

THE WEEPING SERAPHS

Unofficial Fan Dossier · Anvil of War

„We see the end. We bind the gaze. We do not return home. We weep last.“

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CORE IDENTITY

Progenitor Legion	Blood Angels
Founding	412.M39 — 24th Founding (c. M39)
Homeworld type	War World
Combat doctrine	Psyker supremacy
Allegiance	Renegade chapter (fell after the Heresy)
Chapter strength	Significantly above Codex strength
One-sentence definition	A Chapter that read the death of its Angel as a teaching, found its own end in an alien mirror, and has since carried witches in chains so as not to have to look.

The four pillars

The Foreseeing
At his elevation every brother looks into a splinter of the Speculum and sees an hour he holds to be his last. The Chapter plans campaigns according to these visions and abandons positions that will fall regardless.

The Guided Will
No Weeping Seraph is a Psyker. Their battles are fought by the Vasa, captive psykers wired with Speculum splinters and carried in reliquaries. The brother aims, the vessel burns.

The Open Crusade
A crusade ends only when its vow is fulfilled or its last brother has fallen. No fleet turns back. Reinforcements come out from Orsolax, never in the opposite direction.

The Owed Lament
Every fallen brother receives an inscribed hour in the Hall of Counted Hours. No brother may rest before he has spoken the names of his dead. The lament is bookkeeping, not relief.

Comparison vs. progenitor legion

Aspect	Progenitor legion	This chapter
Loyalty	Emperor and Imperium	Excommunicate Traitoris since 788.M40
Stance on the Primarch's death	Mourning, remembrance, sacrifice	Doctrine of the Foreseeing: death as calendar
Psykers	Librarians in their own ranks	None; only captive Vasa
Organisation	Codex Companies	Five crusades without Company structure

Inherited curse	Red Thirst, Black Rage	Same curse, guided through the Speculum
Aesthetics	Gold, red, angelic imagery	Faded red, bone grey, silver glass
Homeworld	Baal and its moons	War World Orsolax

Further core facts

Fact	Value
Field	Entry
Founding	24th Founding, 412.M39
Homeworld	Orsolax, War World in the Halo Rim
Fortress-Monastery	Bastion Lacrimosa
Combat doctrine	Psyker supremacy through bound Vasa
Codex compliance	31 %
Battle cry	"The blood remembers—the hour comes!"
Chapter strength	1,640 brothers, five crusades

CORE IDENTITY (CONTINUED)

Forms of Address / Cascade of Titles

Level	Designation	Context of Use
1. The individual brother	Lacrimans	Self-address after gazing into the Red Basin
2. The Chapter as a whole	The Mourners of Sanguinius	Prayer, chronicle, invocation before battle
3. Full ceremonial title	Keepers of the Speculum, Wardens of the Last Hour, Sons of the Ninth Angel	Oaths, declarations of war, admission of the Vasa

Chapter Maxim

We see the end. The virtue of foresight. The Neophyte learns that every battle is already lost, at some point, and that courage begins only where one has looked upon one's own death.

We bind the gaze. The virtue of mastery. The gift of sight belongs not to the one who bears it, the Chaplains teach, but to the one who guides it in chains. The Neophyte learns obedience before the will, not before the flesh.

We do not return home. The virtue of endurance. Crusades last centuries. Whoever leaves Orsolax learns to regard it as a grave to which he will never return.

We weep last. The virtue of grief. Grief is duty, but only after the battle. Whoever weeps before the last shot has surrendered one shot too soon.

LORE & HISTORY

Founding history

The Weeping Seraphs arose in 412.M39 in the 24th Founding from the geneseed of the Blood Angels, as a Codex Chapter for the pacification of the Halo Rim. Their first Chapter Master, Lucan Ardesi, chose the War World Orsolax as their home because it killed more warriors in a year than the Chapter needed in a century. For nine hundred years they were regarded as loyal, dogged, taciturn.

In 611.M40, some 1,200 years after the Founding, they recovered the Speculum Ultimum from a dead Aeldari world, a mirror of polished soulstuff. Whoever looked into it beheld their death. The Chaplains interpreted this as a gift in the line of the Angel who knew his end. The Speculum fed on psychic pain and showed in turn all four faces of the warp, bound to none, open to all. In 788.M40 the Inquisition declared the Chapter a renegade Chapter.

Homeworld description

Orsolax has been at war since the Age of Strife, six realms, none ever victorious. Children fight from their tenth year. Above the battlefields circle Morrigs, carrion crows with bare skulls, whose feathers every Aspirant wears as a sign of his first kill. Beneath the trenches live Thalven, blind grave-beasts that drag corpses into the depths; the Weeping Seraphs throw them the ashes of the Hourless.

Chapter cult

The Blood Angels mourn Sanguinius. The Weeping Seraphs teach that he knew his death and went to meet it—and their Chaplains conclude from this that knowledge of the end is the highest loyalty. To them the Speculum is a window, not a god. They pray to none of the Four; they endure all of them, as one endures weather.

Gene-seed quirks

The brothers' Sus-an Membrane reacts to psychic fields and sends them into brief rigidity when a Vasa dies. Their tear glands secrete blood under warp pressure. The Occulobe has changed: the iris shows silver flecks where the light of the Speculum has struck it.

Curse Stages

Stage 1 — The Forevision: - Silver flecks in the iris, visible with the helmet removed. - Hour-strokes scratched into the left vambrace. - Bloody tear tracks beneath the eyes after every Vasa deployment.

The brother continues to serve. His Chaplain records the number of strokes and compares it at every mass. No praise, no punishment; only the number.

Stage 2 — The Mirroring: - The iris entirely silver, the pupil barely discernible. - Strokes across vambrace, gauntlet and helmet plate, scratched in with the combat knife. - The blood tracks crust into a permanent red mask on face and faceplate.

A Chaplain brings the brother to the Silent Gallery. There he kneels before a mirror niche until he can

once more describe his hour as future. Whoever describes it in the present remains.

Stage 3 — The Fulfilled Hour: The brother believes the hour has come, and lives in it. He sees his death in every foe.

He is not healed. He is transferred to the Hourless and sent where his hour awaits regardless.

Lost Company

The Hourless. In the idiom of the Chapter, a brother whose hour can no longer come, because it is already here. He no longer has a future that could be counted.

Removed: the white tear. Every brother bears a white tear beneath the right eye lens. It means: this brother will be mourned. On the Hourless it is ground away down to bare ceramite. No one will lament him; he has already been lamented.

Added: the clepsydra. Between the exhaust vents of the backpack sits a glass water-clock cylinder in a plasteel housing, bolted to the backpack casing. The waste heat of the reactor keeps the blood within it liquid; it drips, day after day. When the clock is empty, it is not refilled.

FOUNDING

Distinction

Whoever hears of Psyker supremacy and a mirror of fate thinks of the Thousand Sons. The resemblance is convergent development and not a kinship of geneseed: no Weeping Seraph possesses psychic power. Their blood is that of the Blood Angels, and it is on this blood that they have broken.

HOMEWORLD AND FORTRESS-MONASTERY

Index of Locations of the Fortress-Monastery

Location	Function	Distinguishing Feature
Hall of Counted Hours	Place of remembrance	Walls covered in carved tally marks; a constant scraping of chisels echoes within.
The Red Basin	Initiation rite	A basin of blood, at whose bottom a Speculum shard gleams silver.
The Silent Gallery	Observation of the Second Stage	A hundred mirror niches, each with a kneeling brother; the air smells of iron and incense.
The Vasa Crypts	Holding of the prisoners	Dark cells from which a quiet humming issues without pause.
The Speculum Sanctum	Hidden core	A cold chamber beneath the bastion; hoarfrost on the ceramite of all who enter.

CRUSADES

Overview

Crusade	Marshal	Theatre of War	Duration So Far
Crusade of the Last Lament	High Marshal Ezrin Calvaro	Eastern edge of the Halo Fringe	211 years
Crusade of the Bound Gaze	Marshal Tibero Aphael	Ilyris Belt	94 years
Crusade of the Ashen Hour	The Eldest Marshal	Border worlds at the Eye of Terror	340 years
Crusade of the Withered Vasa	The Marshal of the Harvest	Black Ship routes in the Segmentum Obscurus	58 years
Crusade Without Trace	The Marshal of the Morrigs	Unknown since 912.M41	87 years

Crusade of the Last Lament

> *We end where the visions end, and not one step sooner.*

Two thirds of the brothers lost since departure, three battle-barges shot to wrecks. Calvaro leads a fleet that lives on prophecies which come true ever more rarely.

Crusade of the Bound Gaze

> *We silence the song of the masks that sings our end.*

Ninety years of hunting a single Harlequin troupe that performs the play of the Chapter's fall. The crusade has consumed eleven Vasa and never captured a foe. It is followed by the Ironclad Dreadnought Malvento, and Chaplain Raldoron Serafino leads its masses.

Sword-Brother Ysrael Duraso, leader of the Corvinari. On the moon Velk he had his five Sword-Brothers hold an archway through which the Harlequins danced. Duraso saw that his hour did not lie there, stepped forward and caught the Shadowseer's kiss with his arm. Today he bears the arm in plasteel.

Crusade of the Ashen Hour

> *We keep watch at the rift until the rift looks at us.*

For 340 years on border worlds that no one holds. The crusade has struck the word for homecoming from its masses and numbers fewer than a hundred brothers.

Sword-Brother Cassiel Grifone, now leader of the Sendini under Aphael. In the Ashen Hour he held a bridge for three days against Heretic Astartes, with a Vasa on his back who, dying, spoke his name without cease. Grifone let him speak. He says it was the only act of mercy open to him.

Crusade of the Withered Vasa

> *We fill the crypts until the mirror is sated.*

It raids Black Ships and seizes their cargo. 58 years, six ships of the Inquisition destroyed, yet the prisoners die faster than it brings them.

Initiate Azkaellon Volterra, now leader of the Vitrian under Aphael. While boarding a Black Ship he found thirty children in cryo-sleep. He brought all thirty aboard; not one escaped. It is said that he has not spoken of the boarding since.

Crusade Without Trace

> *We go where the mirror is silent.*

Without sign of life since 912.M41. The Chapter keeps it on its rolls, because no hour has been carved for it.

The Sword-Brothers

A Sword-Brother is raised up when he has survived his hour in the Speculum twice—when, that is, the vision was false. The Chapter honours these brothers and fears them at once, for no one knows what they saw instead.

Neophytes

The Neophyte is chained to an Initiate, wrist to wrist, for one night in the Hall of Counted Hours. In the morning the Initiate carves a tally mark for the Neophyte, as though his death were already certain. Only when the Neophyte is permitted to overwrite the mark himself is he deemed ready.

What This Chapter Lacks

The Weeping Seraphs have no Librarians; their vow abhors the witch within their own ranks. When a battle demands psychic power, a brother opens the reliquary of a Vasa and turns its pain upon the enemy.

COMPANIES

Companies

Sendini

Role: Crusader Squad

Hero name: Cassiel Grifone

Hero title/epithet: Schwertbruder

Vitrian
Role: Crusader Squad

Hero name: Azkaellon Volterra

Hero title/epithet: Initiat

Corvinari
Role: Sword Brethren

Hero name: Ysrael Duraso

Hero title/epithet: Schwertbruder

NOTABLE CHARACTERS

Characters

Tibero Aphael
Title/role: Marschall

Raldoron Serafino
Title/role: Chaplain

Malvento
Title/role: Ironclad-Dreadnought

NOTABLE CHARACTERS (CONTINUED)

High Marshal Ezrin Calvaro
A slender, aged warrior with wholly silver eyes, who reached the Second Stage eighty years ago and has not left it since. He wears blackened master-crafted armour and a power sword whose blade is covered with 306 tally marks—one for each brother he has lost.

> *I have seen my hour for eighty years. It does not grow more beautiful.*
> *— Ezrin Calvaro*

On Thessin he ordered the withdrawal from a fortress that the Speculum showed as lost. The fortress then held for three months against the besiegers, without him. Calvaro calls this his only guilt.

Chapter Master Lucan Ardesi

Founder of the Chapter in 412.M39, a warrior who chose Orsolax as his home and never knew the Speculum. He bore a Thunder Hammer and the first white tear upon his helm.

> *I want sons who carry every grief to the end.*
> *— Lucan Ardesi*

He fell in 538.M39 in the trenches of Orsolax itself, while forcing a tribe of the six realms into submission. His hour lies first in the Hall of Counted Hours.

Marshal Tibero Aphael

Commands the Crusade of the Bound Gaze and the force currently deployed. Tall, his right iris flecked with silver, a single hour on his vambrace. He carries a bolt pistol and a power sword, as well as the reliquary of an old Vasa.

> *They dance our shame. I only want to let them finish once.*
> *— Tibero Aphael*

On Ilyris, Aphael let the Harlequins perform the play up to the second act before he attacked. He says he wanted to know how it ends.

Chaplain Raldoron Serafino

The Chaplain wears a bone helm with a red mask and a crozius whose head is a mirror. He holds fast to the teaching that the Speculum is a window of the Emperor.

> *He who knows his end cannot fall away. He has already fallen and stands nonetheless.*
> *— Raldoron Serafino*

In the Silent Gallery he has led 41 brothers back into service and lost 19. He names both numbers aloud, every year.

CAMPAIGNS

Campaigns

The Recovery of Hesperon

Era: 611.M40

Enemy: Necrons and Aeldari guardians

Duration: four months

Outcome: Speculum recovered

On a dead Aeldari world the Chapter searched for traces of the Ordo Xenos, found a Necron tomb ship and, beneath it, a mirror in a tower of soulstone. The recovery cost 97 brothers. The survivors brought

the mirror to Orsolax and let no report go to Terra.

The Mask War of Ilyris

Era: 887.M41

Enemy: Harlequins

Duration: seven months

Outcome: Undecided

A troupe of Harlequins appeared on the moon Ilyris and performed the Chapter's own history before its eyes. Aphael pursued them through ruins and gates of the Web of a Thousand Gates. Eleven Vasa burned without a single Harlequin falling. In the end the dancers vanished in the middle of the final act.

The Harvest of Corvinas

Era: 996.M41

Enemy: Adeptus Astra Telepathica, Imperial Navy

Duration: 26 days

Outcome: Victory

The Crusade of the Withered Vasa fell upon a convoy of Black Ships. It brought 212 psykers aboard and lost 33 brothers. Volterra led the boarding. Most of the captives have since been consumed.

THE FLAW

The Weeping Seraphs do not consider themselves renegades, but they do not know whether they are. Their Chaplains are divided on the matter. Raldoron Serafino teaches that the Speculum is a window of the Emperor, and that whoever knows his end is more loyal than any fleet that hunts him. High Marshal Ezrin Calvaro, by contrast, says openly that the Chapter died in 611.M40, and that everything since has been a long echo.

This division has consequences. Twice Calvaro sought to destroy the Speculum; twice the Marshals stood against him, because without the Vasa none of their crusades can win battles any longer. The Chapter numbers 1,640 brothers, more than ever before, and keeps itself alive through a weapon it would itself call sorcery if it saw it in another's hand.

Every Marshal knows of it. The Initiates learn of it when they bear their first reliquary. Some of the brothers refuse to bear one; they are not punished, but they are not promoted. Three Sword Brothers have gone into the Silent Gallery over this in the last fifty years and have not returned.

The Chapter has no answer to the question of what it is. It has only the next hour.

SHORT STORY

The Second Act

The moon was called Velk and had no air left. Its cities were ruins of white stone, and on the largest square, beneath a sky of stars and the dull light of the gas giant, stood the Harlequins.

Marshal Tibero Aphael watched them through his eye-lenses and counted. Nineteen dancers. A Shadowseer with a mirrored mask. A Fool in black and white, lying on his back upon a fragment of rubble as though asleep.

"They are beginning," said Chaplain Raldoron Serafino over the Chapter frequency. He sounded like someone announcing the reading at a Mass.

The dancers moved. Silently, for here no air carried the sound, and yet Aphael heard music. He heard it in his head, there where the Vasa dwelt. The girl in his reliquary, whom he called Mira because she remembered no other name, had begun to hum.

The play showed a tower. Three dancers in red robes climbed it. At the top stood a mirror made only of light.

"They are showing Hesperon," said Sword Brother Cassiel Grifone. The Sendini lay in the rubble to the left of the square, ten bolters levelled.

"I know," said Aphael.

He had known for ninety years. The troupe always danced the same piece, and they never danced it to the end. On Ilyris they had vanished in the last act. On Thessin in the first. Today, he knew, he would leave them the second.

To his right, Malvento creaked. The Ironclad Dreadnought had not moved since the landing, and the brother in the Sarcophagus had not spoken since he had seen the mirror for the third time. Only the power fist opened and closed slowly, like a hand remembering something.

On the square, the red dancers fell to their knees before the mirror. One after another they looked into it. One after another they clutched at their eyes, and their hands turned silver.

"Marshal," said Initiate Azkaellon Volterra. His voice was young. "The Vitrian are in position. We could take them now—"

"No."

Mira hummed louder. In the reliquary on his backpack Aphael felt her warmth, her fever. She wanted to reach the dancers. The Vasa always wanted that. The Harlequins were to them what light is to moths.

The second act began. A dancer in red armour, without a mask, stepped forward. He carried a child on his back, a child of glass, and the child glowed. The dancer drew a sword and struck at the air, and wherever the blade passed, other dancers collapsed without having been touched.

"That is us," said Raldoron quietly. "They are showing the Vasa."

The glass child on the dancer's back began to shatter. First one crack, then many. The dancer fought on, and the child crumbled piece by piece, until only an empty frame hung on his back. Then he turned, looked at the frame, and wept.

Aphael noticed that Mira had stopped humming.

"Marshal," said Sword Brother Ysrael Duraso. His Corvinari lay behind him, five shadows in the dust. "The Shadowseer is looking at us."

She was looking at him. Through the ruins, through the ceramite of his helm. In her mask Aphael saw himself: a warrior in faded red, with a reliquary on his back in which sat a girl he called Mira. And behind the girl, in the reflection, a crack.

He knew what his hour looked like. He had seen it in the Red Basin, one hundred and twelve years ago. A room of white stone, a child, a light. He had never known whose child.

"Fire," he said.

The bolters of the Sendini spoke. Silently the stones of the square burst apart. The dancers were no longer where the rounds struck; they were already further on, already over the rubble, already among the Vitrian. Aphael opened the reliquary and turned Mira upon the Shadowseer.

Mira refused.

That had never happened before. The Vasa burned when they were aimed, just as promethium burns when it is ignited. But the girl in his reliquary was still, and in his head he heard only a single voice, very quiet:

"They have said how it ends."

The Harlequins killed three brothers of the Vitrian in four heartbeats. Malvento crushed a dancer who was too slow. Grifone fired until his bolter was empty. Then the dancers were gone, all nineteen, through a gate in the air that closed behind them like an eyelid.

On the square lay only the Fool, upon his fragment of rubble, as though still asleep. He was dead. He held a frame of glass in his hand, empty.

Raldoron Serafino knelt down beside Aphael. "She refused."

"Yes."

"The law says a refused vessel is a spent vessel."

Aphael looked at the reliquary. Mira was breathing. Through the silver-glass he saw her face, and her eyes were not silver, as he had feared, but brown, the eyes of a child of Orsolax.

"I know the law," he said.

With his knife he scratched a line into his vambrace. Not for the three dead of the Vitrian, whose hours he would write later. For himself. A second hour.

Raldoron saw it and said nothing.

Aphael closed the reliquary and ordered the withdrawal. The second act was over. The third, he knew now, he would see.