

tHE bIG pICTURE

(nOThInG lAStS foReVeR)

C O N T E N T S

Introduction – Welcome to issue twelve....

Serial Killers – A quick look at Mort's most wanted and psychotic.

Seven – Scenario to target the Op's in a series of bizarre murders.

Street Drugs – Some of the illegal narcotics out there on the streets.

Never Mind The Pig – Carrien Birds and Trancid, should liven things up a bit.

Equipment – The Hurcules, Squid computer and Tek Trex Drednought.

Finding A Job – A Cloak offered Grey and a Ministry of War White.

Soft Companies – Time TV, Shroud and FireFight. Born to succeed.

Meet N Greet – WarDog, sole survivor of a doomed squad.

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This is a SLA Industries fanzine produced on a non profit making basis by a few dedicated fans, the cover price pays for copying and materials and postage.

tHE bIG pICTURE can be bought direct from us at the address below, with cheques and PO's (Stirling only) made payable to M. Bantleman.

We cannot pay for anything we use, all copyrights remain with respective authors/artists, each of whom does it for love not money (surprised eh? Not you, them!).

So, you going to buy it or what.

A disclaimer should be here, saying something like the opinions expressed are those of the authors and not the publishers, and that no one is ever going to

admit responsibility for anything bad, dodgy or misspelled, but we really can't be bothered.

Stuff we like: Background material, BPN's, soft companies, equipment, beasties, scenarios and campaign ideas.

Stuff we steer clear of: Poetry, fiction, characters, big gun profiles, law suits.

Feedback would be greatly received, let us know what you think of **tHE bIG pICTURE**, either way, good or bad.

SLA Industries is looking good for the future and we hope to be around to see it launched again.

Nightfall lives!

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Unless specifically credited to an author, all material in The Big Picture is written by Max Bantleman.

B a c k C o v e r

The World of Progress has grown darker.

The 'truth' is hidden by an ever shrinking shroud.

Scrape away to find the truth.

Dig deep to uncover the lie.

SLA Industries demands unquestioning loyalty.

Mr. Slayer demands unfailing vigilance.

Survival is no longer enough.

2 0 0 1 – P D F C o n v e r s i o n

*The twelfth issue of **tHE bIG pICTURE** featured stolen artwork from the MRB on the cover (again and ongoing). Written contributions came from Mark Whittington (Whitt) and Chris Cotgrove.*

Issue twelve also carried an advert for the only other SLA zine I've seen, Keith Elcombe's 'New Karma', which was looking good.... ☺

Nightfall had emerged with Dave, Tim and Jared at the helm, and things were starting to look cool again for SLA.

There was some mention of 'the truth' briefly being released to the SLA-I....

Max Bantleman, 2001.

sound of white noise

Hello there. It's issue 12. Bloody hell.

SLA Industries appears to be getting a new lease of life via Dava, Jared and Tim, who seem to be reforming Nightfall.

As far as anyone can tell, they have got the rights to produce SLA Industries and intend to do so.

Excellent.

So far they have hinted at releasing some of the already written material that was ready to go under WotC, as well as some new stuff on the horizon.

No time line has been given, though obviously the sooner the better from the players point of view, it stands to reason that there may be certain restraints on producing stuff. Better to 'measure twice and cut once', I'm sure they'll get there pretty soon....

Great news then.

And there's more....

The 'truth', that is the 'official' truth behind Nightfall's vision of SLA has been released on to the SLA-I (Station Analysis), so it's now out in the open and up for discussion.

We'd like to print it in TBP, but so far the Nightfall chaps appear to want to keep it limited to the list, if this changes we'll bang it in TBP.

To subscribe to the SLA-I, 'Station Analysis', send an e-mail to; majordomo@majordom.net with one line in the body reading; 'subscribe station-analysis

youremailaddress@yourserviceprovider.

If you have access to e-mail, you really should subscribe, it's a constant source of news and resource.

Speaking of SLA resource;

Sam Pay's excellent website (The Pythagorean Lair) can be found at:

(<http://www.stsm.demon.co.uk>)

Then there's **New Karma**, a new SLA 'zine launched by Keith Elcombe, costs only a quid and is well worth it (see advert in BPN's).

tHE bIG pICTURE can be e-mailed at:

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We get scant feedback from TBP, and maybe it's time some of you started writing to us to let us know how you think we're doing.

Some questions raised by the releasing of the truth include:

Are games going to focus on 'bigger themes' now? Is this a good thing? Is the minutia of the WoP going to become unimportant? Will GM's seek to introduce the 'big guns' in to their games, and is this a good thing? Can the players ever really interact with the likes of Slayer, Intruder et al?

The piece on serial killers is a good example of the sort of thing that may suffer if 'grand themes' are to be concentrated on by GM's.

Serial killers are part of the everyday horror of the WoP, the fact that they exist in such numbers is indicative of the failings of SLA to construct a worthwhile society. Will their importance be diminished by the introduction of 'bigger' themes? If so, does this trivialise the heinous act of murder, as serial killers become a background feature?

SLA is, as we all know, about atmosphere and background as much as it is about characters. It's about exploring the WoP and the character's place in it. How do we think this will best be served by the 'truth'? If at all?

Should the GM every once in a while, throw in games that are just about the day to day, just about getting on with the business of living in the WoP? And if so, how should they be focused, what are the important details, the little things, that should be highlighted?

It's not about 'big guns'. But guns do feature heavily in the WoP, and citizens know the best way to protect yourself from the 'everyday' threats of the WoP is with a gun. So how do the Op's react to this? How do they deal with a largely armed populace that doesn't really trust them? How does SLA deal with guns in society?

Ah, questions, questions.

Isn't that what keeps any game alive, looking for answers?

(nOThInG IAStS foReVeR)

SERIAL KILLERS

Written By: Mark 'Whitt'
Whittington (the first bit)
and Max (the second bit)

"I stepped away from the corpse looking over my shoulder. It was all on tape, I didn't want to see it again just yet. It was fresh. Too fresh. The shadows around me in the alleyway began to take on new forms, the sound of the rain became whispers in the darkness. The killer could be anywhere.

I told myself to pull it together, told myself I was trained, told myself I was a reporter, not a statistic. In the drowning pour of the rain, my voice wasn't very loud - like a child's, muttering to itself about a cookie jar.

I switched the camera to IR, scanned the alleyway, looking for - well hopefully nothing. The shadows didn't change, only became red.... Blood red. My stomach decided it was scared too. I checked the alleyway, backing against the wall and slowly pacing sideways to the main road, and safety.

Five feet to go. I stepped over a sewer outlet. A form of blackness slid out between my legs, grabbed on to my belt and pulled itself up face to face with me, it moved like slow-pouring oil. Blackness, evil, darkness.... Oh, did I mention the huge knife?

It must have taken only a second, but I died a thousand times looking into that black face. My veins felt like stone, I couldn't move.

"....not pretty," said a thin, high voice, like a child's - from the folds of the mask.

The oil poured again and I was alone."

Third Eye Operative Jack Door on his encounter with Serial Killer 'Bad News', Mort 903 SD.

Serial Killers are an integral part of the World of Progress, fuelling the fear of the masses and feeding the media machine. Here are some ideas on killers and how they could be implemented.

Disclaimer

I am not a psychologist. I have only films, books and comics to form the basis for these ideas, so if they do not conform to 'the real world' then change them.

Inside A Killer

The image of a squad of Slops stumbling upon a serial killer while he's 'working' or even a killer attacking Op's just doesn't sit right with me. A serial killer will use fear, anonymity and intelligence rather than fantastic combat skills. A killer's MO will rarely include one on one fighting, instead relying on the fragile illusion of safety people have when going about their daily life.

Killers are made by the pressures that society has put them under that they can't deal with, and their killing is a revenge on those that gave them pressure, or a release from the stress. Delusion, sadism, sociopathy are all results of this pressure, and it will be targeted towards those that caused it, or are defenceless against the killers actions.

Most killers will have a specific group they prey on: Social groups, physical similarities, visitors to the same location, previous lovers, or even broad groups like Shivers, Financiers, Wraith Raiders.

Killers have a vast amount of emotional reasons why they do what they do, a little thought behind their reasoning can make a killer more realistic.

Some killers may be doing it for the attention from the authorities, some may be doing it for the risk of getting caught, most, I would think, do it for the pleasure they get from their terrible acts. I mean when it comes down to it they are all nutters.

Practical Killing In The World Of Progress

A killer preys on the weak and defenceless. No serial killer would survive if they went after SCL 5A operatives hanging out by Slayers Crib. A killer would watch a victim for some time learning their habits, checking access to their victim, making sure they would not be disturbed, maybe even stalking their victim for days watching them from a distance.

Anonymity is a killers greatest asset. Not everyone has a cool mask. The guy that always sits at the table in the corner, the girl that sells you your coffee, the man that lives next door. Maybe even your best friend. These types

however don't make good TV, if they are a lot scarier.

A Serial Killer is dangerous for any operative. If they come after you it will be when you are at home and defenceless. Any geek can toast a killer when they are in their Exo with a Blitzer, but it's a different story when they have been stealthing round your apartment for half an hour, and paralyse you with fear when they slip down from the ceiling when you are in the bath.

A society where serial killers co-operate together is a scary place indeed.

A cognate of killers has great potential. Diversion, 'divide and conquer', and outnumbering tactics could be added to the serial killer repertoire, and even cover for each other when the authorities get involved.

'New Faces'

Here are some sample serial killers

The Tin Can Man

The 'Tin Can Man' as he has been called, is a Killer that targets Operatives that belong to a squad. A failed SLA applicant, TTCM has always wanted to be an Operative, and needs to 'belong'.

His standard MO is to stalk a group of Operatives that are away from crowded streets (in sewers or in the Cannibal Sectors for example) he would get a way ahead of them then separate a heavily armoured Op from the rest of the squad. Using trip wires, mud in the optics and even pit traps he would incapacitate the Op's armour and 'pop the lid'. After slitting their throat, dragging them out and hiding them, TTCM will enter into the Armour and continue the mission as if nothing had happened, feigning Com problems and other technical difficulties to prevent discovery. As the squad continues, any members that get too suspicious or are close to blowing the gaff will meet with 'accidents' or just get blown away by 'mysterious' gunmen. This will continue until it gets too risky for TTCM, or the operatives complete the mission, at which point TTCM will just slip away.

So far 12 separate squads have lost members, some not realising until 'Joe' disappeared just before a debrief.

Blessed Children

The Blessed Children are a cognate of sorts. They are a group of kids all from the same sector of downtown. They believe (not incorrectly I suppose) the adult world is responsible for all evil and sin and they must destroy it little by little to protect themselves. A lone downtowner would find themselves in an alleyway suddenly surrounded by 20-30 kids baring knives. The children all keep in close contact with each other and are well practiced in sending Op's on wild goose chases - 'Yes Mr. Operative we saw a bad man by the alleyway down there'.

It should be pointed out that when a member of the BC gets to 16 they willingly kill themselves in a ritual watched by all of the BC.

Bad News

Bad News is almost unique in the fact that he (it?) is a Vevaphon.

Biogenetics rarely have the emotional complexity to be a serial killer (at least in the proper psychological sense). However, Bad News 'fell' for media anchor woman Angela Stone about a year ago. Her image (artificially designed to appeal to the populace) stirred something within Bad News and awoke feelings he wasn't equipped to deal with, i.e. - love. After a few months of media popularity Angela Stone faded into obscurity and started freelance reporting again. Bad News is looking for her, only knowing she is out there somewhere. Any female media's Bad News stumbles upon, unfortunately, get the ick. Males just get left alone...

Dogfood

Dogfood appears to be a small downtown tramp. A few months ago, he was a figure of fun in certain streets of upper downtown, begging for food for his (apparently invisible) dog, soon everyone was calling him Dogfood. After a while Dogfood disappeared. Recently, people have started to vanish, and strange little piles of 'dog food' are turning up around the places they went missing. The Shivers are assuming Dogfood has some kind of hideout with a kitchen (or at least a blender), but they are most worried about the rat population that are increasingly wandering the

streets looking for this free food. And getting a taste for it.

I'm not going to do stats for these guys, but you can assume Stealth and Hide are going to be higher than, well, the Operative's Detect skills really. They are not going to have huge armour or guns, but will often have the terrain on their side (un-armoured people can fit in remarkably small spaces, and move quite quietly).

Don't allow any passive Detect skill use, if fact, you can generate a lot of mood by noting down all the players Detect rolls and rolling it yourself behind a screen. Every time you roll the dice, look at them and just carry on with your description until they begin to panic.

Serial Killers are about mood. Not just a bunch of targets in masks.

Thanks Whitt. Glad I don't play in your games ;)

The definition of power in some people's minds is control, to truly be able to say you control something, you must have the ability to destroy it.

Serial killers have been pushed to the point where they begin to regain control of their lives through murder.

What pushes a serial killer to the point of action, rather than elaborate fantasy and delusion, is as individual as what makes people act for the best instead of the worst.

Selfless compassion is the other face of the serial killer's psychotic coin.

Serial killers should be driven by a need, however deranged and misconceived, to take control of their own lives.

Now, obviously, there are deep rooted psychoses behind most (if not all) serial killer's actions.

A good way to start developing a serial killer is to choose a 'base' from which to work in the form of a psychoses.

From the 'template' of a 'normal' citizen of the WoP, we can then start to layer on the madness that will drive the serial killer.

Serial killers are not driven by the need for combat and conflict, though some may be combat veterans who have leaped in to the

abyss of madness since their return from the 'front line'.

Put most serial killers face to face with most moderately trained Op's, and they will be mere cannon fodder.

With this in mind, it can be seen that most serial killers have no illusion as to their vulnerability regarding more powerful opponents. Rare indeed is the serial killer that has a death wish.

Serial killers empower themselves by preying on the weak.

Most of the time, it is not the killing act itself that gives the serial killer his pleasure, or sense of satisfaction. It is more likely the cat and mouse game of 'shall I, shan't I' that produces the enjoyment.

Some serial killers stalk their victims for many days, weeks even, before they act, making sure they have complete control over their victim before they strike.

Of course there are the sadistic killers, for whom the act itself is the release, but they are very rare and short lived due to the 'addictive' nature of what they do. They need to seek bigger and better thrills, perhaps by being ever more viscous, or daring in their location or choice of target.

Ultimately, they will betray themselves, taking one risk too many.

The focus for the killer's psychoses will often suggest a set of victims. Most of the truly notorious serial killers prey on a very specific target group. This is partly what makes them so scary, their obsession and dedication is beyond the comprehension of most 'normal' citizens.

The mind set of the serial killer should also prove the greatest challenge for the pursuing Op's or Shivers. There is a logic to his actions, even if the actions themselves seem like chaotic madness. Figuring out the logic, getting in to the head of the serial killer, is the best way to anticipate his moves, to be where he is going to be, to save the next victim. It also forces those pursuing the killer to confront aspects of society and perhaps themselves, that they had previously left buried on purpose.

A serial killer that preys on women may force a begrudging understanding from those who have

a hard time dealing with women, in whatever form they encounter them.

A killer of the old, or the sick, can easily be seen in the sickly half light of near reason, as doing society a favour, especially by those of a 'fascist' disposition.

And what if the serial killer turns his attention to a minority that are almost universally hated by the majority of citizens? He would be hard to catch due to the passive acceptance of his acts by those who may be able to stop him.

So, to construct a serial killer, first take a template of a 'normal' citizen, then choose a set of psychoses that push him to the edge of reality and split his sanity between the waking world and the delusional.
Easy eh?

We have detailed 'Ripple', one of our WoP's up and coming serial killers.

R i p p l e

"We have accredited eleven victims to Ripple, I'd say that constitutes a 'serial killer', wouldn't you?"

Sergeant Harry Black, Shiver Serial Tracker, Mort 903 SD.

Shiver report; classified SCL 6, access restricted to active BPN personnel only:

First Strike: Eleven weeks ago, first victim was found in Men's toilet facilities in Chic Cherry fashion house. The word 'Ripple' was scrawled in blood on the wall near the victim, the one and only time it has appeared at the scene.

M.O.: Victims are found with their throat's cut, apparently from behind, dragged in to a cubicle and sat on the lavatory. Victims have been killed while at 'stalls', and three have been killed while attempting to leave the convenience.

A single cut is delivered, from victim's left to right, entering and exiting below ear lobe.

Suspected Weapon: The Autopsy's of the first three victims showed differing weapons, probably all large (but indistinguishable) kitchen knives. The last eight victims have all been killed with a hand held MJL Power Disc.

Emerging Pattern: Each victim has been killed between 5pm and 6pm on a Friday, though some have not been discovered until Saturday.

There is no discernible pattern in the victim themselves, neither race, hair, eye or skin colour or clothing. All victims had varying jobs and social lives. It is not believed that the victims are known to the killer.

R i p p l e : W h o A n d W h y

Ripple is John Waters, a nominal SLA employee (SCL 11), who works in the Pit as a Bartender. While walking the three blocks from the Gauss Station to the security of his apartment, John was confronted by Halloween Jack. It was five O'clock exactly on a Friday evening.

John's mind froze in fear, then acted in outraged indignation. It was five O'clock in the evening! It was still bloody light! He was almost at his front door! This just shouldn't be happening!

He turned and began to run blindly for his life. As he did, he crashed in to a hapless citizen emerging from the dimly lit interior of a cab. Without thinking, John grabbed the unfortunate citizen, and catching him off balance, thrust him between Jack and himself.

Halloween Jack took another life.
John lived.

John now believes that Halloween Jack will come and take his life, unless he kills in his stead at the appointed hour.

T r a c k i n g R i p p l e

John stole the Power Disc from the weapons room at the Pit, the most daring and dangerous thing he has ever done in his life. There will be a report of the disc being stolen.

There may be a static site cam recording of Halloween Jack having his next victim thrown at him by John, maybe shown on TV, triggering a response of 'lucky bugger', from one of the Op's.

As John becomes more notorious, larger malls may issue warning to avoid the washrooms between 5pm and 6pm. The timing is important to John, and if his supply dries up, maybe he will be forced to act in a less secluded spot.

Eventually he may be forced to kill while in the Pit, maybe due to a change in his shift pattern.

Ultimately, John may well be cornered by some Op's on a routine matter, while 5pm ticks

slowly by. As the serial killer becomes more and more restless, he will be forced to act, his fear of Halloween Jack far exceeding his fear of the Op's.

S E V E N – V I I

This scenario is best played out by a squad of Op's that include at least one Shaktar. If no Shaktar is present in the squad, you may need to tinker with it a bit, maybe via one of the Op's contacts, friends or even Third Eye. As the story unfolds, the motives behind the serial killer's actions will best be picked up by a Shaktar or someone who is familiar with their Honour Code.

The scenario is initially played out as 'side line' events, stuff that goes on in the background while the Op's are getting on with their lives. When the Op's become directly involved is up to you, we suggest after scene Three.

The focus for the scenario is a Shaktar called Qw'Lkn and the three man squad he belongs to, Trinity.

Trinity consist of: Eric, 313 Stormer, SCL 8. Qw'Lkn, Shaktar, SCL 8. Ward, Ebon, SCL 9.

B a c k g r o u n d

Trinity have been formed for a little over four months now, they have undertaken eight BPN's and have a high media profile due to Ward's massive charisma and the squads predilection for confrontational Yellow's and Reds.

You may want to give the Op's a taster of the squad, maybe a thirty second sound bite intrudes on them while they are near a TV.

FW: "Frank Weiss for Inter-Com here with Ward from Trinity. I understand nine members of the Disciples are now no longer with us.

W: "Is it nine? So many?"

FW: "I understand that Eric and Qw'Lkn got in amongst them with blades...."

W: "All we wanted was the cache of weapons they stole from our fallen comrades. We reasoned with them, but you can't reason with closed minds."

FW: "Not the first time a Yellow has turned in to a battle with Trinity is it?"

W: "We will not back away from a fight. Qw'Lkn has taught us well. Eric is driven. I am committed to mediating, talking, but when that fails...."

FW: "The blood flows...."

W: "Isn't it the way of the world."

FW: "And now cutting back to the studio where I understand they're ready with the Clam Man / Ju-Ju footage...."

The Op's may be drawn to the screen by Ward's appearance or by some detail in the report, maybe the Disciples were a gang known to one of the Op's.

I n t r o d u c t i o n

Initial contact with Trinity should be either in the Pit or some other 'recreational' space, somewhere where the Op's and Trinity will not be 'tooled up'.

One of the Op's must be 'lead' in to breaking the Seventh element of the Shaktar Honour Code (Purity), at least so it will be perceived by Qw'Lkn. There are a number of ways you can lead one of the Op's to do this, an example is given below;

The Soft Company, Alien Shore (TBP 10) have modified a Human woman to have the facial features of a Shaktar. The woman is stunningly well built, having features that would turn the head of a gay preacher. She wears clothes to compliment her figure in the most brazen, suggestive way. She is obviously looking for a companion for the evening.

As she cruises the Pit, or wherever the players are, she will nod knowingly to the most attractive of the Op's. If they refuse to take the bait by commenting out loud, or making any suggestive remark, which should of course be encouraged by your description of the woman, someone standing near the Op the woman signs to will say something like; "lucky bugger, you're in there."

Once the Op has either replied to the bystander or maybe made some comment, or move towards the woman, Qw'Lkn will stand up from the table he is at and bear down on the Op's.

Qw'Lkn will be very verbal and loud in his protests, basically pointing out how the

woman's behaviour, and the services of Alien Shore strike at the purity of the Shaktar race. If the Op's offer any argument at all, Qw'Lkn will launch in to a fist fight. Ward and Eric will rush in to break things up, offering apologies for Qw'Lkn.

If the Op's take the fight seriously, or offer offensive remarks to Qw'Lkn, Ward and Eric will join in instead of breaking it up. A full on brawl will ensue, which will have to be broken up either by staff from the venue, or maybe a squad of higher level Op's who don't want their evening interrupted.

The Op's may remember the incident, or they may simply take it as part of the background to their lives. Either way, they will have been introduced to Qw'Lkn.

Five days after the incident, the Op's see another news report that catches their eye;

"And it was on this very spot that Tempest brought to an end the careers of one of the most promising squads to come out of Meny for some time. Trinity were ambushed by an estimated twenty terrorists, mainly conscripts, who seemed to be indiscriminate in their choice of target. Eric, the 313 Stormer from the squad, bore the brunt of the attack, though both Ward and Qw'Lkn were slain in the ensuing explosion, which as you can see.... has left a gaping hole through to the massive storm drains, their bodies will be washed down to the mire of Cannibal Sector 3, that's if they're not devoured by the dark inhabitants of the sewers first. Another victory for Tempest? On the face of it, yes."

Tempest Ambush

Tempest were gathering for a big operation, the ambush of a squad made up solely of Stormers: PussyCats.

PussyCats never showed, instead Trinity stumbled in to the Downtown market where the ambush was to take place, on a routine Yellow. They uncovered some of the conscripts and triggered the ambush, the Tempest leader of the strike force reckoning that their chance of surprise had been blown. The amount of 'Release' used in the ambush was the highest in one strike so far on Mort, bearing in mind the original targets, it would have been needed. Trinity stood their ground and slugged it out.

All three squad members took numerous hits from Release darts, as well as numerous wounds from conventional weapons. It was the explosives that got them in the end.

Eric was thrown in to the lower levels beneath the market, where the Release got to him; he committed suicide, though he may well have die from his gunshot wounds eventually.

Qw'Lkn and Ward, shot, cut and bleeding, were blasted in to the main sewer beneath the market. There they scrabbled through the filth and darkness trying to escape.

The Release began to take hold, Ward succumbed to the madness first, taking off his Deathsuit, he begged Qw'Lkn to kill him and return his Deathsuit to Dark Lament. Qw'Lkn could not kill his friend, he left Ward and took the Deathsuit. Ward let himself die from his wounds.

Qw'Lkn wandered, his mind lost, through the sewers, discarding his gear as he went. Eventually he came to a massive 'clearing channel', where five main sewers met, here he sat in a shattered service alcove and slipped quietly in to madness.

Qw'Lkn put on the Deathsuit as best he could, ripping it to fit his huge frame. He is gripped by the need to commit suicide, to achieve Release. But before he can do this, he must avenge seven breaks of the Honour Code.

The Deathsuit has also been infected with Release, but is 'leeching' the drug off, drawing it from itself and eventually cleansing itself. The 'survival instinct' of the Deathsuit has kicked in, it is not going to die without a fight. Qw'Lkn will be used as a 'host' for as long as is possible, and to this end the Deathsuit will 'protect' it's wearer by retaining it's armour characteristics. it is 'fuelled' by Qw'Lkn's passive Flux store, and this draining of the Shaktar's energy will eventually kill him, even if the Release doesn't.

Scene One - Honour

A Shaktar, K'Qn, is found dead in his home in Suburbia. The Shaktar, an Operative with a squad called Frost, was strangled while in his bath. The killing attracts a small amount of media attention, but may well be more widely known among the Shaktar community, both for it's unusual nature (strangling) and for the fact that K'Qn was a suspected member of the Shaktar 'terrorist' group, Chapter Seven. The

Shivers will carry out their duties with the usual thoroughness and enthusiasm, the crime scene and all it's clues, will be recorded, filed and forgotten.

Unusually for the murder of an Operative, no BPN will be issued to investigate. Third Eye will give the incident maybe a ten second bite on one of their local broadcasts, maybe with an open ended tag line to encourage some response.

Any Shaktar in the Op's may have the murder reported to them in a conversation with another Shaktar, something like; "Chapter Seven members deserve such a dishonourable death."

The last four targets for K'Qn's terrorist activities were;

Klt'n Sst, Shaktar retired Operative, working as adviser to Captain Contract show. Killed at home in fire.

Sl'n Qwrn, Shaktar Operative with BlindFaith, the squad was wiped out in Downtown. Sl'n survived and was investigated and cleared by IA. He was killed while recovering in hospital from massive internal wounds.

Qw'NrIs K'ntr, Shaktar Operative crippled in War World BPN, disabled, lost both legs and left arm, worked at Crib as BPN Clerk. Killed when vehicle he was in was run of road.

Ruth Kendall, Human, believed to be a surgeon for Alien Shore, shot in Downtown clinic.

Qw'NrIs was from the same Clan (Griedaja / Fifth Moon / Honour) as Qw'Lkn.

Scene Two - Family

An unemployed Human citizen, Marcus Garvey, has been found dead in his Downtown apartment. Nothing remarkable in that. He was strangled while he slept, again nothing unusual there. In his apartment were hundreds of leaflets, videos and audio discs from the Black Order propaganda library, along with a Blitzer and thirty shells. This is what makes his killing newsworthy.

Marcus belonged, as a conscript, to the local Black Order cell. The last two 'hits' that the cell were responsible for took place in the sector, in two separate shopping malls.

Among the dead were two Shaktars, both Operatives, and both 'off duty'. Both felt compelled to act and were taken out as they tried to confront the terrorists.

Sh'nt K'strn, SCL 8 Operative with FirstBlood, killed by clean shot to head.

Q'wrk K'ntr, SCL 10 Operative with CandyFire, killed by clean shot to head.

Q'wrk K'ntr was the youngest brother of Qw'NrIs K'ntr. Q'wrk was pledged in Blood Oath to Qw'Lkn's youngest sister. Had the marriage gone ahead, Qw'Lkn and Q'wrk would have become Blood Family.

Scene Three - Friends

A Shiver is found dead, strangled to death in his bed in a Suburban Shiver Block. The Shiver, Mathew Pursy, worked from the local sector house and has had an unremarkable career.

The last assignment Mathew undertook on the streets was a 'sweep and clear' for an illegal market set up in a disused car park. During the operation, nine civilians were killed and forty injured.

Among the dead was Sarah Bliss, a nominal SLA employee (SCL 11) from the Department of Psychology.

During a routine set of Psyche. Evaluations, one of the patients went berserk, bringing out a hidden gun and proceeding to shoot any and all that came in their path. One of the madman's victims was Qw'Lkn, who would have been finished off had it not been for the actions of Sarah, who took a shot in the leg, distracting the lunatic long enough for Qw'Lkn to wrestle him to the ground, snapping his neck in the process.

Qw'Lkn declared Sarah a 'Blood Friend', and swore that he would repay the debt.

It is the killing of the Shiver that prompts the issuing of a BPN:

SCL: 10

Contact: Shiver HQ in sector. Captain Halek Rail, SH/388-60023/EX1.

Training Package Recc.: I&I, plus any.

Colour Code: White.

Summary: Investigate the murder of a Shiver, bring the killer to justice. One month expiry on BPN.

Coverage: Station Analysis.

Consolidated Bonus Scheme: 500c

Payment: Per Op.

SCL Increase: +0.5

The Op's can either be tempted with the BPN, which they may well associate with the Shaktar Qw'Lkn. Or informed of it's undertaking by another squad, maybe by their Financier of a contact.

If they do not take the BPN, you can have one of the investigating Op's from the squad that do, contact them on a tip off that they had some contact with Qw'Lkn, re; the opening incident.

The connection of the first three murders to the Honour Code should be made at this point, either through the Op's own tweaked curiosity and investigation, or through the BPN, maybe through a Frank Weiss editorial on one of his reports.

One way or another, the idea should be planted in the Op's minds that Qw'Lkn is not dead, and that he is behind the killings. Some prompt may be offered as to the nature of the initial encounter the Op's had with Qw'Lkn, maybe on how it could be interpreted by Qw'Lkn with a view to his current activities.

Scene Four - Truth

An Eye-4 Inter-Com reporter is killed, strangled in her bed. The last interview she conducted was with Trinity. The interview as to be used as part of a piece on 'unnecessary violence' as used by Op's in the completion of BPN's. Only forty seconds of the whole interview was actually used, though it was edited to make it look like the squad, and Qw'Lkn in particular, were blood hungry Operatives who looked for an excuse to use violence.

Sarah lived in a Suburban housing block containing adequate security and a permanent Shiver presence.

The news station, Eye-4 Inter-Com, will make a great deal of Sarah's killing, using the 'expose caused retribution' angle. They will hint at the incompetence of Slops and Shivers and speculate on the next victim.

If the Op's haven't got it yet, they will run a report tying Qw'Lkn to the killing, and maybe draw some conclusions about other killings where the victim had been strangled in their beds....

If the Op's are on the case and investigating Qw'Lkn and possible connections to the honour

Code, give them a break, let them have some clues and focus them on possible victims, this will also get them thinking on their own possible involvement with Qw'Lkn. Whether you want to give them a chance of catching Qw'Lkn before scene seven is of course up to you....

Scene Five - Faith

A whole squad, Shine, are found, one strangled to death, the other two killed in hand to hand combat.

The bodies were found in one of the squad members apartments, where they were all staying, apparently in preparation to leave on an off world BPN the next day.

Shine were a newly formed squad, all SCL 10 and all fresh out of Meny. They have only completed one BPN, and left another unfinished.

Shine; Joely Hart, Human (strangled), Mitch Lowd, Human, Ch'rewan Hur, Wraith Raider.

The last BPN that Shine undertook, has been registered as 'incomplete', and shows no resolution before the BPN expired.

The incomplete BPN:

SCL: 10

Contact: Shiver HQ in sector 380. Lieutenant Commander Joseph Richards; SH/JR-714-66733/PL.

Training Package Recc.: I&I, plus any.

Colour Code: Yellow.

Summary: Retrieve stolen SLA property from known gang stash location. Expiry of BPN prompts swift action.

Coverage: Third Eye.

Consolidated Bonus Scheme: 250c

Payment: Per Op.

SCL Increase: +0.2

Q'wrk K'ntr, the Operative killed by the Black Order sniper in scene two, was robbed by the Manic Street Preachers, the local gang of 380.

He was stripped, beaten close to death, then thrown down a storm drain. He took three days to get back to SLA, during which time he was presumed dead and the BPN issued for the recovery of his gear, which was rumoured to be for sale.

Q'wrk K'ntr had trained at Meny with Joely Hart and they had exchanged vows to help each other in the outside world. Q'wrk K'ntr had

gifted Joely with a Friendship Braid, which Joely wore at all times.

The BPN was abandoned by Shine when they were confronted with sixty gang members at a Black Market meet where the stolen gear was to be sold.

There is some Third Eye hidden cam footage (shot by Mitch) showing Joely trying to negotiate with the Manic's, and then some small arms fire breaking out and Shine retreating under a hail of hurled missiles and sparse gun fire.

Shine called for Shiver back up and helped in the resulting clean up by Dispersal Shivers. The Shaktar's gear was not recovered.

Scene Six - Loyalty

The intended victim is to be former Officer in charge of Qw'Lkn and Trinity while they were on the War World Cross, completing a Green BPN for the Ministry of War. The Officer, Captain Brandon Clift, has been found guilty of accepting bribes to allow sons/daughters of prominent SLA officials 'light duties' while on War World.

The trial and verdict are big news on Mort as the implications are wide within SLA for those offering the bribes.

The Op's may either find out about the trial from the news, or may be told by a contact or friend who knows they are on a 'Shaktar related' BPN. However they find out, they should arrive at the courthouse as the Officer is being ushered out by two Shivers.

Qw'Lkn knows he cannot get the Officer in hand to hand, and he realises this will be his only real chance to strike (Tactics). The Shaktar intends to use a Blitzer stolen from the apartment he killed Shine in. Qw'Lkn will use surprise, and brute force to take his shot, edging close through the crowd of reporters, then pushing down an unsuspecting anchor woman to clear his shot.

The Op's should arrive as the Blitzer goes off. As the Officer goes down there will be panic as the crowd of reporters and bystanders flee for their lives.

The Op's may spot Qw'Lkn and may give chase. The Shaktar's only thought is that of escape, and all his skills will be used in this direction.

Scene Seven - Purity

Prompted by the encounter with the Op's, Qw'Lkn will focus on the player from the initial encounter to exact revenge for the breaking of the seventh code.

How you want the Shaktar to go about his attempt on the Op's life is left for you to decide. Qw'Lkn is on a limited time line, with both the Release and the Deathsuit eating away at his life. we have not specified a time line for the scenes, but would suggest a day for each, two at most.

Qw'Lkn now has a Blitzer with five shots left, he will use this as well as his hand to hand skills.

Someone once said you cannot stop someone who doesn't care about their own life.

Qw'Lkn is looking for Release, maybe unconsciously he will seek his own death in the final retribution on the Op's.

One suggested ending is a cat and mouse chase through the sewers that Qw'Lkn disappeared in originally, with the Shaktar hoping to split the squad up, allowing him a one on one confrontation with his target.

Obviously, Qw'Lkn will leave a trail that is easy to follow to the sewers, where his skills will make him an elusive target.

We have listed the Shaktar Honour Code to remind you of how Qw'Lkn is seeing/twisting things;

Shaktar Code Of Honour

1 Honour

Uphold the honour of the Shaktar Race.

2 Family

Respect your elders. Your parents gave you your life. You are prepared to return it at their demand.

3 Friends

Accept as friends only those to whom you owe a debt of honour or place a great trust in.

4 Truth

Never lie to anyone worthy of your trust unless ordered to by a superior.

5 Faith

Complete any task you undertake.

Act to the best of your ability.

Show others you are undertaking a duty by wearing your ceremonial scarf.

6 Loyalty

Obey anyone you accept as a superior.

Act as an ambassador of the race at all times.

7 Purity

Uphold the purity of the Shaktar race.

Q w ' L k n

Classification	Shaktar, Male
Package	Kick Murder
Squad	Trinity (deceased)
Strength	13
Dexterity	13
Diagnose	8
Concentration	8
Charisma	6
Physique	13
Knowledge	6
Cool	12
Walk	1
Run	3
Sprint	(5) 6.8
Movement	53
Half Movement	106
No Movement	212

Qw'Lkn is armed only with a Blitzer and five rounds. The Deathsuit worn by the Shaktar, retains some of it's armour properties, covering torso, upper arms and upper legs; PV 10, ID's: Torso 40, Arms 30, Legs 35.

Unarmed Combat	6
Detect	8
Evaluate Opponent	5
Rival Company	4
Survival	6
Climb	4
Hide	8
Sneak	8
Martial Arts	11
Acrobatics	5
Wrestling	5
Pistol	8
Rifle	6
Tactics	5
Throw	6
Medical Paramedic	4

Swim 4

Running 6

Blade, 1-H 5

If Qw'Lkn gets to play cat and mouse with the players, he will try for an ambush, with one close up shot then a physical assault.

If the Op's are all too powerful, or too heavily armed for this to have any chance of succeeding, you may want to arm Qw'Lkn with something like a Chain Axe.

STREET DRUGS

Written By : Chris Cotgrove

ALTERED STATES

The World of Progress can be described at best as bleak, shallow and depressing. The struggle of day-to-day life proves too much for a lot of people, who contribute to an ever-increasing suicide statistic.

SLA and many Soft Companies offer ways to escape from an otherwise soul-destroying existence, or at least make it a little more enjoyable....

The most popular means is the use of narcotics, either provided by SLA or by a Soft Company.

All drugs not manufactured and distributed by SLA through the Dept. of Pharmacology or a wholly-owned subsidiary are considered illegal; Cloak Division is usually called in to shut down production facilities and terminate personnel, or Operatives will be given an appropriate BPN.

The so-called "designer" drugs are often dangerous, being rushed onto the street without proper testing to accommodate market demand for a bigger and better rush. They often induce unforeseen side-effects, or kill their users outright.

Designer drugs are often put on to the street by back-street chemists operating out of Downtown, or by Soft Companies attempting

to secure a corner of the market by providing an "unusual" experience.

Here are some examples of some 'street drugs, produced and supplied by Soft Companies. Many softies will have only one product, and as such their very existence will depend upon the popularity of the product; successful product equals longer lived company.

SLA is usually slow to pounce on pharmaceutical companies for this very reason, they know that companies who produce such drugs, have by their very nature, a short life-span. those that do thrive and survive are often the subject of BPN's or 'legitimising' buy outs.

We have listed some examples of street drugs and the companies behind them.

Psychodrome

"Leave your fear at home, dose up with Psychodrome."

Type - Combat.

Description - This drug makes its user less susceptible to fear by dampening the biochemical fear responses to external stimuli.

Side-Effects - An overdose can have a reverse effect, heightening fear or inducing phobias.

Game Effects: +2 to COOL for 2 hours.

Addiction: -1 PHYS per 10.

Detox Effects: -2 COOL, -1 DIA.

Addiction: 2 per day.

Cost: 80u.

Produced By: PsychoPharm. Small Downtown company that specialise is taking other 'reputable' drugs, and changing their structure to allow enhancements/focusing of their affects. PsychoPharm have stated their intention to specialise in combat drugs and Psychodrome looks like being a loss leader to introduce 'clients' to their full range.

Astral

"Tune in, turn on, drop through to another reality."

Type - Recreational.

Description - This strange drug, produced in an experiment by Dark Lament, causes an increase in "psychic sensitivity". Rumours indicate that organic (neural) tissue is used in the production

of this drug. Frequent users claim to experience memories that are not their own.

Side-Effects - (at GM's discretion) Can induce random psychokinesis, precognition, telepathy and pyrokinesis.

Detox - Induces terrifying hallucinations, drawn from the user's subconscious.

Game Effects: Hallucinations of pleasant nature, unless psychoses or phobia over rank 3, then nightmares.

Addiction: -1 PHYS / 5.

Detox Effects: -3 CONC, -3 DIA.

Cost: 100u.

Produced By: DarkLine Drugs. DL drugs have stolen some samples of the Dark Lament drug, and have set about recreating the effects of the DL original. Unfortunately they have not quite got it right. The massive Detox effects mean that the drug will probably be withdrawn from sale on the streets in the near future. There are two White BPN's outstanding for the shut down of DarkLine, who, it is believed, may have a contact on the 'inside' of Dark Lament.

Judas

"Tell the truth or take the consequences."

Type - (dubiously) Medical

Description - Officially, this drug does not exist. It is commonly used by Cloak Division during "difficult" interrogations, to obtain information.

If the biochemical associated with deception are released into the bloodstream of the subject, the drug violently reacts, causing intense pain. The greater the lie, the more pain is induced; eventually, the drug burns out the nervous system of the subject, or causes a great enough level of pain to induce coma or death.

Detox - Loss of DEX, PHYS; induces a phobia of needles/injections?

Game Effects: Lying while under the influence of Judas causes 1 'hit' to Torso and increases the greater the lie. 1 dose lasts thirty minutes.

Addiction: -1 PHYS per 10 doses.

Detox Effects: -3 COOL.

Cost: 150u.

Produced By: PunchLine Chemical Products (PCP). PCP copied the formulae for the drug from a stolen Cloak transmission. PCP are backed directly by DarkNight. The drug is being leaked on to the streets through gangs, who buy from a 'central', roaming source. Operatives found in possession of Judas are

liable to an immediate fine and SCL decrease. DarkNight are working on refining the drug with a view to a mass release in to the water supply of one of the Downtown sectors.

M o r p h e u s

"To sleep perchance to dream? It's guaranteed with Morpheus!"

Type - Medical

Description - A powerful sleep drug, which induces a peaceful, dream-filled sleep, as the drug actually stimulates the portions of the brain that cause dreams.

Side-Effects - Overdose leads to horrific nightmares lasting until the drug is properly cleansed out of the user's system, or induces a catatonic state.

Game Effects: Puts user to sleep, if unwilling, PHYS roll at -8 to resist.

Sleep state induces vivid dreams, if unwilling sleeper or psychotic or phobic, then nightmares. If nightmares, -2 COOL upon awakening for 12 hours.

Addiction: -1 PHYS / 5.

Detox Effects: -2 CONC, -2 DIA, -2 COOL.

Cost: 60u.

Produced By: Calmer Pharm. This is Calmer Pharm's first product to hit the streets, and they plan to specialise in 'calming' drugs, relaxants and anti-depressants. Rumours are rife on the streets about the involvement of Feral Ebons with Calmer, and it is thought that a 'version' of drum will be the companies next release.

T o t a l R e c a l l

"You can remember it all with Total Recall."

Type - Medical

Description - Allows a user to access subconscious memories, to obtain information that their conscious mind may have missed in observation.

Side-Effects - Overdose leads to the user being trapped in a world of flashback memories, becoming more and more unable to interact with their surroundings; this is marked by increasing "blank spells".

Game Effects: Increased memory recall capacity, reflected by +2 DIA, +1 CONC for 1 hour.

Addiction: -1 PHYS / 5.

Detox Effects: -2 CONC, -2 DIA, loss of long term memory.

Cost: 200u.

Produced By: Pod Pharmaceuticals. Pod produce a wide range of street drugs, with Total Recall representing their more 'specialist' range. Pod are trying to move away from the combat market, in to the vast soft drug arena. A version of Total Recall, known as 'BlackOut' is being developed, that will actually intentionally wipe out the users long term memory, without permanently affecting their CONC or DIA abilities.

G e t t i n g H o l d O f S t r e e t D r u g s

Street drugs may be bought from gangs, pushers or soft company representatives.

G a n g s

Every gang will supplement it's income by dealing in drugs. They are middle men, having some stuff to hand, but having to 'order' the more obscure drugs from the manufacturer, often entailing a short wait and hiked prices. Some gangs will be associated with one or two soft companies, in whose drugs they may specialise. Dealing with gangs is tricky, if you have a good rep with them, they will supply high quality product at a reasonable price. If the gang don't know you or you have a bad rep, they may simply deny being able to supply drugs.

P u s h e r s

Pushers hang around street corners, markets, malls and schools, hoping to pick up trade from the curious as well as their regulars. They stick to their 'turf' and resent anyone else selling to their 'clientele'. Pushers often share the same turf as a gang and sometimes supply the gang with the harder to get drugs. Pushers have a small but well supplied set of contacts from whom they get their stuff.

S o f t C o m p a n y R e p s .

These enterprising individuals deal only with pushers and gang members, supplying in bulk. They can be tempted to deal with almost anyone, as long as the punters background checks out and there is enough money involved. As the rep's have direct ties to soft

companies, they are very careful about who they meet, and will always be accompanied by either gang members doing a favour or Props.

NEVER MIND THE PIG

TRANCID

The Trancid is believed to have originated on Polo, the Wraith Homeworld, where it can be found in the Myran Wastes.

It has adapted and is thriving on Mort, mainly in the Cannibal Sectors and in Downtown, though some have been sighted in Suburbia, even Uptown.

They can survive anywhere there are large bodies of water and vermin for them to prey on. Hungry Trancid will hunt anything, chancing prey up to and over their own size if particularly hungry.

The Trancid looks like a large Leopard, with leathery skin covering it's face and neck like a hood. It has no visible ears, these being slits just in front of it's gills.

Their back paws have no claws, and have webs between their toes. Their front paws have razor sharp retractable claws. Trancid teeth grow up to eight centimeters in length (incisors).

Trancid can 'breath' underwater for up to sixty minutes, then they must breath air for at least three minutes.

Stats.	Min.	Max.	Norm.
STR	8	10	9
DEX	6	10	8
DIA	1	1	1
CONC	0	1	0
HITS	15	20	18

Walk 1. Run 4. Sprint 6. Swim 3.

Weapons	PEN	DMG	AD
Bite	1	2	0
Claws	2	4	1

SKILLS RANK

Detect / Track	6
Swim	8
Hide	7
Sneak	7
Unarmed (Claw / Bite)	6

Trancid range in size from 0.5 to 1.5 meters toe to shoulder. Their length (nose to hind) is 0.75 to 2.5 meters. Trancid have no tails. Their fur is dark brown or black, the skin around their head and 'hood' is usually light brown.

The bite of the Trancid carries a highly contagious disease. On Polo it is known as the 'growling sickness'. The victim's throat and glands swell up to enormous size with pustules of infected tissue, gradually closing off their airway. In an attempt to clear the irritation, victims take to coughing violently in short bursts, or 'growling'.

The infection carried by the Trancid is known to affect only Humans, Wraith's, Ebons, Wasters and Shaktars. Biogenetic creatures appear to be immune.

The potency of the infection varies with the Trancid's breeding cycle, at their height, when they are on heat (twice a year) the poison is at it's most venomous.

Once bitten, the victim must make a PHYS roll, using the potency of the poison as a negative modifier; the poison ranges from strength 4 - 10. If they pass, the venom passes harmlessly through their system. If they fail the poison takes hold, and they will be dead in 6 - 12 days. At present, the cancerous like disease has no known cure, though Wraith Raiders claim the poison sacks of the Prarun can 'leech' the disease out of a victim if applied twice a day, over a period of a week.

CARRIEN BIRDS

Carrien Birds originated in the Cannibal Sectors, but can now be found all over Mort, thriving wherever there is a meal to scrounge. There are numerous 'scavenging' birds on Mort, but the Carrien Birds are a race apart, having evolved in to carnivorous beasts that will eat anything dead, and will even stoop to preying on the sick and injured.

They hunt in flocks of up to a hundred, and have been known to drive off feasting Carrien from a fresh corpse.

Stats.	Min.	Max.	Norm.
STR	1	3	2
DEX	6	10	8
DIA	0	1	0
CONC	0	1	0
HITS	5	10	7

Walk 1. Fly 10.

Weapons	PEN	DMG	AD
Beak	0	1	0
Talons	1	2	0

SKILLS RANK

Detect 10
Unarmed 10

Excellent sight / hearing.

Carrien Birds are without exception totally black. They have a shiny plumage, with feathers around their heads and shoulders being short and fur like. Their beaks, legs and claws, are all black. They have black, seemingly pupil-less eyes. They are completely silent, neither shrieking or calling.

In appearance, Carrien Birds are similar to very large Crows, the largest Carrien Bird measuring 1.5 meters from claw to crown of head, with a wing span of 2.5 meters.

The Carrien Birds dropping's are foul smelling and copious, carrying many infectious diseases and being slightly acidic when brought in to contact with skin. Where a colony of Carrien Birds chooses to roost, there is always a lack of animals below. Even Carrien give Carrien Birds a wide berth, recognising the evil stench of their roosts from many kilometers away.

Carrien Birds are scavengers, but hunters also. They are incredibly agile on the wing and will take other flying things as a meal if they can. In the early hours of what would be dusk, they will hunt bats, which they are particularly adept at catching.

The thing that makes the Carrien Bird stand out in the Mort bestiary is there habit of 'suiciding'. When a population grows too large in a given area, the older birds will be driven by insane instinct to 'suicide'. They achieve this by gathering in the air, circling until all who are

going to join the huge flock, then they choose a suitable target and swarm. Usually the targets are Gauss Trains, Kilcopters, APC's or heavily armoured humanoids. The Birds swoop down, diving at incredible speed, with the aim of folding their wings at the last minute, forming a kind of 'spear'. They strike their target head first, usually dying instantly.

The largest swarm to suicide on Mort was recorded at over ten thousand Birds, which 'suicided' on a Gauss Train in Downtown sector 490. The train was nearly derailed as the Birds hit it head on and from every conceivable angle as it emerged from a tunnel. Some of the passengers (and the driver) were permanently affected by the incident. The mess took three days to clean up. The stench stays with the train to this day.

EQUIPMENT

THE HURCULES

Defense Systems Inc., the company that have brought us the Defense System Shield (TBP 4), and the GSM 2 Gyro Stabiliser Module (TBP 6), have now launched the Hurcules, a recoil 'soak' unit that gives the added bonus of increased lifting capacity.

"And I say I saw the little squirt unload two Blitzers at once, and then she lifted the Pandora off her partner like it was a kids toy. Hey, look, I don't know how, maybe it was some Ebon shit."

Luke Novak, Unemployed citizen, Mort 903 SD.

Each Hurcules system must be fitted to the individual wearer and takes two hours to configure, the Hurcules cannot be transferred to another user without being substantially re-configured.

Rumours are rife regarding the 'borrowing' of technology from Dark Lament by Fen, Defense Systems Inc.'s parent company, for the production of the Hurcules. The base material for the rig has been patented by DSI and is known as 'fibroid', it seems to be as pliable as

leather, yet have the tensile strength of a ceramic-steel laminate.

To date, the Hurcules is only available through approved FEN/DSI outlets such as FirePower Stores, Trigger Happy and Fast Jacks Gun Shacks.

There is no presence on the Black Market due to the Hurcules' need to be custom fitted to the wearer and the lack of flexibility in transferring the unit from one person to another, though units are stolen and stripped down and sold as parts.

Game System Stuff

The Hurcules is designed to reduce the recoil from weapons fire, and to give the user an increased lifting / carrying capacity.

It can be found among the equipment of almost every off world or 'exploratory' expedition.

The unique 'fibroid' laminate construction allows for light weight and maximum durability. The Hurcules has four small motors which assist in pumping hydraulic fluid around the rig, as well as taking the initial 'strain' from heavy lifts.

The hydraulics of the Hurcules are where the real innovations come in. The fluid is contained in 'ribs' that run the length of the unit, hundreds of them on each rig. The hydraulics are designed to be used in conjunction with the bodies natural posture when firing and lifting, counter action with the opposite limb or legs adds to the Hurcules power.

Hurcules

Cost	Black Market	Weight
300c	8,000u	7kg

Recoil Baffling

Maximum of users PHYS +3 in 'levels'

Lifting Capacity

User gets to act at 'Half Movement' with 'No Movement' carrying capacity.

The Hurcules may not be worn in conjunction with any Powered Armour except PP644 Body Blocker.

THE SQUID

The Squid is an advanced computer design, it is the first in a new wave of computers from EyeTex, the newly formed subsidiary of Third Eye. EyeTex plan to take the computer technology in to the home entertainment, as well as the Operative market place.

"Easy to use, easily accessible, no maintenance and cheap. Isn't that about all you could ask of anything?"

Orrin Harcourt, SCL 7 Human Op with HardLine, Mort 903 SD.

The Squid has been launched with much hype and advertising; almost everyone who is concerned with the use of a computer knows about the Squid.

They have not really filtered through to the Black Markets yet, and their reliance on the Mort Matrix makes them virtually useless to non-SLA employees. Some have been seen converted for use solely with data slugs and standard up-links.

Game System Stuff

The Squid is worn like a helmet, with a cap fitting over the skull to just above the ears, ear pieces may be worn that cover the ears to provide true stereo sound. The Squid is specifically designed to be worn with a Headset Communicator.

There is no 'screen', the eye piece slides down much like a visor, only it is semitransparent, allowing vision through it while in use (-1 CONC/DIA).

There is no keyboard, once the computer is activated, the keyboard is 'projected' to an area defined by the user, being represented by a linear diagram overlaid on the visor display.

The user uses the 'keyboard' via gloves that have sensors in the fingertips. There hand/finger actions are translated in to key strokes. The gloves are connected to the Squid via two cables that run down the back of the neck and along each arm.

The Squid may be worn under other armour, though the user will not be able to perform any other tasks while using the Squid. If used under armour, the user incurs a -2 penalty to their computer use skill due to distractions, physical

restrictions and the need to juggle both the suit's and Squid's functions.

The Squid has four slug sockets and four jacks, each at the base of the skull unit.

The 'onboard' capacity of the Squid is the same as the Oyster. The real advance is in the hook up with a 'central' data base via the Headset.

EyeTex have set up parallel lines with the Headset's communications, allowing up-links to the Mort Matrix, and access to the most powerful data base in the world of Progress; the SLA Industries Central Data Bank.

Squid users have their level of access restricted by their SCL.

The Squid

Cost	Black Market	Weight
30c	1,000u	0.3kg

The user pays a monthly fee to EyeTex of 5c for rental of the up-link space, and then the usage is charged per five minutes (1c).

The Mort Matrix (TBP 7) gives the user unlimited access to the best inter-active 'games' as well as the option to enter the 'CyNet', for which EyeTex has separate rates.

Cloak, IA and some of the larger SLA Departments all have 'watchers' in the Matrix, infringements of SCL clearance are acted upon swiftly and with deadly force.

TEK – TREX DREDNOUGHT

The mysterious 'Fritz' was one of a pair of drones that were never fully released into the market place, the other was the Drednought.

Recently DarkNight had some major wins on Cross, and were surprised to uncover an abandoned Tek Trex storage facility. The DN 'tekies' assembled the Drednoughts from plans, adding the change of main armament as their contribution to the drones birth.

After a Thresher counter offensive, the facility was recaptured, and the drones removed, shipped to Mort and dispersed on the Black Market.

The Drednought can be purchased from the same sources as the other Tek Trex drones, though the money goes directly to the Thresher.

Game System Stuff

The Drednought G30 Combat Drone (TH.0010 BD)

In appearance, the Drednought looks like an over-sized 'Buzzard', standing as it does 2 meters tall.

The enhanced on board capabilities of the Drednought give it access to a large range of independent' programs, such as target acquisition and terrain optimisation, as well as stealth and submarine modes. The Drednought can operate completely submerged and has two small propellers at the rear which give it alarming under water speed.

Remote use of the Drednought is via an onboard set of vid units giving 360 degree vision. There is an onboard speaker unit, allowing the remote user to feed sounds, including speech, through the Drednought.

The DN conversion of the weapons system replaced the experimental Tek Trex 12mm cannon with a 10mm SMG. This coupled with the two 5mm machine guns and the large Chainaxe make the Drednought an efficient combat drone.

Drednought

SKILL	RANK	Walk	1
Pistol	5	Run/Swim	3
Rifle	8	DEX	6
Detect	6	STR	6
Tactics	5	Weight	60kg
Chainaxe	5	Cost	150Ku

P.V. 8, I.D. 50.

The two 5mm machine guns are belt fed, with an on board capacity for 300 rounds for each. The 10mm SMG feeds from an internal drum, which holds 200 rounds.

The Drednought has a power supply lasting 6000 hours.

There are rumoured to be four hundred Drednoughts on Mort, most in the hands of

either large Soft Companies or powerful street gangs.

The Thresher are also rumoured to have converted a few to take a 17mm cannon rather than the 'standard' on board firepower, though none have so far been documented by Op's.

The current softening of views by SLA towards Tek Trex may mean that some of these drones may be found in some of the more forward looking SLA Dept. storage facilities, though their use is officially banned, and any Op found in possession of any Tek Trex product is liable to the usual fines and SCL decreases.

FINDING A JOB: BPN'S

This issue we have two BPN's designed to focus very much on the squad, depending upon their relationships with the WoP and the characters in it for the driving force of the BPN. It should give you a chance to get the players involved more in the development of the WoP, allowing them to fill out some of the details.

Both BPN's may require some 'jiggling about' to fit with your particular group, but we've tried to write them with as much room for maneuver as possible.

"All we have to do is find him, bring him back alive, and not let anybody know what we're doing or why we're doing it.... easy."

This 'BPN' will be assigned to the squad on their next visit either to the Crib or their Financier.

How you get the Darkfinders involved is up to you. They can either take over from the clerk at the BPN hall, maybe halfway through an explanation about a different BPN, or they can appear out of the shadows at some meeting place.

The two Darkfinders show their SCL and Department badges before asking the squad to take a seat.

Once they have the squad's full attention, they will explain what the squad has to do.

The 'BPN'

This is classified as a Grey, though in real terms there is no BPN, as no record will exist of the Op's activities. The Darkfinders will make it clear that it is a Grey, and that the Op's will be responsible for the success of the mission; failure is not considered an option.

SCL: As per Op's.

Contact: Two Darkfinders will contact Op's, no contact with any SLA Dept. should be considered.

Training Package Recc.: As per Op's.

Colour Code: Grey.

Summary: Seek and recover Tempest agent.

Coverage: None.

Consolidated Bonus Scheme: 500c

Payment: Per Op.

SCL Increase: +0.8

One of the Darkfinders will do all the talking, while the other sits and silently broods over the Op's. The information given to the Op's is as follows, most of it will be told to them in quiet unemotional tones, though some of it they will have to extract by skill use and playing the situation. Don't be afraid to only give them part of the story; if they do not 'earn' it, don't let them have it.

One of the players contacts / friends / family, it's up to you to decide who to choose for best effect and most game playability, is in fact a Tempest agent.

This person has gone underground after a Cloak operation to shut down the cell they belonged to.

With them they took some information that Cloak would like back. The information is contained on some audio/video equipment which is described in detail to the players.

On top of this, the Tempest agent must be recovered and brought back to Cloak for questioning. Cloak need to know exactly who has seen/heard the material, and how many (if any) copies have been made.

The Operative's will be held responsible for the death of the agent, no matter how it occurs; if the agent dies the Op's die. It is as simple as that.

It is known that DarkNight are looking for the agent as well, and they should be seen as the main threat on this operation. Tempest are also seeking their agent, though it is assumed they

cannot find him due to the agent's acute paranoia and fear for their life at the moment.

A squad of Op's have also been assigned on a Platinum from Head Office, and they have been issued with a termination warrant for the agent, as well as seeking to destroy the equipment and information. If absolutely necessary, the Op's are to use deadly force to prevent the other squad from achieving their goal, Cloak will back the Op's up with termination warrants if the need arises.

The Op's are also told that they must under no circumstances examine the information they are recovering.

If any of the Op's are chipped, they will have their chip 'disabled' for the duration of the BPN.

What's Really Going On

For a change, there is no hidden agenda. Everything is as stated in the above synopsis.

There are of course a hundred things that could be going on, and the Op's paranoia and suspicion should be fed by you at every opportunity. A few things that may be suggested by events or NPC's are;

DarkFinders are in fact from the squad on the Platinum, using the Op's to lead them to the agent.

Agent is working a Platinum, and Tempest and DN are after them to terminate them and steal the information back for themselves.

Agent is already dead, killed by DN, who now have the information.

You get the idea, it should be possible to get the Op's thinking all sorts of things....

Running The BPN

We have outlined the major players in this BPN, along with the encounters they appear in, it will be up to you to fit them in to locations the players take you. As they are searching for a very close contact they should have some of the locations they meet fixed in their minds. You can guide them to suit your self, but it will probably not be necessary, let them suggest theories and ideas as to the whereabouts of the agent, drop the encounters in along the way, then when you think they are ready, let them find the agent in one of the places they suggested.

Agent: Tempest Insurgent Agent. You will need to 'bump' the characteristics of the agent, and give them the skills listed under Espionage Agent (Karma p138). Kit them out with equipment you think appropriate, using their 'normal' life cover as a guide.

DarkNight: Seek and Destroy unit. This will consist of one Espionage Agent and three 'Props' (Karma 139). They will have access to grenades and some minor explosives, it is suggested that you arm the espionage agent with either a sniper rifle or a powerful assault weapon.

Tempest: Recovery unit. Due to their undercover nature, the Tempest unit will not be as obviously well equipped as the DN unit. Use Standard Shiver stats (Karma p134) for their leader, and the DN Civilian Convert stats (Karma p138) for the unit.

Squad of Op's on Platinum: Fear Addiction.

Fear Addiction are a three man squad comprising of;

Julie Saheer, Human I&I (Karma p143).

Xavier Cross, Frother Death Squad (Karma p142).

Cheraw Freaan, Wraith Raider Scouting (Karma p143).

The Op's will probably want to do some digging in all areas they have information, and we have listed what they may find out broken in to three areas; Street, SLA Information, Other.

Street represents what they can find out from using their street contacts, it relies upon gossip, rumour, reputations and hear say. Most of it is mingled in with other information, and should be sifted using skills.

SLA Information is available through 'official' channels, though there will be differing amounts at varying SCL levels. Some of this information will be questionable, either out of date, or just plain inaccurate.

Other is the sort of stuff they may come across by accident, through ingenious plans or dumb luck.

Tempest Agent

Street: Not much can be gathered from the street, no one suspects that the person is a Tempest agent, if it is openly suggested the

reaction will be one of derisory disbelief. People will refuse to believe that they could have been fooled by the agent. Unless the street inquiries are very discreet, word will soon spread of the Op's interest, and they will simply be greeted by silence. You may want to drop whatever rumours you see fit in here, maybe hinting that some suspected something 'was up', but that no one could put their finger on it. It would be a good place to reveal the probable whereabouts of the agent, through favourite haunts, etc.

SLA Information: All files are classified SCL 4, and attempts to access them will alert Internal Affairs. The agent's 'cover' background will be available to Op's in the form of a citizens dossier, but it will show nothing of interest, it may even list one of the Op's as a known contact.

Other: As the Op's follow up on hunches and investigate the movements of the agent, you should spin out a trail or let the Op's suggest one through their movements and activities, maybe backing up their ideas by dropping bits of information and near encounters in as they go, keeping the agent just out of reach.

DarkNight Unit

Street: It is known that DarkNight have been at war with Tempest in the sector the agent was from. DarkNight have spread a lot of money around on the street, searching for Tempest agents. It is fairly common knowledge that a DN 'hit squad' is currently at large looking for the agent, people seem keen to help them or get out of their way.

SLA Information: DN and Tempest have recently engaged in a number of attacks on each other, escalating the previous tolerant suspicion of each other to full scale conflict. The DN hit squad currently in sector is known to have been responsible for the deaths of nine SLA Op's, each through individual ambush.

Other: DN are at war with Tempest. They see Tempest as 'competition' for anti-SLA resources via the population. DN also have ongoing biogenetic experiments to emulate Stormers, and they do not need Tempest turning the general populace against the idea of biogenetic warriors.

Tempest Unit

Street: No one on the street wants to talk about Tempest. The general feeling is that Tempest are planning 'something big' and that SLA know and anyone caught in the middle will be minced. There has been very little activity on the streets recently regarding Tempest, who have been assumed to be gathering their forces.

SLA Information: The Tempest unit after the agent are from another sector. They are suspected to have termination orders for the agent along with recovery orders for the information; it would seem that Tempest is not as united as everyone else thinks. Most Tempest files are limited to standard SLA Soft Company Profile, with little that any Op's with Rival Company of 3+ would not know....

Fear Addiction

Street: Bad Rep. (4) with local gang Street Pigs, Bad Rep. (4) with local Monarch Officers, Good Rep. (6) Third Eye, Major Enemy (6) DN. Fear Addiction are a relatively new squad, who specialise in Whites and Greens, they know the ways of the streets and are 'lenient' with interpreting the law as far as those who live on the street goes, they focus on their BPN's.

SLA Information: Julie Saheer, Human I&I, SCL 7. Xavier Cross, Frother Death Squad, SCL 8. Cheraw Freaan, Wraith Raider Scouting, SCL 8. Fear Addiction have completed eighteen BPN's in the past year and have been the subject of an IA inquiry (information classified SCL 4). They are listed as having worked off world in New Paris twice and the Stone Rim Colonies twice. They have no Financier, and get all their BPN's from the Crib in sector.

Other: Fear Addiction are known to target BPN's that force them to overcome their fears and phobias. To this end, you may want to give each of them an additional phobia. They rarely record prisoners from their BPN's and terminate with extreme prejudice those that they come against.

They have been turned down on application for a Black BPN last month.

The Encounters

The three main encounters on the BPN should be those detailed, though of course there will be many more with groups and individuals suggested by the Op's. The placing of these three encounters is left to you, drop them in when you think it works best, when the Op's investigations are flagging, or when they least expect it. Don't be afraid to disrupt another encounter with an intrusion from either DN or Tempest.

Dark Night

DN will try to stalk the Op's hoping they will lead them to the agent.

Once they have been spotted, or after Tempest have struck, they will set an ambush for the Op's, aiming to take one of them alive for questioning.

The DN squad will realise they are no match for the Op's in a stand up firefight, and may even try to kidnap one of them after a diversion, to achieve their ends.

Tempest

The Tempest leader will approach the Op's, after making initial contact via a phone or headset. He will want to arrange a meeting one on one to discuss the agent and what he has. Tempest will try to get the Op's to understand the significance of what's on the recording, and how it can be used to expose the abomination of Stormer creation.

If the Op's do not want to know, Tempest will simply follow them at a distance, avoiding encounters at all costs, until the Op's lead them to the agent. They will then use Fear Addiction as a diversion, to sneak in and recover the agent. One of the Tempest unit will have a broadcast unit with them, if they cannot get in and get out with the information, they will broadcast it to a waiting 'dump point', then destroy the original and fight their way out in a suicide attack.

Fear Addiction/ Tempest Agent

Once you have decided that the Op's have pinpointed the location of the agent, you should decide which one of the two options you want

for Fear Addiction; they can either be there slightly ahead of the Op's, about to go in as the squad arrive, or they can wait for the Op's to go in and get the agent, catching them on the way out.

If they are already there, they will tell the Op's that they are on a Platinum and that they must not be interfered with. After this they will carry on with their business, believing the Op's will not try to stop them.

If they wait for the Op's to go in, they will wait 'outside', calling for the Op's to send out the agent so they can take him in. If the Op's refuse Fear Addiction will try to take the agent down as the Op's leave, if they have to they will target the whole squad. If the Op's outnumber or outgun Fear Addiction enough to worry them, they will call in a SCAF unit for support. The SCAF unit will respond to the Fear Addiction call, via a legitimate BPN call reference, something the Op's will not have.

Fear Addiction's tactics are to have Cheraw Freaan concealed as a sniper, while Xavier and Julie talk their way in to close combat/surprise attack range.

The Agent's 'Information'

The information the agent is trying to protect is an Integration 20 extract (either part one TBP 10 or part two this issue).

You may want to have the agent being a fanatic or simply a survivor. Either way, they will try to appeal to the Op's, obviously targeting the one they are closest to, to either let them go, or let them stash the information. If a fanatic, the agent will care little for their own life, once they realise the Op's are not going to listen to them (they may of course!), they will try to destroy the information using their body as shield while they do so.

If they are a survivor, they will try to double-talk their way out by implicating the Op's as Tempest sympathisers, so they will be under suspicion from Cloak, they will try to use any and all blackmail they can to get the Op's to let them stash the information. As they get more desperate, they will offer greater rewards or nastier reprisals/consequences.

Consequences

What happens at the culmination of the BPN is up to you.

If the Op's get the agent and the information back to the two Darkfinders, they will either be terminated due to the Darkfinders suspicion that they viewed the material, or they will be rewarded and kept on file as potentially loyal Op's to be used in future Greys.

The Op's may of course take the information, in which case they will be in a position to make friends/enemies of both Cloak and Tempest.

Tempest may get in touch to see if the Op's know anything about the information, and to see if they can be won over as sympathisers.

There are too many possible endings for us to cover them all, but you should be able to use the events during the BPN to tailor the outcome.

"An investigation of this nature calls for tact, subtlety, discretion and an unfailing eye for attention to detail. What are you lot doing here?"

This BPN should be given to the squad if they are looking to make some serious money, the 'performance' bonus is rumoured to be up to 1000c per Operative.

SCL: 9

Contact: Captain Nero Ulysys, at Deep One; via operator 891/455-09379. Ministry of War.

Training Package Recc.: I&I, any.

Colour Code: White.

Summary: Discretion, subtlety, tact must be assured. Squad with at least one completed White only. Investigate 'shortfall' in arms and ammunition inventory at Ministry of War base.

Coverage: Station Analysis.

Consolidated Bonus Scheme: 500c. Plus 'performance' bonus for judged discretion.

Payment: Per Operative.

SCL Increase: 0.8.

Getting The BPN

The BPN will only be offered to the Op's if they meet the criteria and they look and act like a squad who know what they're doing, and are able to guarantee some degree of professional discretion. It should be made obvious to the Op's at the BPN interview that the Ministry of War are harsh task masters, but if they succeed, the Op's are likely to be very well rewarded and thought of by the Ministry.

It will be stressed that for the duration of the BPN the Op's are to observe the strict codes of conduct enforced by the Ministry on their bases.

In accordance with the Ministry's own regulations, the BPN has been issued to ensure an impartial investigation, and the Op's are to record diligently anything they uncover during their investigation, reporting directly to their contact; the base Captain John Connor.

The Station Analysis coverage will be 'filtered' through the Ministry and all reports should be filed with them first, it is a condition of the BPN that everything uncovered during the investigation remains the property of the Ministry. Filming and recording on the base is prohibited.

Report To Base

The Ministry base is in Suburbia, sector 300, close to the massive FEN Plastics industrial complex, which covers an area of four square kilometers. There are no residential units within a thousand yards of the base, which is entirely above ground.

The base stores, packages and distributes arms and armour to various Ministry of War unit headquarters, and has the most dealings with the Mort spaceport, which is six kilometers away.

There is a 'no go' zone three hundred meters wide around the perimeter of the base, which is mined and alarmed.

There are three hundred buildings on the base, ranging in size from six story office blocks to massive warehouses. All are guarded and alarmed, with restricted access. There are numerous 'static' drone fire points which cover the base, each having both video and independent target acquisition.

The Captain

Upon arrival the Op's will be greeted with strained courtesy, and lead in gruff silence to the Captain's office.

Captain John Connor is an ex-War World soldier who has completed two full terms on Hed. He is a quiet man, given to long periods of deep thought and silence. He always wears his custom Crackshot though often without the helmet. Use ex-War Criminal stats (Karma p133) but drop all skill levels and psychoses/addictions by three levels.

The Captain will explain to the Op's the nature of the BPN, he will treat it like a briefing, expecting no questions until he has finished. If he is interrupted he will listen patiently then carry on as if the person had not spoken. The Captain's briefing details the problem, and the areas he wishes to come under investigation.

The Briefing

Two weeks ago, an internal audit, carried out by the Ministry of War, revealed the base to be missing over two million rounds of ammunition and two thousand pieces of 'ordnance'. The rounds range from 10mm to 12.7mm, the weapons from pistols to assault rifles. As is the Ministry's policy, an 'outside' team has been called in to complete investigations and report to the base Captain. The Op's have one week to complete their BPN.

The Captain has compiled a dossier containing all the relevant information for the Op's, including those personnel that should be investigated.

Personnel

Captain John Connor
Sergeant Michael Young
Corporal Mica Lasson
Private Jake Saltzer
Private Cheera Graw (Wraith Raider)

The Captain advises the Op's that he will expect daily briefings to be given to him at 18:00 hours. The Op's have security clearance 'Alpha' while on the base, which will last for eight days. This gives them access to all areas except for Storage Facility 18, which is strictly out of bounds as it contains SCL 4 clearance logistics.

The Investigation

We have given brief details of each employee listed, as well as their involvement with the missing inventory. Each will be cold and polite, making it obvious they are co-operating because they have been ordered to.

Captain John Connor

Captain Connor is the most respected and feared man on the base. He rules his troops

with a rod of iron, his approach to discipline is extreme, trivial matters tend to get overlooked, those worth the Captains attention get the offender executed.

Captain Connor has left his sanity on Hed. He is behind the thefts, together with the others, whom he has listed in an attempt to contain the investigation by using people who know what's really going on.

Captain Connor is stockpiling weapons and munitions in a warehouse at the Mort spaceport. When he has recruited enough loyal soldiers, he will lead them back to Hed to set up a fighting unit. This unit, code named IronFist, will take the fight to the enemy using any means necessary to destroy any that stand in their way.

Sergeant Michael Young

The Sergeant is as mad as the Captain, having served along side him for his last tour of duty on Hed. The Sergeant believes in the goals of the Captain, and sees them as realistic and achievable, knowing as he does the state of conflict on Hed.

Michael is in charge of documenting the inventory that leaves the base, and cataloguing any discrepancies. His figures will match those of the investigation, showing the shortages as 'damages and defects', which have been listed as destroyed under the supervision of the quartermaster.

Corporal Mica Lasson

Corporal Mica Lasson is the standing Quartermaster. She is responsible for the upkeep of the base's data base and computer network. Mica has friends and contacts in all departments on the base, and it is she that has the most contact with the outside world, especially the Ministry of War.

Corporal Lasson has never been off world and is using the Captain's activities to make some serious money. She diverts 10% of all stolen shipments to her contacts in the Black Market, which extend to the 'fixers' of four street gangs.

Mica knows how psychotic the Captain is and realises that her best chance for safety lies in keeping on his good side and pretending to go along with his scheme to return to Hed.

Private Jake Saltzer

Private Slatzer is a passionate believer in the Captain's goals and is 'blood brothers' with Sergeant Young, having served with him for a term on Hed. Jake is sure that the list of names the Captain has, some on Hed, some on Mort, will form an unstoppable company that will drive back the hated enemy on Hed.

Private Saltzer is the most unbalanced of the group, being prone to bouts of deep depression and uncontrollable bursts of frantic nervous energy, which he usually works off by performing Gymnastics.

Private Cheera Graw (Wraith Raider)

Cheera is suffering from delusions brought about by her exposure to some experimental drugs while in training at Meny. Cheera has maneuvered herself in to the Captain's favour and seeks to get to Hed at all costs. The deranged Wraith Raider believes that 'the beast' lives on Hed, and it is 'the beast' that represents the greatest challenge and hunt in the WoP.

Private Graw knows she will need to get to Hed in the company of some experienced and very well equipped companions if she is to stand a chance of hunting 'the beast'.

She will be the most uncooperative of the group, telling the Op's nothing, answering in only a yes or no fashion, and pretending to be stupid most of the time.

Running The BPN

The main protagonists are all world weary veterans, or slightly deranged individuals. The Op's should feel out of their depth with these people, as the Captain and Sergeant in particular could probably take on the squad single handed.

All the employees on the base have a 'military' status, and as such will feel nothing but disinterest or contempt towards the Op's and their investigation. None of the base's personnel will speak unless spoken to and conversation will stop whenever the Op's approach a group of them.

The base is run along strict military guidelines, confining those involved to strict routines and protocols. All rules and regulations will be followed to the letter, and the Op's will have to

do some thorough investigating to uncover some of the smaller rackets.

Ultimately, the Op's may be able to 'pull rank' on some employees, as the Op's BPN is set to take precedence over 'local' rules and regulations. This is restricted by the Captains instructions to the Op's, which define the limits of their powers.

As they go about their business the Op's will be snubbed and shunned, given the run around. Any information they gather will either be mindless trivia, groundless speculation or outright fantasy.

The Captain's unwillingness to step in to help the Op's is driven by the need for an 'independent' investigation, as the Captain himself must be one of those under suspicion and investigation.

How much the Op's find out is left up to you. They will have to be subtle, discreet and skilful to find anything out, and it's usefulness to the BPN is left to you to decide. Whether you want the Op's to uncover the Captain's insane plan, or whether you want the Captain to make a break for it the day after the Op's leave the base....

This BPN has been intentionally written in an 'open' format to allow you to develop it. this will very much depend upon your own views on such things as the Ministry of War, the Op's powers under a BPN, and the freedom of investigation they have.

Storage Facility 18

Known on the base as 'Hanger 18', this building has maximum security and can only be entered with a SLA Database Smartcard.

The facility contains heavy armour suits and a cache of arms and armour recovered from both Hed and Dante, which is being repaired and upgraded for re-use by SLA personnel.

The Captain has had the technicians repair five suits of MAL Shock Armour, fitting it to the build of the five conspirators.

Hanger 18 represents an 'Aladdin's cave', containing weapons and armour the Op's can only dream about affording.

One possible end to the scenario is having the Captain lead his small company from out of Hanger 18, making a dash for the Mort spaceport to get to Hed before any 'serious' threat is mustered by SLA.

A twist could be tying the Captain directly to the Thresher, making him an insurgent agent recruiting for a mission on Mort, using the arms and armour from Hanger 18 to strike at the heart of the SLA empire.

SOFT COMPANIES

TIME TV

Company Slogan: "Time TV, time for TV to give you what you want."

Second hand TV shops that offer repair services are rife in both Downtown and Suburbia. Time TV started out as a small chain of shops set up in sector 56. Their cheap and cheerful approach to TV supply and repair, earned them a reputation in Downtown as a no nonsense company that were not above 'bending' the law to get you what you wanted at a price you could afford.

Soon Time TV was the second largest supplier of used and reconditioned TV's in the sector. Their repair vans and bikes could be seen all over sector 56, their engineers went in to most places without fear, knowing their service was what kept a lot of Downtown citizens alive.

Recently Time TV have begun offering new services and products, and for this they have had to go underground, to become a 'soft company'.

Game System Stuff

The legitimate company that was Time TV is no more, bought out by DarkNight. The original founders and staff have been 'replaced', though not all killed, to be replaced with converts and three insurgent agents.

Time now has a total of one hundred and seventy employees.

Time offer very cheap TV's, often brand new or barely second hand. In a world where TV is essential, Time have tapped in to a powerful market. Time buy TV's from anywhere, their most prolific source of supply being stolen warehouse stock, raided by gangs by the truck load. Time will never buy back a TV they have already sold on, and they mark all of their TV's with the 'Time' logo (smiling clock).

All of Time TV's have an extra chip fitted, this is embedded in the circuitry and is extremely hard to find, and cannot be removed without destroying the receiving ability of the TV (Elec. Repair 6).

The chip allows the TV to access Channel Resistance without interference, and is 'keyed' to the current version of the Vent virus being used by DN. Time TV's are 'pre-tuned' to receive transmissions from roving pirate broadcast stations, overriding any SLA signal that may be in transit.

As a result of the chip, the TV can receive almost any broadcast over the frequency range with amazing clarity, allowing local 'access' stations to reach a much wider audience, broadcasting completely 'unofficial' material. The chip also allows the decoding of vid slugs and audio discs, anything the Vent virus is used to conceal may be decoded and viewed/heard.

As a mark of 'trust' in their customers, Time TV also fit 'off' switches to TV's, allowing them to be set to show blank screens or soothing pictures from a pre-set menu.

Time work from mobile workshops and vehicles. They are known to have nine Props in their service as well as six street gangs. DarkNight want Time to survive and they are prepared to sink a lot of resource in to it.

SHROUD

Company adage: "Don't hide from the future, lift the Shroud."

Shroud hit the streets over four months ago, and their innovative clothing designs have been enthusiastically greeted on Mort. Their product can be found in many Op's wardrobe as well as the fashion conscious gang members and Props. A lot of Third Eye street crews wear Shroud clothing.

The company can be found in almost any Downtown street market, selling from a large case or the back of a van. In Suburbia, they trade from shops and stalls in transition from one owner to another, or from discrete vans parked near the entrances to Malls.

Word on the street is that Shroud are cool. They're clothing is stylish, affordable and very, very durable. Shivers and Op's mostly turn a blind eye to the trading activities of Shroud, the 'official' SLA line is a policy of 'wait and see'.

G a m e S y s t e m S t u f f

Shroud were formed by four ex-SLA employees from the Dept. of Sanitation, in partnership with two designers from the now defunct NeatStreet SLA subsidiary.

The four employees came from a processing and incineration plant, where they hi-jacked a shipment from an experimental Karma lab. The material was due for destruction, but nothing appeared to be wrong with it. Altogether they managed to way lay eighteen loads of raw material before their source dried up.

They all left the Dept. Sanitation; Processing, to move to Street Cleaning, where they 'went missing' near one of the larger Storm Drains in sector 56. They are listed as missing, presumed dead on SLA files.

When NeatStreet went in to liquidation, they contacted the two designers and set up Shroud. They operate from deep in Downtown, where they have a small storage and manufacturing unit. They are currently working on replicating the production of the material originally stolen from Karma, they have a contract with Pod Pharmaceuticals who are doing the research and supplying the technicians.

The material is known as SureFit. It is one of the components of the original Solutionwear material.

SureFit looks and feels like very supple leather. It is incredibly hard to crease and almost completely dirt resistant, it's surface being smooth as a ceramic. SureFit is heat and cold resistant, being almost freeze and fireproof. SureFit also interacts with Human sweat, producing a faint lemon scent.

Shroud feature original designs as well as bootlegged artwork and slogans. They spoof well known advertising and company slogans,

as well as creating new themes for existing companies.

SureFit garments cost between 40u and 400u, depending upon size and style.

Currently, the only colour available is black, though this will change in the near future with the perfection of the replication of the original formula for SureFit.

A very small number of people have shown allergic reactions to SureFit, coming out in yellow rashes that are irresistibly itchy, scratching breaks the weakened skin and leaves the person scarred for life.

F I R E F I G H T

Street talk: "Get in or get out, but don't get in the way of a FireFight."

"They just turned up, threw open the van, started taking bets on this tough looking dude beating up some poor ganger that happened along. yeah, I won a bundle, ganger turned out to be some muscle from the Street Hawks."

Jezz Moor, unemployed citizen, Downtown, Mort 902 SD.

FireFight organise and set up street fights between gangers, Props, citizens and sometimes Serial Killers. They take bets on the fights, clear away the bodies and administer any final killing blows that may be needed. There is only ever one winner in a FireFight.

Street word is that FireFight are a lunatic, cool company, offering a breath of fresh air in the stagnant world of Mort entertainment.

G a m e S y s t e m S t u f f

FireFight are an 'independent' soft company, being the brain child of two gang chiefs, who have gone out on their own with the backing of some of their old contacts. They employ thirty ex-gang members as well as the two Props; RedNeck and Cat.

They operate from a van or large 'battle taxi', usually stolen the same day as the fight. They have three of their own vehicles, which they use when they can once the re-spray's are completed after each job.

The secret to their success is their huge network of street contacts and the desire for violence on the streets of Mort.

FireFight will often set up matches between old gang or Prop rivals, arranging a time and a place, and then leafleting the area hours before the fight. They make their money from the gambling and associated products such as drugs and drink that can be sold at such an event, the fights are often recorded and the vid slugs sold immediately after the event.

Recently they have begun organising 'all-comers' fights, where they choose a time and a place and people turn up to fight one of their chosen Props. All fights are to the death, there is a 'purse' of 20Ku as well as the usual gambling. So far FireFight have only lost one Prop, and that was to a ganger who turned out to be a martial artist.

All street fights are hands or blades, though FireFight are thinking of branching out in to full scale gun battles, if the market wants it, which at the moment it doesn't.

FireFight have initiated what they call 'Random Violence', where they pull up, discharge a fighter who fights anyone nominated by the local crowd, whether they want to or not. These fights are anything goes, though the FireFight rep will use only hands and blades. Two fighters have been lost this way, both to concealed CAF or DN weapons.

There is no shortage of people wanting to be FireFight rep's, mainly from gangs, though some Props have shown an interest, especially if the purse is high.

RedNeck and Cat will not hesitate to engage anyone trying to stop the fights. Shivers steer clear, and the fights are usually not advertised well enough in advance to give Op's a chance to break them up. SLA want FireFight shut down as they may start to give GoreZone a run for their money.

MEET N GREET

Frank Weiss was on the scene as the Black Order strike on the Kennedy Market went down. He caught the only interview with WarDog, the sole survivor from DeathDance, the squad wiped out by the terrorists. All

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FW: "WarDog.... WarDog? Hey buddy, you in there...."

WD: "Wha.... hey, get that thing outa my face...."

FW: "Frank Weiss from Inter-Com, you're going out live to a cut in slot in Small World...."

WD: "What the fu...."

FW: "Hey! Keep it civil, we're talking prime time...."

WD: "What happened?"

FW: "Well I was going to ask you that."

WD: "Look, just fuck off OK?"

FW: "Have you called for Shiver clean up?"

WD: "What? Yeah, oh yeah. Sure. Shiver clean up."

FW: "You realise the body count hit thirty five, including four from your squad?"

WD: "Yeah sure. They're all dead. Shit."

FW: "Did you get the bad guys? The Black Order Sniper? You get him?"

WD: "Yeah, sure. Got the fucker."

FW: "The body?"

WD: "Up there.... third floor balcony, scattered over a fairly large fuckin' area though...."

FW: "Assault rifle?"

WD: (laughs) "Yeah, sure. Assault rifle. Got one in the apartment store too, MAC knife in the throat, boom!"

FW: "How'd you get dragged in to this?"

WD: "Just shit lucky I guess."

FW: "you want a minute to get yourself together....?"

WD: "Yeah sure, I guess...."

FW: "This is Frank Weiss at the Kennedy Market, we've just seen some serious carnage with a Black Order strike taking out three cabs and a bus, a squad of Operatives responding to the call was drawn in to the ambush, four of them being killed by two terrorists with what looked like sniper rifles. I'm here talking to the only survivor from the squad, and the man responsible for finishing off two of the Black Order terrorists. Can you give us a clearer picture of what happened?"

WD: "Sure. I think so...."

FW: "In your own time...."

WD: "Yeah, well, you know, we got a call over the head set, Shiver patrol requesting assistance, possible terrorist sniper nest found...."

FW: "But the call was a fake?"

WD: "Well yeah, I'd say so, wouldn't you? Anyway, we gets here and boom! Two cabs are hit, smoke and shit everywhere, then the bus pulls over and the people start running screaming, I just knew it was gonna get real messy."

FW: "The terrorists shot the passengers?"

WD: "Yeah, got five or six of 'em before we were deployed. Then the fuckers start with the damn grenades!"

FW: "And the booby traps."

WD: "Yeah, and them. Boots, our Stormer, went left, R'Qkn goes right, Murray and Spider went straight in. I took up a good fire position and scoped the sniper. I dunno what happened, it all went too quick. I think there was four of 'em not three, maybe five, we thought three. I need to see the surveillance footage...."

FW: "Here come the Shivers now. Thanks for your time, I know it's been hard."

WD: "Yeah sure. Hard."

WarDog

Classification	Human, Male
Package	Strike Squad
Squad	DeathDance
Strength	8
Dexterity	10
Diagnose	7
Concentration	8
Charisma	8
Physique	9
Knowledge	8
Cool	10
Walk	1
Run	2
Sprint	3
Movement	31
Half Movement	62
No Movement	93

WarDog wears PP644 Blocker Powered Armour. He is armed with a FEN 603, a FEN AR and a MAC Knife. All ammo carried is HEAP.

Other than this, WarDog carries standard starting Op's equipment, as well as some personal gear such as IR/UV goggles, motion scanner, nav map slugs, Oyster and climbing gear.

DeathDance were fresh out of Meny, this was their first 'live' response, they had undertaken no BPN's.

Upon arrival of the Shivers, WarDog seems to have snapped out of it, acting with authority in the direction of the clean up. A full, and concise report was filed with both Station Analysis and the local Shiver house. All relevant paperwork was later found to be in order.

Frank Weiss tried to pursue WarDog for a follow up interview, but found him to be 'unavailable'.

SKILLS	RANK
Literacy	3
Detect	8
SLA Information	3
Rival Company	4
Streetwise	6
Unarmed Combat	8
Drive, Civilian	4
Drive, Military	4
Pistol	6
Rifle	8
Paramedic	4
Blade, 1-H	5
Climb	4
Sneak	5
Hide	5
Auto Support	8
Haggle	4
Persuade	4

The SLA Operatives Register currently lists WarDog as undergoing a Psyche. Evaluation.

A statement from the local Shiver house details the action at Kennedy Market, but lists the surveillance camera footage as unavailable, due to; "an internal investigation forming part of an active BPN."

WarDog's actual performance was outstanding for an Op on their first 'call out'. The interview conducted by Frank Weiss, a veteran of the streets of Mort, shows some respect for the fledgling Operative.

It is rumoured that the squad Pendulum are inquiring as to WarDog's availability, and the Financier / Agent Kirsty Young has also shown an interest in representing WarDog, whose Rep. in the sector has been established as 'lucky', if nothing else.

Issue 11 was fairly up-beat, I was fairly positive that SLA would get back on track with Nightfall getting together.

The highlight of the issue had to be play testing the White Ministry of War BON, where I made Sam laugh so much he nearly choked, I don't know why, but some people find star-jumps funny ☺

I was happy for TBP to continue in the format it hit on 10, and continued with 11. There were running adverts for Valkyrie on the inside front covers, with the inside back covers being given over to lyrics from favourite bands, mainly Anthrax, who produced some truly excellent music in Sound of White Noise, Stomp 442 and The Threat Is Real... where are they now?

Max Bantleman, 2001.