



THE DEATH GUARD

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The Death Guard were formed soon after [Praefecti](#) was founded. Arkadius took his trusted General Kallus and put him in charge of one of the greatest Legions on all of Dreyg. They have a crushing pursuit of victory, their entire purpose was to carve out the land and rid it of enemy forces. The Death Guard do not know defeat, it is a taste that has never been tasted by their blades.

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The Death Guard wear darkened armour and a special sigil representing Arkadius himself. They are the blade of the Emperor and only the strongest of the [Derveni](#) join this special section of the army.

To become a Death Guard recruit one must first be selected by the Elders themselves of the agents of Kallus who keep a close eye on their greatest warriors and any offspring they may produce.

To be chosen as a Death Guard recruit is a huge honour, even if it could mean death a family will happily usher their young one into it. The Death Guard is essential, they have a pivotal role in keeping the Derveni safe and upholding the lifestyle they have become so accustomed to.

A recruit is taught philosophy along with the military, diplomatic, social, political, psychological and economic effects of war as often as they are taught the blade, one must be as sharp as the weapon they wield. It is important that each member of this faction be a master tactician. Young recruits are fond of different war games they have boards for that require intellect.

Through an agreement with Saint Servandius and Emperor Arkadius, some young recruits will train with the Divini as squires- though not all are picked for this. They will be subjected to the burning grace of the Divini and some are even tortured by the fanatical [Coerth](#).

Those that are picked by the Divini to serve as squires have a far higher chance of being steeled and ready for the upcoming trials that await the recruit, so while it may be a time of hardship and being worked to near death- it is greatly sought by those that want to learn and gain a massive resistance to pain.

THE TRIALS OF THE DEATH GUARD

To get to this point the recruit is lifted to Aspirant.

The Aspirants will fight in gladiatorial combat, typically one aspirant per ending game match as most challengers or monsters will typically fall to the already honed aspirant and the Elders/Emperor want a challenge. Some do die during this stage but it is the easiest way to weed out the weakest of the aspirants.

Those that survive their gladiator days are bound in chains and tortured mentally for months, Derveni Apothecary will drug them with maddening concoctions that will warp their perception of time so those months will feel like years on top of having strange visions whenever they manage to get sleep.

The point of the torture is to see who will break mentally, those aspirants that break will either be killed if they are too mad- those that are somewhat broken but can still serve a purpose are quietly escorted back to the Coerth as squires. Each aspirant knows that the rest of their life in servitude to a Coerth Divini will be their fate if they break which is extra encouragement to not fail.

Many do not make it past this phase while those that do rise above with an iron will that the Emperor requires for his blades.

From there the survivors are paired off and returned to the gladiator ring, full crowds absolutely rabid over getting to witness the final trial of the Death Guard hopeful aspirants. They are one vs one fights where only one can survive- should they get that upward pointed thumb of the Emperor.

BECOMING A DEATH GUARD

The aspirants are then visited by Derveni Sorcerers who scrawl runes into their bones and flesh, leaving ancient enhancements upon each limb and even going as far as slicing open the Dreygsin and leaving the runes upon their very organs which will grant them underwater breathing along with massive resistance to plagues, poisons and foreign chemicals.

Many aspirants have horns fused to their skull, their new horns are generally very massive to show off their might.

One bone is removed from the aspirant, typically a rib but sometimes the tail is selected which will be used in the forming of the aspirant's weapon. From here the weapon is forged of strong enchanted metal and fused to their wielder's soul, they are normally long two-handed swords but there are some shortsword/shield combos and sometimes even axes- but typically swords.

They are cursed swords that feed off of blood and if not fed will begin to slowly drain their master.

The Armour is crafted next, the helmet always has a mighty plume or crest on the crown of the helmet. These vary depending on the individual Death Guard, it can range from animal hair to feathers. Each helmet is used to work with their new horns.

Both metal and leather is used for the Death Guard's armour, most of the colours used are black and shades of grey with the carved sigil of Arkadius placed somewhere upon their armour. It takes upward of a year to craft the entire set of armour, not only is it intricate but extremely powerful as well with the magics of the most powerful beings within the Derveni as commissioned by the Emperor. For that reason a Death Guardsman must treat their armour with the utmost respect.

After the enhancements are made upon the aspirant, after the blade and the armour is made and fitted then the final ritual takes place.

The few that have survived this far are presented before the Emperor where they swear their undying loyalty to Arkadius, swearing that they will die for the Derveni and her glorious ruler. There they drink a single cup of conjured poison mixed with the Emperor's blood where they will learn of his true name although it cannot be used as a means of control but instead an unbreakable connection. If the Emperor dies then the Death Guard will die but not the other way around.

After the Blood of the Emperor is consumed they become the blade of their saviour, they become the Death Guard, bringing death and assured destruction to all those that try to oppose the Derveni.

Entire armies will pull away when the Death Guard shows up as they are the mightiest the Derveni has to offer, they know not treachery and their blades endlessly hunger. They will fight with a fierceness that leaves the regular branches of the military in awe.

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