

# tHE bIG pICTURE

(tHe rEStleSs sEA)

## C O N T E N T S

**Introduction** – Issue 14, isn't it all brilliant!?

**Born Again** – Strange and dangerous scenario.... Players beware.

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Black Sabbath eh?

OK. One more time for the cynics. **tHE bIG pICTURE** is a non profit making fanzine, where the cover price goes to pay for copying and distribution. We pay nothing for contributions, we all do it 'cos we're extremely groovy and hoopy frood SLA nuts (idiots basically....). Nightfall Games Ltd. do not endorse the stuff we put in **tHE bIG pICTURE**, and it must be stressed that we are a completely '**unofficial**' fanzine. All copyrights of stuff used remain with respective authors. We'd like to think that this means something, and that the stuff here-in will not be produced without our knowledge or permission.

Nobody minds, just ask is all. (And DON'T photo copy TBP – buy your own!)

If you want to contribute; write something. We'll consider most stuff (not poetry or fiction).

Stuff expressed here is seldom the kind of thing that could get anyone in to trouble, but if it is: then it wasn't us; it was the crew of small green dudes that live at the bottom of my pond. We know nothing. We were all away at the time and can take no responsibility for anything naughty. The good and great groovy stuff which gets much deserved praise, money and chocolate things is undeniably ours; and we thank you for noticing (send more chocolate, we're going in to a trance).

Want to buy something from us? Of course you do! Personal cheques (in sterling only) or P.O.'s made payable to M. Bantleman please. Thanks awfully.

**tHE bIG pICTURE** could really do with some funky pictures. Any ideas? Know any artist types? We'd be sickeningly grateful for any artwork we can use....

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Unless specifically credited to an author, all material in **tHE bIG pICTURE** is written by Max Bantleman.☺

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## B a c k C o v e r

SLA Industries reinvents itself every day.  
Lifestyles are sold to go with the image.

Loyalty is bought and sold,

Survival is it's own reward.

Do not question the truth of this.

What you think you know?

SLA already knows,

What you need to know?

SLA already knows.

## 2 0 0 1 – P D F C o n v e r s i o n

*The fourteenth issue of **tHE bIG pICTURE** was the first to be produced in electronic format only (pdf). It marks the death of TBP as I know and love it, and the birth of TBP in a form I'm highly suspicious of.*

*Max Bantleman, 2001.*

## SLIGGS & GRIBBLYS

Issue 14.

G-roov-e.

It plods along, driven by the fact that we love SLA.

Ah well.

The race is afoot, things are afoot, a foot's a foot, and feet are always going to be there, feet like at the bottom of your legs right?

(I apologise in advance to the feetly challenged right now, sorry.)

Nightfall have gone in to partnership with Hogshead, who will be producing SLA from August 2000, publishing the main rule book and reprinting Karma and Mort. After this will be the release of 'Key of Celery-Head' and some other stuff that's been around for years and can now be dug up and published (Key is great, shame about the artwork.)

It's hard to get too excited about it at the moment, it's very much a case of wait and see. But it has to be great news for SLA, as well as the Nightfall crew that will allow them to continue to develop the SLA WoP. So generally well done Night fall and Hogshead, I think all SLA fans have heaved a collective sigh of relief....

Roll on 2001.

Now on to thornier subjects, but keeping a positive theme ☺

Nightfall have a deal with Hogshead. Hogshead will be reprinting stuff and then producing new stuff, written by the Nightfall team. Their proposed production schedule covers the next two years (to the end of 2001), with stuff like an 'official' Soft Co. Directory pencilled in for then. With the schedule in mind, and with the fact that Nightfall will be writing 'official' stuff, where does this leave the likes of TBP and Chocolate Frog with their 'unofficial' stuff? And what the hell does 'unofficial' mean anyway?

Well....

I've basically had to re-write the whole of the editorial based on how Nightfall and Hogshead view 'unofficial' stuff. As far as they're concerned, TBP is fine as it is, but the rest of the stuff is a complete no-no.

From the Chocolate Frog Enterprises side of things a brief word of explanation, maybe even justification, may be in order.

The intention is not to 'beat' Nightfall or Hogshead to the punch, we are not simply doing things to 'spoil' the market for either of the two official SLA sources. It's more a matter of trying to compliment what they are doing and intend to do, with material that is worthwhile but may not be included in their agenda of things to do. There are of course also a hundred ways to view each aspect of the WoP and a bit of variety and choice for SLAers can only be a good thing. So, the 'unofficial' Soft Company Directory (for example) may well touch upon things and offer new material unavailable in the 'official' Soft Co. SB, but it will still compliment and back up the Nightfall WoP.

Everyone from the SLADev list and Chocolate Frog would vigorously encourage all SLA fans to buy both official and unofficial material, and always to support both Nightfall and Hogshead in all of their SLA endeavors; but we'd hardly need to as SLAers are loyal and keen to get the official material for any number of reasons anyway, regardless of what unofficial stuff they already have.

Nightfall and Hogshead don't share our enthusiasm for doing things 'unofficially'. Hogshead have a licensing agreement, and quite rightly want us to go to them for a license to produce stuff, which they would quite rightly charge us for. As we don't do it for the money, we can not afford to do this: as they (quite rightly) **do** do it for the money, they can not afford to not let us pay for licenses.

So there you have it.

Our best intentions and actions are being seen in the context of a licensing agreement with Hogshead, who need a clear run at the SLA market, without things being muddled or clouded with the 'unofficial' even 'bootleg' nature of the Chocolate Frog Enterprise Products.

They do have a point. And they do have the law on their sides. We're just going to have to wait and see. If in a year or two, things haven't worked out for SLA, then we may be looked at differently, largely because we're just stupid enough to still be playing it by then....

You can write to TBP at:

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Thanks to the GenCon 2000 SLA crew; The inimitable Glenn, Paul Eddington, Mr. P, Whitt, shouts to Peter, Gerald and the 'Richard Sands must die' posse (there's always next year, it's just a matter of time....☺).

FallCon and DragonMeet beckon, get your SLA boots on....

(FallCon was totally excellent, in the best west coast drawl kind of way. Fabulously well done to Dennis Douglas and all who helped him.)

DragonMeet was good, but low key, it's in a weird place to get to (driving anyway) so we'll have to wait and see how it grows, but it's heavily sponsored by Hogshead, so good luck to it we say!)

Rumours abound about the Shaktar Sourcebook from Nightfall, which has some funky artwork.... Ooh gimme, can't wait ☺  
Anyone got anything for issue 15?  
Bring it on.

(tHe rEStleSs sEA)

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## BORN AGAIN

SLA knows everyone has to believe in something.

Fortunately for them, it also knows that for most of the citizens of the WoP, at the core of their belief sits the need for survival, the fear of death and the lust for money driven by the all consuming greed that is the fabric of the SLA Industries WoP.

SLA Industries owns and controls Progress. The World of Progress is of their making, it belongs to them; it's ideals, goals and beliefs are all driven by them.

Religions and cults come and go, worshipping as Gods anything from Serial Killers to Slayer himself, from Credits to chaos; each lasts a month, a year, a decade or a century.

And so what if it lasts longer?

There is no religion or cult with the staying power of SLA Industries.

For this reason, SLA tends to tolerate much in the way of worship and belief. As long as it doesn't interfere with Mr Slayer's Big Picture, most religions and cults are left to the mercy of 'market forces', being used and discarded at the whim of those they claim to serve. Slayer knows only too well the fickle nature of worship, the fragile veil that is faith. He knows how easily it is discarded as a worthless useless thing, powerless in the face of the brutal, incessant march of Progress and the greed that drives it.

What promises these religions and cults make, how they attract and keep their congregation, what tricks they use to bribe, batter, confuse and betray their followers in to subjugation; these are the things that ultimately bring them to the attention of SLA.

But what if all they promise they deliver? What if they offer healing and actually do it, really heal people, stop their suffering and make their lives better? What if they do not ask for money, are not driven by greed, avarice, the lust for power? What if they are not corrupt to the core, what if they are not just another extension of the malignant evil bred in the festering depths of every corner of the WoP? What if they simply seek to help the downtrodden citizens of the WoP, to bring some hope and light to their dark, bleak, miserable lives?

Then they would have to be stopped.

Why?

Because they would be removing one of the greatest weapons in the SLA arsenal.

Fear.

And that can not be allowed.

If you intend to play this scenario; read no further.

The information given is for the GM only, and as such is laid out for ease of access and use.

Squad Needed: 5-7, all SCL 8+. Equipped as they like, but some 'deep cover' work will be needed, so Power Armour and Reapers may not be appropriate. The inclusion of an Ebon in the Squad will also make things a little easier, but ultimately wont affect the outcome too much.

(so don't worry about it.... ☺)

## In The Beginning

Two hundred years ago, the Necanthrope union 'Domino' were sent to the developing War World of Cross to seek out and capture a renegade Feral Ebon that had taken sides with the Thresher. Domino arrived and began the job of tracking their prey.

What they were not told, and what they could not hope to understand, was the nature of their quarry. The 'target' was a Feral called 'Ghost', named for his ability to seemingly rise from the dead; he had been reported as killed by two previous Necanthrope hunter Unions. Ghost was old, ancient even by Necanthrope measure, and as a Feral had heard the Call of the White with a fear unknown to other Ebb users. But the Walk in to the White did not obliterate Ghost, instead it revealed a deep secret behind the Ebon race's development. Ghost emerged from the White, after many trials and tests, each of which would have obliterated him had he failed. But what emerged was not a Necanthrope. Ghost saw none of Slayers 'truth' as other Ebons who enter the White do, he was not forced to make the eternally damning choice, as other Ebons are, he was not inescapably bound to SLA, as all Necanthropes are.

Ghost emerged as the 'natural' evolutionary being the White was meant to make of Ebons. Ghost was a Kilneck.

Domino were soon met by Ghost and easily defeated in the explosive confrontation that followed. But to their utter surprise, the Union did not find itself destroyed, as they knew they so easily could have been. Instead they found themselves wondering about the nature of their 'prey'. They found themselves questioning things they took for granted, truths and beliefs at the core of their Necanthrope 'soul'. Ghost had sown the seeds of destruction within Domino, their curiosity would be their downfall, and (as Ghost knew) they would take many in SLA down with them.

After the confrontation on Cross, Ghost left to seek out his brethren in the Black Stump.

Domino returned to Mort, confused and uncertain as to their future within SLA. The core of their existence had been questioned and they wanted answers.

Stygmartyr gave them to them.

Domino were thrown back in to the tempest of the White, there to be stripped of their sentient

minds by the Preceptor. Teeth salvaged what he could, five of Domino were utterly destroyed, three of the eight Necanthropes were reborn, returning with their memories of Ghost cleansed, the questions he raised in them locked within a labyrinthine maze of riddles buried deep within their minds. Domino was reinstated within SLA, as Cloak Operatives, stripped of their right to form a Union.

That was 200 years ago, and since then the remaining members of Domino have formed a bond much deeper than most Unions, theirs is the bond of alienation, of being fundamentally different, of sharing a dark and dangerous secret. They only have each other in the whole of the WoP to turn to for any kind of understanding, emotion or compassion.

And now one of them needs help.

## What's Going On

Angel, Core and Rust are all that is left of the Necanthrope Union 'Domino'.

This is a privately sponsored BPN, sponsored by one of the two Necanthrope partners to Angel: Core.

Angel has been 'killed' by Feral Ebons in the Sector where he was undertaking a Platinum, his body dismembered and destroyed. Before he died, Angel managed to Thought Plant (20) a Feral Ebon Vassal he was cultivating. This Vassal now has Angel buried in their mind. The Feral nature of the Vassal has meant that the Thought Plant has not worked properly, denying Angel any control over the body he now inhabits. The Vassal, Shadow, does not know she has Angel in her mind, and acts out of a deeply felt sense of social justice. She is the bridge between the Relic and those it heals, it is her latent Ebb use that discharges the healing ability from the Relic, which is actually the right arm and shoulder of Angel, minus most of the flesh, but with remnants of the Gore Cannon intact.

Core knows Angel is effectively 'Soul Caged' inside Shadow and wants to find out whether or not the fact that the Vassal is a Feral will interfere with the 'rebirth' of Angel, which Core can achieve if he can get Shadow to the Black Cathedral and get her to willingly enter the White, where the Feral Vassal's mind will be stripped away piece by piece, allowing the

‘release’ of Angel who can then ‘reincarnate’ as Necanthrope in the Vassals body.

Rust is currently working a Grey in the Stone Rim Colonies, tracing a supply route for the smuggling of Ebb Crystals. She is out of touch with her two ‘partners’ but will return to Mort as soon as she breaks cover.

For the time being, it’s down to Core to help Angel.

### Getting The BPN

The Operatives will have to be offered the BPN either directly by Core, or by a mutual associate of Core and the Squad who is trusted completely by both (rarity indeed), maybe a Financier, maybe a Major Friend. Either way, the Squad will feel that taking the BPN will put Core in their debt, and being owed a favour by an SCL 4 Necanthrope is never a bad thing....

BPN: SCL 8 (minimum requirement), BPN Number 00237/74448-CD/C-581.

Contact: Necanthrope Core, Cloak Division Field Office, Sector 301 – Ref: CD/C-581.

Training Package Required: I&I, preferable Ebon in Squad – Some ‘deep cover’ work may be required.

Colour Code: Grey (Cloak Sponsored).

Summary: Squad required to investigate Downtown ‘Religion’, retrieve SLA Property from Cult.

Coverage: Station Analysis (to be handled by I.A.).

Consolidated Bonus Scheme: 500c. Plus completion bonus of 1,000c.

Payment: Per Operative.

SCL Increase / Decrease: 1

It should be obvious from the BPN Card that the BPN is a big deal. A whole SCL increase on offer, as well as a ‘bonus’ from Cloak Division....

The BPN will be offered as it stands above, with absolutely no other information.

The Op’s, if they accept, will have to sign the usual waivers, NDA’s and Disclaimers, after this they will be ‘fully briefed’ by the Necanthrope Core at his offices in Cloak’s Sector 301 building.

### Behind The BPN

If the Op’s do any digging about the BPN, either before or after they accept it (you may want to give them 24 hours to think about taking it), you can give them as much, or as little of the following information as you see fit, according to their Skill use and ingenuity.

### Word On The Street

Core, the Necanthrope behind the BPN’s briefing has a Bad Rep. with just about everyone, but especially with Shivers and Third Eye. There is no way most of the street contacts would consider working for him, or working against him, he seems to be jinxed, with those he comes in to contact with seldom living more than a year after.

Word is the other Operatives in both Cloak and IA are just itching for him to slip up so they can hang him out to dry.

Core is known to have two partners; Angel and Rust, both Necanthropes. The three of them are the remnants of a Union, whatever happened to them has made them pretty tight, they never go near other Nec.’s and they avoid social contact with other Ebons, none has a Vassal.

The BPN is sponsored by Cloak, so not much is known about it, except that if Core is involved you can be sure it’s not ‘mainstream’ stuff.

A suitable Street contact would be able to get their hands on the Third Eye report from two hundred years ago, for a price of 3,000u.

### The SLA Data Base

The BPN is being sponsored by Cloak. All information is subject to being given out in person by the representative of the Department, in this case, Core.

All files regarding Core, Angel, Rust or their previous Union ‘Domino’, are classified SCL 5. Access to them ‘red flags’ the use to Cloak and IA.

### Third Eye Archives

The Necanthrope Union Domino, and their brief career are barely touched upon in any Third Eye reporting. Their demise on Cross got a brief two minutes on an obscure ‘reportage’ show of two hundred years ago, access to these archives is restricted to SCL 7, but can easily be ‘hacked’. If a bribe (100c) is placed in the

right hands, the file will be downloaded by a friendly face at Third Eye.

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(Visual footage of a female reporter catching an interview on the run with a Necanthrope, identifiable as Rust, while Rust and two other Nec.'s disembark from an off world shuttle.)

“Judy Steel, reporting for Tunnel Vision, live from Mort Spaceport on the return of the Necanthrope Union ‘Domino’....”

JS: “Were you successful on your mission? I understand you were assigned to Cross?”

R: “You understand nothing. Get out of my way.”

JS: “So, things not go according to plan? What happened?”

R: “We are under de-brief with Cloak. Do you want to ask them?”

JS: “So, no news of your target.... Ghost wasn’t it?”

(Rust stops in her tracks, turns her head to slowly face Judy Steel....)

R: “What you think you know, you don’t. Understand?”

JS: “Sure, whatever you say.... and Ghost? Dead? Another enemy of SLA consigned to the grave?”

R: “Ghost was already dead.... he just didn’t know it....”

JS: “So you got him?”

R: “You really are starting to annoy me....”

(Rust begins to walk away, hurrying her pace as Judy Steel follows. Core comes in to shot as Judy tries to keep pace, waving the camera man to keep rolling....)

JS: “Core, you can confirm the success of the mission? People want to know, maybe have a right to know....”

C: “I can confirm the success of the mission. Ghost will never return to Mort.”

JS: “Where are the rest of your Union.... word is that Cloak took five of you straight to a FoldShip de-brief.... unusual?”

(Core stops, turns and smiles at Judy Steel.)

C: “I am going to count to three, and if I can still see you after this I am going to kill you. Do you understand?”

JS: (laughs nervously, looks in to camera.) “Hey, give a girl a break I’m just doing my job, we are live y’know?.”

C: “Two....”

(Judy Steel can be seen from the back, from the waist down as her and her cameraman run for their lives, hastily spoken, out of breath commentary....)

JS: “The crazy fucker, wouldn’t kill a repor....”  
(Sound of hideous scream, then camera hits floor, more screaming, pool of blood appears to seep in front of camera, followed by large explosion of internal organs spattering camera lens and surrounding floor.... then hisses to white noise and darkness....)

## F r i e n d s / C o n t a c t s

Core is a disliked Operative, inside SLA and within Cloak itself. Word is he and his two friends, Angel and Rust have a dark secret in their past, that would be enough to get most other SLA employees taken apart by the ‘mind menders’ at IA.

The Grey being offered is well backed, with sponsorship being posted from the highest levels within Cloak, this would suggest a successful outcome could do no end of good for the responsible Squad.

Rumour has it that the trio of Necanthropes is separated by a large distance for the first time in a hundred years, with Rust being on a BPN off world, possibly in the Stone Rim Colonies and Angel on a Platinum deep in Downtown.

Everyone agrees Core is not a man to be crossed.

## M e e t i n g C o r e – T h e B P N I n t e r v i e w

Core’s office is in the basement of the Cloak Sector building in 301, effectively he has the basement to himself, as the other nine rooms are all large storage areas. Core can be reached through the main reception, where a DarkFinder is stationed at all times; no one gets in without an appointment. The office itself is very cluttered and filled with all kinds of records; audio, written, video, laser dick, data slugs and holo-cubes, seemingly scattered in a random order throughout the large room.

Core sits facing the only door in to the room, which has ‘Discharge Protection’ Glyphs placed all around it. Anyone entering with a Flux Store of 10+ will have their Flux drained down to 10, unless they declare themselves to Core and he momentarily switches off the Glyphs.

For a visual representation of Core, see main RB, page 217.

Core is slim, sleek, with no apparent mouth, lizard like eyes, and a DeathSuit that looks like it's made of bundled wire stitched together with human internal organs. Core's GoreCannon looks almost mechanical in structure, a cross between beast and machine.

Core cares little for the opinions of others, his Rank 17 Communication Ability is switched permanently to 'intimidate'. He talks, others listen. He doesn't say much and hates those that waste his time with needless 'chatter'.

The 'briefing' will consist of Core giving the following information and asking a minimal amount of questions.

There has been a growth in a Downtown cult known as 'Delerium'. The cult has recently (60 years ago) taken on the status of a 'Religion', with their own place of worship and their own 'Relic'. The followers of Delerium are no longer drawn from the lower dregs of Downtown, the addition of the Relic to the Cult's place of worship has started to attract 'normal' citizens in growing numbers.

It is believed this Relic is in fact a SLA Artifact (SCL 5+ for full details).

The Squad are to go under cover in Sector 684, attend some of the services and gauge the level of support within the local community (and abroad) for the cult. When they judge the time is right, the Squad are to kidnap the Spiritual Leader of the cult, a Feral Ebon known as Shadow, and return with her and the Relic to Cloak.

There is a time limit of 40 days set against the BPN, after which, if they have not returned, the Squad will be declared to have failed and the SCL decrease implemented.

If they are particularly resourceful, they may get the additional information from Core:

The local Gang, the Disciples, are known to act as protectors for Delerium, though there doesn't seem to be any money changing hands. There is no worthwhile Shiver or Monarch presence in 684, and currently only three other BPN's active in the whole Sector ('normal' Downtown Sectors average between 600-700 active at any given time.)

There is another Operative Squad looking in to the cult, working a White for Head Office. If they are encountered and are considered to be endangering the success of the Grey, they are to

be warned off; if this fails, they are to be terminated, a suitable warrant will be issued by Cloak after the event.

Once Core is satisfied that the Op's are signed up, he will hurry the proceedings, assuring them of his full support, "during and after the BPN".

#### 40 Days And 40 Nights

From here on in, the BPN will take a course dependent upon the direct actions of the Operatives. Rather than try to anticipate every eventuality, we have given the details of the environment the Op's will be entering, along with the major 'players' and events, to allow the GM to moderate the BPN as the game demands.

#### The Citizens Of 486

The citizens of 486 are the usual mix of hapless, helpless, unlucky, downtrodden, cast out and unwanted peoples of Mort, who naturally seem to gravitate towards the fringes of Suburbia; not mean or wary enough to make it in the sub-surface levels of true Lower Downtown, but too inadequate to muscle in to the reaches of Upper Downtown. They are a kind of grey, amorphous, featureless mass of population, that seems to strive merely to exist from day to day. All are happy to pay whatever they can afford to anyone who offers them protection and entertainment, and in the dark recesses of 486, this means the Gangs and the Soft Companies. All citizens native to the Sector avoid Shivers and Monarchs when they can, showing no respect to either. Slops are seldom seen, and are given a wide berth when they are. Undercover Slops have an easy time of it in 486 as the general lethargy of the citizens means they don't ask too many questions or dig too deeply, theirs is a fractured, isolated community, with little or no shared sense of 'belonging', everyone just wants to be left alone. Dwellings and shops, such as they are, are always broken down and semi-temporary, even if they have been used for years. The whole of 486 has a 'shanty town' feel about it, as if it could be up and moved wholesale given a days notice. The walkways, passages, tunnels, roads and alleys all seem to shift around the moving bazaar that is the physical make up of the Sector. There are many cults and 'street religions', being a focus for

minimal social gathering, some small amount of protection and a way to pool meagre resource to pay off protection or buy goods from wholesale dealers. The morality of the citizens of 486 is not cut-throat, but neither is it community driven; a citizen of 486 will happily walk past you as you bleed to death in the gutter, but they would not try to rob you until you were dead.

Mort Civilians (pp 137) change Sport to 'Hide', change Play Instrument to 'Sneak'.

## The Disciples

There are nine major gangs in Sector 486, and the Disciples are the largest. They have the best equipment, the best street hide outs, the best contacts within other gangs (as well as within the Shivers and some in SLA and DarkNight).

The other gangs of 486 are: Morbid Angels, Tunnel Worms, CrossFire, ShockWave, The First, Street Bitch, BloodWalkers and The Tomb Boys.

The Disciples have approximately six hundred members, each of whom wears the traditional gang 'colours' of a blood red left sleeve on their jacket or long coat.

The Disciples run the usual range of rackets in 486, ranging from drugs to prostitution, from gambling to setting up street fights, from protection to paid hits. They roam the streets in 'packs' of 4-10, armed with concealed small arms, MAC knives and clubs. They can generally smell out an opposing gang member with ease, and are quick to seek out Sleeper Shivers and passing Monarchs for assault and robbery. They do not fear SLA or the Slops that occasionally visit the Sector undercover.

The Disciples provide protection for Delerium, and regularly attend the services in force. The gang brings it's injured members to services for healing, and offers their own dubious services in return.

Gang Leader: Jahmol Tyr (use DN Espionage Agent pp138). Gang Fixer: Lucy Syre (use Prop. pp 139). Street Disciple (use Civilian Convert pp139).

## Shivers And Monarchs

Shivers and Monarchs do not like going in to 486, and subsequently 'fake' a lot of their duties in the Sector. There is no permanent

Shiver base in 486 and the Monarch base is very heavily fortified and seldom left by those under siege within it. There is always one Sleeper unit on duty in 486, but they usually lay low in one of the more desolate abandoned industrial areas, not bothering to patrol or encounter the gangs or citizens of the Sector.

Any Slops trying to get in contact with either Shivers or Monarch for assistance will encounter numerous 'technical difficulties' that will prevent any aid arriving in time. All of the Sectors gangs pay regular bribes to the Sleeper units for continued 'support'. Monarch Law Enforcement are seen as a joke and, are the subject of physical assault whenever the opportunity presents itself.

Shiver Sargent (Sleeper): Alf Tooley (Dispersal Shiver pp 134), Shiver Veteran Sleeper: James 'Hooch' Rakin (SCAf Pilot pp 135). Standard Shivers (pp 134).

## Godsmack – The Squad On A Mission

Godsmack are a four man Squad on assignment to a White sponsored by Head Office. The squad consists of: Barclay Ryme, Human SCL 8 Kick Murder. Reece Morgan, Human SCL 8 I&I. Sallindra Praa, Human SCL 8 Scout. Nancy Bold, Human SCL 8 Strike Squad. They are deep under cover, wearing only 'street' gear and Striker Custom Armour, carrying weapons such as Blitzter, 603's MAC Knives and GunHead SMG's. They are masquerading as ex-War World soldiers from the Ministry of War standing forces, mercenary guns for hire on the street. It is Godsmack that will launch the final attack that will trigger the Twist in the Tail. For the assault, they will visit their 'drop point' to gather heavier weapons and maybe some armour; how they finally end up being equipped will be left to the individual GM to tailor to suit their game needs.

Godsmack have a Good Rep. with Third Eye and Shivers in 684, they are a fairly high profile squad, usually working Greens and corporate sponsored Yellows. There is a slight chance that any of the Op's with a high Streetwise (7+) may recognise one of the members of Godsmack as the two squads encounter each other in the Sector. Godsmack will not make any moves until the Op's are on the way out of the Sector with Shadow and the Relic.

Godsmack: Use either Human or Frother NPC stats. (pp 142 / 143).

## Delerium

Delerium has grown from humble beginnings as a Feral cover cult, backed by Purge, in to a genuine Cult with it's own belief systems, faiths and values. Their services are well attended by upwards of two hundred, each there to reaffirm their beliefs in the ways of self help and personal development offered by the High Priest, Shadow. The healing rituals are a very important part of the ceremonies, it demonstrates the power of the faith shared by the congregation, and encourages their feelings of well being through an unseen 'guardian' force. At each service four 'healings' are undertaken, with up to seven in exceptional circumstances. Shadow always chooses those to be healed, and shows no favouritism, ignoring money, social standing, political background or 'official' connections.

Each of the ceremonies is a loud, colourful affair with a lot of dancing, chanting and singing, largely based around the celebratory songs of the street, including anything that's current and catchy from the 'top ten'. The idea is to get the congregation involved, to make them feel empowered and able to heal themselves. Shadow is a passionate speaker, with a real oratory talent, being able to lift peoples spirits and make them see a clear message in the garbled assemblage of the service.

Shadow is a Feral with the following core skill categories: Detect, Healing, Illumination, Reality Folding, Telekinesis. She has two companions, each of whom is utterly loyal and protective of their High Priest; Pit, Human Prop, (use Props, pp 139, Blade 2-H 8) and Slye, Frother outcast, (use Frother, pp 142).

## The Relic

The Relic that has become the focal point for the ceremonies, and for Shadows firm belief that she is somehow 'chosen' by a benevolent force, is a part of Angels broken, destroyed body. It sits, charred and stripped of it's outer flesh, within a black wooden box, glowing faintly with a pale green light when the Feral High Priest draws Flux through it.

The Gore Cannon was sentient when Angel 'died', it was not fully destroyed and was left in a 'feedback loop' gathering Flux in it's death throws. The Flux leeches through Shadow, as it

tries to find it's 'rightful' master and user, Angel. The Relic can draw in 100 flux per 25 hour period, and can discharge up to 60 flux in one go.

Shadow has found the perfect fuel for her Feral abilities.

The Flux from the Relic has the unmistakable 'taste' of a Necanthrope. Shadow takes the Relic with her everywhere she goes, and has recently taken to living in the Cult's 'church' full time, never leaving the confines of Delerium's most sacred place.

## Operatives In The Wilderness

The Op's will find it easy to infiltrate 486, unless they are particularly stupid, in which case they will probably meet a sticky end at the hands of either the Disciples or Godsmack. Getting in to the services will be relatively easy, and they will be largely ignored, as each of the worshippers becomes engrossed in their own thoughts and meditations, among the noise of the chanting, singing and music, the Op's can be lost in the crowd.

All in all a far too easy time will be had by the Op's.

There investigations and schemes should all go according to their well laid plans, up to and including the kidnapping of the Relic and Shadow. The Op's will have to fight it out with Pit and Slye, though others in the congregation will fight to protect Shadow, they will not go so far as to throw their lives away.

Shadow will not leave the Relic and can not Reality Fold with it, her only real defence may be through her creative use of Telekinesis, she will be loathed to kill, but will quite happily Throttle (Manipulation 2) and may Fly (2) to evade capture.

Ultimately the (remaining?) Op's will end up with Shadow and the Relic in their custody, making their way out of Sector 486.

This is when they will be confronted by Godsmack, who will ambush them with an aim to killing them all; Shadow, Op's and all.

As the bullets rip in to them tearing through their feeble armour and clothes, and the grenades rain in close, blowing their bodies apart, they will become aware of Shadow Formulating and using the Relic.

If Godsmack are no longer around, or are not appropriate, Rust will have returned from the Stone Rim Colonies, and unaware of the Op's

involvement with Core, will seek to kill them, take back the remains of Angel and the body of Shadow.

### The Twist In The Tail

Shadow has gone too far.

She has attempted to help the Op's (and herself) by using a form of precognitive healing, in conjunction with Heal 12 (Rank 19 ability), the Flux discharged has backfired the Formulae used to create an effect similar to Deathwake....

The Op's will regain consciousness after their massacre at the hands of Godsmack: each will come to realise that something is terribly wrong.

Each of the Op's has been 'Reborn' in the body of one of their comrades, their spirits and souls transferred from their 'own' body and dragged back in to the WoP to inhabit a strange shell, totally unfamiliar and utterly alien to them.

The Players will have to swap character sheets, being in possession of a 'new' racial body, together with it's physical and mental skills. Their mind remains as it was however, complete with memories and experiences, so although they will have new skills and abilities, they will be unable to use them at anything other than a 'base' instinctual level.

Each also has accumulated 6 Ranks of Fears and Phobias, chosen by them.

At first they may believe they are dreaming, hallucinating or maybe even dead.... but as they pick themselves up, find the body of Shadow (who is completely burned out and irrecoverably dead), they will realise the horrible truth of their situation. If any of them can't cope and wants to commit suicide: let them.

### Requiem

Shadow is dead, the Relic is gone, they have failed in their attempt to carry out the BPN.

They have witnessed (and survived) a deep secret behind SLA and a hint at the Deathwake Device.

They are changed beyond the comprehension of those around; their dark secrets must remain theirs alone. They have become the prey of

departments like Cloak, Stygmartyr and the fabled Catharsis.

Where the Op's go from here is up to them and their cunning. Whether they remain sane enough to accept the challenge the rebirth offers, and whether the GM will use their born again nature to further the deeper means of their campaign: we can not say.

Still, nobody said it would be easy did they?

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## THE SH'MR

(Pronounced ShIm-ear by Humans)

"The Sh'mr? What do you know of them? No.... Not here.... Meet me in my office tomorrow morning, 8 sharp and we'll talk...."

Hans Lowry; Third Eye Station Monitor, setting up Op from 'Cold Front', Mort 903 SD.

The Sh'mr were named and first catalogued by the Shaktar. The name 'Sh'mr' is itself very hard for the Shaktar to pronounce, and reflects their ancient hatred of this diabolic race.

The Sh'mr first appear in Shaktar Legends at the time of the God Wars, where there is mention of them in the Q'wKIn Texts. The priests of the Shintash clan apparently encountered them first; this may also confirm, by association, a suspicion long held by Dark Lament that the early Shaktar Priests may have had some form of 'Feral' Ebb use ability. If this could be proved, it would throw in to disarray everything the other races thought they knew about the Shaktar. Dark Lament have a number of undercover Operatives living on Kn'nth trying to detect any 'Feral' Ebb use by living Shaktar.

After the first, fatal mistakes made by the Shintash clan in trying to make allies of the Sh'mr, the Shaktar have learned their lesson. Sh'mr are killed on sight, or suspicion, and those that consort with or even speak of them with anything less than complete contempt, are declared Gk'tsh.

What is now known (by a very select few) is that they were originally sent by the Root Dogs

in an effort to destabilise the God Wars and to force the continuing conflict to degenerate in to anarchy and chaos. Some Shaktar still believe the Sh'mr are agents of Doktetcomast (an obscure, ancient lesser God), sent to punish the other God's followers for the banishing of Cunder, the only ally Doktetcomast had during the Wars.

“Our ancestors were foolish. We will not make the same mistakes. No Shaktar will. The Sh'mr are to be hunted and destroyed by all, from whatever Clan.”

Rkt Jnll, Shaktar Operative (Shintash Clan) with 'No Fear', Mort 903 SD.

### Sh'mr Race History

The Sh'mr began life as Ebons, sent to the Black Stump by Slayer to seek out and report on the activities of Mandrake and the Black Church.

28 Ebons entered the Black Stump aboard the Foldship Scythe, 12 were killed in the encounter with the Root Dogs (destroyed utterly), and the remaining 16 were captured. The Foldship was sent back, on a collision course with New Paris, only to be intercepted and destroyed by the Necanthrope Union Myne.

“The Scythe? Destroyed, all crew killed. Myne? You don't need to know. You don't want to know. I strongly suggest you forget whatever you think you know.”

Burn, SCL 6 Brain Waster solo Op, over-heard in the Pit, Mort 903 SD.

All 28 Ebons were listed as 'presumed dead' by SLA. Dark Lament sent scouts to the edge of the Black Stump to 'feel' for their Flux presence, and when none was detected, they reported back to SLA, who closed the file on the Scythe and all it's crew.

Each of the Ebons chosen for the Scythe was a powerful Ebb-user in their own right, being selected by Slayer for their high Formulae and knowledge of the Ebb; most were close to turning, some were already on White Noise.

The Root Dogs twisted the captured Ebons beyond all recognition of their former selves,

infecting them with a chaotic DNA mutating virus.

The Ebons natural Flux use, and their understanding of the Ebb, allowed them to offer some resistance, and to control the greater excesses of the change. What emerged from the Root Dog's tanks were monsters, but monsters with the inner soul of an Ebon.

The Root Dogs split their mutated subjects in to two groups of 8, sending them to Kn'nth and Polo. The tortured Ebons could do nothing but obey their new masters, their will's broken and their bodies twisted out of their control. The newly created Sh'mr knew nothing of their creators intentions, but they soon realised they were a curse within the WoP that was destined to spread like a disease.

Little, if anything, is known of the Polo Sh'mr, though it is suspected (by Dark Lament), that they haunt the swamp regions of the Myran Wastes on Yuran, where the flow of the Ebb is concentrated on Polo. If this is the case, they may be the creatures the Wraith Raiders know (and hunt) as the Prriss (pron.: p'reece). The Prriss are bestial, showing little if any real intelligence, their limited flux use is thought of by Wraith Raiders as no more extraordinary than that of the Qwc (reptilian flyer from Kn'nth).

“I hunted the Prriss back in '89. Very tough hunt. Lost two companions, nearly got killed myself. The Prriss make you see what you want, make you forget why you want to kill them. Then they tear your head open and you remember.”

Farien, Wraith Raider guide, Polo 902 SD.

Another possibility (and that assumed by Dark Lament), is that the Sh'mr hunt the Prriss, maybe even living among them as cover. This would explain why the Polo Sh'mr seem to have either disappeared completely or somehow 'regressed' to the level of the Prriss.

It is only on Kn'nth that the Sh'mr appear to have evolved and developed socially.

The Sh'mr of Kn'nth live in family groups of seven; never any larger or smaller (presumably developed from the contact with the Shaktar psyche and their reverence for the number

seven). If a family member dies, the Sh'mr 'create' a new one.

Elsewhere in the WoP, the Sh'mr live in family groups of four. This seems to be the optimum number for the Sh'mr, who find it hard to maintain links in larger groups outside Kn'nth.

#### Sh'mr Race Characteristics

The Sh'mr are very long lived, they can reach an age of 900 years old. They are limited in number by their twisted nature, which will never allow more than 28,000 Sh'mr to exist at any one time in the WoP. The Root Dogs instigated the upper limit on the Sh'mr race, for their own secret, degenerate purposes, which have yet to be uncovered by SLA.

"I suspect it has something to do with the Sh'mr actually carrying a piece of the Root Dogs inside them; something to do with race consciousness. Or it's part of the chaotic nature of the beast's creation, nothing more than dumb luck."

Dr Chrya Hyko, Dark Lament Dept. Head, internal report to Cartharsis (Division of Stygmartyr), Mort 903 SD.

The Sh'mr do not 'breed' as 'normal' races, and have absolutely no sexual desires or needs.

"I live because I have the will. I have the desire to survive. I am not driven by the pathetic needs you people have. I am stronger than that. My family will always survive, when you kill me, they will replace me. You cannot defeat us. You will all die. You will all die...."

Excerpt from interview with suspected Sh'mr, shortly before execution, Kn'nth 901 SD. Interview not for re-broadcast.

Sh'mr live in family groups and can not stand to be alone (away from other Sh'mr) for any length of time; ranging between one and three weeks. If they are kept separated for longer than this, they will try to 'create' a new family member, which will be doomed to failure if there are already 28,000 Sh'mr in existence. After a few failed attempts, the lonely Sh'mr will die, apparently of heart failure (despair?).

Sh'mr stand between 1.5 and 2.5 metres tall, weighing anything from 90 kg to 180 kg.

They always have black hair (on their head only), and their eyes are always either Emerald Green (predominantly in 'females') or Pale Blue (mainly in 'males').

Sh'mr grow no bodily hair and have very smooth, silk like skin that appears to be slightly wet at all times. Sh'mr can easily pass as human.

"It's in their eyes man, just don't look into their fucking eyes. I would have cut my own arm off if she had of asked me.... Just don't look in to the eyes.... Not the eyes...."

Frankie 'FlyBoy' Finnigan, SCL 8 Frother Scout with 'OffSpring', Psyche Evaluation (failed) Mort 903 SD.

All Sh'mr are lithe and wiry, with taut, muscular athletic frames. They usually have very long fingers and thin necks.

Sh'mr move with a definite economy of movement, resembling a coiled spring when they do strike. Those with experience in evaluating their opponents would do well to take note of the gangly stranger they somehow feel threatened by, Sh'mr often cause the 'hairs on the back of the neck' syndrome in those with particularly high skills in evaluating the opposition.

#### Personality And Attitudes

By their very nature, Sh'mr are secretive and paranoid. They need to be extremely careful in their dealings with everyone in the WoP.

Sh'mr neither fear or 'like' anyone, their bestial nature of a dedicated hunter/killer prevents them from understanding 'friendship' in any of it's forms. Their close family ties and bonds are born from necessity and loneliness, only another Sh'mr could be trusted and only another Sh'mr could possibly understand the tortured loneliness of their existence.

"Ask a Wraith Raider about friendship. Come to think of it, the Sh'mr and the Chilly's ain't that far apart. Except you've maybe got a chance with a psychotic Chilly...."

'Boots' Morgan, SCL 8 Human Pilot seconded to Kn'nth Defence Fleet, Kn'nth 901 SD.

As part of their survival instinct, Sh'mr have learned to fake the outward appearance of emotions that make them seem more 'human' to those around them; it is easy for them to pass as simply sociopathic humans.

However, to conceal themselves, Sh'mr often live in secluded areas, away from all other people.

Sh'mr have an intense dislike, bordering on physical discomfort, of strong sunlight and UV, this stems from their creation by the Root Dogs and is universally present in all Sh'mr. Strobe lighting can cause a Sh'mr to 'fit' uncontrollably, effectively 'deflating' them until they are clear of it's sight.

"The subject seems unable to control their reactions to the strobe and UV light, the latter causing them to tear their own eyes out with the pain towards the end of the second day. By the end of the fifth day, they were fully recovered. We have yet to see any mutilation or injury the subject could not recover from."

Seth Caulkin, Dark Lament technician, DarkNight leaked report, Mort 901 SD.

Sh'mr awaken each new day with a randomised set of minor phobias; Each day, roll 1D10 and add that many ranks of phobias (randomised) from the list in the main rulebook. The GM decides the dice rolled for the random selection of phobias, the player allocates Ranks, no more than 2 in each.

"Don't try to understand them. They are insane. They are disorder personified. The Sh'mr will transform from one day to the next; always a monster, always a killer. There is no reasoning with them, you will never deal with the same Sh'mr twice. Do not try to understand them. They are insane. Just Kill them. Kill them all...."

Veneer, SCL 7 Ebon Operative with 'BloodRoot', Mort 902 SD.

### Characteristic Ranges

If generating as a PC, generate using 'normal' rules, but with a starting total of 200 points. Sh'mr start with 0 Flux and 1 Formulae.

STR: 5-10 Normal Range. 1-5 Deflated. 11-20 Boosted.

DEX: 5-10 Normal Range. 11-16 Boosted.

PHYS: (STR + DEX) Div2 Normal Range / Deflated / Boosted.

CONC: 5-8 Normal Range. 1-5 Deflated.

DIA: 5-10 Normal Range. 1-5 Deflated. 10-13 Boosted.

KNOW: (CONC + DIA) Div2 Normal Range / Deflated / Boosted.

CHA: 3-8 Normal Range. 9-13 Boosted.

COOL : 5-15 Normal Range. 16-20 Boosted.

Formulae Range: 1-20.

Normal Range: This is the 'usual' range of characteristics, bought and paid for at character generation. The Sh'mr operates within this range unless it is Deflated or Boosted.

Deflated: This range is used when a Sh'mr runs low on Flux, or has it's HP reduced to below it's 'Threshold'. A Sh'mr is said to be 'low on flux', when it's current Flux level falls below it's Formulae, when this happens, the Sh'mr applies the range for each characteristic that has a 'Deflated' range.

Boosted: This range is used when a Sh'mr pumps Flux to it's Ebb ability to alter it's physical or mental being.

All Skills Ratings (maximums) are affected by the Sh'mr's current governing Statistic.

"He seemed to just go limp, like he ran out of power, just doubled over and legged it. He would have killed me for sure if he'd have stuck around. He was weak but moving like a Chilly on Blaze, no way I could have caught him.... Deflated? Well, maybe, I wouldn't have survived if he'd stuck around, 'deflated' or not...."

Floyd 'Moose' Klowse, interview with Cloak Operative, Mort 903 SD. (Not for media use).

Threshold: A Sh'mr has a constantly changing body; it's internal cellular structure is inherently unstable. When their Hit Points (HP's) fall below their Stored Flux, they are below the point where they can control this shifting DNA chaos, and are said to be below their 'Threshold'. When this occurs, they become 'Deflated', using the set range of each of the Characteristics that can 'Deflate'.

The 'Deflated' Range: Once the Sh'mr is in a state where it needs to generate a 'Deflated'

range of characteristics, they do so by rolling a D10 as a D5; i.e. 1-2 = 1, 3-4 = 2, etc. The number (rolled once for all) is the number that ALL their Deflated characteristics act at for the duration of the 'Deflation'.

The Deflated state lasts until the circumstances that brought it about change, and either the Flux or HP of the Sh'mr go above the total necessary for Deflation. Deflation lasts a minimum of: minutes = number rolled for Deflation Range for stat., i.e. if 3 rolled on D5, all stats/ subject to Deflation are at '3' for 3 minutes.

The Boosted Range: Once the Sh'mr has used it's Ebb Ability (Boost) to start the Boosting process, they must spend two Flux per point per stat. they wish to Boost. The Sh'mr remains in a Boosted state for a number of minutes equal to their Formulae.

"They can pull strength from nowhere. You may think you can beat them, looking as puny as they do; but you can't. They just get bigger and stronger...."

Sid, SCL 5 313 Operative with 'DredLuck', Mort 903 SD.

### Regeneration

The Sh'mr have an ability to regenerate their chaotically changing bodies far in excess of anything that Karma have been able to (so far) engineer.

The Sh'mr do not need to regenerate wounds before hits; they regenerate one wound and four hits in the fourth phase of every round.

"I shot him. Then I hit him. Then I shot him some more. I bit him and clawed him. I ripped his eyes out, tore a hole in his stomach big enough to park a Calaharvey in and the fucker still managed to get away. Don't ask me how. Gives me a headache just trying to remember what the slippery fucker looked like."

Toots, 313 Stormer Operative with 'Knight & Daze', Mort 902 SD.

### Ebb Abilities

Sh'mr have access to a random range of Ebb Abilities, which shift from day to day. At the beginning of each day (25 hour period), roll

1D10 on the following table for the Ebb Ability the Sh'mr has access to for the next 25 hour period. Sh'mr roll 1D10 for each 4 Formulae they possess (A Sh'mr with Formulae 9, would roll 2D10). Any duplicate rolls allow the Sh'mr to choose an ability in lieu of the duplicated number (Sh'mr with Formulae 9 rolls 2D10 and gets two 3's, they have Communication and may choose another ability group.)

- 1) Blast - Force Ebb Kinetic
- 2) Blue Thermal - Glacial Ebb
- 3) Communication - Voice of the Ebb
- 4) Detect - Ebb Awareness
- 5) Healing - Art of Healing & Purification
- 6) Illumination - Ebb Illumination
- 7) Reality folding - Ebb Manipulation
- 8) Red Thermal - Inferno Ebb
- 9) Senses - Sense Perception
- 10) Telekinesis - Force Focus

Like Feral Ebons, Sh'mr can use any ability from the Ebb Ability group that they have the Flux to pay for, they are not limited by the abilities 'rank'. As an alternative 'games rule', you could allow the Sh'mr abilities up to their Formulae in rank.

"They are NOT Ebons! Anyone who says they are can spend some time 'discussing' the matter with the Teeth."

Stone, SCL 5 Ebon Instructor at Meny, Mort 903 SD. (Pupil asking questions later 'withdrawn' from training, last known whereabouts; Dante.)

### Sh'mr Core Ebb Abilities

As well as the randomised Ebb abilities, the Sh'mr has access to a set of Core abilities that they can use as long as they have the Flux to pay for them.

These core abilities have been assigned Core 'ranks' and 'categories', as one of the Ebb Abilities, for teaching/learning purposes by other Ebb users. The Sh'mr Core Abilities may be taught by some Necanthropes, though they will choose their pupils carefully as they are keenly aware of the powerful nature of these Core abilities.

- 1) Boost - (Enhancement: Augmentation of Ebon Energies)

- 2) Mesmerise - (Communication: Voice of the Ebb)
- 3) Mirror - (Senses: Sense Perception)
- 4) Assimilate - (Reality Folding: Ebb Manipulation)
- 5) Flux Drain - (Healing: Art of Healing & Purification)
- 6) Infect - (Gore Cannon: Celrydread)

"Their understanding of the Ebb interests me. They have developed very specialised abilities. I want to know more, where they got the 'spark' from, how it all started, where their evolution will take them.... but I'm not yet bored enough with life to try and find out."

Mire, SCL 6 Ebon Operative with 'Force 5', seconded to Dark Lament as body guards to 'field researchers', Kn'nth, 903 SD.

Enhancement: Augmentation of Ebon Energies  
RANK 9: Boost.

This ability allows the Sh'mr to 'boost' one of their characteristics by 1 per 1 Flux spent, up to the maximums indicated under 'Race Characteristics'. The stat. Remains boosted for a number of minutes equal to the Sh'mr's Formulae.

Sh'mr Use: Primarily used to deal with situations or enemies that may be outside the Sh'mr's usual range.

"I had him. Then he had me."

Dying words of Fornost, Brain waster from 'DaD' (Down and Dirty), Sector 320 Shiver Medical Facility, Mort 903 SD.

Communication: Voice of the Ebb  
RANK 10: Mesmerise.

The Sh'mr can create in their targets mind the impression that the Sh'mr is a very close friend, or even family. The target will treat the Sh'mr with complete trust, accepting the Sh'mr's suggestions and ideas as if they were the most logical, sensible, worthwhile things in the world. The target can not be persuaded to harm themselves or their immediate family, though the Sh'mr will be treated with preference over anyone except next of kin.

The Mesmerism lasts for a total of the Sh'mr's CONC in minutes, +1 minute per rank of Formulae the Sh'mr possesses..

Mesmerism costs the Sh'mr 10 Flux to use.

The target for the Mesmerism gets an 'Ebb Save' against being Mesmerised; victim's CONC (as a skill) with a -10 Rank Modifier. The Sh'mr may 'pump' extra Flux in to the Mesmerism to reduce the Ebb Save even further; for every 2 extra points of Flux they use, the target receives a -1 modifier to their Ebb Save.

Sh'mr Use: Typically, the Sh'mr use this ability to get close to their targets, to allow them to either strike or drain Flux from them. It also prevents the Sh'mr from having their true natures revealed, as the target will readily believe they are a 'normal' person.

"Hey back off! This here's my friend! Mess with him, mess with me! You want a fight, you got one buddy...."

Jake McClusky, SCL 10 Frother trainee, encountered by Shaktar in Downtown market, Sector 480, Mort 903 SD.

Senses: Sense Perception  
RANK 10: Mirror.

This ability allows the Sh'mr to trick those within his range in to thinking it's appearance is completely different. The Sh'mr can 'mirror' the appearance of any person or animal within 10 meters of itself. The Sh'mr's range for 'projecting' this ability is their CONC in meters. All targets within the Sh'mr's range are affected, and each must make an Ebb Save to avoid being fooled (use Rank as minus modifier, i.e. -10) by the Sh'mr. The mirror image is perfect, as it is in the targets mind not in 'physical' form. It will move, react and have all five sensual perceptions of the 'original'. If a target talks to the mirror image, they will get the answers/conversation they expect, as it is their own mind that is fuelling the deception and their knowledge that holds it in their own mind.

Mirror costs 12 Flux to use. The 'mirror' lasts for 1 minute, and can be extended by the Sh'mr at the cost of 2 Flux per 5 minutes after the first.

Sh'mr Use: Sh'mr use this ability to confuse their pursuers and to conceal themselves within herds or packs of animals and in crowds.

“It was just too weird for words. Ebon shit I guess. The thing just seemed to disappear in to the crowd, then I notice people changing, like right in front of my eyes, then it’s like I’m not sure. I know it’s in there, but it seems to be tripping from place to place, and no one cares, no-one thinks this is weird. Like the world is suddenly full of twins and no-one’s noticed. Maybe I’m just getting too slow, maybe it’s time to move on....”

Oliver Stein, Third Eye Camera-Op, filming with Shaktar ‘hunter’, Downtown Sector 480, Mort 903 SD.

Reality Folding: Ebb Manipulation  
RANK 12: Assimilate.

One of the Sh’mr’s most powerful abilities and the direct result of the Root Dog creation. Possibly the reason the Root Dogs created the Sh’mr, to ‘play’ with developing this ability.

This ability allows the Sh’mr to ‘absorb’ all of the targets DNA patterns and thought processes. The Sh’mr, to all intents and purposes, ‘becomes’ the target, with all knowledge, memories, skills and physical traits intact.

The ‘target’ (victim) must make an initial save against being physically stunned by the assimilation, using their PHYS as a skill, with a -12 (Rank modifier). If they succeed, they suffer no ill effects, if they fail, they are ‘stunned’ for (20 - PHYS) minutes, after which they are fully recovered and remember nothing of the assimilation.

The Sh’mr retains a dual personality, allowing it to reassert it’s own form at will or when the Flux powering the assimilation is used up. The assimilation is partly real/physical and partly illusion, if the Sh’mr differs wildly in their body mass from the target (target is over 60% bigger than Sh’mr), they will appear to be the same, though in reality they will remain at their body mass. Any targets below 60% of the Sh’mr’s mass will also be part illusion.

Assimilate costs 15 Flux to use. The Sh’mr retains the assimilation for it’s DIA in minutes. Non-Ebb user targets receives no Ebb Save and are unaffected by the assimilation. Ebb users receive an Ebb Save of their Formulae (as a skill); success means they resist completely.

Failure means the assimilation is successful and is ‘powered’ by the targets Flux, i.e. paid for from their Flux pool, if the target has not got enough Flux to pay for the assimilation, they pay the difference in Hit Points (torso).

Sh’mr Use: Often used to gain access to resources otherwise unavailable to the Sh’mr. Ebon targets are selected when a particular Ebb ability or skill may be needed. The Sh’mr has access to any skill (Ebon or ‘mundane’) that their ‘target’ has; Ebb abilities must be paid for as normal using their own Flux. Sh’mr do not need to formulate, when using a targets Ebb skills, they act like ‘Feral’ Ebons.

“This has never happened. You are fine. I was never here. Do you understand?”

Cloak de-brief of ‘assimilated’ Op, Mort Central, 903 SD.

Healing: Art of Healing & Purification  
RANK 11: Flux Drain.

This ability allows the Sh’mr to drain Flux from a Flux Store, this can either be in an Ebb User or ‘artefact’ (such as an Ebb Medi-kit). The drain has drastic physical and mental affects for the target and is, perhaps, the most hideous of the Sh’mr Ebb abilities.

The Sh’mr has to touch it’s target, the target receives no Ebb Save.

The Sh’mr needs to make a Formulae roll (as a skill) using the targets Formulae as a negative modifier. If successful the drain takes place (cost for drain deducted from Flux drained, then Sh’mr), if they fail the Sh’mr loses the flux to pay for the drain but gains nothing. If the Sh’mr fails their roll, the victim is completely unaware that anything has been attempted.

The victim of a successful Flux Drain suffers the affects of a ‘PsychoVirus’, as if they had been contacted by a Rank 9 - Psychovirus 2. This gives the victim a -1 to their COOL for each point of Flux the Sh’mr spent in the drain. The COOL loss lasts for a number of days equal to the victims DIA (the more they understand, the more frightened they are). After this period in days, they regain their COOL at the rate of 1 point per day.

Flux Drain costs 5 Flux to use, plus an additional Flux for each Formulae rank the target has.

Sh'mr Use: Sh'mr use the Drain to gain Flux and to power their encounters with Ebb Users. Sh'mr need Flux just to survive, so the Flux Drain is essential for their continued existence.

"This is why there is so much fear surrounding the Sh'mr. This is why Dark Lament want them so bad. This is why they will ultimately be hunted down and killed. This is why I am afraid of them. Everything else is just window dressing."

Shyft, SCL 9 Ebon Operative, working as liaison with Shaktar 'hunter' squad, Kn'nth 902 SD.

Gore Cannon: Celrydreadhad  
RANK 9: Infect.

The Sh'mr can use this ability to infect the target with a destabilising virus from it's own DNA strain.

The target will lose one point from their Hit points each day after the Infection has taken place; these points cannot be regained or healed by either natural or Ebb means. Their bodies are literally falling to pieces as their DNA structure is broken down and attacked by the infection. When their bodies reach zero hit points, they effectively 'die' and are reborn 1-20 days later as Sh'mr.

Their former physical characteristics are replaced by those of a Sh'mr. If the infected cannot rise again as Sh'mr, due to their limited numbering in the WoP, they simply die.

The only known cure for the infection comes from the Necanthrope Gore Cannon ability; Drain 2 (RANK 18). This allows the Necanthrope to drain the infection from the target and to 'fire' it out of their system through their Gore Cannon. It costs the Necanthrope 5 Flux per (original) PHYS of the target to perform.

Infect costs 20 Flux to use. There is no Ebb Save against Infect.

Sh'mr Use: The Sh'mr use Infect to create more of their kind.

"Head Office knows they're here. No one will admit to anything, everyone is scared. Talk to anyone and they'll tell you nothing. You can't even mention the 'Black Stump' without getting.... <BLAM!>"

Interview terminated with Human SCL 9 Op Chase Willoughby by Frank Weiss, Cloak sanctioned, Mort 903 SD.

Sh'mr And The Flow Of The  
Ebb

Flux Gathering / Use

Sh'mr gather Flux at a rate of 1D10+10 points per day (25 hour period). They can 'store' up to (Formulae X CONC) Flux.

Sh'mr do not need to 'formulate' their abilities or the Ebb Abilities they gain access to on a daily basis. They simply 'unleash' them. The ability takes affect one phase after it is unleashed, the Flux is paid in the turn it is unleashed.

All Sh'mr need to expend 1D20 Flux per day simply to survive. They must roll at the start of the day (25 hour period), they must 'pay' this Flux before the end of the day or they will die that night.

"Sh'mr. Ferals. Same shit, different name. They all go down under enough burn."

Lava, SCL 5 Brain Waster, contracted to Dark Lament, Mort 903 SD.

"They feel the same as the Ferals, their Flux tastes similar. I can not say whether they are related, not because I'm not allowed; because I don't know. I think not though, there is something about them that feels 'wrong' for Ferals. I feel a chaos in them that is not present in Ferals. And I wasn't allowed to say that."

BlueFire, BrainWaster 'hunter', assigned to Dark Lament, Mort 903 SD.

Sh'mr increase in Formulae like all Ebb users. Their understanding allows them greater access to their 'daily' skills, offering some control (via duplicated rolls).

When a Sh'mr's Formulae reaches 12 they begin to hear the call of their Masters; the Root Dogs. For every point above 12, the Sh'mr classes it as a 'skill level' (Formulae 15 would

be the equivalent of skill level 3) in a trait known as 'Gathering'.

### Gathering

Once their Formulae is over 12, they feel the need to travel to the Black Stump to join with their creators. They must roll against their Gathering trait (as a skill) once every three months (90 consecutive daily periods). If they 'succeed' (achieve 15+), they must make their way to the Black Stump by the most direct means possible. Once they have started their journey, any delay causes them to weaken and if they delay too long, they will die. Each week they are away from the Black Stump after they have succumbed to the calling, the Sh'mr loses one point from a randomly chosen Stat. This loss can not be regenerated and may affect other Stats. or skill use. If *any* Stat. reaches zero, the Sh'mr dies.

Sh'mr can never 'turn'. They do not seek to enter the White, they have no desire to become Necanthrope. Once they reach the Black Stump, their Root Dog creators and masters have their own, dark, sinister uses for their chaotic off-spring.

### SLA Industries And The Sh'mr

There are very few people within SLA who know of the existence of the Sh'mr, and few of those will ever talk about them.

Most of the information on the SLA Database is held in Dark Lament files, and most of these are classified SCL 4+. SLA do not want the Sh'mr to become common knowledge; their connection to the Root Dogs could lead to other connections being made and more of the truth being uncovered, and this, of course, must not be allowed to happen.

Dark Lament occasionally hire a select few to hunt the Sh'mr, usually Brain Wasters or Wraith Raiders. The Shaktar send forth their Holy Warriors when they hear of a suspected Sh'mr appearance; Shaktar hate the Sh'mr more than any other race.

"The Sh'mr? Just a fairy tale monster to scare Shaktar kids. You think you know any different and you may end up knowing too much."

Harque, Ebon Dark Lament technician, Mort 903 SD.

"They are here. They are evil and bring chaos. They will eat your soul and destroy your civilisation. They must be stopped. If you are not here to help me, you are here to stop me, and I can't let that happen."

R'zt Qwk'N, Shaktar Operative with 'EvenFlow', Mort 903 SD.

### Sh'mr In The WoP

The Sh'mr are creatures of chaos and disorder. Their inner nature means they try to cling to emotional security through their 'family groups'. Other than this, the Sh'mr care for and respect no one.

The Root Dogs knew that the Sh'mr's nature and their unique abilities would allow them to cause the most havoc in a society where the individuals actions could have consequences for the whole group / social order. Hence the decision to send them initially to Polo and Kn'nth.

Since their creation, the Sh'mr have spread through the WoP, though they are extremely rare outside Polo and Kn'nth.

The Shaktar treat the Sh'mr as a traditional enemy, recognising them as a bestial foe from the dark mists of their past. Wraith Raiders treat them as any other prey, acknowledging their status as worthy adversaries.

The other races in the WoP have been largely shielded from the Sh'mr and know little if anything of their existence.

"They come from the Black Stump, sent by the Root Dogs to undermine our society. They feed on Flux, they can only survive by draining Ebons of their life force. The abilities they possess are known to some of our Necanthrope Elders but can never be taught to our Brother Ebons. All anyone needs to know is that they do exist and that they must be destroyed wherever they are encountered, cut from our society like a cancerous growth. Sh'mr can not be reasoned with, they are like animals, like a virus, like a disease. Anyone who has had contact with them must be cleansed. None of this took place, you heard nothing and I was never here. Do you understand? No? Good."

Chalice, Necanthrope Operative with 'Veil' Union, Mort, 903 SD.

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

A good introduction to Sh'mr in the WoP would be to have one of the Op's unknowingly encounter one on Mort, and then be visited by a Shaktar Kn'tkt (Holy Warrior) acting as a 'Sh'mr Hunter'. The Shaktar will ask for the Op's help, if they are not forthcoming, then the Kn'tkt may become insistent....

Sh'mr may be played as Player Characters, but only by very experienced players, and those who are willing to sacrifice some of the stability associated with other character types. The Sh'mr will only work in a group or squad if the Sh'mr can drain Flux from at least one other Ebb user without being noticed. A Sh'mr would work well in an all Ebon squad.

As NPC's they should be rare and alluded to rather than encountered. A powerful Sh'mr could easily become the Nemesis of a squad. Essentially they are beasts of chaos; malignant hunters roaming the WoP, struggling to come to terms with their curse, forced to kill to live. They will always be the most hated of outsiders and must live secretive, furtive lives.

SLA will keep their existence a well guarded secret, only those who absolutely have to will know of them and their powers.

The Sh'mr may appear to be full of contradictions and inconsistencies, both in their background and their character make up; this is intentional. The emphasis is on keeping them chaotic and unpredictable, driven by needs that humans can barely perceive, let alone understand.

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## D E A T H S U I T S

What's the point in writing a piece on DeathSuits, we all know about DeathSuits, right?

Well, what exactly do we know? And what do we 'assume' and take as read even though it's never been clarified? And what's the point in writing about it if everyone already assumes it?

And why is it impossible to exceed the speed of light, concepts of 'infinity' must be discarded right?

Anyway....

The point of this article is to get both GM's and Players to take Deathsuits more seriously, to give more thought to their use and application. Ebons have for too long taken for granted the awesome creation that is the Deathsuit. To begin to build a more complete picture of what Deathsuits are, and how they may actually function, we may need to cover some old ground.... so bear with us and please be patient....

Deathsuits are made from Science Friction, they are fashioned by an Ebb User working for Dark Lament. Each Deathsuit is forged from raw Flux and Ebb use, being bound by the creative vision of the Ebon and limited only by their ability to weave Flux. To retain it's physical shape and form, each Deathsuit is instilled with a Flux Matrix at it's inception. It is the Flux Matrix that gives the Deathsuit it's stable physical presence and allows Dark Lament to add the Glyphs and cypher codes that will give the Deathsuit it's ability to aid any Ebon wearing it with their formulation of Ebb Abilities. OK, you are all yawning and saying "yeah, we know all this." But, if that's the case why is it ignored that the Science Friction item created is dependent upon the Ebon creating it for shape and form? In short; the Deathsuit looks as the 'creating' Ebon imagines, not as the wearing Ebon imagines.... but wait a minute, this conflicts what we also know about Deathsuits reflecting the wearers emotions.... so there's a gap. Ebons need to assimilate their Deathsuit with their own, innate 'Flux Matrix', they need to 'tune' their suit to respond to their particular Flux use 'wavelength'; the taste of the Flux if you like. This is why Ebons must start with a Formulae of 1. The 'tuning' of the Deathsuit is governed by both the 'Protect; Ebon Guard' ability and the Formulae. But we're jumping ahead....

Should Ebons have to buy, i.e. pay for, their Deathsuit? Would you let a starting Operative from any other race, begin their game life with a 'free' suit of Powered Armour (PP9 Exo)? No of course not.... The Ebon must pay for their Deathsuit, it forms the core of their Ebb use, it is at the heart of their characters development, it is worth twenty times what DL charge for it

and Ebons are too unbalanced in other areas to let them get away with not paying for the Deathsuit.

So, we have the Ebon forking out the meagre 750c for their Deathsuit. Let's see how things develop from there. But hang on a minute, we've jumped again.... if we assume the Ebon buys their suit with the 1,500c starting monies, then what have they been using for their training and graduating process from Meny? Do all non-Operative, i.e. in training, Ebons use Glyph Cards, or do they use 'temporary' Deathsuits, kind of generic suits that they can not 'bond' with, but that will allow them to access the abilities without resorting to the archaic Glyph cards? Somehow that doesn't feel right, the Ebon should only ever have a relationship with one Deathsuit, and that should take him to the grave and beyond.... so we must assume the Ebon gains his Deathsuit when he enters Meny, and that the moneys for it are paid directly to Dark Lament by SLA at the Ebon's graduation. So the Ebon automatically pays for the suit?

So, we have an Ebon, starting his training at Meny, about to enter the realm of the Ebb, Flux use, gathering, storage and all.... The Ebon must now 'tune' their Deathsuit to enable them to match it's Matrix with their own, to fully integrate it with their flow of Flux.

### Tuning A Deathsuit

Every Ebon that draws Flux in to the WoP adds their own particular feel and flavour to it, stamping it with their own unique brand and style of use. The first job for the Ebon is to tune their Deathsuit to recognise and accept this 'taste' of flux as part of it's intrinsic Flux Matrix, otherwise the Deathsuit will not be able to make full use of the Flux, rejecting it as a 'foreign body' rather than as a part of the Ebb Use process.

We can also make a leap here, to bring in to play the vaguely hinted at concept that Ebons are creatures driven by their emotions. We will use the Ebons emotions to form the basis for their Flux 'taste', each differing from the other as any two Ebon personalities would differ, we can even draw out analogies for 'taste', 'smell' and 'colour' of Flux dependent upon the Ebon's fundamental, underlying emotional state: deeply depressed, introspective Ebons produce bitter, acrid, black Flux (or whatever your interpretation suggests....). This can also

lead us to the conclusion that once an Ebon has their Deathsuit tuned, they can become 'out of tune' with it, should they lose control of their emotional state, or be seriously affected so that their psychological state changes to one the Deathsuit Flux Matrix does not 'recognise'. This can either be used in 'game terms' by the GM as a non-critical aid to the Players role playing the Ebon, by adapting an attitude of relating to the Ebon how their Flux use may vary when using abilities, and maybe hinting that Concentration rolls may be involved if the inconsistencies continue, with greater minuses for greater variations in character. For example, a normally patient calm Ebon, who has taken the 'Exceedingly Cool' advantage suddenly loses his temper in character because, basically, he's bored and frustrated, the Ebon wants to 'Blast' a gang member where he would usually use more subtle ways to get what he wanted from him, the GM judges this drastic change to be enough to endanger the Deathsuits 'reading' of the Flux use, and so makes the Ebon make a 'CONC Roll', with a -5 modifier in order to formulate the Blast....

In the Ebon Sourcebook (what do you mean you haven't bought one yet....?) we touch on the subject of attaching 'core' or 'base' emotions to the Ebon and their abilities, so our Ebon may have 'Inquisitive' for communication, or 'Angry' for Blast, if they then try to use these abilities when not in the 'appropriate' emotional state, the Deathsuit is slightly 'out of tune' and requires a CONC roll (with suitable modifier) to channel the Flux for formulation.

OK. So we have a Deathsuit, we know when we got it, how much it's cost, how it's connected to the Ebon and how they are tied to it through their emotional / psychological state.... so far so good.

This also allows us to utilise the suits 'mood reflective' properties for appearance. If the Ebon is angry, what colour is associated with that emotion (for them)? How is this reflected in the Deathsuit? Can the Ebon control it, or is it a 'reflex' action on the Deathsuits part? Our Ebon may be calm on the exterior, trying to convince the gang member that he really doesn't want to hurt him, and that they're going to be the best of friends, when the Ebon's Deathsuit flares scarlet, and begins to appear to 'ooze' blood....

And then on to what does it actually look like? The classic ‘skinned man’ look may hold for some of the Deathsuits, but surely not for all of them? And can the appearance be changed, as the colour can, either by force of will or mood? We would suggest yes. The texture has to remain ‘organic’ as is the nature of Science Friction material, but it can be changed from ‘muscle tissue’ in appearance to ‘textured skin’ maybe scales, maybe even smoother, like interlocking plates. The limitations are born from the creating Ebons imagination at the Deathsuits ‘birth’ and the wearing Ebons skill and force of will. Link the Ebons Formulae to their ability to change the fundamental look of their Deathsuit, get the Ebon Player to write down degrees of refinement they wish to achieve in the look of their suit, grading from 1-10 in Formulae.

In the description (in games system terms) of the Deathsuit, there is a PV / ID for the ‘head’ location. Does this mean the Deathsuit is permanently covering the wearers head and face? It doesn’t seem to fit the social image of the Ebon race; they wouldn’t want anything making it harder for them to communicate and show their emotional states.

The Deathsuit covers the wearer in a very similar way to a Scuba Divers wet Suit, leaving the hands, feet, neck, face and head bare, until the last minute when the extra protection is required. For the Deathsuit, this means that the extremities are where there is a slight folding and gathering of material, like small rings or pouches, the material can be ‘activated’ to move over and cover the extremities with a thought from the wearer. It costs 1 Flux for the Deathsuit’s wearer to fully activate the armour properties of the Deathsuit and cover their extremities, the extension takes 1 Phase and does not require Formulation, it automatically happens the Phase after the wearer wants it to.

Protect: Ebon Guard

Rank 1: Shroud Deathsuit – The activation of the completely enclosing property of the Deathsuit in it’s capacity as ‘armour’. The hands, feet and head (including the face) are shrouded by the Deathsuit. It takes 1 Phase to activate the Shroud effect and costs 1 Flux. All Ebons are taught this ability in their first year at Meny. The extremities are covered with the same PV / ID as the Deathsuit’s ‘class’ (Light, Medium, etc.).

## Deathsuit Maintenance

Does a Deathsuit need maintenance? Until the Ebon wearer reaches ‘Rank 17: Living Suit’ in the Ebon Guard ability, the answer is yes. Up to this point the Deathsuit is still a piece of Science Friction material, all be it a highly charged, maybe even sensitive piece, but it is still effectively classed as ‘equipment’.

All Science Friction material that channels and discharges Flux gathers residual flux and must be ‘cleaned’ from time to time, otherwise the build up of unwanted Flux ‘waste’ will begin to corrupt the object, causing it to suffer negative modifiers when used by an Ebon for channelling or storing Flux. It may be likened to the phenomenon that affects Glyph Pillars in FoldShips, where the central guidance pillar is prone to a build up of residual energy, converted in to the deadly Ebb Crystals. (TBP 11)

Protect: Ebon Guard

Rank 2: Flush Deathsuit – The clearing of any residual build up of Flux within the Deathsuit, which may manifest itself as small crystalline structures on the interior surface of the suit, or as a ‘clouding’ of the Deathsuit’s colour. It costs 1 flux per PV of the Deathsuit to Flush, and takes the Ebon their CONC multiplied by the PV being flushed in minutes to complete the ceremony. A Deathsuit needs to be ‘Flushed’ approximately once every 3 months. For every 3 months the suit is not Flushed, the Ebon receives a –1 modifier to any Formulation rolls they make.

The ceremony is treated by the Ebon as a very serious procedure, not least because they have to remove the Deathsuit to perform it. The ceremony requires nothing but peace and quiet and a little space for the Ebon to lay the Deathsuit out and pass their hands over it. During the ceremony the Ebon thinks of nothing else and can be quite vulnerable to attack; they seldom flush their Deathsuit anywhere other than their own apartment, and then usually with a trusted colleague in the next room.

## Storing Flux

Using the ‘Channel’ Ability, the Ebon can store Flux in their Deathsuit for use in powering any Ebb Ability they have the skill to use. But how do they get the Flux in to the Deathsuit? Do

they simply 'spend' the Flux they wish to store in their Deathsuit, and there it sits until it is called upon through the use of an ability? If so, there are some things to bear in mind:

Most Ebons will begin play with between 10 and 20 Flux (stat.), with increases during the campaign at a cost of 2 EXP for 1 Flux, they are not exactly going to be rocketing up the Flux Store.

An additional way you may want to allow your Ebon Players to 'charge' their Deathsuits is through the direct placing of Flux in to the Deathsuits while they sleep, up to a maximum of their own Self Flux Store. i.e. if an Ebon has a Flux stat. of 23, not only will they regenerate their own 23 points of Flux after a good eight hours sleep, but they will be able to channel up to 23 Flux in to their Deathsuit, awaking with both themselves and their Deathsuit fully charged (up to it's Rank capacity).

This may make it too easy for the Ebon to gather and store Flux and must be moderated by the kind of ease with which you allow Flux to be gathered and spent in your particular WoP.

As an aside, can a Deathsuit have zero Flux? We would suggest not. The Flux Matrix must have at least 1 flux in it to keep it open and 'flowing', if it is drained completely, it will begin to wither and shrivel, reducing in it's capacity to act as a conduit for Flux and the flow of the Ebb. A Deathsuit will 'leech' 1 Flux from it's wearer if it is driven to zero by the Ebons use of the stored Flux. Treat as a Rank 12: Suck Flux ability use.

#### Repairing Deathsuits

The Rank 2 ability: Heal Deathsuit, deals with the permanent healing of a damaged Deathsuit, using care, time and a lot of Flux, which is as it should be. But Dark Lament realised that a lot of Ebons need a quick fix for their Deathsuit when they are in a pressure situation, so they developed the 'Temporary Heal' ability:

Protect: Ebon Guard.

Rank 2: Temporary Heal Deathsuit – this allows the physical healing of the Deathsuit in exactly the same way as the Heal Deathsuit ability, only the effects are more drastic, shorter lived and have consequences if not revisited and healed 'properly' using the Rank 2 heal Deathsuit ability. This skill costs the Ebon 2 points of Flux per 6 ID restored to the Deathsuit, temporarily. The ID is restored for 1

hour, after which it will 'crumble', falling to zero. If it is not healed within an hour of reaching zero, the affected area becomes useless and must be replaced (effectively it becomes dead tissue).

The 'temporary' heal is obviously designed to get Ebons out of tight spots until they can lavish the due care and attention in Healing their Deathsuit that the suit deserves.

#### Secrets Of The Deathsuit

Deathsuits are the gift, aid and boon from SLA Industries to the Ebon race. It is rumoured that even Intruder wears a Deathsuit of sorts. So what shadowy secrets lie behind the greatest piece of Science Friction in the whole of the WoP?

The Deathsuit is the sixth sense of the Ebon race, without it, they are little more than conjurors, relying upon Glyph Cards as props. There is an argument that the Deathsuit is also the natural way for SLA to 'control' the Ebon race, a race which Mr Slayer can never really trust.

The natural conclusion to this theory is that without the Deathsuit, the Ebon cannot 'turn', and become a Necanthrope. It is the Deathsuit that causes the Dream Demons, and the Deathsuit that twists the Ebon in to the shape of a Necanthrope, bending ultimately to the will of Mr Slayer and not the wearing Ebon.

If you do not want the conspiracy to be on this grand a scale, explore the possibilities of the Deathsuit as both 'monitor' and extension of Dark Lament. A version of the 'Ebon Chip' (this issue) could easily be fitted to the suit, reporting back to it's masters via Ebb Communication Glyphs in the suit. And where do Dark Lament get the hideously large amounts of Flux they need to perform their work? Maybe the Deathsuits leech Flux back to DL via Glyph 'guidance' pillars, taking as much as 10% from the wearing Ebon each day....

Ebons rely on their Deathsuits for all their Ebb use. 99% of all Ebons in the WoP wear, and are naked without, a Deathsuit. There must be possibilities for a darker, more sinister background for their production, use and connections to DL.

And what about Feral Ebons (TBP 9)? They do not need Deathsuits and have their own unique way of manipulating Flux and the Ebb.... but

what if they got hold of a Deathsuit? used it purely as an ‘accelerator’? and what if an Ebon, taking off their Deathsuit, found they could still use the Ebb, that they were in fact a Feral, subdued by the wearing of the Deathsuit?

We realise that everyone’s WoP is different, and each GM has the Ebon race with a slightly different background and development. But surely all GM’s explore the relationship between an Ebon and their Deathsuit? And if not, maybe this article will prompt some deeper digging....

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## JUSTICE FOR ALL

It may at first be hard to imagine a system of Justice within SLA. There is so much darkness, horror, violence and impending chaos that it may seem irrelevant in such a brutalised society. But there must always be laws, or there is no civilisation. And the laws will always be made by the ruling majority, made to suit their needs and fuel their continued reign in power. So it is with SLA.

How SLA administer their Justice system will of course depend on how SLA run their WoP in general in your games. If they are completely authoritarian, overbearing and dictatorial in nature, they will have a different set of ‘rules’ that need enforcing to a more insidious SLA, working through the economy and their ultimate control of all things in the ‘market’.

SLA knows the value of law and order, it knows, as all governing bodies do, that it must make it’s citizens feel secure. People within the society of the WoP must feel free from the affects of crime, no matter what ‘crimes’ their governing classes may be perpetrating in the name of justice; for the majority of citizens the laws must be clear, simple and enforced. Then, as long as it is the minority who are seen to break them, the majority will feel safe.

What we are doing here is offering a set of possibilities, some, none or all of which may be worth considering for use in your WoP.

## Justice System In SLA – The Laws

It sounds ridiculous, but it’s worth considering; what exactly is a crime?

In a society such as ours today, people can be prosecuted for any number of things, from the petty to the heinous, ranging from murder to self defence, from theft to arson, from racism to rape. Taking the view that the WoP, any WoP is an extrapolation of our own society leads you to the inevitable conclusion that the laws, crimes and enforcement would be an extension of what we have now, or at least a version of it twisted to fit the grim everyday existence of the WoP. So many of the laws still apply, and would have to be enforced by a justice system similar to that which we know of today. Shivers can be likened to the Police, IA and Cloak to government agencies and Monarch to ‘security’ forces, perhaps with some dispensation for equipment and behaviour (powers of arrest etc.).

The burden here falls squarely on the Shivers. If the list of criminal offences is as extensive as it is today, then they are going to have their work cut out for them, responding to every assault, petty theft, minor break in, racist incident, road accident etc. Are they fighting a losing battle? Is this accepted by Slayer and SLA? Does anyone care? If the Shivers are effectively stooges for the activities of SLA, expected to clean up after the populations unrest and unruly response to the draconian laws laid down by the company, then the Shivers are going to turn in to a de-moralised, corrupt, lack luster, force of malcontents, looking to simply get through another day. This may well fit the style of your WoP, and would explain a lot of the animosity between Shivers and Op’s as the Op’s can be seen as some kind of elite, above dealing with the ‘everyday’ mundane, mindless, endless stream of minor offences that cloud the Shivers every day.

## Crimes

Lets move the WoP to a darker setting. Changing the code of what is ‘accepted’ behaviour, changing what is actually considered a crime; let’s base the laws on a society and a system of social justice where the citizen is expected to act slightly differently than the way we do today.

The whole society is more deeply corrupt, with organised crime on a scale we can only imagine, with gangs roaming their territory openly, and with every intent to carry out their criminal activities to the fullest. Guns are more prevalent, as are knives, clubs and any kind of weapon you can imagine. The 'average' citizen is a cynical, jaded, morally corrupt individual who expects to live with the effects of crime through out their whole life, their expectation is one of damage limitation not avoidance. Protection monies are paid, as are bribes to Shivers, as this is the only way to run any kind of business or livelihood. SLA are the overlords, who need to be bought off through taxes, and more insidiously through permits and licenses; you must pay to have the right to live.

In this society, petty crimes such as minor assault go almost unnoticed, unless the victim has connections and has paid their dues. Minor break-ins, burglaries and thefts from shops and businesses are seen as an occupational hazard, with little or no intervention from the Shivers. The reasoning is one of cynical reality, if you've been robbed or had your business torched you couldn't have been paying the right money to the right people.

With the population as poor and as densely packed as it is on most of Mort, the Shivers and Monarchs know they need to concentrate on the more serious crimes as they can expect little if any support in their investigation of the minor ones. So the 'minor' crimes tend to get reported less and less, with the tolerance of what is 'acceptable' being pushed higher the deeper you go in to Downtown, or any run down, deprived area.

People take the law more and more in to their own hands. DarkNight are always there to supply the necessary tools of justice, for a price of course. As guns become more common, vigilante groups and 'citizens militia' become more of a force to be reckoned with. Wars between these groups and the gangs breaks out more frequently as each tries to regain control of the streets and tenement blocks.

With the general watering down of law and order we need to ask what is a crime?

Broadly speaking, crimes can be broken down in to three categories:

Crimes against property.

Crimes against the person.

Crimes of Subversion.

Crimes against property are:

Vandalism. Petty Theft. Grand Theft. Arson.

#### Vandalism

The destruction or degrading of someone's property by another. This is a largely ignored crime, that is usually brought in to play when Shivers (or Op's) need a 'legal' reason to bring in a ganger or other street type. The charge is almost always impossible to prove and is generally acknowledged to be a 'holding charge' which allows the suspect to be held in custody for up to 24 hours, after which they must be released.

The level of vandalism on Mort is frightening. Anything is vandalised simply because it is there. Nothing is safe. And with the growing increase of 'street graffiti' advertising campaigns, it has become even harder to classify defacing property a 'crime'.

Vandalism can also be used by Shivers to gain a little extra income, as most gangers will gladly pay the standard 20u bribe to the Shiver to turn a blind eye.

#### Petty Theft

Petty theft is defined by the value of the property and from whom it was stolen. Anything of less than 1000c value is classed as petty theft, unless it belongs to SLA, when it automatically becomes Grand Theft regardless of value. Petty theft is one of the hardest crimes to prove as goods are moved through black markets, fences, or simply stripped and reclaimed by gangs and the homeless. Suspects cannot be picked up and held on suspicion of Petty Theft, they can only be arrested and charged with it. It is the crime most likely to be bought off on a regular basis by gangs or Soft Co.'s that have 'permanent' bases, as the Shivers can easily raid such premises.

#### Grand Theft

Grand Theft is defined as ANY SLA property or any 'privately' owned property of value 1000c+. All vehicle theft is classed as Grand Theft due to the value and the 'leased' nature of most SLA vehicles. Grand Theft is always treated as a very serious crime and always prompts an investigation by the Shivers or Monarchs, each of which must be fully reported and filed. A lot of BPN's (Yellows and Whites) are triggered by Grand Theft. Often, the victims will try to gather as much evidence as they can before reporting the crime, delaying the actual

register of the crime by as much as two days. As a standing order, no Grand Theft can be lodged as a crime if more than three days have elapsed since the goods were stolen, after this time they are listed simply as 'missing'.

Bribing your way out of Grand Theft is only possible if the property stolen did not belong to SLA, and then it will cost you anywhere between 5,000u – 10,000u depending upon how much evidence has to be 'lost'. It also helps if the property is returned, which can reduce the cost of the bribe by up to 50%.

#### Arson

Arson is the most serious crime against property on Mort. All Arson is investigated and a report logged, usually with a completion detail of an arrest/s and charges being filed. Follow up BPN's (if any) are always White, though the cause of the fire is usually discovered and reported by the Fire Shivers Forensics, who will spend up to two days on the site once the fire is out. There is no way to bribe your way out of an Arson charge, and many gangs will give up a scape-goat or the culprit to avoid too much SLA digging on their turf. All citizens will help in the tracking of an arsonist, and none will offer any protection or help to any individual or organisation (gang or otherwise) that uses Arson.

Crimes against the Person are:

Common Assault. Armed Assault.  
Manslaughter. Murder.

#### Common Assault

This is used to describe anything from a 'brawl' to rape. It is basically the charge used to cover all areas of assault not involving a firearm, including the numerous attacks using blades, clubs, etc., that are carried out everyday on every street in Mort. Common Assault is not taken very seriously by the Shivers, as the victim is expected to exact their own form of revenge through 'Street Justice,' as it is notoriously hard to prove, the Shivers may even help the victim in cases such as rape, where they have been known to 'deliver' the guilty party bound and gagged to a pre-arranged drop point, all for a fee of course.

Common Assault can be bought off fairly cheaply, with bribes ranging from 50u – 100u. After a gang brawl the Shivers expect to be paid off in full, especially if there is video footage which will need to be 'lost' or if Third

Eye are involved. Common Assault is never used to charge someone attacking an Operative, but is always used when a Shiver is the victim; Op's are not expected to file charges of Common Assault, they are supposed to take it as part and parcel of their job.

#### Armed Assault

Armed Assault can only be charged if a victim has been robbed and or assaulted by a perp. with a firearm that was discharged during the course of the assault. Generally a common occurrence for the more serious of the robberies, where a store, gang or Soft Co. are involved, it is a tough one to bribe your way out of, costs between 500u to 3,000u. It is rare for Shivers to log calls of Armed Assault against either themselves or Operatives, despite what Shiver HQ instructs them to do (which is log every Armed Assault; in an attempt to get Shivers better armed). Any assault on Shivers or Op's is more likely to be met with an 'unofficial' response, and bearing in mind that 99% of all Shivers carry an unauthorised back up weapon, they do not like to be seen as somehow hypocritical, bad for the street rep.'s. If a death occurs during the course of an Armed Assault, the charge is immediately escalated to either Manslaughter or Murder.

#### Manslaughter / Murder

Manslaughter is used when there is no obvious prior intent to kill, Murder when there is. A bungled robbery where the victim ends up getting shot is more likely to be charged as Manslaughter. Any Shiver or Operative death is always charged as Murder.

Follow up investigations for both Manslaughter and Murder are expensive and resource heavy for Shivers, sometimes their Station House may sponsor a White if a Murder looks to be too complex or involving a 'higher' level of culprit than they'd care to deal with. Bribes to escape Manslaughter are expensive, but not impossibly so, ranging from 40,000u to 60,000u, this will normally either get the charge dropped or commuted to one of Assault, this depends on how much forensic evidence has to be buried. Murder charges are seldom open to negotiation unless the victim's relatives or immediate business associates are open to the idea, even then the rates are extortionate, ranging from 80,000u to 300,000u depending upon the case to be 'bungled'.

### Crimes of Subversion

SLA Industries reserves this charge for those who are seen to be working directly against the 'interests' of SLA Industries or one of its licensed subsidiaries.

Usually brought against either Soft Companies, gangs or other organised criminals, it can never be bribed away and will always entail a BPN being issued, either before a charge is brought, or once the culprit is in custody. The charge is more common than SLA would like, and there will be a general trend towards reserving it for those that need to be shut down in large scale actions, or removed through shows of strength and violence. Shivers rarely bring Subversion charges, it is usually left to Op's and IA agents, Cloak never bring Subversion charges, though they will sanction investigations (if Cloak believe you are a Subversive; you are already dead.)

### Courts

Once charges have been brought, and the accused is in custody, is there a process of trial by court and/or jury? We would suggest there must be. The alternative to this occurs when SLA are a 'Big Brother' style state, who assume guilt of the accused with their arrest, but this may make the Shivers too powerful, unless you only allow arrest by Operatives.

Courts need not be the elaborate affairs we know of, they can be simplified both in process and in function.

Jury trials are reserved for: Arson and Murder.

In all other cases the Prosecution and the Defence each have a full day to present their evidence to a Council of Judges, three experts at law, who will decide on the outcome of the case. Once the decision has been reached, there can be no appeal, and any sentence or fine is carried out with immediate effect.

Jury trials are presided over by two Judges and a Jury of 12 men/women. The trial always has a time limit of two weeks, after which time the jury will be instructed to retire and consider / reach their verdict. There are no hung juries and if necessary the two Judges will make the decision. There is a right of appeal from Jury trial, which must be lodged and held within two months of the original trial; appeals are rare, and almost never succeed.

Trials are expensive business and the Prosecution are expected to never bring a case they can not win, to this end more charges are dropped than taken to court.

### Punishment

Once a defendant has been found guilty, they are offered a choice in how they 'pay' for their crime.

Fines and Work Orders are split 50/50 between the victim (if alive) or the next of kin and SLA Industries, with work being carried out at the instruction of the survivor or their relatives. Where a crime has a list of alternative punishments, the guilty party has the choice of which they accept as their punishment.

Vandalism.

Fine: 1,000u – 10,000u.

Work Order: 3 - 20 days service (make good vandalism, longer if needed up to max. of 90 days).

Petty Theft.

Fine: 2,000u – 5,000u.

Work Order: 3 - 10 days service.

Grand Theft.

Fine: 10,000u – 100,000u.

Work Order: 30 - 90 days service

Imprisonment: 1 year.

Arson.

Fine: 100,000u.

Work Order: 360 days service

Imprisonment: 3 years.

Common Assault.

Fine: 1,000u – 10,000u.

Work Order: 10 - 30 days service

Armed Assault.

Fine: 5,000u – 50,000u.

Work Order: 30 - 180 days service

Imprisonment: 1 year.

Manslaughter.

Fine: 10,000u – 50,000u.

Work Order: 360 days service

Imprisonment: 2 years.

Murder.

Work Order: 1,800 days service

Imprisonment: 10 years.

Death by lethal injection.

Subversion.

Work Order: 3,600 days service.

### Death by lethal injection.

#### Fines.

Fines must be paid within five days of the guilty judgement being made, during which time the guilty are held within cells at a Shiver Station. Fines are usually paid in uni's though credits are acceptable. The fine is split 50/50 with the victim or their next of kin surviving relative and SLA Industries. Where the 'victim' is a SLA Dept. the whole of the fine goes to that Dept.

#### Work Orders.

The guilty party is put to work for the duration of the Work Order, watched over by either a Warden from the Department of Works, or a Shiver. During the nights they are locked in a holding cell at a Shiver Station. The work they carry out must be beneficial to both the victim (or nearest surviving kin) and SLA Industries. If the guilty choose a Work Order and the victim has no appropriate (or possible work) SLA may use the guilty person to work for them and offer the victim cash in lieu of the work; this however is rare with most victims choosing the dirtiest, most dangerous job they can think of, and SLA having many such jobs that need doing both in factories and on the streets (and below in the sewers).

#### Imprisonment.

SLA places it's criminal prisoners in large jails usually situated in Industrial Sectors or off world on moons. The prisoners are made to work during the day but are never brought in to contact with 'outside citizens'. While in prison, they have no 'rights' and are treated as animals, made to produce the best they can and subject to the harsh regime of lockdown and physical punishment should they transgress any of the many rules of the jail. There is no segregation within any SLA Prison, and there is no 'protective custody', so the likes of the Skin Trade operators are placed along side Serial Killers and 'concerned citizens'. The mortality rate of inmates is high, with a 20% fatality rate among prisoners. Some prisoners may be offered shorter terms if they 'volunteer' for certain SLA 'experiments' and 'missions'. Watched at all times by Enforcer Shivers, prisoners become dehumanised and brutalised by the prison regime; SLA does not care, it seeks to punish not to rehabilitate through prisons.

### Death Penalty.

You may choose to ignore the death penalty, either through moral reasons (arguing that it is fundamentally wrong to take human life), or through economic reasons (waste of a 'resource' that can be enslaved and used to work for SLA.)

SLA Industries reasoning behind their use of the death penalty is simple: it's cheaper than jail, it solves a problem once and for all.

The fact that SLA reserves the death penalty for only two crimes also means they can avoid the 'hung for a horse as much as a sheep' mentality.

And remember: this is the 'systemised' use of the death penalty, through the 'justice' system of courts, lawyers, Shivers and Judges. This is not the same as Termination Warrants issued by SLA Departments to target a specific individual for the good of the company.

The death penalty may be chosen by the guilty party and is only very rarely imposed by the court: usually in the case of Subversives or particularly high profile Serial Killer cases where the public demands it.

#### Street Justice

Outside of the 'official' channels of justice is the Street Justice of citizens and Shivers. Revenge is sweet and the WoP has a sweet tooth.

Paid hits are fairly common in Downtown, with the local gang or Soft Co. providing the muscle, so citizens often form groups, committees and 'tenants associations' to raise funds for their protection. Vigilante groups and individuals are common place, sometimes becoming the bane of the local gang or Props. Then there's always the Shivers. The Soft Co. Hit & Run (issue 13 TBP) is an excellent example of how justice can be taken to the streets.

Ultimately though most citizens learn the golden rule of Mort very early on in their lives; prevention is better than cure. To this end, most (if not all) arm themselves with what they can, be it a knife, club, knuckle duster or gun. There are very few 'soft targets' on Mort, and in Downtown there is virtually no 'casual' crime to speak of; it's all organised and sanctioned by one of the many crime syndicates of the Sector or it does not take place, the gang bosses are only too well aware of how mean the average citizen is, and how a spark can ignite a flame that may well burn the Sector to the ground.

Shopkeepers have a gun, every home has at least one gun, Soft Co.'s and the 'roaming' businesses have their own muscle, and the gangs and crime syndicates have their 'muscle'. There would seem to be no such thing as the 'average, innocent' citizen. In the dark world of the WoP, people have learned there is no one to help them but themselves. Everyone looks out for number one, each according to their own moral code. As the song goes; "there is no Justice; Just us."

## NEVER MIND THE PIG

### SLIGGS

Where Sliggs came from and how long they have been on Mort remains a complete mystery. Very little is actually known about these loathsome creatures by anybody, there is a growing awareness within SLA that one of the SLA Departments, probably the Dept. of the Environment, is going to have to start issuing BPN's to find out more about the disgusting, black beasts in order for SLA to begin some kind of control program.

Sliggs can be found in any environment where there is water or moisture; which is basically everywhere on Mort. They seem to thrive on pollution and can cope with great extremes in temperature with no noticeable affect.

Word on the Street is that Sliggs are originally from Kn'nth, brought to Mort by Chapter Seven as a kind of 'punishment' for the mistreatment of the Shaktar Homeworld by SLA. Wherever they're from, one things for sure, they're here to stay, and unless they can be controlled, they could threaten to spread all over Mort in truly epidemic proportions.

### A p p e a r a n c e

Sliggs vary in length and girth from 30cm to 200cm long, and 5cm to 40cm across their middles. They look like giant slugs with a set of 'antennae' at each end of their body, which they use to sense their environment. They move like a snail or slug, having a single, muscular 'foot' along the bottom of their body. They move at anything from 1cm to 5cm per round,

depending upon size. They leave a horrible trail of viscous mucous behind them wherever they go. Their skin is universally black, with a light brown edge around the bottom near their stomach muscle. The ends of their antennae glow a putrid yellow, giving off a faint luminescence that can be quite bright where Sliggs gather in their thousand.

### Physical Attributes

Sliggs are a-sexual, they can reproduce without any sexual contact, there are no apparent 'males' or 'females' of the species. When they do lay eggs, they lay between 1-3000 at a time, most of which are eaten by numerous natural predators like small rodents, etc. The eggs look like tiny green peas, glistening with a protective mucous, they stick to wherever they are laid until they hatch; newborn Sliggs are between 3-6cm long. They grow at a phenomenal rate until they reach their optimum size, which is governed by their environment; food supply, heat, light, air sources, the better the environment the bigger they get. Sliggs can either live on their own or in huge colonies numbering thousands, rumours of millions of Sliggs infesting some of the larger chambers of Lower Downtown are rife.

| Stats.         | Min. | Max.                                                                   |
|----------------|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Length         | 30cm | 300cm                                                                  |
| Weight         | 1kg  | 60kg                                                                   |
| STR            | 1    | 5                                                                      |
| DEX            | 1    | 3                                                                      |
| Hits           | 5    | 30                                                                     |
| Movement       | 1cm  | 5cm                                                                    |
| 'Weapon'       | PEN  | DMG / AD                                                               |
| Acidic Slime   | 0    | 6 / 6 (per exposure / 'dose' left for 1 round to dissolve it's target) |
| Natural Armour | PV   | I.D.                                                                   |
| Skin           | 8    | 30 / 300 (size dependent)                                              |

Sliggs eat anything. They ingest the tiny amounts of food they require by smothering the vegetable/decaying material with their acidic slime and then sucking in the liquefied nutrients through the 'foot' muscle. The acidic slime takes one round to inflict 6 DMG, Sliggs

can produce 100 ‘doses’ of the slime for every 1kg they weigh.

Sliggs have a life span of 60 to 180 days, their bodies dissolve to a stinking mush once they die.

### Sliggs In The Game

All very well, I hear you say.... but so what? Well.

Sliggs can drop on to an Op from anywhere, and will start to ‘dissolve’ the armour / cloth / skin as potential food as soon as they land. Sliggs grip with a mixture of the glue in their slime and suction, their ‘victim’ needs to make an opposed STR roll to remove them, one attempt per round (not phase) as they are notoriously slippery and hard to get a grip on.

Sliggs have a preference for Dark Lament material, and they find Deathsuits irresistible, seemingly being able to sense them from up to 100m away, moving towards them with a sluggish determination.

The body chemistry of a live Sligg is very strange, and can be used to produce a disturbing narcotic experience. If a live Sligg is put in to a Bong (Hubbly Bubbly Pipe) and smoked, the resulting narcotic experience is much like Alice, but with no chance for addiction and no Detox. The main problem is the tough nature of the Sliggs skin, their soggy innards and the creatures unwillingness to burn. More damage is done to the smoker from the fumes of the combustible agent used to ‘light’ the Sligg, than from the animals burning body. Burning Sliggs give off a terrible foul odor and make a very high pitched, shrieking, whining noise. Smoking Sliggs has been classed as a ‘Class 1’ Narcotic Offence, resulting in a fine of 300u and an SCL decrease of 0.1.

### T R A A L

Intercepted bulletin, believed to have been transmitted from the roving DarkNight Broadcast Unit ‘Tiger 1’, picked up by Third Eye Relay Station in Suburbia Sector 298, Mort, 903 SD.

\*\*\*Message Begins\*\*\* (AdVent Content Approved).

Bulletin Origin: Cell 32.

Time Sent: 23:50, December 30<sup>th</sup>, 903 SD.

Encoding: Advent (version 2.6), receding playback.

Message Reads: Enclosed report on Traal, species under examination for possible mass migration to Mort from Taalus IV Resource World.

Report compiled by Dr. Susan Chambers, head of SLA Research Facility ‘Green Belt’.

“The Traal are indigenous to Taalus IV, and we believe unique to this Homeworld environment. Every test subject transferred to any other temperature range has died within a week. Subjects die from ‘drowning’ in their own bodily fluids, which appear to gather and saturate the ‘lungs’ instead of being passed through the system.

Appearance: The Traal stand bipedal, ranging from 1.5m to 2m tall. They have a very hard, chitinous exo-skeleton akin to that of an Ant. In appearance they are indistinguishable from a ‘walking Ant’. Their skin colouring is always the same; pale Blue.

Physical Attributes: Traal are capable of lifting up to twenty times their own body weight, and leaping up to ten times their own height. They travel on four or two legs, depending upon terrain. They have only four senses, having (as far as we can tell) absolutely no sense of taste. Traal can only eat semi-liquefied food, and use their mandibles for crushing to a pulp anything they intend to eat. They need to eat only occasionally, though they do have a great thirst. A hungry Traal will kill and eat anything it can get it’s claws and jaws to. They are Omnivores, but resort to vegetation only in emergencies, preferring meat.

Mental Capacity / Social Attributes: Traal appear to have the intelligence level of a large feline, but with the jumbled up sense of purpose of an insect; they can be machine like in their pursuit of prey and a mate, and this may turn out to be their greatest weakness. Generally Traal are solitary creatures, only seeking out other Traal to mate, which they do twice in their life cycle. Traal lay eggs when they are a year old and at three years old; they live to an age of four. The eggs are left to fend for themselves after laying, and hatch after 30 days. The main problem we are having with classifying the Traal is placing them within the food chain. They appear to be ideally suited to head the eco-system, but do not seek to build either permanent dwellings, nests or hives. They remain nomadic for the whole period of their lives, neither claiming or respecting any territorial boundaries.

\*\*\*Message Ends\*\*\* (AdVent Tag - 1197468444).

DarkNight have brought upwards of a thousand Traal to Mort, releasing them in to the upper reaches of Downtown.

|        |      |      |
|--------|------|------|
| Stats. | Min. | Max. |
|--------|------|------|

|        |      |      |
|--------|------|------|
| Height | 1m   | 2m   |
| Weight | 40kg | 70kg |
| STR    | 8    | 13   |
| DEX    | 8    | 15   |
| Hits   | 20   | 40   |

Movement Walk; 1. Run; 4. Sprint; 8.  
(Traal can only Run or Sprint on a ratio of 1 in 5 with Walking, and never two consecutive turns at each speed.

|          |     |     |    |
|----------|-----|-----|----|
| 'Weapon' | PEN | DMG | AD |
|----------|-----|-----|----|

|                  |   |   |   |
|------------------|---|---|---|
| Mandibles (Bite) | 6 | 6 | 2 |
| Claws (X4)       | 4 | 4 | 1 |

|                |    |                   |
|----------------|----|-------------------|
| Natural Armour | PV | I.D.              |
| Exo-Skin       | 12 | 30 (any location) |

Skills: Detect 6, Swim 8, Climb 8, Unarmed Combat 8, Dodge 8, Survival 8.

Traal regenerate at a rate of 2 Hits per 'turn', they do not suffer from 'wounds'.

#### Where The Traal Live

Traal are particularly sensitive to temperature, they need to live in a range similar to that of their Homeworld; 32-40 degrees C. If they find themselves getting cooler or warmer, they will take urgent action to raise / lower their body temperature, if they can't they will die within 30 hours of being out of the nominal temperature range. With this in mind, the Traal need to live in well regulated areas, where there are not going to be any drastic changes in temperature. To this end they usually end up either deep underground or near to power sources such as Power Plants or the larger factories.

Traal are nomadic by nature and when they are restricted to an area for their survival, they get very aggressive and 'touchy' being ready to attack without provocation.

The bestial, pragmatic nature of the Traal means they maybe thought of as no more a nuisance than a Pig or Gator, their massive

STR and DEX however, make them more than 'soft opponents', and they can be a real danger if encountered unexpectedly.

Karma, and Phantom Pregnancy in particular, are trying to graft some kind of 'sentience' in to the Traal, loosely based on the Domino Dog development, in an attempt to make the Traal in to a form of mechanised warrior, ideal for many War Worlds. So far all attempts have failed....

## EQUIPMENT

Whole Equipment Section  
Written By: Chris Cotgrove

SLA Shiver Fast Response  
Vehicle

"Red BPN's are a pain in the ass, good money, chance for some groovy action, but how often can you get through a Sector in time to really make a difference? Shit, heavy traffic has cost me more cred.'s than all the Soft Co.'s put together...."

Jacob Lorr, Human I&I Op with squad 'LiteFire', Mort 903 SD.

Produced by SLA to be used by Squads responding to Code Red BPN's in an attempt to increase response time.

Due to the nature of a Code Red, squads need some sort of high-speed transportation so that they can arrive at the scene before everything is all over. Kilcopters are too expensive to use in these situations, and ground vehicles (such as Battle Taxis) are inappropriate in other cases.

The SFRV is an airborne VTOL vehicle, capable of hovering, with a capacity of 8 people (Stormers count as 2); it requires a crew of 1 pilot: usually, SLA assigns a specially trained Shiver Officer.

SFRV pilots have a reputation amongst Ops as being daredevils and speed freaks, and taking extraordinary risks, such as dodging between the walkways of Downtown at 500 kph. Fortunately, SFRV pilots are skilled enough to pull this off. (Don't try this at home, kids.)

In some cases, a briefing officer will travel with the Squad to provide an en-route briefing of the situation.

The SFRV is armoured, to withstand assaults from DarkNight personnel who often attempt to prevent the deployment of Op's who are responding to a Code Red.

It carries a light defensive armament; the SFRV is built for speed, not for sustained combat.

Cloak Division have also been known to use SFRV's, to arrive at the scene of "incidents" before anyone else, as have several high level SCL Operatives.

### Game System Stuff

Max. Speed: 500 kmh/h (80m/phase)

PV: 15 ID: 300

Acc. / Dec.: 10

Weight: 3 tonnes

Turning Circle: 80 flying; 0 hovering.

Cost: 300,000c

Crew: 1 pilot

Passengers: 8

Skill: Pilot, Military

Movement: Fusion Turbine

Armament: Ball mounted FEN Power Reaper, with internal 1000 round ammunition bin.

### SLA Holographic Communicators

SLA Industries has many ways of communicating with its countless employees and Operatives; in recent years, holographic communicators have become popular, as they allow the sender to observe the receivers reactions to their message.

"Just when I was getting the hang of lying over the phone.... sums up my luck completely.... and you can't hide where you are either.... what kind of idiot would invent something like this? The military? Figures...."

Lisa Cordoza, Human Strike Squad Op with 'WetWork', Mort 903 SD.

The concept of portable holographic communication was originally a development of military technology on War Worlds, allowing faster relay of orders between base commanders and units in the field.

SLA Industries, realising the potential for profit, simply made their outdated technology available to the open market.

Holographic communiqués can also be sent via existing fibre-optic cable networks (also known as optical or optronic networks), if a link is provided (usually by a Chippy Lead).

The featured holo-communicator is manufactured by HoloCom, a specialised, wholly owned subsidiary of SLA Industries. To date, they are the foremost producer of commercial holographic projectors.

Large scale holocommunication suites do exist (one example is the HoloCom "Executive"). However, they are prohibitively expensive, and limited to the rich, the influential and the military.

Large scale holocommunicators are used aboard some FoldShips as a form of intership and orbit-to-ground communications.

Operatives above SCL can access the SLA HoloNet on Mort; however, a "reduced" charge of 5 c per minute is enforced, and use is limited to transmission of business messages only.

(Special dispensation is required for the transmission of personal messages - contact Department of Forms for more information).

### HoloCom P100 Portable

This unit (no larger than a laptop computer) provides the Operative in the field with the capability to transmit and receive top-quality holographic communications.

It incorporates a small video camera and an omnidirectional audio recorder, along with a miniaturised holographic projector, which all flip back into handy recesses when not in use.

Provided in a durable, lightweight casing, the P100 is more than capable of taking wear and tear - essential for all equipment used by today's Operative.

The monochrome hologram produced by the P100 is approximately 30-50 cm in height (this can be adjusted to a larger size, but please be advised that image quality may suffer). The range of the portable unit is limited; links into an existing optical communications network are achieved through the use of a Chippy Lead provided with your P100.

The basic unit also includes the capacity to record and playback images stored on a datalog.

The P100 is available in a range of colours, from Camouflage to Day-Glo Orange; we ensure that as well as providing you with the facility for up-to-date communications, the HoloCom P100 looks good with your favourite armour or outfit too!

HoloCom – “Ensuring that personal touch in today’s communications.”

### Game System Stuff

Cost: 100c

Black Market Cost: 2000u

Dimensions: 30 x 15 x 6 cm

Range: 100m (to nearest network point)

User Life: 5000 hours

To connect a P100 into an existing optical network requires an Electronics Repair roll.

The onboard power supply can be recharged from the standard SLA fusion recharger.

The camera / microphone can be extended on a 50cm retractable reel cable.

The unit can produce full size holograms, but the image is grainy (it will just about fool a Carrien or Carnivorous Pig) and the transmission quality will break down, resulting in portions of the message being lost (GM's discretion).

Please note that the HoloNet does not extend into some areas of Downtown, or the Cannibal Sectors.

### SLA Environment Suit (Type 2)

“We’ve been waiting a long time for this. Stone Rim Colonies here we come!”

Mraw Chewgh, Wraith Operative with the Wraith Raider squad ‘WhiteStalk’, New Paris 903 SD.

Commonly used by employees all over the Known Universe who work in harsh or dangerous environments, the SLA Environment Suit is the result of an exclusive civil contract from Power Projects.

Upgrading the old Type 1 Suit, the Type 2 offers increased mobility and a light power chassis for heavy lifting work.

The Type 2 provides a 2 hour air supply and air filtration/purification (filters need replacement every 12 hours of continuous use.)

The suit is fully contained against radiation, aerobic and anaerobic viruses and biological organisms, and is resistant to most corrosive substances / atmospheres.

It boasts automatic temperature adjustment (Wraith Raiders love this suit!), helmet HUD, antidazzle visor and shoulder lights as standard. Options include a biomonitor/tracking device, and a sensor pack for exploration missions.

A mining version of the Type 2 is available, with a six-hour internal air supply.

Please note that although the suit is resistant to extremes of temperature, it will not stand up to prolonged exposure to flame throwers, napalm cannons, or immersion in liquid nitrogen.

Larger suits are available for Shaktars & Stormers.

### Game System Stuff

PV: 5. ID: Head 10, Torso 20, Arms 15, Legs 17.

+1 to users effective STR for purposes of lifting / carrying purposes; -2 negative modifier for combat and movement, due to the minor encumbrance of the suit.

Cost: Standard - 1000c. Mining – 1,500c

### Ebon Finance Chip Variant – The ‘Watcher’

Written By: Adrian Baker  
And Chris Cotgrove

“This has to be a joke right?”

Turmoil, Brain Waster Op with squad ‘Dark Down’, Mort 903 SD.

Karma's recent research into biogenetic telepathy whilst working on the Janus 2225 Stormer variant (designed by Dr Taro Toyama) also prompted Dark Lament to re-evaluate a design of a Finance Chip variant for Ebb-using Operatives.

A standard chip cannot be implanted into an Ebon due to their connection to the Ebb; flux permeates their entire body, and causes

biogenetic implants to be harmlessly rejected and destroyed.

Dark Lament have created their "chip" to interface not with the brain of an Ebon, but with their DeathSuit.

First, a genetic sample is taken from the Ebon who is to receive the implant, along with a minute fragment of their DeathSuit (which is easily regenerated). Science Friction techniques then shape the implant from these samples and saturate it with flux, to give it a kind of "life".

It is then fitted to the DeathSuit in the same manner as other Dark Lament technology.

"Dark Lament are not making themselves any friends with shit like this I can tell you. Like they care."

Jag, Ebon I&I Operative with squad 'Neon', Mort 903 SD.

The bond between the implant and the DeathSuit prevents an Ebon from disposing of it; to do so, they would have to shed their suit. Not only would this cause immense psychological distress, but would result in the loss of all Ebb abilities due to lack of an equation accelerator.

Upon implantation, the Ebon begins to receive the standard 200c/month bonus for a Chipped Op.

When interviewed, Karma consultant Dr Maxon Hagen (creator of the "Domino Dog") was noted to voice his approval of the EFC project:

"I'm all in favour of keeping an eye on the Ebon population; why should the human race be kept under scrutiny when these "truth-seekers" get away scot-free? We all know what curiosity did to the cat - now we'll get the chance to see if it'll do the same to the Ebons."

#### Design Notes & Game System Stuff

Taken from notes of Dr. Adriana Baxter (SCL 7 Dept. Ebb), consulting Dark Lament Technician on 'Watcher' project, addressed to Ms. Christine Greenback (SCL 5), design consultant on loan from Phase Inc. for the Watcher Project, Not for re-use or distribution without express permission of Head Office.

"So what do you think Christine? There are of course, several things we've stumbled across whilst working on this:

First is the fact that no Ebon or Brain Waster would accept this implant willingly. Ebons value their privacy a lot, and would probably go nuts, and Brain Wasters get up to things on a regular basis that they wouldn't want others to see, ESPECIALLY the Company...

Personally, I think that the implant works best as a form of punishment, perhaps for being too inquisitive or causing lots of collateral damage. The offender would be implanted for a probationary period and their activities assessed as loyal Operatives and as Ebb-users under Dark Lament. If they manage to get through the probationary period without black marks, the implant is removed. If not... well I'll leave it to your imagination.

Secondly is the use of the Implant by Necanthropes and undercover Dark Lament sponsored Operatives, who would be able to interdermalise it within their Deathsuit (the normal version is going to be constantly visible - either as an eye set into the chest / shoulder of the suit, as a literal "third eye" set in the forehead area or as a series of audio-visual sensory organs placed over the suit's surface.) The actual appearance of the implant is also another matter for some debate - we've narrowed it down to the following - any suggestions?:

- a) a series of audio-visual organs placed over the suit's surface.
- b) a black lidless eye, with a wet, slimy look to it.
- c) a slitted eye (like a cat or a snake).
- d) a black eye that blinks every so often.

Another thing is that eventually the implant could actually turn out to be sentient, in a similar way to a Necanthrope's Gore Cannon, or serves as a psychic link to a Dark Lament observer (either an Ebon or Necanthrope assigned to watch over the Watchers host).

The 'powers that be' actually wanted it to leech Flux from the wearer to operate, and also wanted Ebons with the implant to be able to store Flux within it to access later - I'm not sure about this idea, as it strikes me as a dangerous road to go down. As it stands at the moment,

the Watcher leeches flux from the character while they are asleep (1-3 per night), or when they wake every day if none was available during the night.

Something that just occurred to me is what would happen if an Operative who received this implant went into the White, and underwent metamorphosis into a Necanthrope. What would be visible to Dark Lament at the other end?

I am not too keen to take up the offers from Cloak Division for collaboration on both 'test subjects' and the monitoring facilities, I believe the project should remain firmly 'in house' as a Dark Lament only administered technology.

With the imminent release of the final designs for approval by Head Office, I would appreciate your thoughts on all matters raised, maybe we could discuss it over dinner? Give me a call."

Head Office Inter-Departmental Memo:

To: All SLA Department Heads.

SCL Clearance: 4+.

Subject: Watcher Enhancement.

From: Mr Slayer.

Message Reads:

"I understand there has been some doubt voiced, both in private and in public, as to the 'useful' nature of the Watcher Enhancement. To be clear: The Watcher Project was instigated at my specific request. I expect to receive every Departments fullest co-operation in the implementation of the Project. Any individuals that feel they will be unable to offer their full co-operation, should feel free to submit themselves to any Dept. Psyche Evaluation Unit for re-assignment on mental health grounds. Watcher will be a success. The Ebon race is no different to any other within the WoP, their ongoing loyalty and dedication is not being questioned. And neither are my methods.

Thank you for your time and attention."

Response: Please sign and return acknowledgement of receipt and understanding of this communiqué.

## SOFT COMPANIES

### BLUE MOON

Company Motto: "Need a helping hand? Have a drink on us."

Blue Moon appeared on the streets in markets and in Malls about three months ago, with over a hundred 'franchised' operations springing up in this time. Each is a one person outfit, selling from a mobile 'still' or a make shift 'stand'.

Recently there has been a spate of Blue Moon inspired parties and gatherings on the street, involving both citizens and gang members, with most of the booze being supplied free of charge by Blue Moon.

Most Blue Moon bartenders are streetwise and stay local to one area. The service they provide is valued by the locals and the Shivers are prone to taking their customary bribes in either uni's or Blue Moon product.

Blue Moon have a high street presence at the moment, sponsoring graffiti art advertising campaigns in all of the sectors they operate in.

The street rep. of Blue Moon is high, with their bartenders being given free range of the sectors, freeing them from the constraints of gang bribes and the Monarch shakedowns.

There is a general feeling that Blue Moon are a very necessary addition to the 'free trading markets' of the Mort economy. Most citizens will simply buy booze from the cheapest supplier, and the quality of Blue Moon product is high.

Anyone giving the Blue Moon bartenders any trouble is quickly jumped on by any and all local citizens in the area. Any Op's associated with hassling Blue Moon will immediately gain Bad Rep. with the local citizenry, maybe even the local Shivers (through the inevitable disturbances they will cause).

The main Product of Blue Moon comes in two forms; Moonshine and Tilt. Moonshine is a very powerful, smooth, dark brown, sweet spirit, with the kick of a mule and the after affect of a deep sleep. Tilt is a fizzy yellow beer, akin to Slosh in texture and taste but with a sweet smell of Lemon. It takes 5-8 shots of Moonshine and 4-6 cans of Tilt to get most

normal drinkers out of their skull. 1 'shot' of Moonshine is roughly 50ml, one can of Tilt is 330ml.

### Game System Stuff

#### Moonshine

Game Effects: Extreme drunkenness, possibly hallucination.

Addiction: -1 PHYS per 10.

Detox. Effects: -1 DEX, -1 STR, -1 CONC.

Addiction: 1 bottle per day (30 shots).

Cost: 2u per shot (50u per bottle).

#### Tilt

Game Effects: Extreme drunkenness.

Addiction: -1 PHYS per 20.

Detox. Effects: -1 CONC, -1 DIA, -1 CHAR.

Addiction: 8 cans per day.

Cost: 5u per can.

The key ingredient in both Moonshine and Tilt is a chemical called Bichlorozine, a kind of sedative with qualities related to Alice.

The main chemical plant for Blue Moon's production of Biochlorozine is deep in Downtown Sector 811, two blocks away from the perimeter wall with Cannibal Sector Three. From this plant, the huge quantities of booze are shipped out by the van and lorry load. The main production plant also supplies the raw materials for the numerous small 'stills' that spring up in each Sector to support the local bartender and their trade. Local stills are often run by the bartender and one or two helpers, usually with the protection of a local Prop or gang.

### Behind The Blue Moon

Blue Moon is financed and run by two SLA Operatives. Keith O'Mally ('Hawk') and Timothy McPherson ('ShowTime'), both I&I Op's SCL 4. They carry on their own careers as a duo of very successful Contract Killers, while funding and organising the Blue Moon activities. There is a little known, secretive club within SLA that both Keith and Timothy belong to. The 'League of Marketing' is made up from sixty wealthy SLA Operatives, each rich enough to 'fund' either Soft Co.'s or gangs as a form of high class mischief making. Each member of the League tries to out do the others for longevity and scale of response from SLA. The main problem is that Blue Moon have become so successful that the Soft Company

may well soon be the target of a 'buy out' by SLA, and in order for this to happen the backers must be known, which would place both Keith and Timothy in untenable positions. The current turnover of Blue Moon is running in to hundreds of thousands of credits per month, with most going back in to the growth of the organisation. It won't be long, perhaps one or two months, before the two Op's will need to devote all of their time to the Soft Co., or will have to sell it off, possibly to DarkNight, lock stock and barrel.

From their experience as Op's, Keith and Timothy have set Blue Moon up using all of the knowledge they have gained from shutting down or tracing and sabotaging other Soft Co.'s, hence the structure of Blue Moon is pretty water tight, making the success of the company inevitable, at least in the short term.

How Hawk and ShowTime handle the growth and success of Blue Moon can be left up to you and your WoP, maybe they will fake their own deaths at the hands of another Softie, maybe they will simply sell out.

### S C R I B E

Street Slogan: "Is it real or is it Scribe?"

Scribe were established eleven weeks ago and operate exclusively from Suburban Sector 532. They have a fairly low street level presence, mainly running their business from the Malls of the Sector, touring with their mobile Scribe Shop, visiting different Malls on different days, advertised the day before on local radio and through leaflets and street gangs.

With the ever increasing beurocracy of SLA, Scribe offer a much needed service for the out of pocket citizen, supplying anything from a Pet Permit to a Travel Pass to a Driving or Vehicle License. If it's a permit, license or form, then Scribe can supply it, at a fraction of the cost of the real thing.

The quality of Scribe's work is outstanding, which is why they are thought of so highly by their clients, and why they are becoming such a thorn in the side for SLA.

Shivers and Monarch hate Scribe with a passion, and will pay dearly to gain information on the Soft Co., the passes and permits they supply are making the law enforcement agencies lives a hell, as citizens apparently have the right paperwork in seemingly impossible circumstances. It is draining a lot of

much needed resource to carry out in depth checks of paperwork, which adds to the work load of the already over stretched Shivers.

Citizens love Scribe. The Soft Co. has the full support of all elements of Sector 532, from shop keepers to cab drivers, from gang members to unemployed down and outs, everyone appreciates the service and the chance to pay less for the necessities of life.

Nobody really knows who or how many people work for Scribe, as the only contact Joe public has is with the touring Scribe Shops, which are usually manned by three people, two salesmen and one back up, usually a Prop.

### Game System Stuff

Scribe are backed by DarkNight.

Their main workshop is buried deep beneath the ruins of a disused chemical plant on the fringes of 532, where it borders the Upper Downtown Sector 640. The workshop is home to the eighteen 'Scribes' who produce the forgeries, together with all of their equipment; computers, printers, laminating and photo equipment. The hide out is always guarded by five DN Civilian Converts and one Espionage Agent, along with eight to twenty gangers and maybe two or three Props.

The local gang, the 'Blitzers' have been thoroughly infiltrated by DN and are loyal to the needs of both DN and Scribe.

Scribe consist of the following personnel:

18 Scribes (forgers – manual and electronic).

20 'Salesmen' (use Civilian Convert bump SLA Info. to 6).

12 Drivers / Guards (use Props.)

20 Street Guides, touts and contacts for business, (use Mort Civilian).

The local gang, the Blitzers, number around 100, with each being armed with either a blade or a pistol. Their 'colours' consist of a pair of purple velvet trousers.

### What's The Real Form?

The head of Scribe is Pablo Sanchez, an ex-Operative turned DarkNight Espionage Agent (use Human NPC pp143 – bump Pistol to 8, Business Administration to 8). Pablo goes by the Street Name of 'PigPen'. Pablo's strategy for running Scribe as a 'business' is paying off, and the deception that they are merely in it for the money is well founded in the financial

success of the Soft Co., which has a turn over of roughly 30,000c a week.

Scribe are being used by DN as an experiment. DN have a high level 'mole' within the SLA Dept. of Forms who feeds them blank templates of originals and can acquire other templates from both the Dept. of Administration and the Dept. of the Environment. The 'copies' that Scribe sell are quite often as genuine as any SLA document.

DN intend to gauge the response from SLA to the counterfeit operation to see if it's worthwhile implementing on a much larger scale, over the whole of Downtown. To this end, DN are prepared to sink quite a lot of resource in to keeping Scribe going.

The DN backing of Scribe is a closely guarded secret. All DN personnel are acting as Soft Co. employees, making out the real motivation is purely financial. The Blitzers and the locals have no idea that DN are behind it all, though the gangs leader, 'Shotgun' Suzie Mann has her suspicions.

Anyone investigating Scribe will get the full co-operation of the Shivers and the Monarch officers in the area, though they will suffer a Bad Rep. from all of the gangs and citizens of 532.

### Scribe Prices

The SLA forms, permits and licenses needed in any WoP will be dependent upon how the GM runs SLA and where the monster of bureaucracy sits in their vision of the WoP.

Scribe will only deal in unis, street currency that they can launder through DN. Usually, a Scribe forgery will cost you between 10% and 20% of the original; remember DN are over resourcing the Soft Co. so the prices are not truly reflective of the market and business requirements for the success of a 'real' Soft Co., which would have to sell at between 40% and 60% of the 'true' price to break even and make a profit.

The pricing may be the first real clue as to the 'true' nature of Scribe.

## MEET N GREET

Bo Peep, the 714 Chagrin Operative, seconded to Karma, was interviewed by Frank Weiss during a break in the action at a siege at one of the LifeForce facilities in Suburbia Sector 592. All material is licensed to Inter-Com © 903 SD. Eye 4 Inter-Com, a fully licensed subsidiary of Third Eye.

FW: "Bo Peep, what's happening here?"

BP: "The outer buildings of the LifeForce complex have been struck, mortar fire, there are some terrorists in there now scavenging gear. How did you get here so fast? Where are the Shivers?"

FW: "Shivers are three minutes away...."

BP: "Shit. I see. You'd better find some cover then...."

FW: "Are you going in? How many of them are there, who are they?"

BP: "I think there are between eight and ten, classic DN strike pattern."

(Camera pans slowly over Bo Peep as he strains his muscles and flexes his limbs and tail....)

FW: "Eight to ten? And you're going in? Any last words....?"

BP: (*Frowns, looks puzzled,*) "Last words? No. Wait here I will be back...."

FW: "The small arms fire is pretty intense, they know you're out here, and presumably know you're coming in, is that the best plan you've got?"

BP: "Yes."

FW: "Ah. OK."

BP: "I am trained for this, this is what I do, they do not stand a chance, besides, I can't let them steal from my employers now can I?"

FW: "Puts a blot on the old resume...."

BP: (*laughs*) "Exactly.... wait here...."

(Camera picks up a FEN 091 Farjacket that has 'appeared' in Bo Peeps hand, the 714 leaps out from behind the low wall and charges.... camera pans to Frank Weiss....)

FW: "Well, I guess we'll just wait here then.... it should be all over one way or the other, pretty soon."

(Small arms fire intensifies, interspersed with louder, larger calibre fire, then silence, then screams cut short, then more fire, then more screams, then pause, then loud explosion.... Bo Peep appears leaping over wall, smothering Frank Weiss and cameraman.... very large explosion.... debris hits camera....)

FW: "What was that!"

BP: "Booby traps around storage containers, dumb fuckers, they never learn do they?"

FW: "You've got some heavy wounds there, you going to be OK? What happened?"

BP: "One of the sneaky little shits had a stolen Blitzer.... some people, no morals...."

FW: "How many were there?"

BP: "I got six, three killed in the explosion.... there was another, but I think he was Feral, he disappeared.... but I know what he looks like...."

FW: "Then I should think he's a worried man."

BP: "I'll do my best to keep him that way, but not for long."

FW: "Shivers are a minute away, thank you for the time and the brief chat. Can we meet again for a more 'formal' interview?"

BP: "Sure, whatever. Maybe somewhere a little quieter?"

FW: "That wouldn't be too hard."

(Bo Peep grins to camera, leaps small wall and charges off in direction of burning facility....)

FW: "And who said 714's were stupid? Certainly not me.... Feral's in league with DN, you heard it here first, stay tuned as we return to the studio for the second part of 'Dominos Of Doom'."

Bo Peep: 714 Chagrin Stormer.

SCL 7. Assigned to Karma.

2.8m tall, weighs 180kg. Walk: 1, Run: 2, Sprint: 4. 'Clamber' (Climb): 2.

Move: 103kg, Half M: 309kg, No M: 515kg.

STR: 23, DEX: 15, DIA 5, CONC: 7, CHA 3, COOL: 15, PHYS: 19, KNOW: 6.

Bo Peep has Level 3 Assertion Tendons, Quad Limbs (four arms), Lash Vertebrae (prehensile tail), Maul Claws and Teeth, Skeletal Enhancement Teeth and Elbow and Knee Quills, Surveyor Trans Optics.

Claws / Quills: DMG; 10, PEN; 3, AD; 1. (Includes STR Bonus).

Teeth: DMG; 8, PEN; 3, AD; 1. (Includes 0.5 STR Bonus.)

Tail: DMG 11, PEN; 4, AD; 1.

### Skills

Unarmed Combat: 15, Intimidate: 5, Evaluate Opponent: 6, Hide: 10, Sneaking: 9, Martial Arts: 9, Climb: 12, Acrobatics: 9, Blade 1-H 8, Tactics: 5, Detect: 6, Pistol: 5, Rifle: 6, Auto Support: 6, Throw: 6. Streetwise 4. SLA Info. 3. Rival Company 4.

Bo Peep usually wears 'customised' Striker Protection: P.V.: 4. I.D.: Torso 12, Arms / Legs 8.

He carries a concealed Farjacket beneath his clothing and attacks using mainly 'called' shots with his claws and FEN (loaded with AP). He is not above simply tearing people's heads off.

Bo Peep is seconded to Karma for the duration of an Orange BPN (new 'corporate' BPN type). His status as an Operative is "assigned to BPN."

Word on the street is that Bo Peep has found his ideal place in SLA, working on 'special' assignments for Karma. He has Good Rep. with six local gangs, due to his 'flexible' nature over minor offences, and Bad Rep. with local Shivers and Monarchs.

Now working solo, Bo Peep has only ever been in one squad; 'Tilt', an all Stormer squad that were disbanded by IA after an encounter with a Tempest cell in which two of the five Operatives were 'released'. IA and Cloak have a monthly review of Bo Peeps status, he needs to go for Psyche Evaluation every two months.

*Issue fourteen was helped greatly by the enthusiasm and the contribution from Chris Cotgrove, who also very kindly paid out of his own pocket for some artwork for TBP covers. Unfortunately, due to some 'shinannigans' from the artist, we don't have the covers available to scan. But we do appreciate Chris's help.*

*Sam Pay continues to be an ongoing help and inspiration, as does Whitt.*

*Issue fifteen is three quarters finished.*

*I look forward to having my doubts and suspicions about putting TBP in electronic format only quashed.*

*But I'm not holding my breath.... ☺*

*Max Bantleman, 2001.*