

(01/07/2196) Karagan, Son of Merok's Personal Reflection

The Brotherhood of the Rift

...

We are not pirates.

We are Klingons in a universe without the Empire.

If we must carve our own empire, then so be it.

The ToH'la grows quieter each year, but sharper. We are hunters aging into legend. The Settled Systems whisper our name now the way prey whispers the approach of winter.

The forest grows around us and its apex predator remains.

...

The Settled Systems fractured around us—factions fighting over scraps of influence, all trying to avoid being the first to bleed. We Klingons thrive where others fear to strike.

I told the crew:

“We will not join these factions. We will become what they fear.”

That was the beginning.

...

(2/12/2206)

After a decade in this new universe, the ToH'la became more than a ship; it became a banner. Warriors and drifters from across the settled systems came, those who survived joined:

- disgraced FreeStar Rangers
- ex-syndicate hunters
- starship crews abandoned by employers
- a dozen desperate mercenaries seeking purpose

Kargan made them swear the only oath that mattered:

“Follow the Hunt. Obey the Captain. Honor the Ship.”

Thus formed The Brotherhood of the Rift.

...

My warriors called for me to take on the mantle of Emperor or Warlord. I told them titles are for men who fear irrelevance. I allowed them to call me Huntmaster.

A council of advisors formed, Lurok, Miral, Jorek, and Relaa—but I listened only when I wished.

The brotherhood requires space. Where the ToH’la was its own territory as it moved, the Brotherhood requires a fixed location.

Initially, we took:

- three pirate outposts in the Ixyll system
- an orbital refinery at Hektor
- the Ecliptic Command Carrier dreadnought and renamed her *The Iron Maw*

These became the beginnings of Rift Territory, an empire born not of diplomacy but of unapologetic ferocity.

...

This new Brotherhood blends Klingon history with frontier pragmatism. I imagine this is how our ancestors were shortly after we achieved true spaceflight and could reach other systems. It feels right, returning to our roots:

1. Strength defines borders, not maps.
2. A leader must face the first blow and survive the last.
3. All spoils go to those who take them.
4. A single ship can be an empire if its crew acts as one.

These doctrine tablets were carved into the hull of the ToH’la.

...

A breakaway group tried to seize the ToH’la itself.

I faced their leader alone, killing him with a shard of deckplating.

The Brotherhood solidified.

Other factions began using a new phrase:

“The ToH’la Line” — meaning the frontier beyond which the Brotherhood held absolute dominion. Masada, Ixyll, Sparta, and Katydid defined the unwritten line east of which others venture at their peril. Few come, none return.

Even the UC learned to avoid us.

...

Brotherhood history, carried forward by Miral, Daughter of Krel’tor

Age eventually hunts even hunters.

By Year 20, Kargan's wounds grew heavier.
His right arm stiffened. His voice rasped.
But his mind remained sharp—razor-sharp.

He intensified my training:

- joint strategies
- command posture
- when to kill
- when to hold
- how to calm a crew
- and how to ignite them

He never said I was to replace him.
He didn't need to.

(12/08/2216) The Final Battle of Kargan

The Brotherhood clashed with a coalition of local powers attempting to retake the Ixyll system. Outnumbered, outgunned—perfect conditions for a Klingon victory.

Kargan led from the front.
His final kill count was twenty-three.

But the last enemy plasma torpedo tore open the ToH'la's dorsal spine. A support beam collapsed over him.

He ordered the crew to leave him and save the ship.
They refused.

I was the one who dragged him to sickbay.

He survived the battle—long enough to speak final words.

Kargan's Last Words to me alone

"You are a storm. Lead them. Where I end... you begin."

He died with a smile—like a targ who caught its prey.

...

Lurok stepped aside voluntarily.

Jorek and Relaa swore fealty.

The warriors struck their blades to their chests in salute.

I stood before the crew and declared:

“We follow the Hunt. Now I lead it.”

The ToH’la roared with approval.

I didn’t claim the title Huntmaster. That belonged only to Kargan.

They called me War-Leader of the Brotherhood.

My first act:

A massive retaliatory strike against the coalition that killed her captain—burning three outposts and capturing two frigates.

...

(05/30/2236)

After twenty years guarding The Iron Maw, the ToH’la was not scrapped but sanctified. Her engines preserved, her disruptors kept in ceremonial readiness—sleeping claws, sharpened still.

She rests within a hollowed asteroid, the same cavern where Kargan lies in honor. Trophies from a hundred hunts ring the chamber, and Kargan’s maxims—the Way of the Targ—are carved by hand into the cavern’s crystalline walls. The ship does not rust; she waits.

The sanctuary’s location is known only to the War-Leader and the three who sit her council. An elite cadre—the Warriors of the Targ—keeps the vigil. This is the Brotherhood’s first sacred ground in the Settled Systems: as the Gates of Kahless once were to the Empire, so this place is to the Rift. Few may enter. None depart.

Each year, on the hour of Kargan’s death, the guard reenacts his final battle in ritual drills. The ToH’la flies dark and silent—no engines, no lights, no witnesses. It is not a spectacle; it is an oath renewed.

During that hour, no ship dares enter our space, any who try do not return.

Legacy Summary

The IKS ToH’la began as a small, cramped B’rel of a minor Klingon House.

It became:

- a war pack
- a faction
- an empire
- a philosophy
- a legend whispered in docking bays and battlefields

And all of it began with one old warrior who accepted being “a big targ in a small forest”...

...and ended up reshaping an entire universe.