

KINGS OF WAR®



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NIGHTSTALKERS



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WHAT ARE THE NIGHTSTALKERS?

Once a knowledgeable court of elven mages and their allies, the Nightstalkers have been twisted into something truly horrific, a terror that now stalks the minds and hearts of all mortals across Pannithor.

Tricked by the god-like Celestian Oskan, the sorcerors of the Conclave of Heaven were taught how to walk the mysterious paths between dreams and the waking world – paths that should never have felt the footsteps of mortal folk, no matter how powerful their magic.

When the Fenulian Mirror was shattered, those members of the conclave walking between the ways had their spirits ripped mercilessly from their bodies, left to tumble endlessly in the emptiness of unreality. In the mortal realm, their corporeal husks exploded, annihilating not only the city where the conclave was based, but all living creatures for miles around, their souls too now trapped in the yawning void.

As the power of the Abyss has grown, the fragile veil between worlds has begun to thin. The unspeakable horrors captured between realities have been able to creep out into the mortal realm once more, in increasing numbers. They lurk in the shadows and feed on the most powerful mortal emotions – hatred, arrogance, and above all: fear.

The essence of the Nightstalkers burrows deep into the psyche of mortals, so that each time an incursion through the veil occurs, the spirits gain a greater foothold in the world. When the power of the Abyss swells anew, those seeds that have taken root erupt violently until dark manifestations tear themselves from mortal hosts, terrorising communities, and sometimes gathering into vast swarms of unimaginable horror. They come from shadow, sweeping through the material realm, taking nourishment from the very fear that precedes them.

Should their grip on the physical form falter, Nightstalkers often latch onto the bodies of the dead – or even undead – in desperation; this explains in part why shadowy spectres are so often seen in graveyards or roaming ancient battlefields. Such wretched spirits are often sought out by the Twilight Kin, for there is much they can teach the practitioners of dark magic – if they can be successfully bound.

Nightstalkers take many forms – often perceived in different ways depending on the superstitions and fears of a culture or individual, or as a hideous perversion of their once-mortal form. The most common are the shambling Scarecrows – a gross mockery of humanity born from

the many fears and woes of the common folk of Pannithor. But they are joined by more unfathomable creatures that warp and twist the minds of the weak-willed. From the giant, grasping tentacles of the Terror, to the looming Shadowhulk, none are safe from the creeping dread of the Nightstalkers.

Such is the power of these ancient, vengeful beings that sometimes, when the power of the Abyss waxes strong, the presence of the Nightstalkers rips a portal in the fabric of space – a doorway between dimensions.

At the edge of vision, the portal seems like a cage of glossy black, writhing serpents, screaming in perpetual agony. Nightstalker shadow-hosts burst forth into reality: a gibbering, cacophonous explosion of fear wreathed in the purple lightning of the portal. The baying of spectral hounds goes before the ravenous host, while the soul-rending screams of heartless Banshees chills their foe to the bone.

When a doorway to the realm of night opens, the mortal world must pray the power of the Abyss wanes and with it the hordes of Nightstalkers will diminish. Even if it does, it's only a brief respite against the darkness – as long as fear lives in the hearts of mortals, the Nightstalkers will persist...

If you'd like to know more about the Nightstalkers, hear the history of the Fenulian Mirror and the God-War that followed its destruction, or learn about the many other peoples and creatures that inhabit the world of Pannithor, you can read all the lore for free online! Just scan the QR code opposite, or visit the Mantic website at www.manticgames.com



WHY YOU SHOULD COLLECT NIGHTSTALKERS



Nightstalkers are one of the most unique – and terrifying – armies in **KINGS OF WAR**. If you like warped predatory creatures with lots of teeth and tentacles then this is the force for you!

The concept behind the Nightstalkers was to create an army that was literally the stuff of nightmares. They are eldritch beings that can take on many shapes and sizes, the better to fill their mortal prey with paralysing dread.

Some, like the shambling Scarecrows and distorted Doppelgangers, seem vaguely human in appearance, yet uncanny and corrupted. Arms and legs are replaced by twisting tendrils. Their eyeless faces nonetheless watch with foul intent, wearing wide, sinister grins with mouths full of too many teeth. The sight alone is enough to send a chill down the spine of even the most hardened warrior.

Accompanying these insidious infantry troops are a slew of terrible, looming titans. In its previous life the Shadowhulk was a cyclops, but the effects of the void have twisted this monstrous beast into something truly horrific, its single eye sewn shut as its bellowing mouth yawns open, while its hands have mutated into gaping fanged maws that craves nothing but to swallow the enemy whole.

The Terror meanwhile was once a kraken, already a frightening foe from the ocean's depths, made even more repulsive by the dark influence of the void. Worse still are the bizarre creatures that were born from that benighted beyond, such as the insidious Void Lurker.

The model range also has plenty of awesome finely-detailed resin 'heroes' to accompany the hordes. Shades are scarcely corporeal masses of deadly fangs, fleet of foot and possessed of a ravaging hunger. The grotesque Banshees are the soul-shattered remnants of mage-queens from the doomed Conclave of Heaven. Despite the sundering of their mortal forms, their sorcerous prowess remains intact, manifesting as the ear-splitting wail for which they are known and feared.

The newest hard plastic miniatures for the Nightstalkers are the awesome Ravagers: ogre-sized brutes that shoot beams of coruscating warp-fire, conjured from portals linked to the Nightstalkers' nether-realm.



The kit can also build lumbering Butchers, clutching wicked scythes and barbarous blades in their many arms.

Also available in hard plastic for the first time, Reapers are multi-limbed monstrosities that spring upon the foe with unmatched ferocity. Their Tormentor siblings (built from the same kit) trade slashing talons for stabbing spikes that pin the enemy down as they're devoured alive, feeding on their victims' helplessness as much as their flesh.

This sense of the Nightstalkers feeding on the fear and terror of their foe is carried through into the rules as well. All units in the Nightstalkers army have the Mindthirst rule, which allows them to use the Inspiring units of their foe, rather than having their own Inspiring units. Just imagine the Nightstalkers growing stronger as they hear the terrified screams of their opponent when they emerge through a portal and onto the battlefield.

Above Left: Phantom.

Below Left: Shadowhound development, from concept sketch to final miniature.

Below: Doppelganger regiment.



THE ROOT OF EVIL

The Nightstalkers would make their presence known in 2015 as part of the Uncharted Empires supplement for **KINGS OF WAR 2nd Edition**. A totally new creation from the twisted mind of studio manager Matt Gilbert (*We really worry what sort of dreams Matt has at night!* - ed.) they appeared alongside other Kings of War firsts such as the Ratkin and Empire of Dust.

However it wouldn't be until 2018 that these horrifying hordes would manifest in miniature form, debuting in the skirmish game **KINGS OF WAR: VANGUARD** where they tested the faith of the pious Basileans in a two-player starter set.

These resin heroes and PVC plastic elites, alongside hordes of hard plastic Scarecrows, would form the backbone of the Nightstalkers' army when they besieged the Northern Alliance at the launch of **KINGS OF WAR 3rd Edition** – cementing their place as iconic antagonists in the world of Pannithor.

NIGHTSTALKERS GALLERY



Dreadfend



Shadowhulk



Void Lurker



Banshee



Shade



Scarecrows



Dream Hunter



Ravagers



Needlefangs



Terror



Reapers



Horror

ASSEMBLING THE NEW NIGHTSTALKERS

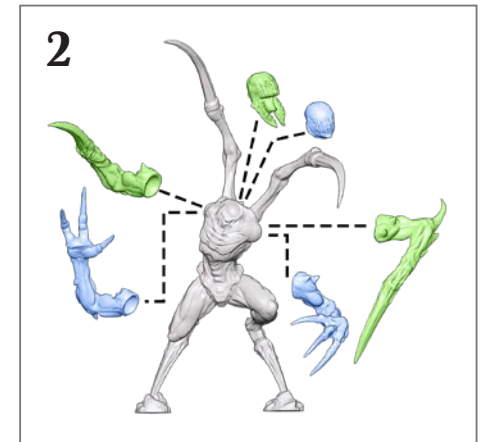
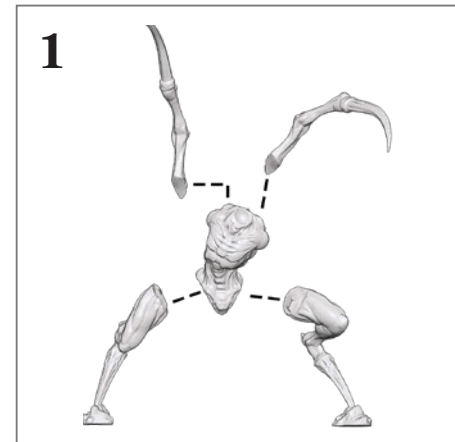
The Nightstalkers' horde of horrors has grown with the arrival of two brilliant new hard plastic kits: the agile Reapers and Tormentors, and the brutish Butchers and Ravagers. The guides on this page will help you to build these malicious monsters.



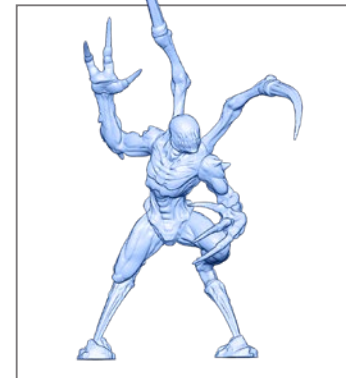
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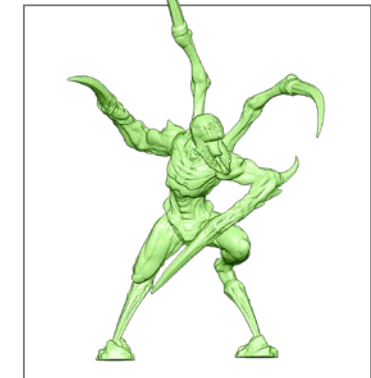
RAVAGER



REAPER



TORMENTOR



Far Left: A fully assembled and painted Butcher.

Below: A unit of Tormentors on a scenic multibase.

BASING

Since Kings of War doesn't remove individual models as casualties, it's possible to mount your units on a single large base that matches that unit's 'footprint' - a technique called Multibasing. This allows you to build your miniatures in dynamic poses that would normally prevent them from arranging into neat ranks if they were based individually. You can even turn the multibase into an eye-catching diorama!



BATTLE TACTICS

Playing a new army can sometimes be a daunting prospect, but don't worry because we've got some tips and tricks for your first few battles with the horrifying Nightstalkers.

A NEED FOR SPEED

If you want to get into combat as fast as possible, then the Nightstalkers have a variety of options to close the gap quickly and force your opponent into some hasty decisions.

There are a number of speedy units in the Nightstalker army, including Soulflayers and Phantoms. Some units also have the Fly special rule (such as the titanic and terrifying Void Lurker) which means they don't have to worry about getting bogged down by terrain.



You should use these fast units to close in and initiate combats early, hopefully charging the enemy by turn two. This aggressive playstyle allows you to put your opponent at a disadvantage and compel them to react to your moves, giving you control of the flow of battle.

DARE TO SCARE

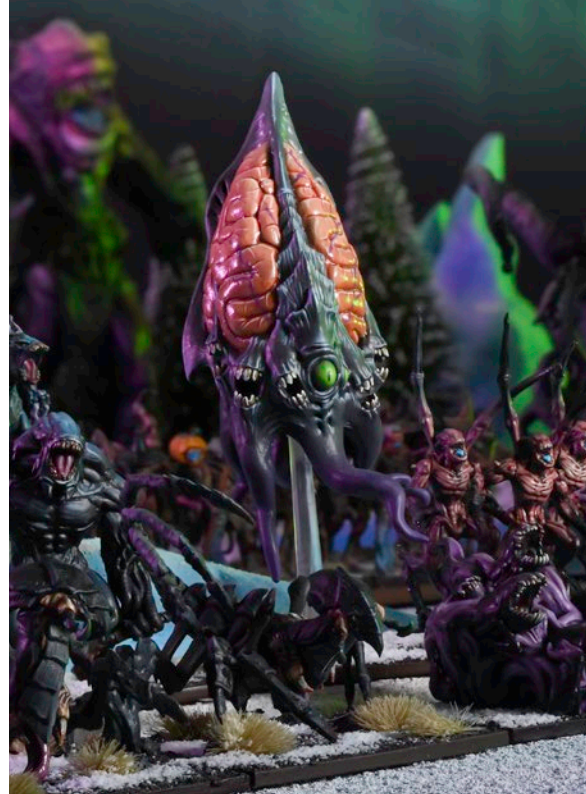
If you don't want to go for all-out speed, the Nightstalkers also have the option to grind down the enemy with immovable infantry.

Hordes of Scarecrows are surprisingly difficult to destroy: thanks to their Nerve stat of -/21, they can soak up lots of damage before they finally 'pop'. They are extremely slow, however – with a mere Speed 4 – so you'll have to take advantage of cover and the Stealthy special rule to stop them taking too much damage as they shamble to battle.

Having a couple of Scarecrow Hordes at the centre of your army is great for creating an anvil for your opponent to hammer against. Then while the enemy is chewing through the Scarecrows, you can smash into their flanks with heavy-hitters like the crushing Butchers or lethal Reapers.

MALEVOLENT MAGIC

Although the Nightstalkers have no war machines, they still pack a potent long-range punch with the Mind-screech. This monstrous Spellcaster shoots Lightning Bolts up to 24" across the battlefield and, unlike many conventional siege weapons,



the Mind-screech can hit on a 4+ with six attacks – making it far more reliable than other armies' artillery.

Also, thanks to the Mind-screech's lofty Height 4, you can place it behind your core infantry without blocking its line of sight. It'll be screened from enemy charges and still be able to fire blasts of lightning over their heads, attacking with impunity.

While we're talking about magic, don't overlook units that have the Wind Blast or Enthral spells. These can be extremely useful in the latter stages of a battle to move enemy units off objectives, denying your opponent precious victory points.

Above: A Mind-screech bolstering a Nightstalker battle line during the invasion of the Winterlands.

Left: A Nightstalker Soulflayer atop its hex-steed.

IMPLACABLE HORRORS

There are two army-wide special rules that make the Nightstalkers a truly tenacious foe: **Stealthy** and **Mindthirst**. Each conveys a distinct benefit to your units, giving Nightstalker armies an advantage to rely on regardless of what strategies you employ in battle.

The Stealthy special rule gives an automatic -1 to hit modifier when the enemy targets your units with ranged attacks. This represents the Nightstalkers being shadow-like creatures who skulk the battlefield cloaked in darkness, making it difficult for opposing bows, muskets or war-engines to draw a precise bead on them. Combining the Stealthy rule with the cover offered by terrain provides a strong defence against armies that rely on shooting.

The Mindthirst rule instead uses your opponent's assets against them. That's because Mindthirst allows your foe's Inspiring units to also Inspire your Nightstalkers. Normally, Inspiring units only have a range of 6" or 9" – but the Nightstalkers can be inspired by enemy units up to 12" away. On top of that, you don't have to worry about bringing your own Inspiring units, which means more points to spend on big monsters instead!

When Mindthirst and Stealthy are combined, this means your Nightstalkers can wade through enemy fire as they advance, and are tough to repel once they get in close – a powerful combo.

COLLECTING NIGHTSTALKERS NEXT STEPS



SHADOWHOUNDS

Shadowhounds are a key unit because of their incredible speed. With a troop or two, you can be in your opponent's face before they have time to react, or position them to counter-charge the enemy if they attempt to outflank you.



SHADOWHULK

The Shadowhulk is a chilling presence on the battlefield. Your opponent is likely to focus on it because it presents such an imposing threat – use this intimidation factor to distract them while your other units capture objectives.



SCARECROWS/DOPPELGANGERS

A horde of Scarecrows is perfect for stalling the enemy advance because they can take a lot of damage without wavering, making them an ideal roadblock or anchor unit.



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