

Martyr Town

Settlement, Hive Primus, Necromunda

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The Settlement of Martyr Town

Home To A Thousand Souls.

Our humble settlement, buried deep within the Underhive, has attracted little attention over the years. Its origins are largely lost to the depths of time. Little is known, save that a man once brought his family down from Uphive in the hope of finding a more peaceful life, during the Guilder Tax riots over three centuries ago.

Discovering a rich vein of workable ore, the man set up shop and plied his trade. In time more, like-minded, settlers arrived, others who wished to escape the violence of the Upperhive and a community was established.

The rest, as they say, is history.

Why the name? No-one's to sure. There are lots of theories and rumours. Some reckon that the original settler was a significant character Uphive, someone of real importance and that his rejection of House and the Guilder enforced laws led the Guilders to have him hunted down and murdered. However, there is little to support this theory, given that everything about the settlers past is now lost to time.

Regardless, the town was a peaceful one, and undeserved of the title.

That was until two months ago.

Destruction & Death

The Hive Quake was massive. It lasted for two full days and brought Martyr Town to its knees. Even now the survivors have yet to count the cost but it will doubtless take many years of re-building before Martyr Town will truly have recovered.

Evidence of the destruction lay everywhere. Homes were destroyed, with many of the occupants being buried alive. There was little any person could do to aid another and as the dust cleared people began to clamber across the wreckage in search of loved ones and property.

As the survivors worked through the wreckage one citizen, her eyes streaming with tears from the ash and dust, gave a cry as she saw that the Quake had caused more than just wanton destruction.

Revealed before the humble citizens was an impressive sight, one which few will ever behold. Two clicks to the South of the Town, where previously there had been nothing more than impassible permacrete, lay ancient ruins of an unidentifiable type. Surely, these ancient edifices dated back to the first Settlers of the Hive, possibly even the builders themselves. Multiple structures rose from the earth, each one archaic and coated in the dust of ages.

Immediately the inhabitants set about exploring the ruins though many others urged them to wait. Rashly, I myself, joined my fellow citizens and entered the decayed structures. I was lucky to escape with my life.

Discovery

Of the manner of danger I encountered within those ruins I shall not speak. Suffice to say that I will not return to that place of my volition, nor face its dread guardians again.

We traversed the ruins for several hours, trudging through dust and ash and stagnant ponds of waste and detritus. There was little which had not decayed and few items of worth but, eager with curiosity, we plunged ever onwards into the fading light.

I would guess that we had travelled no more than four and a half clicks before coming upon the Dome. It was vast and a sight unlike any I have ever witnessed before or since. Stretching before us lay a Dome constructed entirely of glass plates bordered by metal support rings in hexagonal patterns. But it was not this phenomena that most interested us.

Through the transparent surface of the Dome wall could be seen lush greenery the likes of which I have only ever heard tales of. Such tales speak of jungle worlds inhabited by all manner of greenery and life though I have never seen proof that such

places exist. Towering organic structures (which I have since learnt are known as trees off world) stretched to the summit of the Dome. The entire bowl of its roof was filled with lush greenery and life.

Above the summit, through breakages in the wall, flew creatures on wings of leather and feathers, vying for dominance of the air.

Inside could be heard the rush of water, as from a full Water-Still but 100 times the volume. Quickly we approached the crumbling but erect entrance and, like fools, we entered. The air was moist, warm and charged. Breathing was difficult because of the humidity. Fighting our way through the greenery, we rapidly became separated.

I had taken but a few steps but already I was disorientated and had lost the path. The direction from which I had come eluded me. Cries from all directions dictated the agony of those who had travelled with me. Desperately I searched for my fellow citizens and soon enough I saw them.

As I have said I will write no more of the terrors which assailed me that day. I only pray that such creatures never leave the confines of the lush territory for the inhabitants of Martyr Town would surely be slain to their last.

There were other things to which my eyes bore witness though. By chance, through my blind panic, I discovered an artificial waterfall of immense size and, though I did not reflect upon it at the time, it later occurred to me that the technology involved in the construction of a fresh water irrigation system of such size would be advanced indeed.

Other questions have since been posed; how is it possible that such an abundance of plant life can exist in the depths of the Underhive, without light or heat? Of what material must the Dome be constructed in order to withstand the wear of millennia and the weight of an entire Hive? What other technological marvels lie, undisturbed, within its colourless walls.

It is this which has changed our town for ever.

Devils Hope

Now they have come in droves. The Gangs. They have come in search of treasure, of the technologies from a distant, dark age. Such things are worth much to those off world. And following them come the Scum and the Bounty Hunters, all eager for a share of the spoils.

Many a Gang, armed and armoured, has entered that dread place in search of riches and an

end to the misery of life in the Underhive. Of those which enter, not all return. Survivors have come back, bleeding and shaking, muttering incoherently of the Terrors in the Dark. Yet still they go.

And some have returned laden with riches. Bearing Archeotech of unknown but ancient origin. Tales of such finds often speak louder than warnings of danger and so yet more come.



The settlement could not long bear the weight of the new arrivals. The Watering Holes filled within weeks and so the Gangs, seeking a more permanent form of accommodation, moved to the Ruins. There, in relative safety, they have set up rough camps and dwellings throughout the ancient edifices.

Like a vibro-blade through tar, the Gangs of each House have carved up the land and formed their territories. They will fight like devils to protect their rights of entry into the Dome, and the sound of gunfire is often heard from the Ruins, day and night. Not surprising, then, that it has coined the name Devils Hope.

The Dome

Many tales now come from the Dome. Tales of death, of discovery and of mystery. Gangs which have crossed each others path while navigating the Jungle have engaged in savage firefights.

Such conflict is made all the more dangerous by the nature of the wildlife which grows so freely within the Dome. Vicious insects, the size of a mans head, attack all who approach with crushing mandibles, poisonous stings and a variety of other, deadly defences. Carnivorous plant life traps the unwary and slowly digests the still living victim.

The very scenery is deadly as the rapidly changing environment can mean that gentle streams quickly become rivers, sections of the Dome roofing collapse and fall on those beneath and black tar pits absorb all those who stumble into them.

Amidst the jungle scenery lies the ancient structures of those who built the Dome. The towering buildings, gantries and other structures would doubtless resemble much of the rest of the Underhive were it not for the massively overgrown plant life with which they are now covered.



Further into its depths lie those dread guardians, massively mutated beasts I cannot bring myself to write more. Beyond them lie the riches, the fresh falls and the source of the technology which maintains the Dome. It is this which the Gangs and miscreants who enter the Dome search for. But the Dome is massive, stretching well over 10 clicks in its diameter and within its maze like structures and canopies it is all too easy to lose ones way. I should know.

The Arrival of the Rats

It is not only those with a legitimate claim to the Domes secrets that have come to Martyr Town, though this is disturbing enough.

The Ratskin Clans appear to have been attracted to the Dome and its surrounding ruins. They claim that these are the constructs of the Hive Spirits and that the Dome is a place blessed by the spirits which they worship.

They further claim that the creatures which inhabit the Dome are the Guardians of the Hive Spirits, manifest in a way which is not seen elsewhere in the Hive and it is for this reason that they attack the intruders, for only those worthy before the eyes of their Hive Gods may proceed into the depths of the Dome and learn its secrets.

While it does appear to be true that the Ratskins do not suffer the same ills as the other Gangs in the dense undergrowth, little else is known of their encounters within the Dome.

Certainly progress has not been easy for the Ratskins. They are rejected by the Hivers and rightly so. Backward and violent, they are not welcome within our town, though we would be hard pressed to resist them if it came to force.

Instead they make their dwellings in unknown locations, hidden from view to all those save their own people. So much the better, for the Ratskins are of a violent creed and, now more than ever, are willing to fight to protect their religious interests in the Dome.

A Change of the Way

So now a variety of parties descend upon our settlement, each with their own interests and motives. Already disorder is rife as rival Gangs break into open conflict in our streets. Bandits and thieves are a common sight.

The Town Watch cannot cope. Bribery is prevalent and much is overlooked. The law is becoming one of the gun and for the first time in its history there are many who would call for the presence of the Enforcers. They do not call loudly though, for there are those who have made a considerable profit in recent months through black-market sales and other nefarious activities and such people would not appreciate the arrival of Lord Helmaur's Enforcers.

Doubtless I put myself at risk in scribing these words, for an assassin can lurk around many a corner and I would not be the first to die with a blade in my back, my body left for the rats.

Alas, such is the way of life in recent times. Therefore be warned traveller and newcomer, Martyr Town is not the haven of peace that it once was.

The Lay of the Land

Martyr Town itself is comprised of three quarters. There was a fourth but it was largely raised to the ground during the Quake and the process of rebuilding has not yet begun, indeed many now wonder if it will.

The first Quarter is the Guilder Quarter. It is the smallest of the three but contains the main Trading Post for the town. It is now by far the busiest and lies to the South East entrance to the Town. The entrance is newly built and faces Devils Hope, better to access those who may profit from ventures into the Dome. Many tents and camps now surround this entrance and the area

immediately surrounding the entrance to the Quarter has become a veritable Shanty town.

It is in the Guilder Quarter that new comers may find shelter, of a sort. It houses the Watering Holes and Inns and is the best place to be if your only desire is a glass of Wildsnake and the company of like-minded individuals.

The next Quarter, to the South West, is the industry quarter. It is built atop an ancient slag pile and the excavation tunnels delve several kilometres into the ore.

The Quarter is raised above the others and its piston driven machines and smelting works can be heard long into the night. Surprisingly it is the one place which received the least damage as a result of the Quake. Probably because it is constructed atop a great heap of iron.

Recently an explosion in the mines caused a lift shaft to plummet and several miners fell to their deaths. Some noted that Doe Marcen, an outspoken individual with much to say about the corruption of officials, was working that day and is believed to be a victim of the accident. I would not risk drawing any inference from this however, especially not if you work the mines.

The Quarter of the Town Council now consists largely of rubble. Formerly the Quarter consisted of the Watch Station, the Town Hall and several other administration buildings but none of these now stand. The Council have taken up residence in the Guilder Quarter as a temporary solution, much to the satisfaction of the Guilders who are increasingly able to turn the Council's hand on matters which affect them most directly. Though this is, of course, pure hearsay.

The final quarter is that of the Resi Quarter. Here the inhabitants of Martyr Town live out their daily existence and make peace with their neighbours. The occasional slime hole is scattered throughout the quarter but most foodstuffs are brought from Uphive and so there is little need for organic produce. The small dome dwellings here are humble affairs. Few of the inhabitants own vehicles. Indeed many have never had the need to leave Martyr Town, and know little of the rest of the Hive.

This lack of understanding often draws the citizens of Martyr Town into conflict with the outsiders and many a brawl has broken out in the local watering holes. Many such brawls are ended only by the crack of gunfire and it is a rare thing that the citizens of Martyr Town are left standing when the smoke clears.

In response to this, fear of the outsiders has grown and many former inhabitants have migrated now, leaving the town in search of a quieter life. So as the population of the town is swollen by the arrival of Gangs and Scum and thugs, so it is diminished by the departure of those to whose taste the town no longer appeals.

In short Martyr Town is becoming a sinful place, where greed and violence are commonplace and oppression reigns. However, there is, perhaps, a bright spark amidst the ash.

None could deny that Martyr Town is booming. Its watering holes and Inns are full. Massive amounts of trade now occur on a daily basis. Though it may not be legitimate there are those who would point out that there is little in the underhive which could be truly described as lawful.

One thing is certain: if it is riches, excitement, danger or simply to disappear amidst the crowds, you are seeking Martyr Town is the place to be.