

TALES FROM THE WARS™ UNIVERSE

WARSONG



Quondm Falx



By Mark Tuttle



From the scientific journal of Viramri-Damir Historical Lord Advisor to the House of Damir

Subject of Study: Relic – Quondam Falx

Viramri-Damir writes:

A very curious weapon indeed.

The Quondam Falx was found on Prilcali during an off-world competition 4,517 years ago when the Shi expansion spread out thousands of light years from Seyal. The world's fate would be decided, as per normal decorum, in the arena.

The Prilcali champion, Battah, was undefeated, and welcomed the Shi challenge. So sure was the Prilcali council, that it eagerly accepted the terms. Helashir-Damir, the Shi champion, was also undefeated having vanquished over a thousand aliens from as many worlds Helashir traveled to through rifts.

The duel was brutality at its most spectacular. Blood was drawn on both sides and the battle turned from one side to the next. For several hours, the combatants fought. Blood sprayed the spectators, which only drove the savage Prilcali into frenzy. Even the Shi were swept up into the fury of battle, seeing their champion fight so valiantly.

Then a curious thing happened. Helashir began to slow and soon took more blows than Battah. The Prilcali's weapon struck again and again and the Shi began to falter. As Battah took fewer blows, he delivered more and more to his opponent. Finally, Helashir fell to the ground, no longer able to remain aloft. Helashir's Vatarma shattered at the head, leaving nothing more than a splintered rod. Blood poured from dozens of wounds and Helashir's nanites couldn't heal him fast enough. Battah stepped forward and looked down to deliver the final blow. He kicked the Shi hard in the head, spinning Helashir over. Battah raised his weapon high into the air. He turned to the cheering Prilcali and screamed "Quondam Falx!" As the crowd roared in response, the Shi spectators sat in stunned disbelief. Helashir-Damir was about to die.

However, that was not to be. Using Battah's arrogance as a distraction, Helashir drove the broken Vatarma clean through Battah's fleshy upper leg, ripping the muscle from the bone. Battah screamed in pain as Helashir then grabbed both sides of the Vatarma and spun it like a wheel. Hunks of Battah's leg flew in all directions as Battah crashed to the ground, falling on his good knee. He swung his weapon around desperately, but Helashir-Damir caught the weapon by the handle and began to wrestle with Battah for control of it.

The account of what happened next comes from Helashir-Damir's personal journal. Helashir described the sensation of touching the weapon as spiritual. It felt cold and warm at the same time. It was impossible to determine its weight and balance, as it seemed to shift wildly up and down its length as Battah and Helashir fought for it. Reeling from the pain in what remained of his left leg, Battah made one final shift to try and throw Helashir-Damir off-balance. Helashir had almost forgotten about the battle and was intoxicated by the weapon's feel. With the smallest gesture, Helashir plunged the weapon deep into Battah's chest with a sick, slicing sound. Battah fell to the ground gasping. He looked back up to Helashir and reach up a bloody hand toward the weapon. "Quondam Falx," he said desperately, before he died.

Helashir-Damir, the champion of all Shi, had won. The following day, 100,000 Quay slaves were deposited on Prilcali and the civilization was destroyed. The origins of the Quondam Falx would never be answered.

In journals, Helashir struggled to describe the Quondam Falx, as it became named, assuming that is what Battah had been referring to. Helashir said the weapon was like holding a sealed tube, half filled with water. As the weapon was shifted, the weight on one end or the other seemed to increase. This wasn't consistent though; as the weight change always seemed to coincide with a strike or block or some other move during combat. Scientific analysis done long after Helashir-Damir's death verified that the weapon was not hollow but did seem to respond by increasing and decreasing its molecular density when certain individuals held it. Many in the scientific community scoffed at such a ridiculous notion and dismissed such talk. One scientist speculated that the weapon was

almost sentient and would respond to beings with special abilities. What these abilities are, no one knows. Helashir-Damir was the most traveled of the Shi champions, but beyond his battle prowess, he possessed no such capabilities that could ever be detected in those ancient times.

Helashir-Damir used the Quondam Falx for a thousand more battles, and was never defeated. Helashir became popular, powerful, and dangerous. Whispers in Shi society saw that as a threat to their own power and ambitions. Helashir's eventual death was a mystery never fully explained as he fell in the Coliseum to a vicious Quay savage named Grttak. Helashir seemed sluggish and distracted as he entered the arena, a condition that the Quay took advantage of. As Helashir died, his last breath spoke "Quondam Falx." Grttak picked up the weapon, looked at it curiously for moment, then threw it aside. Grttak was shot dead by the Coliseum security detail.

The Quondam Falx then disappeared for several thousand years, before being found in the remains of a prominent member of the Vishal house who couldn't explain its presence there. Reclaiming it as their property in a bloody civil war, the Damir have held it ever since. Where it came from and what secret it holds is a mystery for the ages. Nevertheless, the Shi are timeless and patient. One day we will know.

Entry closed.

Viramri-Damir looked up from the data gelscreen and stared at the broken, empty pedestal where the Quondam Falx had remained for hundreds of years. The security tendrils lay strewn about the floor in tatters and human blood trailed down the hallway toward the outer corridor and onto the maintenance level boarding platform.

"The Shi are timeless and patient," Viramri thought to himself.

From the Publisher's Desk:

WARSONG has a long enough history that its managed to accrue some lost media in its nearly two decades of existence. Some more lost than others. Recently though, a lot of material has come to light due to the diligent efforts of fans, and this story is here thanks to the diligent efforts of fans like Ketora on Discord, who helped dig up things we didn't even know we'd lost.

During the wilderness years of WARS, as fans passed around the original WARS stories written to promote the WARS Trading Card Game, this story was never among them. Imagine my shock when I read a brand new WARS story I hadn't read before—and I hadn't commissioned! It was a real treat, and I hope you get the same joy out of its rediscovery. Yes, its a short little ditty, but its unique and fun.

Written to promote the release of the unreleased WARS TCG cardset "Edge of a Sword", this story is perhaps the furthest most edge WARS existed in in its timeline. For new fans who haven't gotten to the appearance of the Shi yet... well, we at Arcbeatle Press hope very much to tell the exciting story of how the events here came to be. There's so much yet to explore.

Thanks for reading, and celebrating WARSONG with us!

-James Wylder

President and Publisher, Arcbeatle Press

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