

# Index Astartes



A series focusing on the Imperium's finest warriors, the Space Marines of the Adeptus Astartes

## PROMETHEAN WARRIORS

The Salamanders Space Marine Chapter

As one of the First Founding Chapters, the Salamanders' history goes back to the very birth of the Imperium. Salamander Space Marines are raised from the populace of Nocturne, a deadly volcanic world. Such a world breeds hardy warriors, strong of constitution and single-minded in purpose; ideal recruits for the Adeptus Astartes. Gav Thorpe takes a closer look at their history from their early beginnings to their involvement on the war-ravaged world of Armageddon.

### Origins

When the gods of Chaos scattered the Emperor's nascent Primarchs across the galaxy, one came to rest on the harsh volcanic world of Nocturne. The Primarch was found one morning by a blacksmith named N'bel, as he entered the yard of his smithy. For a long time the people of Nocturne had been plagued by Eldar pirates, whose constant raids pillaged the small settlements and enslaved Nocturne's children. The wise men had prophesied the arrival of a saviour, who would come to them from the heavens to rid them of the decadent Eldar. So it was that N'bel instantly recognised the greatness within the infant that he found lying on the bare stones of his yard. He named him Vulkan, after the first king of the salamanders, the giant lizards that roam Nocturne, and raised him as a son.

Vulkan's growth was extraordinary. Within three years he was bigger and stronger than any man in the town, and his mind was sharper than any Nocturne-forged blade. He had rapidly learnt all the skills of metalworking taught to him by N'bel, soon surpassing even the master smith's renowned ability. It was Vulkan who taught the people of Nocturne the most hidden secrets of alloys and bonding, improving their already considerable skill at weapon-making and artifice.

It was during Vulkan's fourth year that the Eldar came to his town, intent on raiding and pillaging. He roused the town's populace from their hiding places in attics and cellars, standing at the forefront of the defence and single-handedly slew a hundred Eldar that day, wielding a huge blacksmith's hammer in each hand. The Eldar fled from Vulkan's wrath and the story of the town's triumph spread across Nocturne. Soon the headmen of the seven most important settlements travelled to pay homage to Vulkan, praising him for his example in fighting the Eldar. They swore to never again hide in fear, but to face their foes and crush them. It was decided to hold a huge celebration, including a massive contest of skill at arms and craftsmanship.

It was at the opening ceremony of the celebrations that a stranger appeared. His skin was pale and his garb outlandish. He announced that he could best any man in any contest. The gathered crowds laughed uproariously, believing that none could be more superior in intellect, physique or skill than their superhuman leader. Vulkan and the stranger wagered that whoever lost was to swear eternal obedience to the victor. The competitions lasted for eight days and including many feats of strength and endurance. At the anvil lift, the strongest men could hold an anvil above their head for an hour and a half – Vulkan and the stranger carried the heavy anvil aloft for half a day before the judges declared the contest a draw so that they could proceed to the next event. And so it was that they were almost equally matched in skill and strength. Occasionally one would

slightly best the other, but when it came to the start of the final event, the salamander slaying, they were evenly matched. Each had a day and a night to forge a weapon and then hunt down the largest salamander they could find. Whoever brought back the heaviest carcass would win the wager and the allegiance of the other.

The ringing of hammers on metal echoed across the volcanic hills for the whole day, neither man pausing for a moment to rest or refresh themselves. As the Nocturne sun sank below the mountains they watched the highest peaks for signs of the giant salamanders. Vulkan vowed that he would climb to the summit of Mount Deathfire, where the largest firedrakes could be found, huge beasts weighing several tons. The stranger said that wherever Vulkan went, he would follow.

It is claimed that the two climbed the precipitous mountains with astounding speed, bounding from rock to rock, the stranger carrying a keen-edged blade, Vulkan with his immense silver-headed hammer held ready. They passed from sight, but soon the skies were rent with the sound of battle and the flames of the firedrakes licked the clouds of smoke that gathered over the volcanoes. It was Vulkan who found his prey first, smashing its armoured head from its shoulders with a mighty sweep of his hammer. The stranger spied another, even mightier still than Vulkan's conquest and set off in pursuit. As Vulkan carried his prize back to the settlement, ill fate beset him, Mount Deathfire erupted into violent life, hurling rocks and lava high into the air. He was flung to the edge of a precipice, where he clung for several hours by one hand, the other grimly held onto the tail of the dead salamander, Vulkan determined to keep his prize.

It was then that the stranger appeared, calling Vulkan's name from the other side of a wide lava flow. Vulkan answered the cry, and could see that the stranger's prey was indeed larger than his own. But by now even Vulkan's almost endless constitution was growing slim, weakened as he was by over a week of hard contest. His grip began to shake, and

yet he was too proud to call for help. But it seemed that the stranger realised the Primarch's peril, and hurled the corpse of his salamander into the lava, making himself a bridge to cross. With great leaps the stranger hurled himself towards Vulkan, hauling the wearied Primarch from the edge of the abyss. Even as Vulkan felt himself being pulled up by the stranger's strong arms, he saw the salamander's body being consumed by the lava and swept away.

When the two returned to the settlement, it was the ruling of the judges that Vulkan had won, for the stranger had returned with no prize at all. The gathered throng cheered heartily, but were silenced by Vulkan. As they watched, he knelt on one knee and bowed his head to the stranger, saying that any man who valued life over pride was worthy of his service. The stranger revealed himself to be the Holy Emperor himself and, from that day forth, Nocturne was to be the home of the Salamanders Legion, in memory of the mighty beasts which had united the Primarch and his Lord.

### Home world

The Salamanders Chapter hails from a binary planetary system in the western reaches of the Ultima Segmentum. The two worlds, Nocturne and its oversized moon Prometheus, circle each other in an erratic orbit, causing massive tectonic activity across the thin crust of Nocturne. The world is girded by chains of active volcanoes and rent apart by frequent earthquakes. Once every Nocturne year, some fifteen Terran years long, the two worlds approach so closely that Nocturne is almost torn asunder. Known as the Time of Trial, this period is marked by tidal waves sweeping across the rough seas, the ash and smoke from thousands of volcanoes blotting out the dim light of Nocturne's sun, and the ground trembling constantly. Towns and villages are thrown down into ruin, continents shift and a cold winter envelops the lands for the next quarter of a year, freezing the young and killing the few livestock animals that can survive the normally harsh and hot climate of the planet.

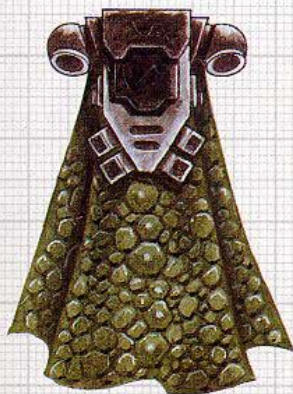
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Salamanders Chapter, Progenitor Legion M.31

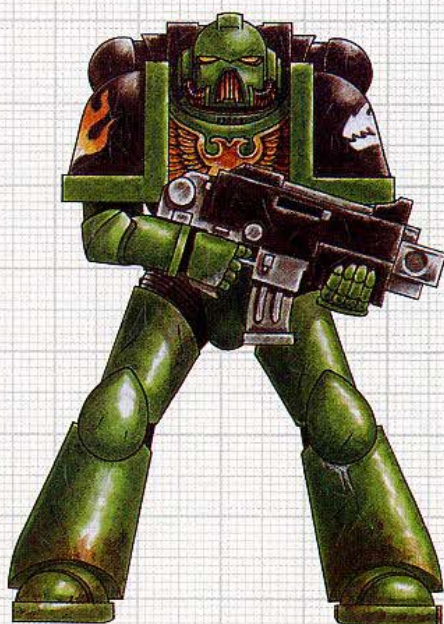


Ref. 326.89

Mk. IV Boltgun, Ultima pattern



Imp. ref. 555/ftp/mantle



Mk. VII Adeptus Astartes Power Armour



Ref. 009.21/Promethean cult markings (cross.ref. Heretic Cults)



Code: fourz cranize



Imp. ref. 004/f Adeptus Astartes relic

Thought for the day: Let the flames of battle consume us.

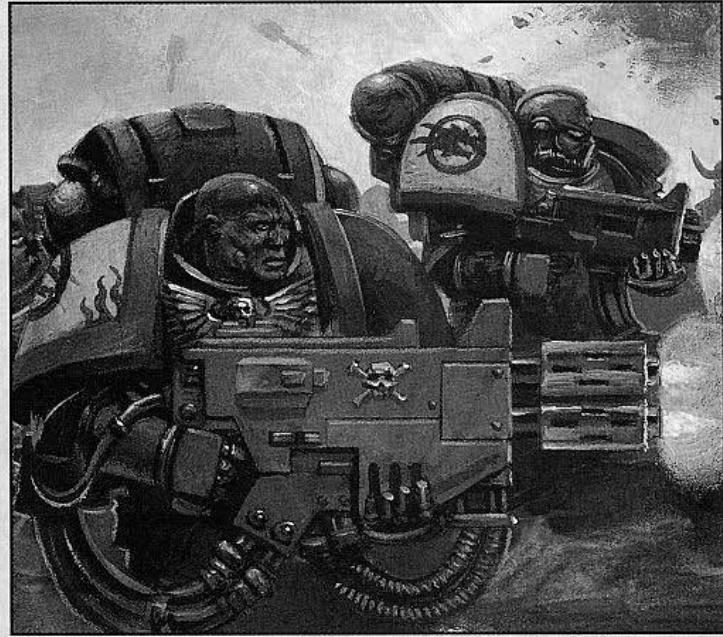
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## Index Astartes: The Salamanders

Some would say that the people of Nocturne are mad to endure such conditions, but over hundreds of generations they have been moulded by their world into a hardy race. And Nocturne's Time of Trials brings great reward too. The upheaval opens up veins of precious gems and metals, uncovering vital ores for smelting. When the lava flows cool, they can be mined for other precious elements, pockets of gas that can be used to power engines, diamonds and other crystals valuable to the Adeptus Mechanicus for lasers and energy transmission systems. And this is how Nocturne survives, by trading its vast mineral wealth with other worlds, using its resources to bring in new livestock and building materials and the few weapons which the Salamanders Space Marines cannot construct themselves.

The Chapter fortress-monastery is based upon the giant moon, Prometheus. It is the only settlement on Prometheus, and is little more than a space port linked to an orbital dock where the Chapter's strike cruisers and battle barges can be refitted and restocked. The Chapter spends its time, when not at war, on Prometheus, living amongst the inhabitants. The Salamanders have very close links with their home world, mingling with the people rather than living aloof as many Chapters do. The Salamanders are the settlements' leaders, a source of inspiration and guidance for the Nocturne populace, and it is as much this position of authority and respect that young aspirants crave as the chance to become a legendary warrior of the Emperor.

Recruitment starts very young for the Salamanders, with a hopeful coming to work as apprentice to a Salamander at the age of six or seven Terran years. They will then spend



several more years learning the skills of the smith, as Vulkan did in his early life. From these apprentices, the most able will then be judged by the Chapter's Apothecaries and Chaplains and the worthy will be taken to Prometheus to undergo the bio-surgery required to make them into Space Marines. At various points in their adaptation and training, the young Scouts must endure the same trials and tests that Vulkan and the Emperor competed in, their final initiation culminating in them hunting down a salamander and slaying it.

### Combat doctrine

The Salamanders follow normal Space Marine tactical and strategic dogma, with a slight variation to compensate for their own physical and mental traits. They have a preference for close-ranged firefights, using many melta and flamer weapons to smash armoured foes and burn swathes of lighter troops.

Coming from a society that places great prestige in craftsmanship and which has high regard for artisans, the Salamanders have access to, and can maintain, highly sophisticated forms of technology. This is most evident in the numbers of Terminators in their armies, as well as a greater proportion of artificer armour and master-crafted weaponry and is supplemented by regular trade with the Adeptus Mechanicus, made possible by Nocturne's abundant mineral resources.

### Organisation

The Salamanders Chapter organisation was laid down when Vulkan swore allegiance to the Emperor. Each Company was founded from the seven greatest settlements of Nocturne, each commanded by a Captain from that settlement. This organisation is still true today, although ever since the disappearance of Vulkan some thousand years after the Legion's Founding, the Captain of the First Company has been given the role of Chapter Master. This position is considered a regency by the Salamanders, who believe that one day Vulkan will return to lead the Chapter in a great campaign to conquer Chaos.

Each Company is slightly larger than a standard Codex Company, and squads were reorganised following the



writing of the Codex Astartes after the Great Heresy. The conditions on Nocturne are not conducive to training for high speed attack or using the anti-grav engines of Land Speeders, so the Chapter employs relatively few of these specialised fast attack units. The Scout company is the smallest known in any Chapter, the sparse population of Nocturne and the Salamanders' slow but meticulous selection process gives a low turn around of new recruits.

The First Company is treated as a warrior cadre within the Headquarters itself, and forms the personal guard of the Chapter Master. They are known as the Firedrakes, after the largest of the salamander lizards that roam Nocturne. To enter the First Company, a warrior must be nominated by his Captain for the honour, and then must prove that such faith was well founded by slaying a firedrake. The Hall of the Firedrakes in the Chapter Monastery on Prometheus is hung with all the hides from the Firedrake salamanders slain as part of this trial.

### Beliefs

The beliefs of the Salamanders are governed by the Promethean cult, which places great emphasis on self-reliance, loyalty and self-sacrifice. Much of this stems from the lessons learnt while training as a smith – patience with relentless determination are highly valued mental characteristics.

The hammer and fire are important symbols in the teaching of the Promethean cult. Ritual scarring by branding and burning is commonplace amongst the battle brothers of the Salamanders, and trials of walking over burning coals and carrying red-hot metal bars are held frequently.

### Gene-seed

As far as can be ascertained, the Salamanders' gene-seed appears to be stable and as yet uncorrupted. The reflexes of Salamanders Space Marines are not as fast as those of other Chapters, although still quick when suited in power armour. However, it is unknown whether this is due to a defect in the gene-seed, a result of their high gravity world, or comes about from the Chapter's doctrines against hastiness and impetuosity.

The Salamanders have never been great in number and were the smallest of the First Founding Legions. Perhaps it is for this reason that there seem to have been no Second Founding successor Chapters formed from the Salamanders, whilst the other Legions were broken down into several smaller fighting forces. It is a matter of debate whether there have been Successor Chapters during subsequent Foundings, although it appears likely and many scholars point to similarities in the physique, markings and tactical dogma of Chapters such as the Storm Giants and Black Dragons.

### Battlecry

"Into the fires of battle, unto the anvil of war!"

### The Salamanders and Armageddon

The Salamanders have been involved in many magnificent conquests and wars, but in recent times even these great achievements have been eclipsed by their stalwart fighting during the Second Armageddon War. While the Blood

## TU'SHAN, Chapter Master of the Salamanders, Regent of Prometheus

At the outset of the Second Armageddon War, Chapter Master Tu'Shan had only held his rank for three years. To do battle against Ghazghkull Thraka would be a hard test of his skills as a leader and strategist, and it was with no hesitation that the humble Tu'Shan agreed to follow



Commander Dante of the Blood Angels. During the campaign, it was Tu'Shan who helped rally the scattered Imperial defenders. In battle, Tu'Shan and his Firedrakes were responsible for defending one of the few bridges across the Stygics river, against a thousand-strong Ork Speed Freck column, fighting continuously for three days and four nights. At the end of the campaign, Dante himself sought out the young Chapter Master and praised Tu'Shan in front of all of the Blood Angels. This was a supreme gesture, for the Salamanders no greater honour can be bestowed than the respect of one's brothers in arms.

He is known to have met Yarrick on at least one occasion, and it is claimed that the two had an instant respect for each other. Yarrick heartily welcomed Tu'Shan's offer to once again defend Armageddon when Ghazghkull returned at the head of the mightiest Ork force ever seen.

Angels set about destroying the Ork horde, and the Ultramarines bent their strength to the defence of the surviving hive cities, the Salamanders took upon themselves the essential but neglected task of protecting the supply convoys, fighting rearguard actions against the Ork advances and escorting refugee columns. So unstinting were they in these arduous but unsung duties, the Salamanders were to earn the gratitude and respect of thousands of Imperial Guardsmen and civilians. The Salamanders have become renowned as sturdy and dependable allies, a reputation which is not shared by other, more unpredictable, Chapters.

When Ghazghkull launched his new offensive against the Imperial forces on Armageddon, the Salamanders were one of the first Chapters to respond, sending a full six Companies to combat the Orks, including Chapter Master Tu'Shan personally leading his Firedrakes. The Salamanders have launched several counter-attacks against the rock-forts landed by the Orks along the Hemlock river. Preferring the close-quarter fighting within the maze of crudely carved tunnels within the Roks to the long-range duels in the desert, the Salamanders have made the Orks pay a high price for their audacity. At least three Roks have been destroyed by the Salamanders' attacks, killing untold thousands of greenskins.

## THE SALAMANDERS CHAPTER ORGANISATION

### HEADQUARTERS

#### HEADQUARTER STAFF

The title of Chapter Master is taken by the Captain of the First Company (who act as his personal bodyguard).

Administrative Staff Support Personnel

#### FIRST COMPANY 'FIREDRAKES'

Chapter Master  
Master of Chaplains  
Chief Apothecary  
Chapter Standard Bearer

**Squads:**  
12 Veteran

**Support:**  
Dreadnoughts  
Rhinos  
Land Raiders  
Terminator Armour

#### ARMOURY

Techmarines  
Servitors  
Predators, Vindicators,  
Whirlwinds, Rhinos,  
Razorbacks, Land Raiders

#### LIBRARIUS

Chief Librarian  
Epistolaries  
Codiciers  
Lexicaniums

### BATTLE COMPANIES

#### SECOND COMPANY

Captain  
Chaplain  
Apothecary  
Standard Bearer

**Squads:**  
7 Tactical  
3 Devastator  
2 Assault

**Support:**  
Dreadnoughts  
Rhinos  
Bikes  
Land Speeders

#### THIRD COMPANY

Captain  
Chaplain  
Apothecary  
Standard Bearer

**Squads:**  
7 Tactical  
3 Devastator  
2 Assault

**Support:**  
Dreadnoughts  
Rhinos  
Bikes  
Land Speeders

#### FOURTH COMPANY

Captain  
Chaplain  
Apothecary  
Standard Bearer

**Squads:**  
7 Tactical  
3 Devastator  
2 Assault

**Support:**  
Dreadnoughts  
Rhinos  
Bikes  
Land Speeders

### RESERVE COMPANIES

#### FIFTH COMPANY

Captain  
Chaplain  
Apothecary  
Standard Bearer

**Squads:**  
8 Tactical  
4 Devastator

**Support:**  
Dreadnoughts  
Rhinos

#### SIXTH COMPANY

Captain  
Chaplain  
Apothecary  
Standard Bearer

**Squads:**  
4 Tactical  
8 Devastator

**Support:**  
Dreadnoughts  
Rhinos

#### SEVENTH COMPANY

Captain  
Chaplain  
Apothecary

**Squads:**  
6 Scout

**Support:**  
Bikes

### SQUAD NUMBERS AND HONOUR MARKINGS



Salamander Space Marines often display squad numbers on their leg armour.

Typical honour markings are the blacksmith's hammer and stylised fire symbols.

### FIRST COMPANY

Veteran



Terminator



### BATTLE COMPANIES

2nd Company



3rd Company



4th Company



### RESERVE COMPANIES

5th Company



6th Company



### SEVENTH COMPANY

Scouts

