

The Anatomy of an Unwinnable War

A strategic teardown of how the Old World fights entropy with one hand tied behind its back.

The background of the slide is a dark, textured surface resembling a map or parchment. In the center-left, a single lit candle sits on a square, rusted metal plate. Purple smoke or magical energy rises from the candle and drifts across the scene. Faint, circular patterns, possibly compass roses, are visible in the corners of the background.

The war was lost before any of the heroes were born.

- ◆ The Old World is not fighting a conventional war; it is fighting mathematical entropy.
- ◆ Despite heroes, wizards, dragons, and dwarf-forged artillery, civilization is grinding down century by century.
- ◆ This is an analysis of a system where every safety mechanism is simultaneously breaking down.

Planetary Cross-Section

The Architects

Built by godlike terraformers (The Old Ones) to seed the younger races.

The Rupture (-4500 IC)

The Great Catastrophe. The gates collapse, turning the poles into open arteries to the Realm of Chaos.

The Weather System

The Winds of Magic bleed south. Where they pool, reality softens, land mutates, and daemons coalesce. Chaos is not a region to be conquered; it is an enduring atmospheric condition.



Mortal emotions inevitably fuel the destroyers.

Khorne

Domain: Rage & Bloodshed

Fed By: Every battle fought to hold the line.

Nurgle

Domain: Decay & Disease

Fed By: Every plague and the desperate love of survival.

Tzeentch

Domain: Change & Sorcery

Fed By: Every ambitious schemer and strategist.

Slaanesh

Domain: Excess

Fed By: Every extreme act or obsession.

Key Insight: The Old World cannot stop generating the emotions that empower its destroyers, because to stop feeling would be to stop being alive. Conventional warfare is a closed, fatal loop.

The First Dam: The Great Vortex



Location: Ulthuan (Ring-shaped island continent).

Keepers: High Elves (The Asur).

Function: The planet's dialysis machine. A magical maelstrom that sucks excess Chaos energy out of reality.

Status: Maintained by chronically exhausted Elven mages bleeding to death for millennia.

The Second Dam: The Great Plan



Location: Lustria (Steaming ancient jungles).

Keepers: Slann Mage-Priests and Lizardmen.

Function: Executing the cosmic blueprint of the Old Ones; sealed the initial breach.

Status: A dwindling order of psychic frog-priests reading plaques older than human language. Half died in the first breach.

THE CURSED CHOICE

First Phoenix King, Aenarion, draws the Sword of Khaine to fight Chaos, cursing his bloodline.

THE REJECTION

His son, Malekith, tries to claim the throne through the Flame of Asuryan. He is burned nearly to death and marked unworthy.

THE SUNDERING (-2750 IC)

Malekith and the sorceress Morathi tear the race in half, founding the Dark Elves (Druchii) in frozen Naggaroth.

THE CATASTROPHE

A counter-spell to protect the Great Vortex sinks a third of the continent.

INSIGHT: The race tasked with keeping the planet's primary dam running permanently cut its own workforce and strength in half through civil war.

CAMPAIGN MAPS

The Setup



Dark Elf raiders disguise themselves as High Elves to provoke the Dwarfs.

The Spark



A Dwarf ambassador's beard is shaved—an unforgivable insult in Dwarf culture.

The War of Vengeance (-2000 to -1600 IC)



Also known as the War of the Beard. Centuries of slaughter between the ancient world's greatest alliance (Elven magic + Dwarf craft).

The End



Dwarf High King Gotrek Starbreaker kills the Phoenix King in single combat.

Insight: The two civilizations best equipped to fight Chaos permanently exhausted their golden ages on a manufactured misunderstanding.

PARADOX EQUATION

$$\begin{aligned} & \left(\text{Infinite Numbers} \right. \\ & \quad \left. + \text{Warpstone Technology} \right) \\ & \div \text{Total Internal Treachery} \\ & = \text{Stagnant Survival} \end{aligned}$$

1 The Arsenal

Clan Skryre (impossible weapons), Clan Moulder (flesh-crafted monsters), Clan Pestilens (weaponized disease), Clan Eshin (assassins).

2 The Fatal Flaw

The Council of Thirteen is a nest of mutual assassination. Every warlord's instinct is to backstab the rat next to him on the cusp of victory.

The Human Delusion: The Empire of Man officially denies their existence. Sightings of the 'Under-Empire' are dismissed as peasant superstition by state policy.

CAMPAIGN MARKS

Insight: The Empire that should be facing north toward Chaos is constantly forced to fight its own buried past.

A grim, analytical teardown by a desperate general trying to hold an impossible line.

Vampires

Created via corrupted elixir given to Queen Neferata. Leads to Vlad von Carstein waging endless wars in Sylvania, wielding a ring that denies him death.

Tomb Kings

Nagash's death-curse misfires, waking mummified rulers like Settra the Imperishable (who notoriously claims: "Settra does not serve. Settra rules.").

Origin

Nagash, Priest-King of Nehekara, invents necromancy to conquer death.

THE HIDDEN ROT

THE UNDER-EMPIRE (SKAVEN)

Origin: Pure Mutation
(The Horned Rat)

Location: Beneath every
floorboard globally

Core Driver: Consumption of
Warpstone

Greatest Weakness: Inevitable
mutual assassination

THE GRAVES (UNDEAD)

Origin: Pure Ambition
(Nagash's Necromancy)

Location: Concentrated in
Sylvania and Nehekara deserts

Core Driver: The obsession
with immortality and control

Greatest Weakness: Supreme
arrogance and pride

THE COMPASS OF DOOM

A grim, analytical teardown by a desperate general trying to hold an impossible line.



Insight: The human heartland is not fighting a front-line war. It is fighting six simultaneous wars on every compass point, plus one straight down.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF ENTROPY

THE HEAVENS

Neon purple Winds of Magic pressing down heavily from the atmosphere.

THE FAILING DEFENSES

The struggling Great Vortex and the fractured lines of Elves and Dwarfs holding the perimeter.

THE BOTTLENECK

The Empire of Man, a tiny glowing ember of civilization trapped in the middle, beset by Greenskin and Beastmen incursions.

THE ROT

Honeycombed earth filled with Skaven tunnels, and shallow graves glowing with necromantic magic.



Takeaway: The Old World is not losing a military conflict; it is being crushed by a multi-dimensional vice of entropy.

Meaning under pressure.

Bretonnian knights questing for unattainable Grails.
Dwarf Slayers seeking honorable deaths for past shames.
Empire generals holding doomed bridges.

They don't fight because they believe they will win.
They fight because letting the dark in without a fight
is the only thing worse than losing.

*Not a promise of victory,
but the choice of how to lose.*