NECROMUNDA

APOCRYPHA NECROMUNDA

ESCAPE FROM ZALKTRAA

The wilds, wastes and badzones of Necromunda are filled with legends and myths of every colour and kind imaginable. Some of them are even true. Wander into any drinking hole in Hive Primus and crack open a bottle of Wild Snake (or Second Best if you're a little light on creds) and within moments some crusty-faced local will be bending your ear with a tale or two. Maybe their little corner of the underhive was once the site of a showdown between the notorious Carrion Queens and the equally nefarious Irontree Reavers, or perhaps the legendary bounty hunter Kal Jericho drank at the very bar you're sitting at now and they got close enough to touch the hem of his duster. Whatever the yarn, you'd do well to listen carefully, for hidden in every story is at least a grain of truth, and maybe even a lesson or two that might keep you alive when you're next out wandering the badzones looking for trouble…

ESCAPE FROM ZALKTRAA

Of all Lord Helmawr's many prisons, few are as unpleasant as Hive Zalktraa. Rising from the Poison Sea, beyond the western edge of the Irradium Oceanus, its rust-streaked spires pierce the low, toxic clouds. It is here the Master of Necromunda disposes of those he either will not or cannot kill, but wishes to seal away from the rest of the world. Notorious warp-tainted villains, off-world dignitaries who have crossed Gerontius or nobles whose birthright spares their lives but not their freedom, have all been sentenced to the remote prison. The worst of the worst, those whose very presence imperils Necromunda are condemned to the deepest cells. For, like cloud-piercing spires of the world, only a small proportion of Zalktraa is visible above the surface of the Poison Sea. The vastness of the hive extends down hundreds of metres to the seabed, the lowest levels buried in the muck and refuse of ten thousand years of industrial run-off. Escape from these sunken levels is considered impossible… or so most believe.

Prisoner UD-414, as she was now known, was one of these subjects of Necromunda considered too dangerous to ever see the light of day again. When she had displeased her noble family and fled to the underhive, both to escape their wrath and a lifetime of servitude to the Imperial House, they had spent vast sums to bring her to justice. In the hive forsaking one's duty is among the worst crimes imaginable, even more so for one of noble blood. When, after the excessive expenditure of credits and lives she was captured, there was no doubt where Lord Helmawr was going to send her.

Since that day Prisoner UD-414 had languished in one of the deep cells, where she quickly lost track of time, perpetually sealed as she was in her cell. Deep below the waterline, the prisoner's cell was lit only by the glow of lumen-strips. This was done purposefully by the gaolers of Zalktraa as it allowed them another means of control over the inmates – choosing when to allow them day and night. The guards also never spoke with the prisoner, silently sliding food trays through the slit in her cell door, but never letting her beyond the confines of her tiny room. This was not universal treatment for the inmates of Zalktraa, but rather explicit orders from Lord Helmawr, that this particular prisoner should never be allowed out. The guards often wondered what they had to fear from the skinny, half-starved one-eyed woman, but did not question their orders.
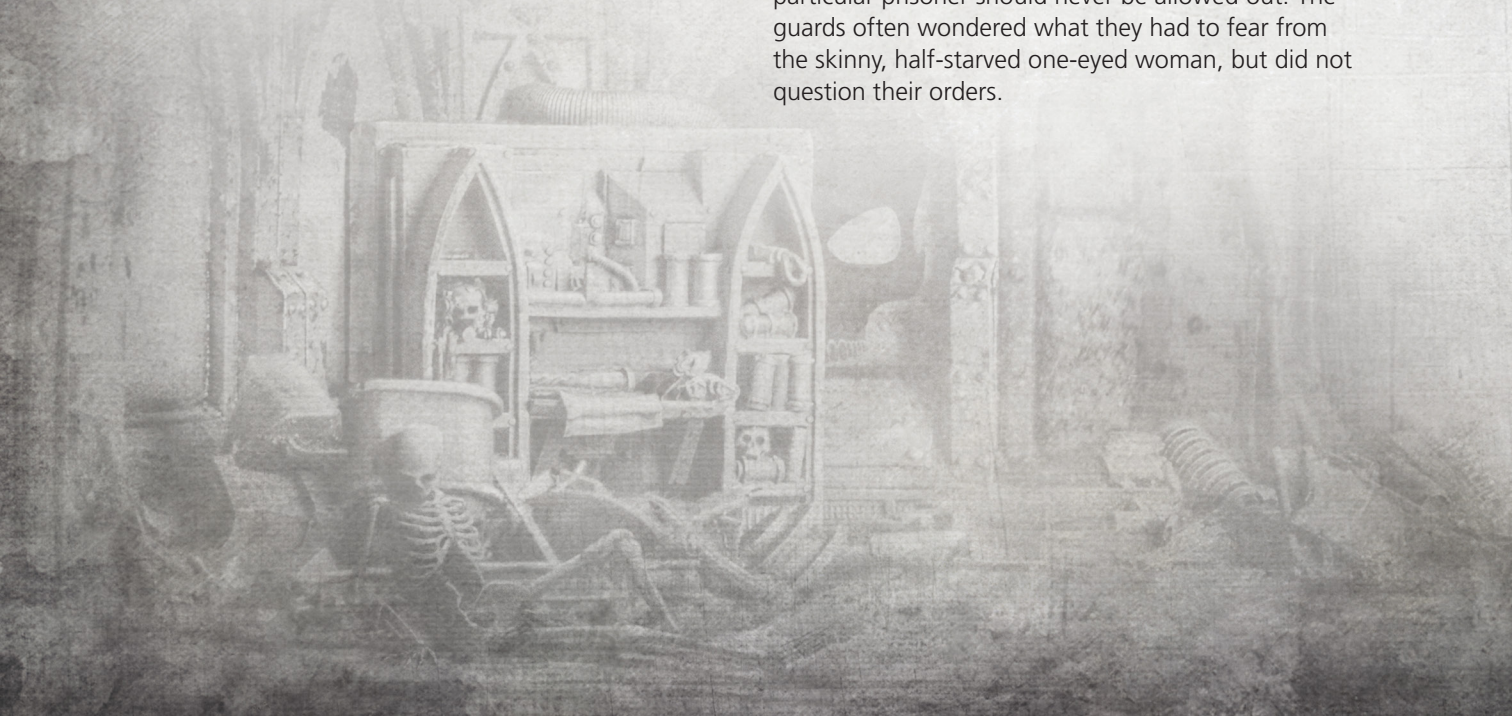
The cycle it all changed was just like the dozens that had come before. It was deep night-cycle and the cell was pitch black. Eerie deep sea sounds echoed from outside the cell, and the hundred other hums, rattles and rumblings that were a constant of hive life, filled the quiet. Then there came a sound Prisoner UD-414 had not heard before – a soft click, followed by an almost inaudible creaking. Looking up the prisoner saw her cell door had ever so slightly moved and now a sliver of false light cut across the floor. Like a phyrr cat she unfolded her crossed arms and legs and crawled towards the door. Peering through the gap she saw a guard not three paces away, oblivious to the fact she was now free. Almost without thought the prisoner slipped out into the corridor on dirty bare feet. Her hand closed around the guard's holstered stub gun before he even knew she was there. Rather than draw the weapon she simply twisted it until the muzzle was buried in the Enforcer's gut – and then squeezed the trigger. The Enforcer's quilted armour muffled the sound of the shot, though did little to stop the bullet as it tore through his abdomen. As the dying guard collapsed, she wrenched the pistol free from the holster just in time as two more guards rounded the end of the corridor. Before they could react she shot the first in the face and the second in his stomach. The first pitched back in a spray of blood, the second fell to the floor screaming. As the still-living guard writhed in his own blood, she walked over to him, bent down and seized his wrist. With a strength that had always surprised her enemies, she dragged the guard to the end of the corridor, periodically striking him with the butt of her pistol when he tried to get free. At the end of the corridor she planted the guard's hand to the palm-lock, its light turning to amber as the security door hissed open, followed a second later by the crack of her stub gun. Leaving the dead guard in her wake, she set off deeper into the hive.

A score of levels above the deep cells, a half dozen Van Saar and one well-dressed noblewoman were crowded into a small security control chamber. Their leader, Droon, turned from the cogitator's ghostly-green display to the noblewoman who had been leaning over him while he worked.

"She's free. I've opened all the cell doors in Theta Block and shut down the guard stations on sub-levels twelve through seventeen – though it won't stop them for long."

It was hard to tell what the noblewoman was thinking behind the veil that covered her face, though Droon got the impression she was pleased.

"If she makes her way along the path I've set out, we should be able to meet her somewhere under Sea Gate Seven."

The noblewoman simply nodded, before turning and striding out of the control room. Droon got up and motioned for the rest of his gang to fall in… time to go and meet this prisoner, whoever she was.

Prisoner UD-414 blinked blood from her good eye, though the vision before her didn't get any clearer. In one hand she held a shock maul, its power cell dead and its surface dripping with blood, in the other the stub gun, its chambers empty but instinct not allowing her to let it go. She was smart enough to know she was being led somewhere, but so far powerless to not follow the path set out before her. Her only goal at the moment was to keep moving up towards the surface. Looking around the guard station, the broken bodies of its occupants lying where she had killed them, her gaze fell on the open security door, its presence both an invitation and a promise that whoever was helping her was not far away. Well, if they wanted to help her escape, who was she to argue – and if she didn't like what came after, she could always kill them too.

Droon took a stub round to the chest and staggered back, his mesh armour and underarmour soaking up the impact. In reply he laid down an incandescent stream of plasma blasts, forcing the guards back into cover on the far side of the bridge. The Enforcers had closed off access to the lower levels and opened the sea gates flooding the dock level, and in the process created obstacles like the sea-filled chasm that now stood between him and the prisoner. The rest of his gang were nearby, hunkered down among the barrels and crates that lined the edges of the chasm. Their pale survival suits and glowing cortical shunts made them stand out in the gloom, but for all that they continued to snap off las shots without fear.

Droon turned to call out to the noblewoman and tell her they had to find another way, but she was gone. Scanning the edge of the chasm, he suddenly saw her set out across the bridge. Rounds flashed off her refractor field while the servo-skulls above her shoulders twisted to and fro looking for enemies. She fired her laspistol into the darkness with unerring accuracy and Droon saw at least three guards cut
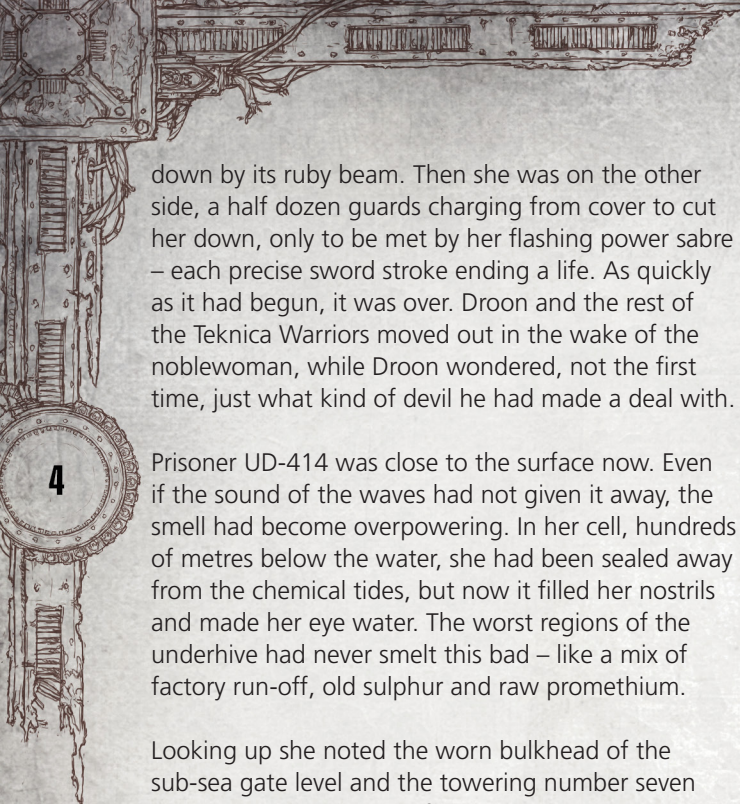
down by its ruby beam. Then she was on the other side, a half dozen guards charging from cover to cut her down, only to be met by her flashing power sabre – each precise sword stroke ending a life. As quickly as it had begun, it was over. Droon and the rest of the Teknica Warriors moved out in the wake of the noblewoman, while Droon wondered, not the first time, just what kind of devil he had made a deal with.

Prisoner UD-414 was close to the surface now. Even if the sound of the waves had not given it away, the smell had become overpowering. In her cell, hundreds of metres below the water, she had been sealed away from the chemical tides, but now it filled her nostrils and made her eye water. The worst regions of the underhive had never smelt this bad – like a mix of factory run-off, old sulphur and raw promethium.

Looking up she noted the worn bulkhead of the sub-sea gate level and the towering number seven painted on its side. As before, the bulkhead began to rumble aside in a rain of rust flakes when she drew closer. The smell, already brutal, increased tenfold and she almost gagged. With the stench, a wash of foetid water rushed out to meet her, its polluted tide lapping around her feet much to her distaste. Ankle-deep in the foul water, a half dozen figures emerged from the gloom. One, a veiled woman who seemed vaguely familiar stepped forward through the open sea gate, her hand extended in greeting. And it was at that moment the prisoner recognized her.

"Greetings my lady, I am Cre…"

Before Lady Credo could finish the prisoner lunged forwards, bringing the bloody power maul around in a punishing arc. With almost preternatural speed Credo swayed backwards out of the way, her own blade coming up in a defensive position. The two women circled each other warily while Droon and his gang helplessly looked on.

"We don't have time for this! More Enforcers coming!" yelled Droon, though his warning fell on deaf ears as the prisoner unleashed a flurry of blows against Credo, forcing the noblewoman to give ground.

As if summoned by Droon's cry, a dozen more guards charged out of the corridor the prisoner had just emerged from. Bolt rounds hammered into the sea gate forcing the Van Saar into cover, their energy weapons replying with brilliant flashes of fire. Apparently oblivious to the new threat, Credo and the prisoner continued to duel in the shadow of the great gate, their feet kicking up sprays of foetid water with each thrust, swing and parry.

"I'm here to help you!" cried Credo between blade swings, "Your family needs you, you are the…"

At the mention of her family the prisoner screamed incoherently and threw herself at Credo. Dropping her weapons she grabbed the noblewoman and the two fell to the floor. Droon, from his cover, watched as the pair wrestled, the prisoner trying to force Credo's head under the shallow water. Past them where the guards were laying down fire, he saw new hulking shapes appear – Sanctioner Automata. The heavily armoured Enforcer robots pressed forward, the Van Saar fire barely scorching their armour. One levelled a concussion cannon and Droon ducked into cover just before the weapon spoke. Water was thrown up in a fine mist by the blast and on the ground Credo and the prisoner were flung back into the bulkhead. The gang leader swiftly took the opportunity to send out two of his fighters to grab the pair of dazed women.

Under a withering barrage of covering fire, the gangers dragged Credo and the prisoner through the open sea gate. Droon then keyed the override and gave the Enforcers a cold smile as the massive door began to grind close… before jamming, leaving a metre gap between floor and door.

"Helmawr's teeth!" Droon cursed, mashing the close icon again and again.

On the other side of the door the Enforcers advanced behind their heavy support – worse, the prisoner was coming round. Looking around in desperation, Droon's eyes fell the on dome seals overhead, beyond which hammered the waters of the Poison Sea. Shifting his aim he unleashed a stream of super-heated plasma into the nearest seal, burning away its locks.

With a tortured screech the seal broke and a tidal wave of foetid water poured into the chamber. The Enforcers were caught in the deluge, many thrown from their feet. Droon and his gang, two of them still dragging Credo and the prisoner, were pushed back as the tide rushed through the half-open sea gate. Wading through the rising water, Droon led the way to higher ground trying to find a way to the surface.

Prisoner UD-414, recovering from the stunning effect of the concussion cannon, threw off the Van Saar ganger helping her and looked around, perhaps eager to finish off Credo. Her gaze fell on the noblewomen, herself just recovering, and they stared hatefully at each other. Before Droon could intervene or either woman could attack the other, the chest-high water erupted as a pair of Sanctioners emerged from the depths.

"Climb!" screamed Droon, and finally both Credo and the prisoner listened to him.

Trading shots with the robots, the Van Saar and their two companions began scrambling up the maze of stairs and gantries leading to the surface. Beneath them the Sanctioners implacably advanced, even as the water rose around them.

For minutes they climbed, all the while staying just ahead of the automata. At points the robots used their concussion cannons to blast the ladders or gantries as the Van Saar struggled across or up them, and twice fighters were sent tumbling down into the effluent below. At last they reached the apex of the chamber, Credo and the prisoner both struggling with the outer seal as Droon and his surviving crew tried to keep the Sanctioners at bay.

One of the robots climbed onto the platform with Droon, Credo and the prisoner. As it did, the Van Saar leader unleashed a blast of plasma into its chest. The thing staggered back under the attack, but quickly righted itself, ignoring the smoking wound left by the weapon. Droon fired his gun again, but as he squeezed the trigger, it malfunctioned and exploded in a blaze of white, hot flame, blowing him apart.

Ignoring Droon's demise, Credo heaved open the seal, revealing the roiling sea and rusting docks beyond. The prisoner scrambled out first, Credo close on her heels. No sooner was Credo clear than the prisoner pushed the seal closed once more. As it crashed down, the sounds of the screaming Van Saar as they fought desperately against the Sanctioners was abruptly cut off.

Prisoner UD-414 gave Credo an appraising look.

"If I go with you, it's for one reason and one reason alone… I get to kill them all."

Credo only paused for a second, before giving a slight nod.
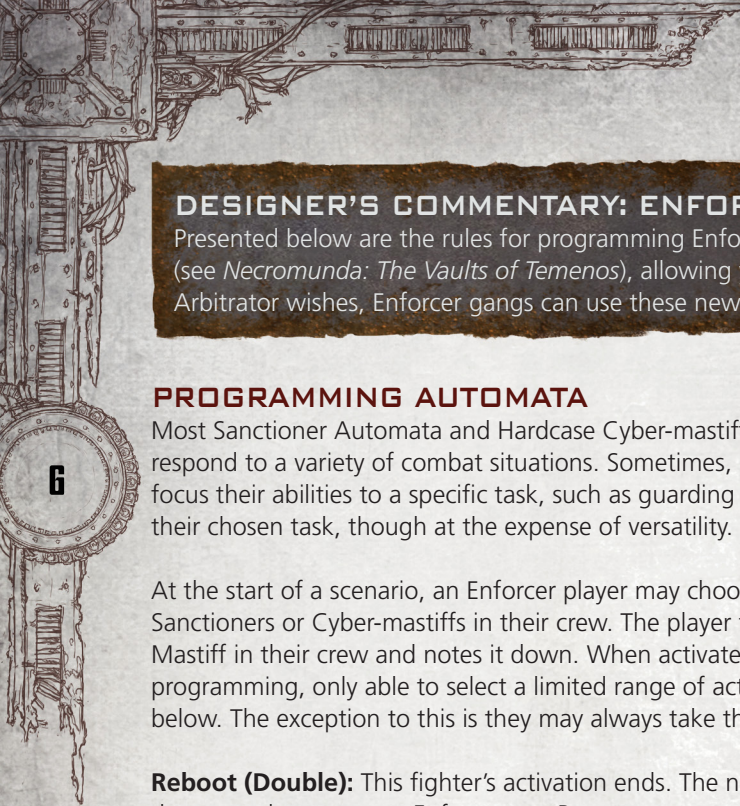
DESIGNER'S COMMENTARY: ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS

Presented below are the rules for programming Enforcer Sanctioner Automata and Hardcase Cyber-mastiffs (see *Necromunda: The Vaults of Temenos*), allowing you to represent the guard automata of Zalktraa. If the Arbitrator wishes, Enforcer gangs can use these new rules in their campaign.

PROGRAMMING AUTOMATA

Most Sanctioner Automata and Hardcase Cyber-mastiffs follow standard Enforcer protocols, allowing them to respond to a variety of combat situations. Sometimes, Enforcers will alter the programming of the automata to focus their abilities to a specific task, such as guarding or hunting. This focus makes the robots more deadly in their chosen task, though at the expense of versatility.

At the start of a scenario, an Enforcer player may choose to enact Enforcement Programs on any or all of the Sanctioners or Cyber-mastiffs in their crew. The player then selects a program for each Sanctioner or Cyber-Mastiff in their crew and notes it down. When activated, these fighters will now act according to their chosen programming, only able to select a limited range of actions, as detailed on the Enforcement Programs table below. The exception to this is they may always take the Reboot action.

Reboot (Double): This fighter's activation ends. The next time they activate, before performing any actions they may choose a new Enforcement Program.

ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS

PROGRAM	AVAILABLE ACTIONS	BENEFITS
Hunt	Move (Simple), Shoot (Basic), Aim (Basic)	At the start of each End phase, move this fighter D6" closer to the nearest enemy fighter. Cyber-mastiffs with this program have to end their activation within 6" of their owner rather than the normal 3".
Intimidate	Move (Simple), Charge (Double), Fight (Basic)	At the end of this fighter's activation, all enemy fighters within 2" of them must make a Nerve test.
Guard	Shoot (Basic), Fight (Basic), Aim (Basic)	When making attacks outside of their activation (i.e., Reaction or Got Your Six attacks), add a +1 modifier to both this fighter's hit and wound rolls.
Capture	Charge (Double), Fight (Basic)	If this fighter takes an enemy fighter Out of Action with a Fight (Basic) Action, roll a D6. On a 4+, that fighter is Captured. If any fighters are Captured in this way, do not roll to Capture fighters in the post-battle sequence.
Kill	Charge (Double), Shoot (Basic), Fight (Basic)	This fighter counts both the Shoot (Basic) and Fight (Basic) actions as Simple actions.
Rescue	Move (Simple), Fight (Basic)	If this fighter is within 3" of a friendly Prone and Seriously Injured fighter in the Recovery phase, that fighter is considered to have automatically rolled a Flesh Wound when rolling to recover – there is no need to roll the Injury dice.

ESCAPE THE DEEP

"No one gets out of Zalktraa alive, and even the dead don't always make it."

Durran Hox, Enforcer Warden, Hive Zalktraa Sub-level 12 Shift

In this scenario, a gang of inmates must fight their way to freedom from the depths of an undersea prison, while they are hunted by their captors.

ATTACKER AND DEFENDER
In this scenario, one gang is the attacker and the other is the defender. If this scenario is being played as part of a campaign, then the gang that issued the challenge is the attacker; otherwise, roll off with the winner deciding whether they will attack or defend.

BATTLE TYPE
This scenario is a Sector Mechanicus battle. Vehicles and wargear that grant the Mounted condition cannot be included in either gang's starting crew.

BATTLEFIELD
Set up the battlefield as described in the Battlefield Set-up & Scenarios section of the *Necromunda Rulebook*. Ideally, there should be two or three terrain pieces with multiple levels. This scenario is designed to be played on a 3'x3' battlefield.

CREWS
This scenario uses the standard rules for choosing a crew, as described in the Battlefield Set-up & Scenarios section of the *Necromunda Rulebook*. The attacker uses the Custom Selection (6) method to determine their crew. The defender uses the Custom Selection (10) method to determine their crew and their Fighter cards are shuffled together to form the Reinforcements deck.

DEPLOYMENT
The attacker deploys their fighters anywhere at least 12" away from the centre of the battlefield and at least 6" away from each other. Attackers cannot be deployed on any elevated areas. All of the defender's fighters will arrive on the battlefield using the Reinforcement rules.

GANG TACTICS
Each player may choose two gang tactics from those available to their gang.

ENDING THE BATTLE
If, at the end of any round, at least three of the attacker's crew have escaped the battlefield (see page 8), or only one gang has fighters remaining on the battlefield, the battle ends immediately.

VICTORY
If at least three of the attacker's crew escape the battlefield, they are the winner. Any other result is a victory for the defender.

REWARDS

CREDITS
The victorious gang adds 2D6x10 credits to their Stash.

EXPERIENCE
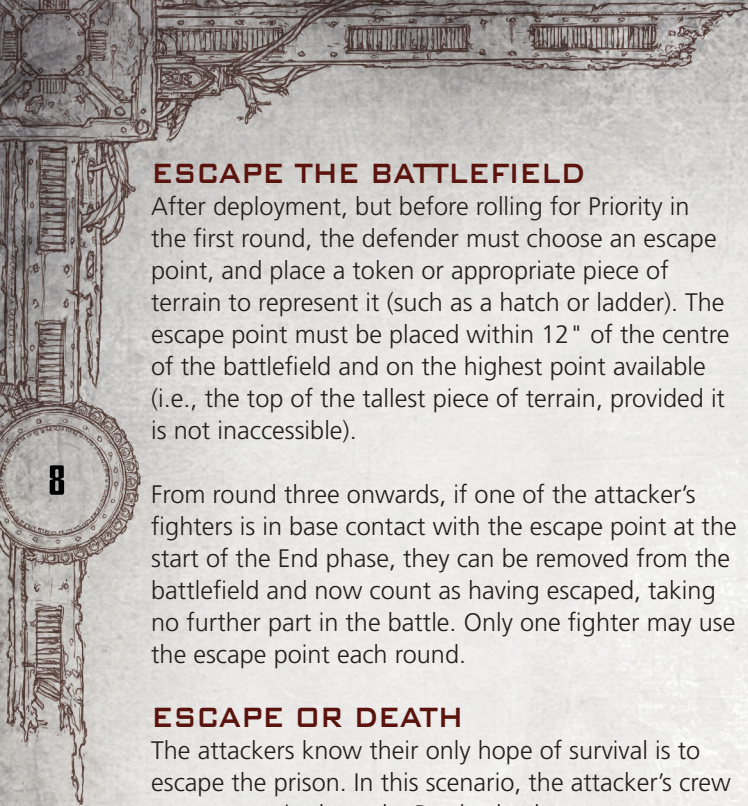Each fighter who took part in the battle earns 1 XP.

Any Leader that survives earns an additional 1 XP.

If a fighter escapes the battlefield then they earn an additional D3 XP.

REPUTATION
The winning gang gains D3 Reputation.

ESCAPE THE BATTLEFIELD

After deployment, but before rolling for Priority in the first round, the defender must choose an escape point, and place a token or appropriate piece of terrain to represent it (such as a hatch or ladder). The escape point must be placed within 12" of the centre of the battlefield and on the highest point available (i.e., the top of the tallest piece of terrain, provided it is not inaccessible).

From round three onwards, if one of the attacker's fighters is in base contact with the escape point at the start of the End phase, they can be removed from the battlefield and now count as having escaped, taking no further part in the battle. Only one fighter may use the escape point each round.

ESCAPE OR DEATH

The attackers know their only hope of survival is to escape the prison. In this scenario, the attacker's crew are not required to take Bottle checks.

REINFORCEMENTS

This scenario uses the Reinforcement rules as detailed in the *Necromunda Rulebook*. At the start of each End phase, D6+1 Reinforcements will arrive for the defender.

FLEEING THE BATTLEFIELD

If the defender's gang voluntarily bottles out and subsequently flees the battlefield, their opponent automatically wins the scenario.

ESCAPE FROM ZALKTRAA

If players wish, they may use this scenario to represent the daring escape of the Prisoner from Zalktraa. In order to do this, make the following changes:

- The attacking gang should consist of Lady Credo, the Prisoner (which can be represented by an Escher Matriarch armed with a shock maul and stub gun), a Van Saar Augmek armed with a plasma gun and three Van Saar Teks armed with lasguns. All of the Van Saar are equipped with mesh armour.
- The defending gang is represented by an Enforcer gang, built using the standard gang creation rules, with the addition of two Hardcase Cyber-mastiffs and a Sanctioner Automata.
- The Enforcer Sanctioner and Cyber-mastiffs must use the Enforcement Program rules detailed on page 6.

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