

Assassin Squad, Knives from the Dark

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WebMaster's Notes: This experimental warband is in FINAL development stages. It would be rare to have this warband tweaked and/or changed, but if something is suggested it would be taken on consideration for further enhancements. We encourage you to play test it and email us your comments. We will pass them along (with your name and email) to the author so further changes can be made.

Remember: Play the warband, write your comments and email them in... THEN you can complain. :P

Bright lights were dancing behind the windows of the castle, the sound of music floated on the wind. The count was having a dress ball and every one who was somebody was there. Extra guards were making sure the riffraff wouldn't disturb the festivities. They were doing their best, because this evening meant for each guard an extra month's pay. But all diligence notwithstanding, one of the guards was standing still near the guardhouse. Nobody had noticed he didn't do his usual rounds. Nobody saw the knife wound in his back. Nobody noticed the dark stain slowly spreading from under the guard cabin.

The Count was very pleased with himself. Everything worked as planned. His trade connections were established now and no one could resist him anymore. The Guild Master, Markuss, still could... at least in principle. But a visit late at night, after the ball, would make sure no opposition would be raised. A soft scraping made the count aware his was no longer alone on the high balcony. He dropped his goblet and at the same time he ran his rapier through the throat of his assailant. The blood from the goblet slowly mixed with that of the rat like assassin. "Skaven scum", the count muttered. "You do not know what you got yourselves into!"

A grin showed off the count's fangs and in one lightning fast move he cut down another black clad Skaven. Then his eyes started to sting and slowly a mist formed around him. As his skin blistered and he cried in pain, several other dark figures attacked. The count managed to kill another attacker but they were just too many and too swift. Two stakes hit his heart at the same time, one from the back and one from the front.

Earslicer recalled his assassins. They disappeared in the night. Before he left, Earslicer thanked the Horned One, the spray with holy water worked marvelously. But there still was the second contract; the night was not over yet. He turned around and looked over the city; trying to discern the next target. There it was the house of the Guild Master...



The Skaven always have used the Eshin clan as ultimate control instrument. But even those killers have specialists. After several missions certain Skaven are selected to operate in secret groups. The groups are called the hand of 13, though more often are just referred to as Assassin Squads.

These elite groups gain access to specialized weapons without restriction and are often used in dire situations. These groups are feared even within the Eshin ranks as they mean instant death if they appear.

It is said that even chaos flinches when they arrive...

Choice of Warriors:

An Assassin Squad warband must have a minimum of 3 and maximum of 12 warriors. You have 500 gold crowns with which to recruit your warband.

- ☛ Shadowblade: Your warband must include one Shadowblade! No more, no less!
- ☛ Silent Hunter: Your warband may include a single Silent Hunter.
- ☛ Black Knives: Your warband may include up to two Black Knives.
- ☛ Young snout: Your warband may include a single Young snout.
- ☛ Snipers: Your warband may include up to three Snipers
- ☛ Knives: Your warband may include any number of Knives

Special Rules:

- ☛ *Look Behind You!*: Assassin warband members (but not hired swords) are adept at ambushes and evasion. Subtract 1 from the initiative, down to a minimum of 1, of a model attempting to spot a hidden Assassin warband member.
- ☛ *The Boss*: The leader of the assassin squad is often the meanest and worse from the lot. He rules with an iron fist, causing fear and promising a share of the loot. The warband leader always must cause *Fear* (if possible). This means that if the leader dies and a successor is needed, you first choose between the heroes that are horribly scarred, or are fearsome. If that is not possible you choose like normal, but the new "leader" must get the fearsome skill as soon as he gets a skill-advance. This automatically disqualifies all heroes with no strength skills.

Starting Experience:

- ☛ A *Shadowblade* starts with 20 experience.
- ☛ A *Silent Hunter* starts with 12 experience.
- ☛ A *Black Knife* starts with 8 experience.
- ☛ A *Young Snout* starts with 0 experience.
- ☛ All henchmen start with 0 experience.

Assassin Skill Tables

- 🔥 Shadowblade may choose from the Combat, Shooting, Strength, Academic, Speed or Special Skills.
- 🔥 Silent Hunter may choose from the Combat, Shooting, Strength, Speed or Special Skills.
- 🔥 Black Knives may choose from the Combat, Strength, Speed or Special Skills.
- 🔥 Young Snouts may choose from the Combat, Shooting, Speed or Special Skills.

Assassin Equipment List

Assassins		Snipers	
<i>Hand to Hand Weapons</i>		<i>Hand to Hand Weapons</i>	
Dagger	1st free/ 2 gc	Dagger	1st free/ 2 gc
Club	3 gc	Club	3 gc
Spear	10 gc	Sword	10 gc
Sword	10 gc		
Fighting Claws #	35 gc		
Chain axe	10 gc		
Wyrd blade #	15 gc		
Weeping Blades (pair)	50 gc		
#: Only Heroes may use item.			
<i>Missile Weapons</i>		<i>Missile Weapons</i>	
Throwing Stars	15 gc	Sling	2 gc
Black Darts	15 gc	Throwing Stars	15 gc
		Black Darts	15 gc
<i>Armour</i>		<i>Armour</i>	
Light Armor	20 gc	Toughened Leathers	5 gc
Shield	5 gc	Shield	5 gc
Helmet	10 gc	Helmet	10 gc
Buckler	5 gc	Buckler	5 gc
<i>Equipment</i>		<i>Equipment</i>	
Black Venom #	10 gc *	Assassin Bullets	25gc *
Flash Powder #	10 gc		*: These prices are only at warband creation.
#: Only Heroes may use item.			
#: These prices are only at warband creation.			
<i>Silent Hunter Only</i>			
Kill Knife	15 gc		
Short Spear	15 gc		
Body Armour	15 gc		

Heroes

1 Shadowblade, 70 gold crowns to hire.

One of the upcoming masters in the Eshin clan... experienced, silent and deadly. He does not only depend on his major skills, but also can use an arsenal of exotic, but deadly weapons.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
6	4	4	4	3	1	5	1	7

Weapons / Armour: A Shadowblade may be equipped from the Assassin equipment list.

Special Rules:

- 🔥 *Leader:* Any warrior within 6" of the Shadowblade may use his Leadership value when taking Leadership tests.
- 🔥 *Fear:* the warband leader causes fear.
- 🔥 *Perfect Killer:* His skill with weapons allows the assassin to find even the tiniest wholes in an opponent's armour. This allows an extra -1 on armour saves, even with missile weapons.
- 🔥 *Vanish Into the Shadows:* The Shadowblades seem to have the uncanny skill to just disappear into the shadows, especially when their life is in danger. A Shadowblade may decide at the start of his combat round, if he is going to leave the battle at the end of that combat round. This means he makes a tactical retreat from the battle (so he is factually out of the game), with all consequences that come with it. This does not count as being OOA, it does not matter if the character is knocked down.

0-1 Silent Hunter, 50 gold crowns to hire.

Clear and simple: the specialist. There is always the one you never hear, never see and yet the enemies drop like flies... The Silent Hunter is such a specialist, he rivals the Shadowblade in skill, but not in politics, so he knows his place (does he?) and does what he does best.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
6	4	3	4	3	1	5	2	6

Weapons / Armour: A Silent Hunter may be equipped from the Assassin equipment list.

Special Rules:

- 🔥 *Shadow Infiltration:* As the infiltration skill, but he only has to stay out of hiding detection range. His believe in his skills makes him also immune to the al alone tests.

0-2 Black Knives, 40 gold crowns to hire.

The best fighters in a Assassin band usually fill the positions of rank by virtue of fear and respect. While an eccentric chieftain may be tolerated, or even admired, their lieutenants are invariably no-nonsense enforcers who know the right time to slip a knife between the ribs of an unruly underling. This same precision works also wonders on all enemies of clan Eshin...

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
6	4	3	4	3	1	5	1	6

Weapons / Armour: A Black knife may be equipped from the Assassin equipment list.

0-1 Young Snout, 20 gold crowns to hire.

The hard life of an aspiring Assassin gives a fairly low life expectancy, and injuries respect neither youth nor innocence. It is common for Assassin leaders to groom promising youngsters, usually as scouts and trackers while they learn to handle themselves in combat.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
6	2	3	3	3	1	4	1	5

Weapons / Armour: A Young Snout may be equipped from the Sniper equipment list.

Henchmen (In groups of 1-5)

0-3 Snipers, 35 gold crowns to hire.

The best way to tackle an assignment and kill the victim is just not to be seen. That is why assassins train snipers. From the shadows a projectile can be as deadly as the best knife in the back.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
5	2	4	3	3	1	4	1	5

Weapons / Armour: A Sniper may be equipped from the sniper equipment list.

Special Rules:

-  **Camouflage:** A sniper can shoot from hiding, he can be detected if the intended victim is hit and then a 3+ is rolled on a D6.

0+ Knives, 30 gold crowns to hire.

These are the backbone of Clan Eshin, often chosen for their prowess with close combat weapons. Or just for their tenacity and will to survive.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
5	4	3	3	3	1	4	1	5

Weapons / Armour: A Knife assassin may be equipped from the Assassin equipment list.

Special Rules:

- 🔥 **Dagger Specialist:** Due to the training and availability of daggers, they are considered the weapon of choice. Any attack made by a dagger on a charge that misses may be re-rolled, second result stands.

Assassins' Special Equipment

Chain Axe; 10 gc; Availability: Common

This is a typical assassin weapon, a small hand axe connected to a chain with a weight on the end. This weapon is used with both hands. It needs a high level of skill for the user but it can disable an opponent's hand weapon and simultaneously strike at the opponent. Roll to hit normally if you hit on a 5+ the opponent losses 1 attack (number of attacks cannot be lowered beyond 1) up until the start of your following combat turn. The user is able to choose which weapon he disables. It still functions as an axe so there is an -1 to armour saves.

Wyrd Blade; 15 gc; Availability: Common, Assassin Hero only.

This blade is made from a Wyrdstone and steel alloy, which slowly bleeds out a very corrosive liquid. Due to the slow bleeding most of the corrosive is gone after the initial blow. It allows the wielder to strike with +1S for the first round of combat. The blade still counts as a sword, so it confers a parry to the wielder.

Kill Knife; 15 gc; Availability: Common

These slender blades are used by skillful individuals to slip through armour and hit the opponent on a weak spot. This knife is +1 to injury rolls and ignores armour saves. Though to its small size it is treated like being at the users strength with a maximum of S4.

Body Armour; 15 gc; Availability: Common

This specialized armour covers all of the Skaven's (so not usable by other races) weak spots. It is especially developed from cloth to minimize noise. It offers a 6+ armour save with a re-roll once on failed saves.

Short Spear; 15 gc; Availability: Common

This is a much specialized Eshin weapon; it looks like a sword with a very long hilt. It can be wielded as a spear, or used as a sword. If used as a two handed weapon it confers first strike and parry. If used one handed it only confers the parry. It counts as a hand weapon in combination with a shield.

Assassin Bullets; 25 gc; Availability: Common

These are specially design sling bullets that wound better then normal stones. +1 to the injury roll.

Black Darts; 15 gc; Availability: Common

These small poisonous darts are coated in dark venom. They are small and have not that great an impact. But it makes them easy to throw, so often people do not see where it came from. S3 (S2 + dark venom, some creatures are immune to poison) Range 8". Small projectile: as the dart is so small it can be thrown from hiding, the user will be detected if the victim is hit and rolls a 4+ on a D6. They can be combined with *Knife Fighter*. No extra poison may be used.

Assassins' Special Skills

- 🔥 **Silent Strike:** As masters of camouflage the character is allowed to charge out of hiding and strike silently at his opponent and then he disappears into the shadows again. Roll a D6 on a 5+ the character is allowed to charge and attack. The opponent(s) may strike back. If uninjured, the character disappears to his original hiding place again. The distance from hiding place and back into hiding, may not exceed the characters maximum movement (2xM, or 3xM with sprint, thus if more then half of the movement is spent to charge, no hiding is possible anymore). If he fails the die roll he charges out and it is treated like a normal charge.
- 🔥 **Ultimate Kill:** The assassin goes for the kill-spot, which is almost an assured one way trip to the grave yard. The character in hand to hand combat forgoes all extra HtH-attacks and concentrates on one very well placed attack. The attack will be +1 to hit, +1 to wound, +1 on the injury roll. This skill can only be used if the character has 2 or more attacks on his profile. Does not work together with Ultimate specialist or strike to injure. Does not work with black powder weapons.
- 🔥 **Master of Poisons:** The assassin is a master in brewing up different poisons. If the hero does not search for rare items, he has the time to brew up 3D-1 portions of dark venom or black lotus. He can come up empty, but those are the hazards of trying these intricate things on the move. The portions are large enough for one weapon and need to be used for the next battle as they are less stable then normally purchased poisons.
- 🔥 **Shadow Defense:** As it is considered bad form to get injured on an assignment there are special defensive moves that make an assassin even better in surviving. The character is allowed to parry, with re-roll, with any weapon he uses. If the weapon already has the ability to parry, it is allowed to parry with an equal or higher dice roll, which can also be re-rolled.

- 🔥 **Ultimate Specialist:** These characters are so highly trained that they can use hand-to-hand weapons in a very efficient way. They gain +1WS and +1 on the injury roll. Does not work together with *Ultimate Kill* or *Strike to Injure*.
- 🔥 **Play Dead:** Sometimes strange things happen when people have the misfortune of running into Skaven assassins. A clearly dead corpse is not there anymore after the fight is over, or dropped weapons or treasures have disappeared. As well as being taught to roll with the blows, these characters are taught to feign death. When avoiding the full effects of a potentially lethal blow they play dead so they can escape undetected later. The character may re-roll a result on the serious injury table. If the Shadowblade has this skill he is even allowed to use his *Vanish Into the Shadows* skill when he is stunned. Or get back to his hiding place when using *Silent Strike* if he is knocked down.
- 🔥 **Infiltration:** A Skaven with this skill is always placed on the battlefield after the opposing warband and can be placed anywhere on the table as long as it is out of sight of the opposing warband and more than 12" away from any enemy model. If both players have models which infiltrate, roll a D6 for each, and the lowest roll sets up first.

Warband Development Progression

- 1.3 Initial warband submission.
- 1.4 Introduction story included; minor editing.
- 1.5 Small introduction included. Designer notes included.

Designer Notes

The assassins were meant for the "Storm over Chaos" aftermath campaign, as do the Grudgebearers warband. Go look for SoC_aftermath at Yahoo! eGroups for further information. {links pending}