

Reconstruction 5

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On the Grandfather

(From a report to General Kine of the Seventy-Ninth Sontaran Assault Corps, from the representative of House Lolita.) 'I'll tell you why you don't understand them, General. You don't understand them because you don't know what living dangerously“ means. That's your problem, isn't it? To you, “sacrifice” means what you do to troops on a battlefield. A couple of thousand dead Sontarans here, a couple of million there. They're homunculi, they're clones, what does it matter?’ ‘The Faction's different, though. Sacrifice is something personal to these people. Those spirits of theirs want more bloodshed every day. Do you know what the most famous legend of Faction Paradox is? It's the story of how their Grandfather founded the House. It's all very tedious and mythic, I'll just give you the basics. 'The Grandfather was a criminal among the Houses, so even after he escaped from his prison he still had the criminal tattoo on his arm. Which tied him to the Homeworld, obviously, and which linked him to the people he was trying to get away from. So the first thing he did, once he was free...are you listening to this? The first thing he did was get hold of a knife and slice his own arm off. Offering it to the spirits, probably. 'Oh, don't get me wrong, as sacrifices go it isn't a big one. But it's a funny thing, the number of Faction people you see who've only got one arm. Makes you wonder, doesn't it? Did they all copy the Grandfather? Or do the spirits just make sure they keep having little accidents“?’ ”

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