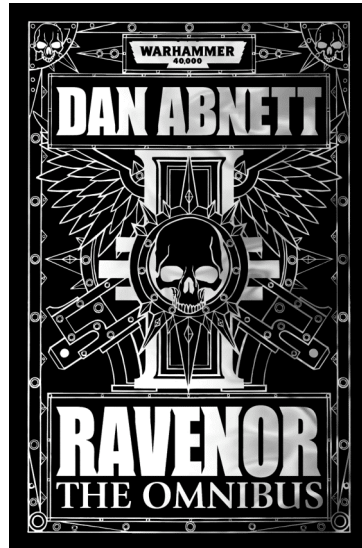


RAVENOR: THE OMNIBUS

A Warhammer 40,000 omnibus

By Dan Abnett

In the war-torn future of the 41st millennium, the Inquisition fights a secret war against the darkest enemies of mankind – the alien, the heretic and the daemon. The three stories in this omnibus tell the tale of Inquisitor Gideon Ravenor and his lethal band of operatives, whose investigations take them across time and space. Wherever they go, and whatever dangers they face, they will never give up until their mission succeeds.



About the Author

Dan Abnett is a novelist and award-winning comic book writer. He has written twenty-five novels for the Black Library, including the acclaimed Gaunt's Ghosts series and the Eisenhorn and Ravenor trilogies, and, with Mike Lee, the Darkblade cycle. His Black Library novel *Horus Rising* and his Torchwood novel *Border Princes* (for the BBC) were both bestsellers. He lives and works in Maidstone, Kent.

Dan's website can be found at www.DanAbnett.com

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DOUBLE EAGLE
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The following is an excerpt from *Ravenor: The Omnibus* by Dan Abnett. Published by the Black Library. Games Workshop, Willow Road, Nottingham, NG7 2WS, UK.

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Tired, I make myself comfortable. Not in any physical way. The sustain-field of my chair accommodates my rudimentary body-needs. I settle and adjust mentally, according to the psykana rituals.

A soft-edged trance allows me to open up. I can hear hectic noise from the ship around me, but I muffle it out. I am weary from the long voyage.

I concentrate. I resolve. I see nothing. I feel everything. Everything that makes up Eustis Majoris. Bloat-world, obese with cities. Filthy with a crust of dirt I can taste. It is like examining a putrefying corpse.

My fingertips feel contaminated already, though I have no fingers.

Eustis Majoris. It makes me gag. Old world. Rain-eaten world. Sub-sector capital. The smell of tar and slime and ouslite on its consumptive breath. The dry odour of trade, the stale stink of vice.

It is hard for me to bear. My gorge rises, my stomach turns.

I resolve. There is too much data, too many signals from too many lives. I have to focus. They are down there. My people, hard at work. I must not lose them.

Specifics. I look for specifics. I hunt for the glints of the wraithbone markers. I whisper through lives, from one to another, as if walking through the rooms of an endless mansion.

I am a courtesan called Matrice, beautiful but spurned by my lover-protector, dreaming of a rich, new patron. My skirts are heavy with lace.

I am a drunk called Tre Brogger, counting out change on a bar top to see if I can afford one more snifter of amasec.

I am a footpad without a name. I am running, out of breath. My estoc is slippery with blood. I think I belong to a clan, and I think the clan will be pleased with the pocket-chron and credit wafers I have just acquired.

I am a washerwoman, crying over the son I once gave away.

I am a hab super, dry heaving as I force entry to a stack apartment where flies fill the air. Three weeks since the old man was last seen. I will have to call the marshals. I might lose my job for this.

I am a bird. Free.

I am an administry clerk called Olyvier, tapping at the keys of my codifier, the screen reflecting green phantoms at my augmetic eyes. I have awful halitosis because of an abscess in my gum. I cannot afford the medicae fees unless I put in extra shifts all month. I have a scheduled break in one hundred and nineteen minutes.

I am a servitor, stacking boxes in a stock-house. I had a name once, but I have forgotten how to say it. It takes an effort just to remember to stack the boxes the right way up. The boxes have arrows on their sides.

I am a pardoner called Josev Gangs. I am waiting nervously for the court doors to open.

I am a rat, and I am gnawing. I am a rat.

I am a gamper called Benel Manoy, crouching under the shutters of a sink-shop, waiting for the rain to come and bring me business. I am nine. My gamp, furred, is taller than I am. It was my father's, when he carried the

service. It needs new skinning, because it is sorely worn. The name on the gamp is still my father's. When I get it reskinned, I will have 'Benel Manoy' writ upon it. I am a wherryman called Edrick Lutz, pulling on the oars of my skiff as I sing out for business. The water is murky and smells of piss. I was married once. I still miss her. The bitch. Where is all the trade today? The quays are empty.

I am a sheet-press worker called Aesa Hiveson. I am sound asleep in my one-room hab in the stacks of Formal K. The double-shift left me exhausted, so I fell asleep the moment I sat down. The feeble shower I intended to get under is still running. The water pipes are thumping and banging. They do not wake me. I am dreaming of a fine custard dessert I once tasted at a distant cousin's wedding. He was a wealthy man. I will not taste its like again.

I am a nurse in the Formal G medicae hall. Everything smells of contraseptic. The lights are too bright. I do not like the way the starchy uniform constricts my upper arms. It reminds me that my upper arms are too fat. The name on my badge is Elice Manser, but my real name is Febe Ecks. I have no qualifications. I lied to get this job. One day they will find me out. Until then, I intend to make the most of my unchallenged access to the post-partum hall. The cult pay well, especially for healthy babies.

I...

I am anonymous, gender uncertain, a very long time dead, undiscovered behind a false wall in Formal B. I am two girls in PDF youth uniforms, left in shallow graves in the north end flowerbeds of Stairtown Park, behind a row of acid-browened bushes. I am a man hanging from a rope in room 49/6 of a condemned hab-stack. I am the

family of a girl who vanished on her way to lessons. I am a fab-worker who keeps pict-shots of young men in the same bureau drawer as a whetted combat knife. I am a rubricator, felled by a heart attack on my way home on a transit mag-lev. I am a tree that is withering in High Administratum Square.

I am an Imperial inquisitor called Gideon Ravenor. The realisation makes me start. I had almost lost sight of myself in the discordant psyk-noise. Slowly, out of the mass of fidgeting data, I lock down the signals. One at a time, each one is almost drowned out by the polyphony of living minds. It is like trying to single out a lone voice from a choir of ten billion.

Focus, Gideon. Focus...

There! There's Thonius. And Kys the telekine, too.

Together, in a bustling commercial street, surface level, two vital life-beats in a mosaic of millions.

And there's Kara. Bright as a pulsar, shining up from deep in the sink levels. I feel her tense. Her heart rate accelerates. I smell the dining house around her. Oh shit, the god-damned ninker is going for it—

Lost her!

Too much, too many. The acid rain drenching the upper level streets burns my skin, though I have no skin. The sensation is delicious. I wish I could linger on it.

No time for that. I taste Nayl. Pure muscle and testosterone. Hugging the shadows of a deep, sink-stack slum.

And then...

What's this? Who's this? Beloved Emperor, this one hurts to touch. Hurts so very much...

From inside his head, I hear his name. Zael...

RAVENOR: THE OMNIBUS can be purchased in all better bookstores, Games Workshop and other hobby stores, or direct from this website and GW mail order.

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