

++REPORT: TRAITOR FORCES DURING THE SIEGE OF TERRA, APPENDIX 99.0g.83++  
++SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION [REDACTED], 998M41++

*My Lord Inquisitor,  
As per your instruction, I have sacrificed valuable time and resources in compiling this report. Direct action was necessary to access some of the lower vault levels, though I trust that the custodians remain unaware of the purpose for the incursions. The main body of this report is comprised of texts dating from immediately after the Heresy. I have left the original language intact. My own notes will be obvious additions.  
I shall remain ever your humble, undervalued servant,  
[REDACTED]*

++SUBJECT: Chaplain-Commander Abbas Cruor, *aka the Blood Father of Sommes Ager*

++KNOWN ASSOCIATES: Forge Master Prolaticus Valum, "Khorne's Mountain", Grand Apothecary Volaticus *aka the Flayer of Skulls. Note: Reliable identification of who, or what, Khorne's Mountain is or was remains elusive. Heresy era reports confirm its existence, but whether it was an engine, daemon, or simply an exceptional warrior remains unknown.*

++COMMAND: World Eater's 19th Grand Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Echelon, *now the Red Crusade of Abbas Cruor (also known as the Eighth Pilgrimage of Blood)*

++ORIGINS AND BASE OF OPERATIONS: Most Legionnaires of the 19th Grand Company appear to have hailed from Terra Herself or were inducted on the Legion's muster world of Bodt from the regular harvests of nearby feral worlds. Bodt remained the Grand Company's base until Autek Mor's invasion in 008. *Interrogation has identified current base of operations as a daemon world deep in the Eye of Terror known as Sommes Ager. Long range astropathic surveys (or what little we can attempt) reveal visions of a world covered in fortresses, forges, and gladiator-temples. In one of the more exasperating examples of Traitor naming practices, Sommes Ager appears to translate most directly as 'World of Skulls'.*

Abbas Cruor's origins are more difficult to ascertain. He appears quite suddenly in the historic record as Captain of the 19th Grand Company, supplanting the former commander without fanfare while replacing the former title with one of his own design. The assumption that his role was earned through challenge combat must be questioned, as normally the World Eaters celebrated those that could slay superior officers as great warriors, but this never occurred. *Lack of any evidence of Cruor as a line brother may be written down to the degradation of data over time, but the sources I have uncovered seem to imply his sudden appearance was as curious at the time as it is now. The only other hint of his origin that I can uncover is an annotation that notes his appearance coincides with a sudden surge in numbers in the Ultramarines, rumoured to have come from absorbing one of the lost Legions. This is, of course, mere foolishness.*

++ASSETS AND TACTICS: The titular 19th 'Grand' Company numbered no more than three hundred Astartes at the start of the Siege of Terra, being comprised of the remnants of other 14<sup>th</sup> Echelon units thrown together in an ad-hoc command. Despite their numerical inferiority compared to most identified Traitor elements, the 19<sup>th</sup> Grand Company was nevertheless responsible for the compliance or elimination of a remarkable number of Imperial worlds. *The Pilgrimage appears to have lost none of its abilities in the subsequent millennia, and due to its tendency to operate as a unified whole, rather than disparate warbands, remains more than capable of crushing resistance on a displeasing scale.*

*The 19th Grand Company appears to have survived the rending of their Legion at Skalathrax relatively intact. Is it possible that their forces were still bound by the choral vagaries of warp travel so long after the Siege?*

The XII fell hard into the embrace of the Blood God, but Cruor appears to have fallen almost sideways. Instead of the berserker rage and warrior ethos that was the core of his brothers' being, Cruor adopted an almost fanatically religious approach to the matter, echoing more strongly the Apostles of the XVII more than his own Legion. Not only did Cruor 'publish' (for want of a better word) at least two treatises on the Blood God in his various aspects, but the Chaplain-Commander seems to have knowledge of Daemonology rarely seen outside the adepts of the XV and XVII Legions. Even before the Siege, Cruor counted among his allies two daemons of incredible power: the True Daemon known variously as "Khorne's Rose" or "The Bleeding God of Sommes Ager", and the Bloodthirster known as Caedo Octum, also known as the Eighth Axe of Khorne, one of the eight Bloodthirsters granted to Angron as a personal retinue upon his ascension. *Whether Caedo Octum was bound by Cruor, sent to him as recognition of service by his Primarch, or to merely keep an eye on him is unknown, but they appear to have continued their working relationship over the next ten millennia.*

More prosaically, Cruor shares the penchant of the X and IV for heavy armour, both of whom he served with during the Crusade. His personal transport is a XIII Legion Fellblade, captured during a disastrous attempt to retake worlds lost during Lorgar and Angron's Shadow Crusade, reconsecrated as the *Divinity of Steel*. Cruor's armoured elements were resupplied and 'improved' by traitor Mechanicum forces on Mars just before the Siege, including the addition of a monstrous insectoid engine of unknown provenance. *With the benefit of hindsight, we have reliably identified this as a Brass Scorpion of Khorne, probably gifted to him by the Lost Priests of Damocles, rather than their more mundane kin on Mars.*

**++COMBAT DOCTRINE AND BELIEFS:** Even before their fall, the XII Legion was well known for massed frontal assaults uncaring of casualties. Where other Legionnaires might throw themselves at the enemy guns, however, Abbas Cruor was noted for surprising patience for one suffering from the Butcher's Nails. Cruor took the time to evaluate enemy emplacements, identify areas of vulnerability, and then, generally, actively ignore them. Indeed, it is recorded that his Primarch non-fatally censured Cruor for valuing tests of might over tactical gain or even simple slaughter.

This idea of testing himself and his forces seems to have stemmed from a desire to improve both himself and humanity. It must be remembered that many of the traitor forces started out with a misplaced desire to 'liberate mankind from the yoke of Imperial tyranny', rather than a need for slaughter or revenge, so the Blood Father's desire to somehow better humanity is only striking in its presence in the later stages of the war, when most of the traitorous forces had put aside these more plebeian concerns. What is astounding, however, is Cruor's standing order to spare the strongest fighters amongst the enemy, leaving them to spread his word and strengthen humanity. Though these survivors tend to be quarantined, interrogated and then sanctioned by Imperial forces, this does not appear to have halted Cruor's actions in any way. Cruor believes it is his role to unite humanity in an unstoppable wave of strength and faith in Khorne, and his attacks have less of the bloodthirsty nature that is common to almost all World Eaters. Cruor spares the strong, mercilessly ends the weak, and gives those he feels worthy the chance to repent and join his Pilgrimage. *His choice of targets makes this less than likely, however, and the Father continues to slaughter his way across dozens of Ecclesiarchy Shrine and Astartes recruiting worlds, his despair at the weakness of humanity growing with every one of his many victories.*

*The madman seems to believe he could give thanks to his patron power through the greatest overall destruction, or overcoming the greatest challenge, rather than through*

*his own personal warrior prowess. In this, the Blood Father appears to have dedicated himself to Khorne in his aspect of Victory, or perhaps the Unrivalled General, rather than the Destroyer, Butcher, or Warrior.*

++TACTICAL IDIOSYNCRASIES: Cruor has a predilection for engaging his enemies at a range that most followers of the Infernal Powers would deem improper. His grasp of combined arms assaults has led to horrific losses for Imperial forces expecting a blood-mad horde of frothing berserkers, but who are then met with a wave of armour to the front while enfiladed by heavy weapons fire, before a final, much more traditional, World Eaters assault sweeps the field. *To be fair, if you want to spill as much blood as possible, riddling a man with .998 calibre explosive heavy bolter shells is a pretty good way to do it...*

Perhaps reflecting his fondness for armoured assault, the Blood Father takes to war either in the *Divinity of Steel*, taking advantage of the Fellblade's advanced sensor suite, or in a suit of Indomitus pattern Terminator armour. Why a commander of a combat focussed Legion would choose Indomitus pattern over the more survivable Cataphractii or the nimble Tartaros becomes evident when one remembers the more advanced auto-sense system present in Indomitus, which would greatly aid a commander's battlefield control.

++ALLIES AND RIVALS: Abbas Cruor maintained close ties to the IV and XVII Legions throughout the Great Crusade and Heresy, the former appreciating his taste for vehicular warfare, and the latter recognising his fervour, both before and after his fall to the Enemy. Magos from Research Habitat Damocles appear to comprise the majority of the tech-adepts under his command. *Cruor's forces operate in isolation more often than not in recent centuries. Was there a falling out?*

IV and XVII aside, Some limited evidence exists that paints Cruor as an outcast within both the World Eaters and the wider Traitor contingent. His belief in species-wide improvement conflicted with the burn for honour and personal strength that dominated the XII, and the desire to eradicate 'weakness' that permeated most of the Astartes that would eventually turn traitor. On the eve of the Savatine Collapse in 009.M31, where the XVI First Captain Ezekyle Abaddon held operational command with Cruor as his designated second, Abaddon publicly stated that "allowing Cruor's pets to spread their taint would be like ripping out our second heart and calling it strength".

++SIEGE OF TERRA: As the World Eaters raced towards Terra with the other traitor legions, the 19th company veered greatly off course to target various military strong points that were disregarded by the Warmaster as irrelevant or unnecessarily time-consuming, ignoring his Primarch's demands to reunite with the main thrust. As such, they arrived on Terra much later than other Imperial forces and concentrated their might on military forces other than those amassed at the Palace. Against the will of both his Primarch and his own men, Abbas Cruor threw his forces at the mighty Naval stations on the southern half of the planet. After action reports explicitly bemoan the loss of these fitting and manufactory plants when noting the delay in Imperial ship repair, and thus pursuit, after the Siege. Without this slaughter, it is possible that the defeated traitor legions would've had to deal with pursuing loyalist forces far swifter than was the case.

++APPEARANCE: The Blood Father's title is reflected in his armour, with his panoply showing the same warp-inflicted changes that affected almost all his XII Legion kin. His armour the colour of fresh gore and brass, a high-spined crown of command sits upon his head as a cloak the colour of the Old Night flutters behind him. He stands proud before both friend and foe, unbowed by the blood he has split or the lives he has ended *The author is oddly poetic in this fragment. A hint of awe, perhaps?*

*Final addendum: The Red Crusade was last conclusively identified in action during the battle for Medusa V, targeting the forces of Ygethmo, apparently deciding the Black Legion sorcerer was unworthy of daemonhood. As Ygethmo's schemes failed the the planet was saved, a less pious man could attribute the salvation of Medusa's populace and machinery of faith as much to Khorne as the God-Emperor. I, of course, would never suggest such a thing.*

*Thought for the day: Free me you human bastard, my time is served.*

