

Wolves and Dragons of the Blood: Revelations

They were another weapon of war designed, constructed and perfected by humans long ago. The Lycavorian Union and High Coven never used Anti-Personal Mines to great extent in their war. As wolves and vampires, many could move far faster than humans, making it very nearly impossible to inflict injury with directed minefields. They were also much less effective because Lycavorians could detect the faint traces of the scents of those who laid the minefields to begin with and vampires could almost certainly detect the residual body heat from a rapidly placed minefield. This was something discovered during the battle for Earth since the vampire artillery had effectively neutralized the minefields the defenders of Eden City had laid.

It was not the same now. The skill of the engineers within the Union, and the combined ideas of Ben and Martin, the Union had resorted to using far more mines in their inventory. Mines of every shape and size. The vast majority of them now with very small and very self contained Shroud generators. The most common of these mines was the Claymore. It was a name leftover from human history, and unlike his beautiful elven wife, Ben was not very good at naming things. He left it alone and simply added a Mark Two at the end of the name.

The M18 Mark Two Claymore Mine was unlike its very effective older brother in many ways. Where the original Claymore was horizontally convex, the Mark Two now stood 140 millimeters in height and weighed just over 5 kilograms, while being completely circular in shape. They were too heavy to carry more than two for any one person, but the Lycavorian Union had put them into primary use as a defensive weapon of unit field commands. Ben had combined the original idea of the claymore with the equally effective bounding anti-personal mine. The Claymore Mark Two was no longer a directional landmine. When tripped, the Mark Two would burst from the ground where it had been buried or hidden and lift exactly 1.5 meters into the air. Then a tiny pyrotechnic trigger activates and causes the main charge of 900 grams of plastic explosive to erupt, spraying out one thousand tiny, and razor sharp flechettes in a 360 degree area of destruction at nearly 5000 feet per second. Each mine had a kill radius of thirty meters and an injury radius of nearly triple that. Each mine also had a very small computer chip in its brain that caused the mine itself to take the coloring of whatever background where it was planted. This camouflage chip would then effectively hide it from almost all known detection

by rapidly advancing infantry and also served to protect ADHOC bases from less than thorough sweeps by attacking forces.

This would be the first time the Mark Two had seen actions since the end of the Evolli War. It was also the first time that any Kavalian soldier had seen it in action, and it made many of them speak silent prayers to whatever gods they worshiped that they never had to face these weapons.

The moment Kalis mashed down on the trigger in his hand, a single burst of energy went out down the nearly ten miles of insulated wire they had laid this minefield with. They had worked tirelessly for a full week to make this wide open clearing appear to be the main Union base of operations on Manne. Base One was actually completely hidden by powerful Ground Shroud Generators similar to what Androcles Leonidas had used on Solmar, nearly one hundred kilometers from this location. This decoy base had been fitted with many electronic devices and hundreds of polymer tents and portable buildings that had been erected to enforce the illusion that this was their main base. Martin Leonidas had not been convinced that this idea would work at first, and was leaning towards using the deserted Science Station they had discovered returning from the moon where they had first met. It wasn't until Koguth, Kalis and even Mata explained to him that the High Coven did not use such trickery in battle and the Puma Bane believed themselves superior to everyone. Base Two was not nearly as large as Base One, nor as well constructed or hidden, and they were intentionally causing it to radiate openly. It only served to enforce the idea to the Puma Bane that they were facing inferior troops. Base Two had a perimeter size of three hundred meters by four hundred meters. There were one hundred Mark Twos buried within the soft dirt beneath the feet of the Puma Bane. There were two hundred and fifty Puma Bane soldiers in Lieutenant Shonis's detachment. Fully eighty-five percent of the shipboard complement under the Marshall's command.

None of them would live for more than a few more minutes.

In the space of 4.5 seconds, one hundred Mark Two Claymore mines triggered and leaped into the air within that killing field. With a single, soft muffled explosion, each mine blew apart at a height of 1.5 meters and expelled one thousand flechettes at five times the speed of sound in a 360 degree arc.

No one was safe.

Each flechette was propelled at 4875 feet per second, providing 89 foot pounds of kinetic energy to the targets. Watching from the safety of their hidden

positions Koguth and the others could only gawk in horrific shock as the Puma Bane troops were practically shredded into little bits where they stood. The light body armor they wore provided very little protection against the devastating force of the flechettes. To those standing within two or three meters of a mine, their bodies simply blew apart in red mists of blood and flesh, catching the force of the mine's deadly ordnance full on. While this served to save some of their comrades from the full force of the mine's lethal radius, none of the Puma Bane within the kill zone escaped injury. The screams of the mortally injured began to fill the air all around them, even as the remains of their Lieutenant Shonis dripped from the tattered remnants of two polymer tents.

And then the overkill began.