

ONLY WAR™



ROLEPLAYING IN THE GRIM DARKNESS
OF THE 41ST MILLENNIUM

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FOREWORD

FOREWORD

In 1987 Games Workshop released a sci-fi miniatures rulebook called *Rogue Trader*, and captured the imagination of gamers across the world with their depiction of a grim, dark future among the stars. For two decades, fans of Warhammer 40,000 clamoured for a roleplaying experience set in this deep and engaging setting. Then, five years ago, Games Workshop delivered **DARK HERESY**, the first of what would become a full line of roleplaying games set in the Warhammer 40,000 universe.

DARK HERESY allowed players to assume the roles of Acolytes in the service of powerful Inquisitors. With unhindered authority, Acolytes explored the deepest, darkest corners of the Imperium of Man, rooting out heresy from the bowels of monumental hive cities to the spires of glorious shrine worlds.

After the release of **DARK HERESY** and its first few supplements, the Warhammer 40K Roleplay line was licensed to Fantasy Flight Games. We picked up right where it left off, and took the next big step with the release of a new core rulebook in the line: **ROGUE TRADER**. This game gave the players complete freedom to explore the 40K universe as they wanted. Empowered by their Warrant of Trade, the players set off into the dark void to explore, fight, and even steal their way to great success and profit.

The third game line to be released for Warhammer 40K Roleplay took on the challenge of encapsulating one of the most iconic aspects of Warhammer: the Adeptus Astartes. In **DEATHWATCH**, the players embark on dangerous missions as members of an elite group of xenos-hunting Space Marines. Empowered by genetic implants, elite training, and the best equipment the Imperium has to offer, the players fought vicious enemies to decide the fate of not only entire worlds, but entire sectors of space.

After **DEATHWATCH**, we decided to take Warhammer 40K Roleplay in a bold new direction, allowing players to take on the roles of the very heretics they have been working so

hard to fight. In **BLACK CRUSADE**, players broke free of the bonds of the Imperium, and searched out a glorious destiny amongst the broken stars of the Screaming Vortex. For the first time, **BLACK CRUSADE** allows players to take on the roles of characters of a variety of different power levels. Heretics and sorcerers fought alongside mighty Chaos Space Marines, all for the same goal of launching a devastating Black Crusade against the Imperium of Man.

Each of these games in turn raised the stakes for what the players were capable of in the Warhammer 40K universe, taking them from inquisitorial acolytes to power-armoured super-soldiers empowered by the Dark Gods. It was at this point that we decided to take a step back. Many of the game lines gave players power far beyond that of mortal men; whether it be influence, technology, or unimaginable psychic abilities, players had the power to bend the universe to their will. Instead, we wanted players to experience what it would be like to be a normal human in the Warhammer 40K universe, thrust up against the same horrors Space Marines face every day, but with nothing but their wits, their lasgun, and their compatriots to survive to see the next day. To this end we began development on **ONLY WAR**, a book entirely devoted to the Imperial Guard.

ONLY WAR originally started as a **DARK HERESY** supplement. As the most gritty, brutal, and low power level of our game lines, it seemed like the perfect place to integrate the Imperial Guard. However, the more we worked on the book, the more we realized there were simply too many awesome elements to explore in a single supplement. As **ONLY WAR** grew into the core rulebook it is today, we worked to craft a system that captures the feel of being a mere mortal, forced to contend with the greatest threats of the 41st millennium, yet maintaining hope and camaraderie, even in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds.

So strap on your helmet and grab your lasgun, soldier. It's time to take the fight to the enemies of the Imperium!

Happy Gaming,
The Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay Team

