the bones and the flesh will have desiccated and been dispersed to the winds.

Ice Ghost

When the Acolytes make enquiries among the different members of court, trying to find Emily Mu, or later trying to find her accomplices; one detail will come consistently into the various stories, the Ice Ghost. This has added a certain amount of titillating fear to the court, especially after the attack on Moncrieff, and after the macabre disappearance of Emily Mu. The Ice Ghost is a glimpse of the Glass Assassin that Moncrieff has been using. Read or paraphrase the following, embellishing or restraining the language depending on the speaker.

I was walking through a corridor near the Mercy chapel close to 2 o'clock in the morning. We had been watching the desert under the stars from the balcony and I came back earlier than the others. Well, to start, I thought it was one of them, you know, Robertus or Ariadne, always out for a laugh. Following me or something. Nothing really clear you understand, just, noises. Taps on the floor, scratches. You think it is your imagination until you see a shape moving against the lumo-strip. I called out and there was no reply, and then as the way opened out onto an open space, I had a clear look. It was a skeleton! I swear to all that is holy! It was walking along, head bowed, but when I looked at it, it looked at me, so I ran ... There is a small chance that the characters might see the Glass Assassin as they journey about the Leviathan. especially if they are following Gustav of Thrace who is Moncrieff's chief suspect. The characters will not be able to capture the Assassin, but they might get a clear look (DIFFICULT PER roll-10%). Failures mean they see a skeleton; depending on the successes they will see different details of the Assassin.

Moncrieff is Concerned

If the Acolytes do not think of reporting to Moncrieff, have a smartly dressed steward present them with a note “You progress has been so poor you have nothing?” Since being disabled, the Inquisitor has been using the Glass Assassin a lot. His eyes are now a clear aquamarine blue. During discussions, he will raise the subject of tools, and “a means to an end” to gauge the characters response. Read or paraphrase parts of the following, adapting as necessary.

The room is unchanged since your last visit to the Inquisitor. He looks up from his data slate and his blue eyes gleam in the light. “Report then, tell me, what you have discovered?”

Your attacker was Emily Mu. So, then I suggest you find this heretic Mu, and bring her here.

We found her remains, she was attacked and killed. Someone does not like loose ends. Interrogate her companions. Dismantle her relationships. Find her contacts!

We think it was something that can crawl through the ducts. Supposition is easy. Find the thing.

Also there are reports of a strange skeletal creature haunting the Leviathan. Everywhere the Imperium has the sentimental and weak minded, the recidivist and escapist. They are hallucinating.

Possibly the sightings are the same device that killed Mu; spying on the court. An interesting idea, certainly. Such a tool would be useful to the Inquisition, though it’s providence might cause concern, there are some things we do which in the mass of His subjects are anathema.

Mu could be involved with Rodderick Perhaps he is an unwitting pawn. We will need some solid evidence of conspiracy to accuse the heir apparent. Rodderick is an industrious servant of the Imperium though it is necessary sometimes to sacrifice even the most righteous of His subjects to prevent a greater heresy. Do you not agree?

Your eyes are really blue now! My eyes are not the subject of this investigation.

But they appear to glow in the dark! It is a side effect of the alchemical concoctions that flow into my blood.

The Glass Rings

The Acolytes are going to need to find Emily Mu's fellow cultists as Moncrieff uses the Glass Assassin to pursue the cult. He has linked Mu to Gustav of Thrace, but is unaware or dismissive of Rodderick's or Ayson's involvement.

Emily Mu was considered a dilettante; in her position in the Administratum as Bursarius Minor for Water, she was only motivated
through bribery. Questioning will generate lots of names in the dilettante faction which does not help the characters, though one interesting point the characters pick up on is that Mu is rumoured to have a mystery lover. Her servant Tomas can confirm the rumour, since he has been acting as the courier, which he thinks is romantic. His instructions are that every 9th hour he was to go to a disused office, and look for a paper concealed in a ledger of Administratum accounts. He was to memorize the message; burn the paper and repeat the message to Mu.

Staking-out the office is simple, and on the next hour another servant enters the office. This is Robart, servant to Rodderick. His instructions are the same as Tomas. Neither know that other cultists also deposit papers in the ledger.

**Background Checks**

A direct approach that the Acolytes can try is to physically search the state rooms of those they suspect. All the state rooms are key coded [CHALLENGING SECURITY roll]. A signet ring coder from Klinkerman allows access to all rooms except for Lucius and Rodderick which in addition are guarded. The guards on Rodderick's room will allow characters in if they have a coder, they will prevent forceful entry.

The doors of all the passenger rooms on the Leviathan have a standard strength [ORDINARY S roll +10% but need 3 accumulated levels of success] though the construction ranges from common plastek to the most highly decorative wood inlaid with precious metals. Some passengers have pict-recorders attached.

**Rodderick's Room**

An official request to search Rodderick's room is strongly disputed. While the characters try and persuade either Klinkerman or Lucius of the necessity, Rodderick will send a coded message to Ayson, who will immediately clean away the evidence. If the characters have the heretek from Mu's room it will beep and display “Ritter”.

The room is austere though the few accoutrements are fine and rich. There are various piles of data slates; a cognitator engine and some parchment rolls. These are all concerned with the court accounts, expenses etc.,. One plaque holds the itinerary and tithing from the habitations to be visited.

A successful search [DIFFICULT SEARCH roll -10%] reveals a concealed compartment, with robes, and a parchment text. The parchment text is sufficient to condemn Rodderick, but the characters might be interested in seeing how far the heresy has spread. The parchment has a quick handwritten note about a ritual that is taking place the following midday. “I have put into place all the necessary arrangements to take Charlotte Lisselette to the rink tomorrow at noon, where you will test her to destruction as a necessary step further into the our mysteries”. The note is signed “G”, and if the characters do not make the connection a little prompting [ROUTINE SCHOLASTIC LORE [HERALDRY] roll +20% or HARD INT roll +20%] will remind them of Ayson.

**Gregory Ayson' Room**

A concealed pict-recorder [HARD PER roll at -20%] monitors the inside of the room. If not found and edited, then Ayson is suspicious and has some cultists follow the characters. Their attention is easy to detect and counter but is persistent until the ritual.

There is no heretical or cult material in Ayson' room. The characters eye might [CHALLENGING COMMON LORE [TECH] roll or DIFFICULT COMMON LORE [IMPERIUM] roll -10%] draw attention to a piece of paper, a diagram of a mechanism where a lens is focuses the light of the sun on flat surface. Hand written on the note is “Will need eye protection if the light is of expected intensity”.

**The Ice Rink**

This room is kept below zero and is situated on the top inside deck of the Leviathan. In the ceiling there is a crystal dome which allows skating beneath the stars, though this is always shuttered during the day. The cultists have mounted a lens below the dome so when the shutters are opened, the sun is focused on a block of ice and Charlotte Liselette, an Ice Maiden, will be incinerated. She is dressed in light clothing and chained over the ice. When the shutter is opened Ayson intones the sorcery to summon and bind the daemon.

There are two fanatics guarding each of the main doors, and one on the service entrance. These have the profile of a cult fanatic from the Dark Heresy rulebook page 337. The remainder are only armed with simple ceremonial weapons, daggers and the like. These have the profile of a cult initiate from the Dark Heresy rulebook page 337.
There are several complications for the Acolytes if they storm in unprepared. The following strike list are the potential problems that they will need to contend with; and the response of Ayson as they happen.

1. Each main door has 2 cult fanatics with vox. Thick bulkheads muffle the screaming and chanting of the ceremony. If one or 2 people approach the guards will try dissuasion, there is a 'private party' going on. More than 2 and they raise the alarm, and physically prevent access. The password 'hyacinth' (message to Emily Mu) will get them ushered in without raising the alarm.

2. The back door only has one fanatic. If anyone approaches, the guard will shoot first, and then go inside and lock the door.

3. The external access is unguarded. To get to the speeder bike platform the character will need to traverse the sun baked exterior in protective gear.

4. The alarm is raised. Ayson is ready to raise the shutters. The first round someone bursts into the room the shutters are raised; strike 6.

5. The characters can get in unobserved. Ayson or one of the other cultists will spot the characters unless they are wearing masks; but the characters have 1 surprise round while the cultists are unprepared. If Ayson is having the characters followed then they cannot get in unobserved.

6. It IS an ice rink. The centre is a sheet of ice. Anyone moving at above cautious speed might fall {\textit{Ordinary AG roll} +10\%}. Characters from an icy planet might know how to skate so might only fall if running. Snow has covered the edges of the ice, so even if the characters see the ice they might fall as they enter the hatched area {\textit{Ordinary AG roll} +10\%}.

7. The shutters are raised. The sunlight floods the room. Nobody can see anything. All the cultists are prepared for this and lower their sun-visors. Rodderick, Ayson and two fanatics have photo-visors which allows them to see 'through' smoke and vapour. The victim starts to scream, a continuous shriek of pain and fear. With the focused light on her she loses 2W per round.

8. Smoke and vapours. The intense sunlight on the ice and victim create clouds of steam and smoke. The bright light still incapacitates those not wearing eye protection, while the smoke and steam blind anyone.
using a simple sun-visor.
The trauma of the screaming and incineration, including the smell of burning flesh and hair, is such that the characters must make a **FEAR** test to be able to act.

9 Going well ...
Ayson continues with the ritual while Rodderick and the cult fanatics take cover and try and pick off the characters. The initiates fall to the floor and try to crawl to cover. Unless confronted they do not take part in the fight.

10 Not looking good ...
Ayson will exit through the external environment lock, taking the only silvered cloak and disappears on the skimmer bike.

11 4 rounds later
The victim approaches death, she bursts into flames; strike 12

12 The daemonhost rises
The screaming of the victim changes to a guttural cry of exultation and the figure on the sacrificial block rises up, the flames wreathing her body now unnaturally blue and yellow.

---

**The Burning Popsicle**

If the Acolytes are not prepared, then the fight at the Ice Rink will go badly, and Ayson will have partially succeeded at creating the daemonhost. Read or paraphrase the following.

Your eyes stream from the smoke and vapours, but you see the woman writhing on the block of ice in the middle of the room. The chanting reaches a triumphant crescendo. You watch in horror as the figure on the ice stops screaming from pain and screams from joy. Blue and yellow flames continue to play over the body, but now they appear to be clothing her rather than consuming her. She rises up, above the block, actually floating in the air, chains dangling from her arms and legs. A half-seen figure behind the block points at you and you clearly hear the command

“Kill them! Kill them all!”

Seeing the daemonhost rise is both terrifying and corrupting. (**Challenging WP** roll or gain 1d5 insanity points and 1d5 corruption points.) Charlotte attacks each of the characters, hovering towards them. Cultists in the way are causally vapourised.

**Allies**
The characters might also request a squad of troopers from Colonel Klinkerman. They are armed with lasguns; they can support a siege, but will not recklessly charge into the fumes.

**Deus Ex Machina**

Moncrieff will use the Glass Assassin to observe and possibly intervene. The Glass Assassin is is unaffected by the light and vapours; and the tripod arrangement of it's feet mean it can move with ease on the ice. It casually flickers about the room killing all the cultists with deft strokes that neatly skewer their hearts.

**Moncrieff is Confronted**

If the Acolytes do not need direct intervention of the Glass Assassin, then allow them to spot the it, lurking in the shadows. Moncrieff is prepared to reveal that he is the controller, so allows them to follow the Assassin to his room, though he keeps it away and out of sight of others, slipping into the shadows. Read or paraphrase the following.

The tall bony figure deftly pushes open the door of the Inquisitor's room and stalks inside. As you follow you are amazed to see it halt at the foot of the bed, it turns to you and then seems to diminish, without any visible bending it thickens and shortens, losing it's limbs and jewels; until it is unadorned cylinder.

Then you notice the Inquisitor on the bed. He removes a circlet from his brow and opens eyes that glow bright blue he says to you "a useful tool do you not agree?"

The characters can decide what to do if they discover that Moncrieff is the controller of the Glass Assassin. Reveal his radicalism, and he and the Glass Assassin disappear into the records of Tricorn Palace. Conceal his secret and they gain an ally that they could involve in a future adventure, until his corruption becomes so acute that he disappears into the void.
Outcome

Acolyte rewards

For each session an Acolyte should gain between 100 and 200 XPs for interacting with the court, Inquisitor Moncrieff and thinking of various approaches to link the suspects.

At the climax of the scenario, if the characters quickly stop the ritual, arresting Ayson and Rodderick, they should receive 400XPs since they are competent agents of the Inquisition. If they cannot stop the ritual in time, but they then successfully overcome the daemonhost they should receive only 100XP but do gain a permanent Fate Point, demonstrating their destiny. Only if they realise the nature of the Glass Assassin and the hand of Moncrieff as a radical do they deserve 400XPs and a Fate Point!

It all goes wrong

Lord Lucius is murdered in his bed by the daemon-host Charlotte, the body burned in supernatural fire, leaving a pile of ash on the floor. Rodderick is proclaimed Lord of Tarsus and the Cult of Extremesis has a powerful foothold. Initially Rodderick’s reforms are seen as clever and efficient, though the Ecclesiarchy notes that congregations are dropping and cult activity is on the rise. Startling examples of Heretek and other dark technologies come to light. Finally, the progressive extremists of Tarsus are revealed, plunging the planet into a civil war that will minimally devastate the planet, and more than likely spread off-planet as well.

Dramatis Personae

Horace Alexander

Alexander is a minor functionary always being sent on errands for Lord Lucius. He is the first to meet the Acolytes. Though he has little influence he can explain the customs and introduce people. Use the minor serious noble profile.

Inquisitor Markus Moncrieff

Inquisitor Moncrieff is a well regarded member of the Calixian conclave. He is not associated with any cabal, though the Tyrantines are interested in his Xeno knowledge. For a large part of his career he has been fighting Xeno incursions and infiltration of the Sector. He has not gathered a permanent following of Acolytes preferring to work alone and use the resources available through the Administratum and Imperial Navy.
Inquisitor Marcus Moncrieff

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Movement: -/-/- (no legs)  Wounds: 7/17

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10%, Charm (Fel), Chem Use (Int), Ciphers [Acolyte, War Cant, Court] (Int) +20%, Ciphers [Inquisition] (Int) +10%, Command (Fel) +20%, Common Lore [Administratum/Imperium] +20%, Common Lore [Arbites/Guard/Machine Cult/War] (Int) +10%, Deceive (Fel) +10%, Dodge (Ag) +10%, Forbidden Law [Xeno] (Int) +20%, Forbidden Law [Heresy, Cults, Ords, Inquisition, Mutants] (Int) +10%, Forbidden Law [Warp, Daemons] (Int), Inquiry (Fel) +20%, Intimidate (S) +10%, Interrogation (WP), Literacy (Int), Logic (Int), Psyniscience (Per), Scholastic Lore [Bureaucracy, Cryptology, Legend] (Int) +20%, Scholastic Lore [Judgement, Creed] (Int) +10%, Scrutiny (Per) +10%, Search (Per), Speak Language [High Gothic/Low Gothic] (Int), Tech-use (Int) +10%

Talents: Air of Authority, Basic Weapon Training (Flame, Las) Blademaster, Cleanse and Purify, Exotic Weapon Training (Digi), Good Reputation [Inquisition], Melee weapon training (Primitive, Power), Mental Fortress, Paranoia, Pistol Training (Las, SP), Resistance[Psychic] +20%, Sound Constitution, Strong Minded, Unshakable Faith

Armour: None

Weapons: Digi-needler (10m, S/-/-; 1d10 R; Pen 0; Clip 3; No reload; accurate; toxic)


The Glass Assassin

The Glass Assassin is a wraith-bone construct and can change shape in unusual ways. The quiescent state is a regular cylinder 50cm long and 10cm in diameter, coloured ivory and unadorned. When unfolded it assumes a skeletal shape 2m tall. In this shape the plain ivory is ornamented with colourful crystals embedded in the shape.

It stalks on two legs though instead of feet it has a small tripod extension. There is no head but a thickened nodule tops the form. As pieces are blasted away, the material rearranges itself, thinning and spreading to smooth any irregularities. Only when it loses the last wound does it shatter and 'die'.
Glass Assassin Profile

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Movement: 4/8/12/28  Wounds: 10

Skills: Awareness (Per) [Listen -10] Concealment (Ag) Silent Move (Ag) +10

Talents:

Traits: Strange Physiology [All hits are body hits; dies on total wounds]

Armour: Machine body (Body 3) note that in all forms the strange composition means that all hits are against the body

Weapons: Needle tipped appendages (1d10+5 †††; T; Pen 2)
† Use WP of the operator to make an attack
†† The (Int) (Per) and (WP) of the Glass Assassin are the operators
††† S bonus included

To control the Assassin, the operator dons an ivory coloured circlet, whereupon the device will unfold. It will fold down to a cylinder a few minutes after the operator removes the circlet. Control is a matter of will, the mechanism understands the desire of the operator.
The Glass Assassin sends sights, smells, and any sounds as loud as normal conversation. The operator can will [EASY WP roll +30%] the structure to squeeze into a pipe 10cm in diameter, stealthily unfolding itself into the normal form as it emerges.
The psychic connection is dangerous to the operator. Prolonged expose to the machine results in the psyche of the machine spreading into the operators mind. Each time the machine is used the operator gains 1 insanity point; each time a WP roll is failed while attacking 1d10 insanity points are gained.

Lucius Ritter

Lord Lucius has been the ruler of Hive Tarsus for the last 20 years. He is fat and complacent. He enjoys the Progress since he can get away from the influence of the Ecclesiarchy, so the feeling on the leviathan is one of levity, frivolity and play. Use the serious noble profile and add Carouse (T) +10%.

Bartholomew Klinkerman

The aged Colonel has a sharp mind. He is loyal and snobbish, but stubborn. If the Acolytes do not emphasize their Inquisitional authority then he will politely refuse requests for more details with a 'not your concern' argument.
Colonel Bartholomew Klinkerman
Colonel PDF (retired)

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Movement: 3/6/9/18  Wounds: 18

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10%, Chem Use (Int), Ciphers [War Cant, Court] (Int) +10%, Command (Fel) +20%, Common Lore [Imperial Guard] +20%, Common Lore [Administratum/War] (Int) +10%, Deceive (Fel), Inquiry (Fel) +20%, Intimidate (S) +10%, Interrogation (WP), Literacy (Int), Scholastic Lore [Tactica] (Int) +20%, Scholastic Lore [Bureaucracy/Creed] (Int) +10%, Speak Language [High Gothic/Low Gothic] (Int), Tech-use (Int) +10%

Talents: Air of Authority, Iron discipline, Melee weapon training (Primitive, Chain), Nerves of Steel, Pistol Training (Las, SP), Resistance[Psychic], Sound Constitution x 2

Armour: Carapace chest plate (Body 6), leather clothing (Arms/legs 2 primitive)

Weapons: Las pistol (30m; S/-/-; 1d10+2 E; Pen 0; Clip 30; reload full; reliable; accurate) and sight (+10BS), Frag grenades x 4 (9m; 2d10 X; Pen 0; Blast [4]), Chainsword (1d10+5† R; balanced; tearing)

†S bonus included

Gear: Uniform; 37 Throne Gelt in pouch. Signet ring encoder all passenger areas. Chrono, Vox, Data slate. Las pistol recharge x 2

Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima

Tomas

Tomas is Emily Mu's man servant. Tomas is a latent psycher, use the 'Citizen' profile in the Dark Heresy rulebook page 338 but add the talent Minor Psychic Power – Lucky. Since he has a latent talent he does not have a psy-rating. When he fails a roll but one of the dice roll comes up '1' then allow a lucky re-roll.

Lavender Prentice

Lavender is an Ice Maiden. She has a nominal post within the court but is principally there to look pretty.

Adrian Utlander

Utlander is not a native to Scintilla coming from the feral world of Strank, destined to be a grunt-bodyguard. Luckily his autistic ability with numbers has found himself a niche in Lucius' household as Secretarius Scudi. Use the adept profile.

Robart

Robart is Rodderick's personal body guard and man-servant, and a cultist. The characters could confront Robart at various times. Use the 'Bounty Hunter' profile in the Dark Heresy rulebook page 336

Rodderick Ritter

Rodderick is a cultist with fast rising importance. He is keen to embrace the cult's ideals. Use the profile for serious noble. His gear includes a vox-linked data slate.

The cultists have a simple security system, a vox-linked data slate. Press an icon and their name appears on the data slate of the
other cultists. This is used to signal if they are under suspicion. Ayson has a signet ring coder for the other's rooms. He will clean away evidence in Rodderick's room; but for the other cultists he orders Gustav to kill them.

**Gustav of Thrace**

Gustav is the champion of Lord Lucius and has an nasty reputation. He has a fair amount of influence. Mu was a pupil of Gustav, and many thought they might be having an affair. Use the 'Dissolute Noble' profile in the *Dark Heresy rulebook* page 339 but his WS is 45, he has the dodge skill (Ag) +20%, blademaster talent, and he has a well used silver hilted duelling sword (1d10+3 R; balanced; primitive). He has a vox-linked data slate.

**Gregory Ayson**

Ayson wears a distinctive dark grey robe with a deep hood he pulls over his face. When questioned, he responds that his up-bringing on the prairies of Percipre has made him susceptible to the cold.

**Gregory Ayson - Extremesis Cult Magus**

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<td>30</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>33</td>
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</table>

**Movement:** 3/6/9/18  
**Wounds:** 15

**Skills:** Awareness (Per), Charm (Fel), Ciphers [Occult/Court] (Int), Command (Fel) +10%, Common Lore [Imperium] (Int) +20%, Deceive (Fel) +20%, Dodge (Ag), Forbidden Lore [Tzeentch] (Int) +10%, Interrogation (WP), Literacy (Int) +10%, Scholastic Lore [Bureaucracy] (Int) +10%, Secret Tongue [Tzeentch] (Int), Speak Language [High Gothic/Low Gothic] (Int), Tech-use (Int)

**Talents:** Melee Weapon Training (Primitive, Power), Pistol Training (Las, SP), Resistance [Psychic Powers], Strong Minded, Unshakable Faith, Psy Rating 3

**Psychic Powers:** Distort Vision, Fearful Aura, Flash Bang, Inflict Pain, Weaken Veil, Sculpt Flame

**Armour:** Mesh Duelling Doublet (Body 4), leather clothing (Arms/legs 2 primitive)

**Weapons:** Compact laspistol (15m, S/3/-; 1d10+1 E; shots 15; reload full; reliable), power sword (1d10+11† E; Pen 6; balanced; power field), duelling sword (1d10+3† R; Pen 0; balanced; primitive)  
†S bonus included

**Gear:** Chrono, vox, auto-quill, vox-linked†† data slate, signet ring coder [includes Rodderick's room] and photo-visor.  
†† As Rodderick.

**Charlotte Liselette as daemonhost**

Charlotte is an Ice Maiden to whom Ayson is going to bind the daemon Lss'the'let, a daemonic creature of Tzeentch, to make the daemonhost. Her possessed body is even more pronoucedly pale, but she can now float eerily above the floor, her pale bare feet hanging down. Flashes of yellow and blue fire play around her, and the colours are repeated in her clothes. Her eyes glow bright colours and her hair floats and moves about her head. The daemonhost only has a bestial intelligence. She obeys the will of Ayson but can easily incinerate other cultists that get in the way of her prey. If the Acolytes interrupt the ritual she is only once-bound, and still suffers Warp Instability; a character [**ORDINARY FORBIDDEN LORE [DAEMONOLOGY]** roll +10%] might realise this.
Profiles: Charlotte and Lss'the'let (Flamer of Tzeentch) a daemonhost

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Movement: 8/16/24/48 hovering
Wounds: 14

Skills: Awareness (Per) Psyniscience (WP)

Talents: None

Traits: Daemonic, Creature of the Warp, Dark Sight, Flames of Change [Anything wounded by psychic attack must succeed a WP roll +10% or gain 1d5 corruption], Fear 3, From Beyond, Hoverer 16, Natural Weapons (teeth), Strange Physiology, Unnatural Speed, Warp Instability [If the creature receives damage and does not deal damage to others by the end of next turn it must make a WP roll. It takes 1W + 1W for every level of failure]

Psychic Powers:
(Psy Rating 3): Burning Fist; Fire Bolt; Fire Storm

Unholy Changes: Glowing Eyes and Wrapped in blue and yellow flames

Daemonic Phenomena: … the air is cold, breath forms in the air, surfaces are covered with a sheet of dancing flame ...

Armour: None

Weapons: Teeth (1d10+3† R; primitive)
†S bonus included

Gear: High fashion clothing of fine fabrics; 120 Throne Gelt jewellery; 20 Throne Gelt in pouch.

Threat Rating: Malleus Majoris

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Cast of Hundreds

When the Acolytes interact with someone choose a name and then their role if not defined from the situation. The profiles are from either the Dark Heresy rulebook or given here.

A-Z names

Roll d10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Important court notable: roll d10 again;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>Noble, ‘serious’ faction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4, 5, 6</td>
<td>Noble, ‘dilettante’ faction, use ‘Dissolute Noble’ profile in the Dark Heresy rulebook page 339</td>
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<tr>
<td>7, 8, 9</td>
<td>Notable adept</td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Ice Maiden</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Minor noble, ‘serious’ faction</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Minor noble, ‘dilettante’ faction, use ‘Dissolute Noble’ profile in the Dark Heresy rulebook page 339</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Adept</td>
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<td>5, 6, 7, 8</td>
<td>Servant, re-roll unless the characters are particularly looking for a servant; servants manage to fade into the background. Use ‘Citizen’ profile in the Dark Heresy rulebook page 338 but they are smartly dressed in uniform with heraldic devices, and have 1d10 Throne gelt in their purses.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>PDF trooper {officers have minor nobility role} use the 'Kill Squad Trooper' profile in the Dark Heresy rulebook page 341 though with lasgun (100m; S/3/-; 1d10+3 E; clip 60; full reload; reliable) and shock maul (1d10 I; shocking)</td>
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<td>Crew member. Use the Adept profile; but with Tech-use (Int) +20% and the talents Pistol training (las, SP), Melee weapon training (shock, primitive). Give them a las pistol and shock maul too. They use normal clothes so consider them un-armoured.</td>
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**Adept**

A profile to use for any of the adepts of court. These are the bureaucratic members of the court who owe their positions from Administratum politics rather than inheritance. 10% of the adepts are representatives of the Adeptus Mechanicus, for these use ‘Tech Adept’ profile in the Dark Heresy rulebook page 345

**Adept Profile**

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

**Wounds:** 12

**Skills:** Awareness (Per), Charm (Fel), Chem Use (Int), Ciphers [Court] (Int) +10, Command (Fel) +10%, Common Lore [Administratum + Arbites/Ecclesiarchy/Creed/Imperium] (Int) +10%. Deceive (Fel), Inquiry (Fel) +10%, Literacy (Int) +10%, Logic (Int), Scholastic Lore [Bureaucracy] (Int) +10%, Speak Language [High Gothic/Low Gothic] (Int), Tech-use (Int) +10%

**Talents:** Pistol Training (SP)

**Armour:** Leather clothing (Body/Arms/legs 2 primitive)

**Weapons:** Stub auto (30m; S/3/-; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 9; reload full)

**Gear:** Thick! Adeptus robes; 20 Throne Gelt jewellery; 2d10 Throne Gelt in pouch. Signet ring encoder. Chrono, Auto quill, data slate,

**Threat Rating:** Hereticus Minima
**Serious Noble**

A profile to use for any of the serious nobles generated. The nobles of the court might also be Administratum bureaucrats or they could be associated through feudal obligations. Minor nobles have the top row of characteristics, more important nobles the second.

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**Movement:** 3/6/9/18  
**Wounds:** 14

**Skills:** Awareness (Per), Charm (Fel), Ciphers [Court] (Int), Command (Fel) +10%, Common Lore [Imperium] (Int) +10%, Deceive (Fel), Dodge (Ag), Gamble (Int), Interrogation (WP) +10%, Intimidate (S), Literacy (Int), Logic (Int), Scholastic Lore [Bureaucracy] (Int) +10%, Speak Language [High Gothic/Low Gothic] (Int), Tech-use (Int)

**Talents:** Melee Weapon Training (Power, Primitive, Shock), Pistol Training (Las, SP), Quick Draw

**Armour:** Mesh Duelling Doublet (Body 4), leather clothing (Arms/legs 2 primitive)

**Weapons:** Compact laspistol (15m, S/3/-; 1d10+1 E; shots 15; reload full; reliable), power sword (1d10+11† E; pen 6; balanced; power field), duelling sword (1d10+3† R; balanced; primitive)  
†S bonus included

**Gear:** Thick! High fashion clothing of fine fabrics; 120 Throne Gelt jewellery; 4d10 Throne Gelt in pouch. Signet ring encoder. Vox. Chrono.

**Threat Rating:** Hereticus Minima

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**The Ice Maidens**

The court of Lord Lucius has many beautiful people. The Acolytes are particularly going to notice the Ice Maidens. These women are not only graceful and alluring, they are wearing very light delicate clothing, all silks and veils, while around them people are shivering in furs and many layered clothing.
Ice Maiden Profile

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<th>WS</th>
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<th>S</th>
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<th>Ag</th>
<th>Int</th>
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<td>35</td>
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Movement: 2/4/6/12

Wounds: 8

Skills: Awareness (Per), Carouse (T) +10%, Charm (Fel) +20%, Common Lore [Imperium] (Int), Concealment (Ag), Deceive (Fel) +10%, Literacy (Int), Performer [Singer/Dancer/Instrumentalist] (Fel), Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language [High Gothic/Low Gothic] (Int)

Talents: None

Traits: Cold Blooded, Unnatural toughness (x2)

Armour: None

Weapons: Unarmed (special 1d5 - 3)

Gear: High fashion clothing of fine fabrics; 120 Throne Gelt jewellery; 20 Throne Gelt in pouch.

Threat Rating: Hereticus Minima

The characters will likely expect heresy or recidivism, but the truth is more mundane. They are dosed with a strong alchemical preparation which prevents them from freezing to death and maintains their body temperature at only just above freezing. The change in body chemistry slows and confuses mental processes, so their conversation is disjointed and vague.

An amusing introduction to the Ice Maidens would be for the characters to find a beautiful woman lying on an icy bench, wearing very little. She is cold to the touch, so unless the characters are prompted to search for a pulse, then they are likely to assume she is dead from exposure. Let them call for help, and then have the girl wake-up, this will make them look a little foolish and reduce their reputation in the eyes of the court.

Dangers of the desert

Venomous Spire Cactus

The spire cactus is one of few types of deep desert vegetation standing roughly 3m tall. The upper part is enclosed in a very hard woody cap. Leaves unfold from underneath the cap in the early morning to catch condensation and early sunlight. The root system spreads 5m from the cactus under the surrounding sand, with tuber like growths near the surface. When disturbed the tuber explodes sending up a large cloud of poisonous needles.

Each round a person must tread carefully (EASY Ag roll +30%) or try to uncover the tubers (ORDINARY PER +10% roll). Fail, and the tuber explodes. The cloud automatically affects anyone without a breathing mask, and there is a small chance of the wooden splinters penetrating light clothing 10% or exposed skin 25%. The effects are as a hallucinating gas, see the Dark Heresy rulebook page 136.

Dire Cat

A Dire Cat is a man sized pseudo-feline predator of the desert that hunts at night before burying itself in the sand during the day. The coat is a glossy gold yellow sheen much sought after. For the profile use a “Ferocious Creature” from the Dark Heresy rulebook page 349, with the addition that, during the day, when stepped upon, the cat has automatic surprise, and pounces on the hapless traveller.

Silicatalid

A silicatalid is a small worm that burrows in the sands of the Tarsus desert scraping the bed rock to obtain rare minerals. The worm is drawn to refined metals and plastek, and the calcium in a human skeleton. A character can might notice (DIFFICULT PER roll -10% or ORDINARY COMMON LORE (BEAST) roll +10%) silicatalid traces. The first an unsuspecting victim is likely to feel is the stirring under the sand as it starts to eat into their boot soles. If the boots are not immediately removed, the silicatalid will bore though the flesh of the foot and start digesting the bones. Fortunately the worm is sated after destroying the bones of a foot (3 wounds).
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Radicals!

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Scenario
The Glass Assassin

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