MORT

SOURCEBOOK

PARENTAL
MATURE MATERIAL
ADVISORY

Wizards
OF THE COAST

SLA
INDUSTRIES

NIGHTFALL
DESIGN TEAM

The figure looked up from the twisted, bloody corpse. His head craned up at the storm-filled sky as, with mounting fury, the rain spat its hatred onto his grinning face.

Carelessly, he let the dagger fall into wet, messy entrails.

"AHHH....YOUR SENTIMENTS ARE APPRECIATED, OLD FRIEND!"

He laughed as the storm reached an angry peak.

"DO YOU LIKE MY HANDIWORK? SO BEAUTIFUL."

He stared down at the girl's broken body with an intense feeling of pride. The thunder roared in reply, but its deafening crashes fell upon ears long since closed.

"SAVE YOUR ANGER, TRAITOR! YOUR PATHETIC RAGE SHALL BRING YOU NO MORE THAN YOU HAVE ALREADY EARNED!"

Slowly, he allowed his composure to return, and the storm settled.

"I IMAGINE YOU MUST BE CURIOUS AS TO WHY I WOULD HAVE DONE THIS TO SUCH AN INNOCENT AND LOVELY PERSON."

The figure looked up expectantly at the dark sky; deathly silence met his measured gaze. He grinned unpleasantly.

"TOO BAD."

Instantly, the sky returned to being a mass of hatred, petty in its childish fury.

"OH, THERE, HUSH NOW. I WILL EXPLAIN TO YOU IN TIME, MY BELOVED BROTHER. IN TIME. I WILL ALSO PUNISH YOU FOR THE BETRAYAL YOU HAVE INFLICTED UPON ME. THERE SHALL BE NO MERCY, NO MORE PITY FOR YOU OR ANYTHING I HAVE CREATED IN MY LIFE! DO YOU HEAR ME, SLAYER? I COME FOR YOU!"

Bloody tears fell from the bitter face, in mimicry of the now-gentle rain. Gradually, the cold touch of the rain washed away the rage.

"NO, THERE SHALL BE NO MERCY NOW."

The voice was lower, steady now, and the head turned from the sky.

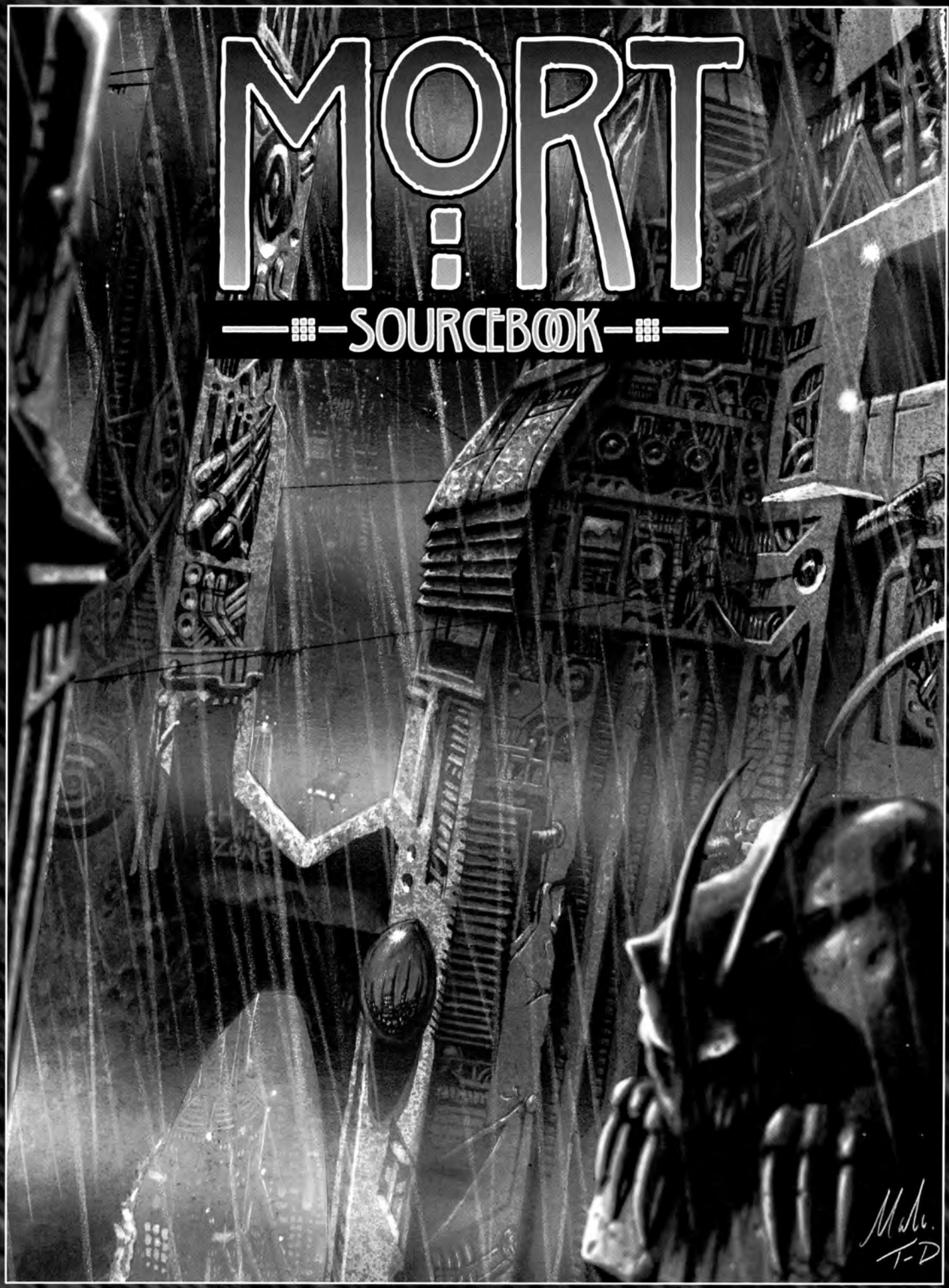
"AND AS FOR YOU, MY FATEFUL FRIEND, YOUR TIME SHALL COME AGAIN. ONLY WORLDS ARE TRULY IMMORTAL. WE ARE FAR FROM THE FINAL CHAPTER OF THIS STORY, MY SWEET."

Smiling to himself, he turned and walked away into the vast sandy plains. The storm rumbled on, seemingly eternal.

"Things would be better if people listened to us, instead of just themselves. If people could have just listened for one moment, there wouldn't have to be a Cloak Division to root out traitors that should never have turned. If people listened there wouldn't have to be Dispersal Units to prevent riots, produced by unnecessary causes and directed against the wrong enemy. If people had left White Earth alone, there wouldn't have to be a Stigmartyr to watch over our every waking breath for signs of the ultimate subversion.

"If people had ever listened to Slayer, I wouldn't have had to be made."

"Mongoose" Stormer SCL 2f.9


MORT
SOURCEBOOK

SLA INDUSTRIES

created by Dave Allsop

Writing:
Roy McRonald, Morton Smith, James "Freddy" Lennon, Lynne Wilson, Karen "Frother Woman™" Newis, "Tiny" Tim Dedopulos

Cover Illustrations:
Clint Langley

Graphic Design:
Chaz "El Presidente!" Elliott, David "Jimbo" Boylan

Layout:
David "Jimbo" Boylan, Chaz "El Presidente!" Elliott, Stuart "The Moog" Beel, Jared Earle

Editor:
"Tiny" Tim Dedopulos

Project Co-ordination:
Karen Newis

Mort, the tattered heart of SLA Industries, holds many secrets... **Overview** Page 6 - 10

Mort City - the largest urban area in the entire World of Progress. **Mort Sectors** Page 11 - 23

Mort Spaceport, the central focus for all Foldship travel to the planet. **Transport off Mort** Page 24 - 25

Living the corporate nightmare with Maxine Smith. **A Day in the life...** Page 26 - 27

The biggest and best nightclub/bar in the entire World of Progress. **The Pit** Page 28 - 49

It's alright for some... a look at what Mort City calls "Home". **Housing** Page 50 - 53

It's not all fame and fortune for the camera crews of Mort. **A Camera's Eye view** Page 54 - 59

SLA Industries' police force, the Shivers bear the brunt of a mad city. **Shiver Units** Page 60 - 87

The people of Mort share their views and opinions of each other. **In the eyes of others** Page 88 - 99

Lower Downtown is not known as a nightmare for the fun of it... **Goin' Underground** Page 100 - 107

The best educational facility on this or any world. **Meny** Page 108 - 113

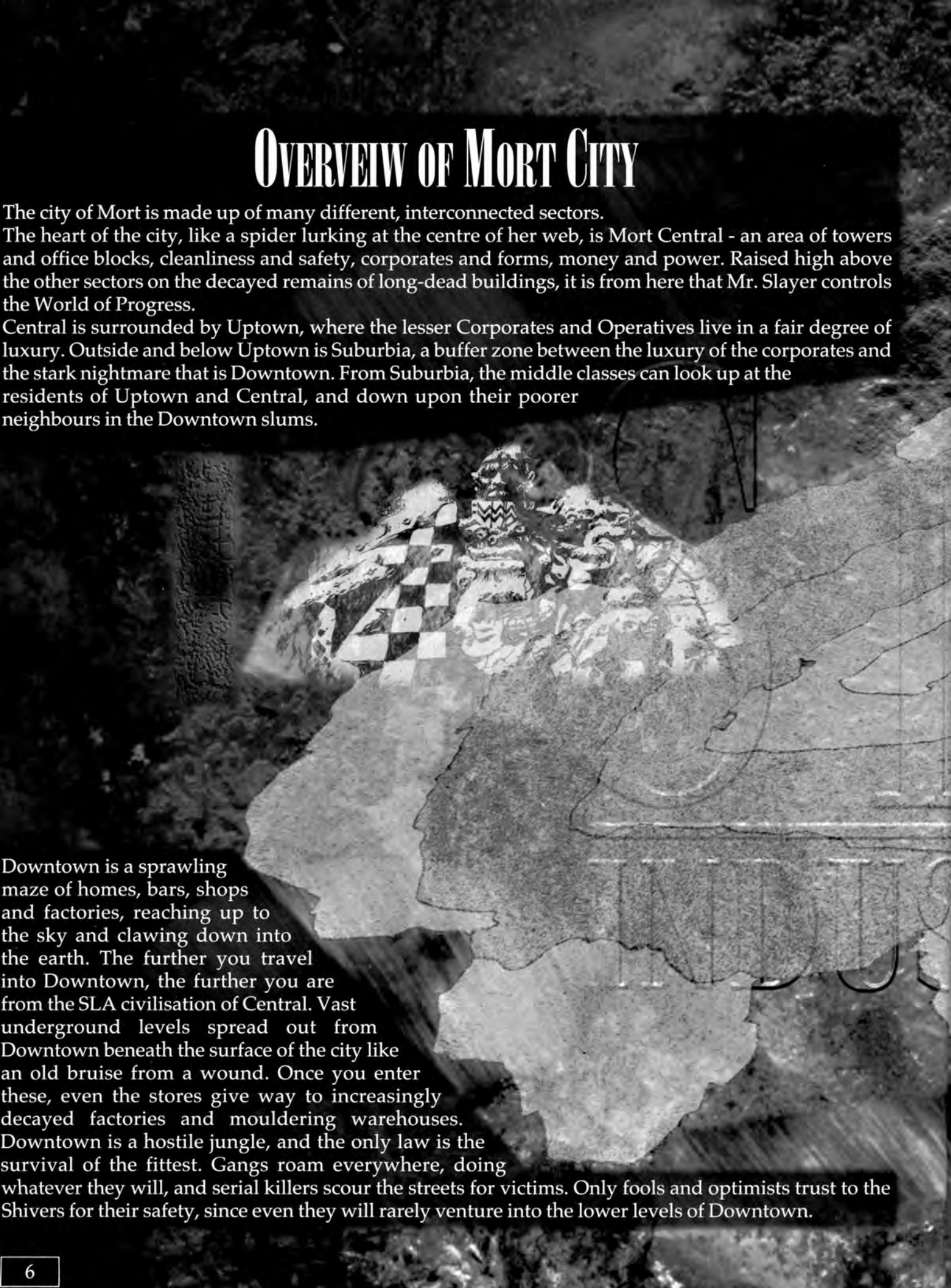
A city of whispers. Everything can be yours - if you'll pay the price. **Orienta** Page 114 - 123

A selection of fully-annotated missions for budding Ops of all types. **BPNs** Page 124 - 135

Glossary and Index Page 136 - 143

Overveiw of Mort City

The city of Mort is made up of many different, interconnected sectors.
The heart of the city, like a spider lurking at the centre of her web, is Mort Central - an area of towers and office blocks, cleanliness and safety, corporates and forms, money and power. Raised high above the other sectors on the decayed remains of long-dead buildings, it is from here that Mr. Slayer controls the World of Progress.
Central is surrounded by Uptown, where the lesser Corporates and Operatives live in a fair degree of luxury. Outside and below Uptown is Suburbia, a buffer zone between the luxury of the corporates and the stark nightmare that is Downtown. From Suburbia, the middle classes can look up at the residents of Uptown and Central, and down upon their poorer neighbours in the Downtown slums.



Downtown is a sprawling maze of homes, bars, shops and factories, reaching up to the sky and clawing down into the earth. The further you travel into Downtown, the further you are from the SLA civilisation of Central. Vast underground levels spread out from Downtown beneath the surface of the city like an old bruise from a wound. Once you enter these, even the stores give way to increasingly decayed factories and mouldering warehouses. Downtown is a hostile jungle, and the only law is the survival of the fittest. Gangs roam everywhere, doing whatever they will, and serial killers scour the streets for victims. Only fools and optimists trust to the Shivers for their safety, since even they will rarely venture into the lower levels of Downtown.

The unceasing rain is a silty, oily mud by the time it hits ground level; the watery light of the sun never reaches as far.

At the edges of Downtown crouch the Cannibal Sectors, waiting like malignant animals for the chance to attack. Downtowners may represent the very dregs of humanity, but the beast-like Carriens, mad ex-War Criminals and revolting cannibal families are far worse. Like other, more sinister monstrosities, they fester and grow in the darkness far from the harsh electric lights of the rest of the city.

Of all Mort's inhabitants, only the Operatives see the whole of the city, from the glass and steel towers of

Central to the broken, rotting buildings of the Cannibal Sectors. They pass through all places, concerned only with fulfilling their BPN. It has been said that all Operatives are in search of something, though some will deny it. Some seek knowledge, others power, but for most the motivation is much simpler. They want money, and the fattest profits always come from taking the greatest risks.

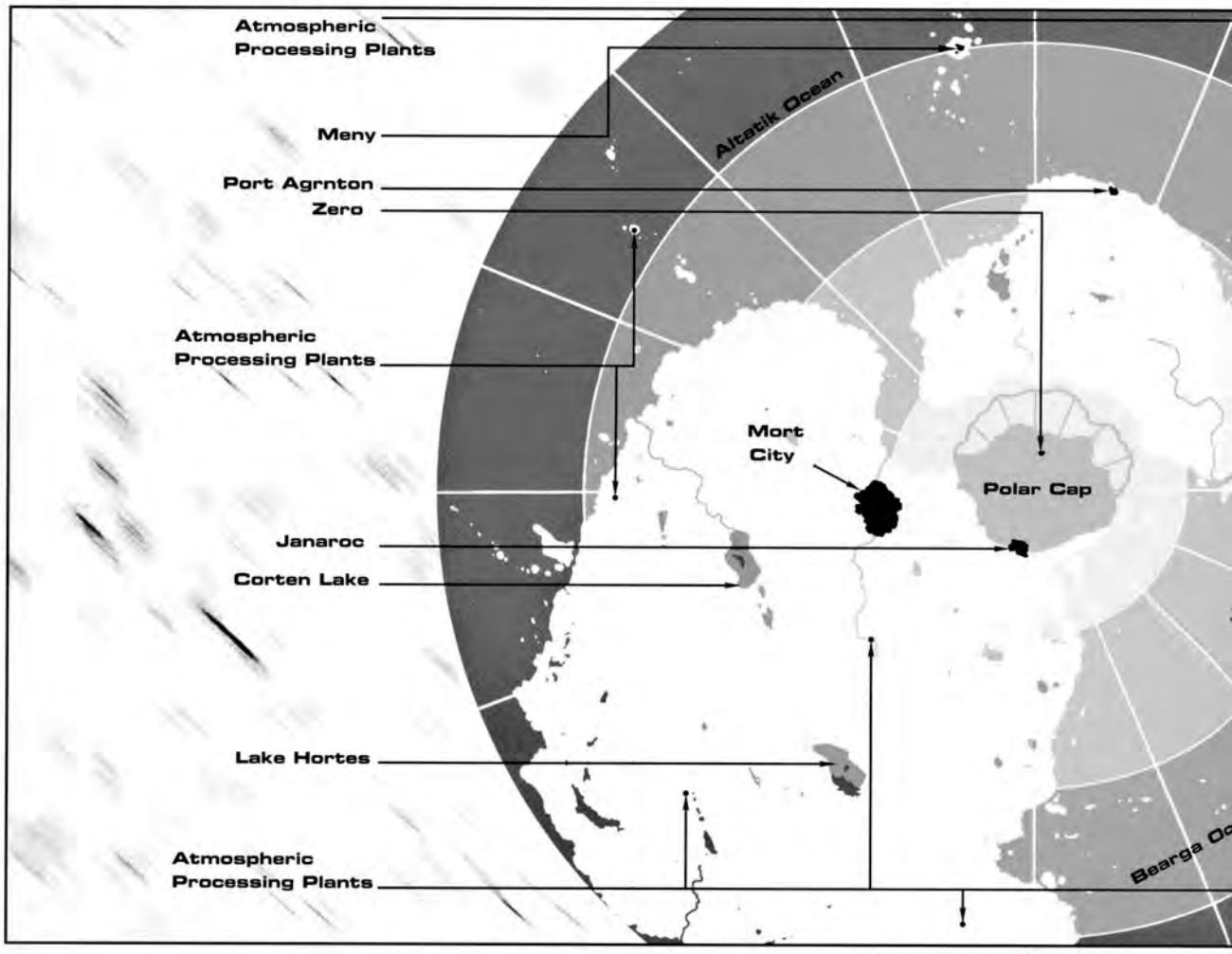
Whether an Operative is encased in a mass of powered armour and armed with enough weaponry to destroy whole streets should she see fit, or happens to be a slender youth with a talent for picking the truth out of the tangled web of opinions, all work for the same employer. SLA Industries is Mort as much as the bedrock of the planet is.

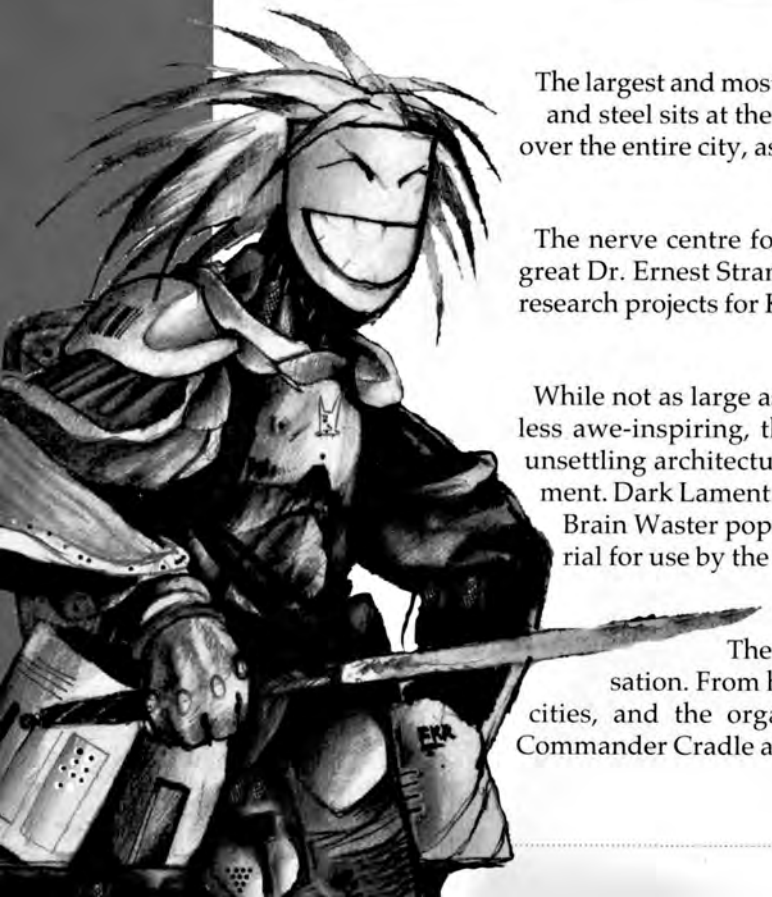
Its Operatives mingle with the corporates in Central just as easily as they stalk the deadly streets of the Cannibal Sectors.

Operatives seem as omnipresent as the rain. No matter where you go or what you do, you can guarantee that an Op won't be far away. The Downtowners call the SLA Operatives 'Slops' as a sign of contempt, but they still scream for them when a serial killer stalks their street, or when the Skin Trade steals a beloved daughter.

The Operative is essential to the survival of Mort, but is still regarded with distrust. Any Slop may carry Mr. Slayer's eyes in the form of a finance chip, and who can tell which one really works for Cloak Division - or even some darker and more secretive department? Needed they may be, but Ops are never trusted. To be an Operative is to be an outsider.

WHERE TO GO





SLA HEADQUARTERS

The largest and most impressive building in Mort, this huge pyramid of glass and steel sits at the very core of Mort Central. It holds a commanding view over the entire city, as and when the rain permits.

KARMA

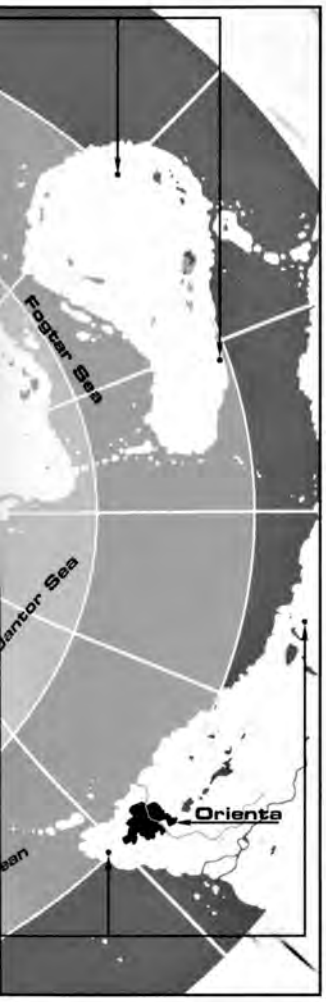
The nerve centre for the whole of the Karma department. From here, the great Dr. Ernest Strand oversees all management, production schedules and research projects for Karma facilities all over the World of Progress.

DARK LAMENT

While not as large as the Karma building, Dark Lament Headquarters is no less awe-inspiring, thanks in part to its eerie, disturbing atmosphere and unsettling architecture. Only the Ebon races feel at ease in such an environment. Dark Lament HQ has administrative control over the whole Ebon and Brain Waster population of Mort, and produces all Science Friction material for use by the two races.

SHIVER HEADQUARTERS

The central headquarters for the whole of the Shiver organisation. From here, Shivers are deployed in Mort and the surrounding cities, and the organisation of all off-world operations is directed by Commander Cradle and his staff.



The Department of Tourism Presents:

The Mort Guide

Central Park

The largest of the recreational facilities in Central Mort, covering over 18 square km of ground, Central Park is protected from the corrosive rain by a sealed protective dome. One of the few places on Mort where you can see real trees and plants. Admission is free.

Mort Spaceport

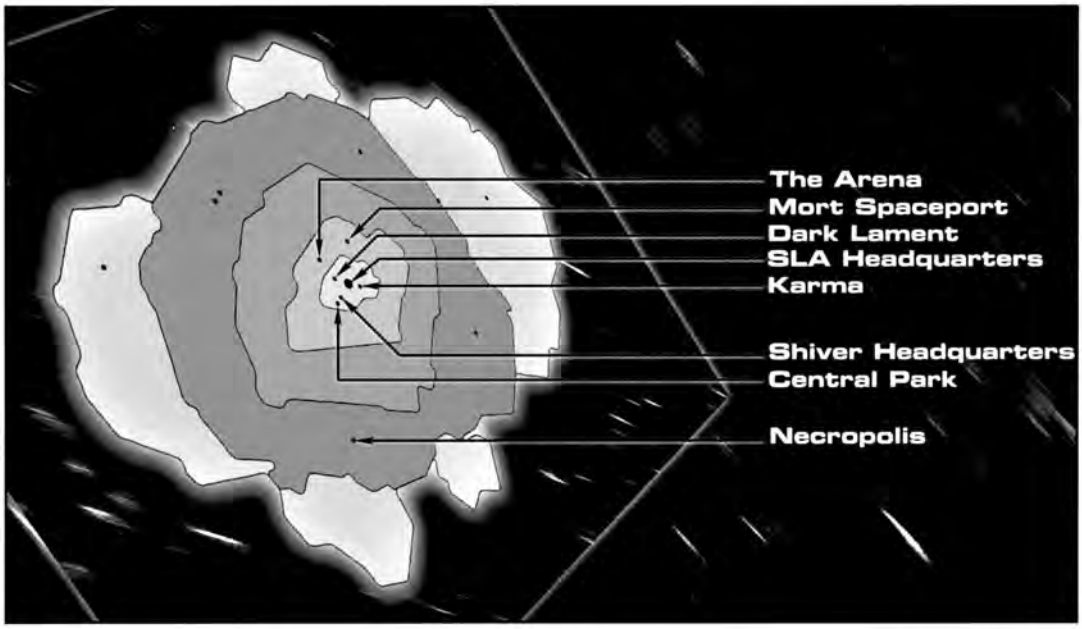
The Spaceport - or Fold Point, as it is sometimes called by Ebon Navigators - is instantly recognisable by its huge, famous Glyph tower. This tower acts as a beacon to all Ebon Navigators as they fold through space to and from their destinations throughout the World of Progress. Handling almost all of Mort's commercial off-world trade, the spaceport complex covers nearly six times the area of SLA Headquarters.

Necropolis

The biggest cemetery next to a Death World mass grave, the truly vast Necropolis towers 70 stories above ground level and a further 80 below it. Stretching more than 30km on each side, the Necropolis contains the remains of over 400 billion people in coffins racked ten-high to the ceiling of each floor.

The Arena

The biggest of Mort's sports complexes, the Arena is home to the Contract Circuit. Here the blood sports of a thousand worlds are staged, but none of them can live up to the pure, unadulterated excitement of the Circuit. The Arena also holds hundreds of 'normal' sporting events, and has extensive facilities for fitness training and entertainment.

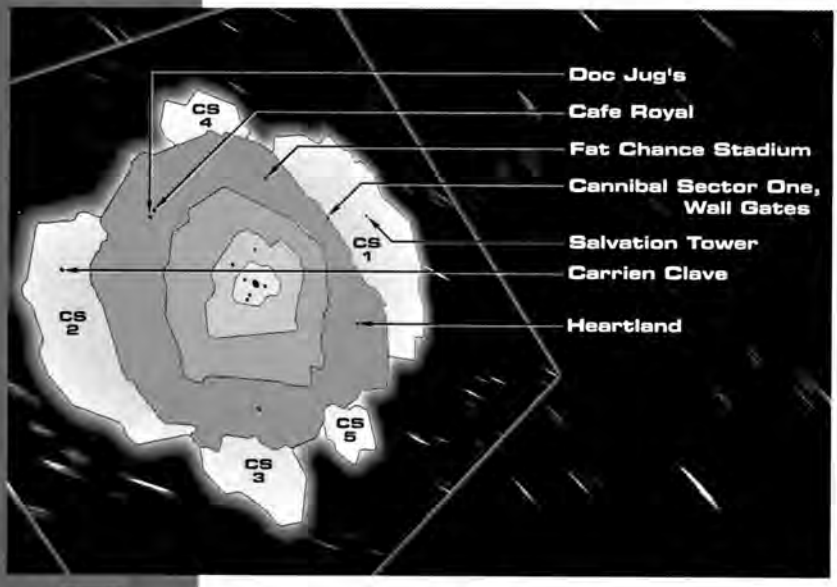


"Mort is a fascinating city. Filled with lively people and truly astounding architecture, you won't believe your eyes. You'll come back again and again"

Mr Michael Eisner, Head of Tourism 902SD

Please note that all areas listed here are on the top levels of Mort. Some areas of Mort may be at least 30 or 40 levels deep, and not all have been mapped in recent years. Please be careful as to where and when you travel. SLA Industries is not obliged to assist you if you run into trouble.

WHERE NOT TO GO



The Jungles

This is the slang name given to Mort's Downtown Sectors where the most notorious gangs hang out. They make the rules here, and only the most experienced SLA Operatives are stupid or brave enough to venture onto their territory.

Doc Jug's

In the heart of a notorious gang hotspot is Doc Jug's, a small curiosity shop with a reputation for selling unusual merchandise of all kinds. The goods for sale range from strange artefacts from distant worlds - as far off, some say, as White Earth - to love potions made by the Doc himself.

The Cafe Royal

The Cafe Royal is a Downtown club at the edge of the Strip, a massive 20-lane highway that is one of the most dangerous stretches of road in the whole of Mort. It is always packed - but only with members of the biggest Downtown gang, the Johannas. They control almost half of Downtown, and do not like outsiders of any kind. For non-members, the Cafe is a very dangerous place, and one best avoided at all costs.

Heartland

Heartland is another gang stronghold - four massive tower blocks clustered together. It is controlled by Krosstown Traffic, the biggest bike gang on Mort. KT are as possessive of their 'turf' as any other Downtown gang, and stronger than most. They especially dislike SLA Operatives, and have been known to hunt an Op down in force once they are aware of one in the area.

Fat Chance Stadium

Although this structure used to be a sports complex under construction, it now serves a different purpose. Fat Chance Stadium, as it has come to be called, ran out of money long before its completion date. The gangs took it over, and now use it as a meeting area for negotiations, grievances, ritual combats and similar purposes.

Cannibal Sector One, Wall Gates

The most famous route into the Cannibal Sectors, the gates to Sector One are a fairly common sight on the Vid. They are a good reminder of how much SLA Industries cares.

The gates are protected by a large force of Shivers, stationed along the wall like soldiers defending a castle.

Salvation Tower

Once to be a crowning achievement of SLA Industries, Salvation Tower is now just another thorn in its side, albeit a bigger one than most. Salvation Tower sits decaying at the centre of Cannibal Sector One, and is home to 'Digger', a massive and ancient Manchine who is widely regarded as the single most dangerous being on Mort.

Carrien Clave

This is the largest infestation of Carriens in any of the Cannibal Sectors. Reports indicate that the nest holds a population of just under 2,500. Why they flourish in this particular spot, no-one knows. This Clave is thought to be the source of most of the armour and weapons used by Carriens in Mort, and attempts at further investigation have always ended in failure and death.

MORT SECTORS

The city as a whole might be going through a few difficulties, with the rapid growth of the Cannibal Sectors and the ever-worsening decay of Downtown, but Mort Central is an impressive testimony to the strength and prosperity of SLA Industries. Viewed from above, the city of Mort seems like a rose sculpted from concrete and steel. The outer petals - the Cannibal Sectors and Downtown - are withering and corrupted, but the centre of the flower, the part that holds the secrets of life and growth, is fresh and strong.

Cynics say that Mort is dying, and that the cancerous tumours that are the Cannibal Sectors will spread inexorably through the rest of the city, but with a little surgery, Mort could be brought back to its former glory. Mr. Slayer will perform that surgery when he sees fit, and until then, the citizens will have to rely on the Operatives to keep them safe from the madnesses that are peering in from outside.

CENTRAL

Central is an island, separate from the sea of beings that surrounds it. It is an area of tall, shining towers, of elegance and money and, more than anything else, of power. Surrounded and protected on all sides by Uptown, Central can grow and thrive with little to fear from the less sanitised areas of the city.

Central is the oldest part of the city, but it is also the best-kept, being continually renewed. The buildings of Central are modern, built on the rubble of those structures they replaced. The underground factories are far below the surface here, buried deep under 900 years of dead architecture. The official word is that no way through exists; the levels are accessible only through Upper Downtown. Originally, Central was the entire city, but as the power of SLA Industries grew, so too did the city at the heart of the World of Progress. The other sectors grew up around Central, each one larger than the last, and took over the housing and everyday needs of the burgeoning population while Central dedicated itself purely to business. Despite the outward growth of the city, as time went on it became apparent that Central was still not large enough to hold all the offices, buildings and people needed to keep the company running smoothly. Thus it was decided to expand the Sector in the only direction that remained: upwards. Now, the towers of Central rise thousands of feet above the rest of the city.

Slayer's Office

The gleaming spires of Central loom over the other Sectors, monuments to the power and strength of SLA Industries. Standing head and shoulders above them all is the office of Mr. Slayer, set near the top of SLA HQ. This massive building, which seems to consist entirely of silver windows, can be seen from all over Central and, indeed, from most of the city. It is from this lofty vantage that Mr. Slayer watches over the city he has created.

Despite its fragile appearance, Mr. Slayer's office is the safest place in the whole of Mort. The building is cunningly shielded, and is able to withstand any force which can be flung at it. It is constantly guarded by the Black Chapter - a company of Operatives with specialist training (Slayer's personal bodyguards) - and a group of Necanthropes devoted to Mr. Slayer's safety. Electronic security checks at the doors and on all levels of the office building ensure that no-one without the correct SCL can bring weaponry of any kind inside. To counter any potential ebb-based threat, Glyph pillars created by Dark Lament block any use of Ebon abilities by individuals whose identities have not been pre-programmed into the pillars.

These measures are backed up by a small army of conventional guards, armed and armoured with the best equipment SLA has to offer.They hold full authority to eliminate any individual who is regarded as a threat to the security of SLA Industries generally, or to the person of Mr. Slayer specifically. Needless to say, very few people ever attempt to see Mr. Slayer without an appointment.

Mort Sectors

The wall

The rest of Central relies on security measures that are less drastic, but still extremely effective. The whole Sector is surrounded by a wall - not as large as the one dividing Downtown and the Cannibal Sectors, but more than adequate for its purpose. No-one passes through the gates without proper authority. The Wall, like the streets of Central, is constantly patrolled by Shiver units; less prominent, but just as effective, are the Dark Finders, who are always on the alert for signs of treachery and subversion. The streets of Central are wide, well-organised and clean, and the innocent can usually walk through the Sector in safety. Only the guilty really have anything to fear.

Slayer's Crib

BPN Halls exist all over the World of Progress, but the largest - and oldest - is in Mort Central. This BPN hall, commonly known as Slayer's Crib, is a large, square building located close to the middle of the Sector. The security check at the door is a familiar ritual, as Ops show their badges and hand over their weapons before being admitted to the vast hall, which is always packed with Operatives of all races.

The bureaucratic procedures of the Crib, like all other BPN halls, are lengthy and frustrating - it can take over an hour simply to register your arrival, and getting a Blue BPN can involve a delay of two more hours. The wait for a more dangerous and profitable BPN can be anything

from three hours to a full day, and highly trained Operatives can become impatient or even aggressive when faced with this sort of delay. A permanent security force of Shivers and Dark Finders patrols the Crib, ready to deal with the fights and assaults on desk staff that occur from time to time. Their presence - and the threat of the heavy fines and reduced SCL ratings that they can impose on the spot - helps to prevent things from boiling over too often.

Many Operatives have started using Financiers to save time and trouble. A Financier is a corporate who handles one or more squads of Operatives, dealing with all the paperwork and acquiring BPNs in exchange for 10% of the squad's earnings. This arrangement makes life easier for everyone: the Operatives don't have to waste half their lives looking at vidscreens and waiting to be called, and the Crib itself operates more smoothly because of reduced congestion and fewer arguments. A good team with a good Financier can more than make up for the cost of the service.

The Pit

It isn't just business that occupies the buildings of Central; the Sector also boasts the most advanced leisure areas in the city. An Operative looking for some rest and relaxation can find everything they might want in Central. From theatres to skin flicks, from bars and clubs to museums, every taste is catered for. These places are often large and always expensive, but the Ops who frequent them are never short of money.

By far the best-known of all leisure areas is The Pit, a night-club famous throughout the World of Progress. Every Operative visits The Pit at least once in his or her career, and most of them spend much time and money there. From the outside, The Pit looks like nothing more than a huge, ugly concrete bunker, but inside it is another world. There are dozens of different bars, restaurants and music venues, all gathered inside the one building; many Ops practically live there, going outside only to collect BPNs and carry them out.

There is no club anywhere in the World of Progress to compete with The Pit.

UPTOWN

Located around Central, Uptown is home to the majority of SLA Operatives, corporates and the richest civilians. Second only to Central in height and cleanliness, much of Uptown has a sterile feel that can be disturbing to those not used to it. It is dominated by the massive housing blocks that hold the bulk of the Sector's ever-increasing population. These blocks are squared-off towers of uniform grey, completely devoid of charm or individuality. This 'sanitised' feel is a masquerade; some truly debauched events occur within these buildings. Wild parties and even wilder lifestyles are

"I'm sure there is a easier way to get a BPN in this place. I mean it's bloody impossible to get one within 3 hours that isn't a Blue."

Hypron, Ebon, SCL 10.a, Slayer's Crib

hidden behind grey walls. On the inside, each of these buildings is completely different, as Operatives are given free reign on interior design (how far they can go depends on credit limit and SCL number).

Many blocks have developed a unique, and, occasionally, infamous character, drawing the like-minded through the reputation of the tenants. Many people refuse to even drive past the well-known Brain Waster blocks. The more expensive districts of Uptown can be a lot more attractive, with good accommodation coming as bungalows, detached and semi-detached houses, and even attractive mansions set in private grounds. These richer housing areas are amongst the loveliest parts of the city.

The streets and walkways of Uptown have been laid out in a rigorously ordered and geometrical plan, and are constantly patrolled by Shiver units and Dark Finders. Security in Uptown is almost as strict as that in Central, but the reason for this is different. In Uptown, the security forces are there primarily to control the inhabitants, rather than to guard them. Dark Finders make sure that their Operative brethren don't get any dangerous ideas, such as deciding that it might be more profitable to work against SLA instead of for it.

DarkNight, and many of the other Soft Companies, are happy to lure Operatives and other skilled personnel away from Mr. Slayer. They offer vast rewards to those foolish enough to believe their false promises, and there are always a greedy few who believe that they can beat the system. Since Uptown is home to virtually all Operatives, the Dark Finders are constantly watching it for subversives and terrorists. It is their vigilance that keeps Uptown safe, although many Operatives curse the Finders and their questions.

The Arena

Uptown boasts a few leisure facilities to accompany its housing, and the most famous of these centres is the Arena. The Arena is a huge auditorium where Operatives, corporates and civilians alike gather to watch blood-sports of a hundred different kinds taking place in its vast central ring or any of the myriad smaller ones. Everything from boxing to animal fighting goes on inside the complex, and millions of Credits may be bet on the outcome of each fight. One of the more popular new attractions is a series of fights involving DNA Altered Canines and Felines, specially created in company labs to kill one another in the ring. Nothing, however, manages to come even close to the popularity of the spectacular Contract Circuit fights, where Contract Killers battle for the audiences and the live vid broadcasts.

The Arena has no entrance fee, but management takes a cut of every bet placed on the events. Miss Gwen Myers (SCL 4A.1) runs the Arena, and has done for the last six years. In that time, she has turned it from a high-cost venue into one of the Recreation and Entertainment Department's most profitable developments.

The current hero of the Arena is a woman who goes by the unlikely name of Blue Sky. A Frother of the McGiver clan, Sky is both figuratively and literally a living advertisement for Nuke Tendon. She has been fitted with teeth, claws, quills and both elbow and knee implants, all of which can be retracted. Her entry into the ring has become something of a ritual, and never fails to drive the crowd into a mad frenzy of blood-lust. Sky walks into the Arena dressed in her clan colours, with her braids and dreads all tied neatly into place, and all her implants fully retracted, so that she looks almost normal. As soon as she reaches the ring, she extends her implants, shakes out her dreadlocks and lets loose a wild battle-cry as the implants tear through her clothes. This transformation never fails to drive the crowd wild, and Sky thrives on the adoration of her fans. To this date she remains unbeaten, but it can only be a matter of time before someone faster and stronger comes along to claim her crown.

The Academy

Uptown is home to a large number of bars catering for corporates and the richer civilians. Most Operatives tend to prefer the more exciting night life of Central, and as a result Uptown bars have developed a reputation as staid, somewhat dull places. Despite this, it can be useful for an Operative to spend time in the bars of Uptown, since they are a very good place to make corporate contacts. The Academy is a favourite watering-hole for many Financiers, who come here to compare squads and swap stories. A squad looking for a Financier would be well advised to go into the Academy one evening and spread a bit of money around; any Financier who doesn't take notice of free-spending Operatives isn't worth talking to anyway.

The Fast Food War

Uptown has an enormous number of fast-food places, dealing in everything from the usual pizzas, burgers and kebabs to a tempting range of small animals for the peckish Wraith Raider. All these places seem to get by solely on the trade of SLA Operatives and corporates, and all of them offer a home delivery service. The average price of a fast-food meal is 1 Credit, or 2 Credits for home delivery - It costs more for Wraiths who like their meals to arrive alive.

Delivery people can often be seen speeding around the city streets on their small bikes with meals packed in thermal panniers, and rivalry between the various fast-food operators is intense. Most delivery services have a 'fast or free' policy stating that there will be no charge for a meal that takes more than 15 minutes to arrive, and competitors often resort to sabotage and even ambushes to delay a rival's order and cut their revenue. False ordering has reached epidemic proportions, and Shiver units often have to break up riots between rival fast-food employees.

The war is starting to get out of hand, and there is no longer any guarantee that an order will arrive on time, if it arrives at all. Many customers are calling for SLA Industries to put an end to the conflict, but it remains to be seen whether anything will be done. Some believe that Mr. Slayer will simply let the fast-food suppliers drive each other out of business, leaving the last survivor with a monopoly; it is the kind of market-forces solution that he has been known to favour in the past.

SUBURBIA

Suburbia is the more expensive of the mainly civilian Sectors, and there is no doubt that it is the safer of them by far. It is similar to Uptown in that it is mostly residential, but there the similarity ends. The vast majority of Suburbia's residents are civilians, with a scattering of low-ranking Operatives forced out of Uptown by accommodation shortages.

As well as the residential blocks, Suburbia is home to the main surface-level manufacturing areas of Mort. Huge tracts of land are taken up by factories that produce a multitude of products for sale both in Mort and across the World of Progress. These factories provide work for many millions of civilians, and are vital to the economy of Mort. Unfortunately, they are also a

prime target for Soft Companies terrorists. Suburbia is an easy mark compared to Uptown and Central, and subversives put a great deal of time and effort into disrupting the smooth running of the Sector.

While Suburbia is safe compared to Downtown, it still harbours many threats to SLA Industries. The children of factory workers run wild in the streets, forming themselves into pale imitations of the Downtown street gangs, indulging in widespread acts of vandalism and petty crime. Sometimes things get out of hand and Operatives have to be called in to keep the peace. Dark Finders are rarely seen in Suburbia, but Shivers are common.

The gangs that are a minor nuisance by day become braver under cover of darkness. Not content with the vids supplied by SLA Industries for their entertainment, they seek greater thrills, speeding around the streets and walkways of Suburbia on skateboards, bikes, or whatever is available; the greater the danger, the greater the rush.

Some of these juvenile offenders have taken to racing across the walkway from Wilkins Shopping Mall to the Edwin Randle Housing Block. Almost a kilometre long, the walkway is suspended more than a hundred metres above the ground. It used to be fully automated, but the conveyor mechanism broke down and has never been repaired. The kids race their bikes along the narrow walkway, trying to push each other over the edge and not caring if anyone gets in their way. So far, there have been over a dozen fatalities as juvenile bikers and innocent pedestrians plummet into the crowds below. In time, the walkway will be closed off, and the racers will go somewhere else.

Security Problems

A patrolled wall divides Suburbia from Downtown, but psychopaths and other criminals still make their way into the Suburbia by night. There is a definite security problem, and things are getting worse. Most Operatives blame the sewers. There are hundreds of kilometres of sewer beneath the city, intertwined with the factory and warehouse complexes, and it would be impossible to secure the whole system. Current estimates are that as much as 70% of the sewer system is unmapped. Quite apart from the sheer scope of the sewers, a major difficulty in mapping the network is the range of creatures that live in the septic tunnels. Rats, feral pigs and other, worse animals are rumoured to use the dank tunnels as a hunting ground, but they are a small threat compared to the psychos, DarkNight mercenaries and other assorted crazies who crawl through the sewers to target-rich Suburbia. Many residents have appealed to Mr. Slayer to deal with the problem, but so far the only response has been the issuing of a few more BPNs for Operatives to go on clean-up missions in the sewers. It remains to be seen whether this will make a difference.

Crime in Suburbia has been rising steeply over the last few years, and it seems that intruders from Downtown are the main cause. More Shivers and Operatives have been assigned to patrol Suburbia, but no matter how many law enforcers are in the field, there will always be more criminals ready to replace those who are stopped. Most disturbing is the sharp increase in the numbers of serial killers hunting on the streets of Suburbia; until recently, they have been content to plague the dregs of Downtown. There is great speculation about the cause of this increase in crime, and no-one has yet found a definitive answer. There is little doubt that someone or something is inciting the criminal elements of Downtown to move their activities increasingly into Suburbia. The all-important questions of who is doing this - and how the trend can be reversed - remain unanswered.

DOWNTOWN

Downtown is home to the lowest members of Mort's society. Those who cannot or will not find work seem to gravitate to the slums of Downtown, and once they enter the poverty trap there, they have very little chance of ever escaping it. Structurally, Downtown is a huge, sprawling maze of narrow alleys, rusted walkways and litter-strewn streets. Below level one (the ground), dark, claustrophobic alleys slowly give way to dark, claustrophobic tunnels, draughty caves and deep pits. The only real difference between Downtown immediately above and below ground - apart from the more industrial nature of the underground levels - is that you're more likely to suffer floods. Over the years, the ground itself has largely been removed, and the boundaries between levels are tenuous at best. It isn't until level 20 that you find a ceiling above you at all times. The map changes hour by hour as tunnels and buildings collapse through neglect, walls are breached and shanties are built out of

the rubble and garbage. No-one - not even SLA Industries - knows every part of Downtown. The buildings are crumbling, the streets, alleys and tunnels are littered with drunks, junkies and crazies, and the sky is a luxury that can be seen only by the lucky few, even above ground. The underground levels extend out beneath the entire city, and are all thought of as Lower Downtown. No people live officially in these essentially industrial areas.

For the residents of Downtown, home is a dangerous place. For visitors, it's worse. The locals do not take kindly to outsiders nosing around. Inexperienced Operatives are often shocked by the lack of co-operation they receive while trying to protect these civilians or investigate the murder of one of their neighbours. Downtowners have no love for Slops, as they call the SLA Operatives, or for company employees in general. Much of this dislike is rooted in jealousy. For the average Downtowner, life consists of sleeping, watching the vid and spending SLA's weekly benefit of 40 unis on drink or drugs. Employment is a thing that happens to other people, and there is nothing to do but stare blankly at the designer violence beamed out to them through the vid. Little wonder that violent crimes are on the increase, and that there is no respect for Shivers and Operatives in Downtown. Every day, the citizens see law enforcers slaughtered by the more flamboyant serial killers, and the authorities react by making the Operatives look and act more and more like the serial killers and lunatics they are trying to stop.

For some time now, Downtown has been caught in a plummeting spiral of violence and crime that no-one seems to be able to break. For most, crime is the easiest source of money; for many, it's the only career opportunity available. Some see it as a means of getting rich enough to escape from Downtown, though this is a dream that very few realise. Shiver holding cells are always full of Downtowners who have committed some petty crime, and the number of citizens in prison is rising. Downtown is threatening to go completely out of SLA's control.

Upper And Lower Downtown

Downtown cannot truthfully be considered as a single Sector, since it has a complex regional structure of its own. The most significant division is between Upper and Lower Downtown. Upper Downtown is made up of the areas closest to SLA eyes - furthest above ground level and furthest away from the Cannibal Sectors. It is not plagued by creatures from the Cannibal Sectors to the same extent as Lower Downtown, but is still by no means safe. It is full of street gangs, psychopaths, DarkNight mercenaries, organised crime and serial killers, and suffers frequent attacks from the more daring Carriens.

Lower Downtown is the area that sees the least daylight and suffers most from flash floods. The constant rain backs up in the sewers from time to time, and after particularly heavy storms the water can build up enormous pressure in the drains of the lowest levels. Sometimes it breaks out, sweeping up through the subterranean levels, carrying away everything in its path. Anyone who is not quick enough in reaching ground level or above is swept away by the rushing wall of water and debris. The worst floods can carry hundreds of bodies down through the sewers to the Cannibal Sectors, where packs of Carriens gather at the outlets after every storm. Occasionally, a particularly unlucky citizen may survive the journey into the Cannibal Sectors, and arrive conscious.

Some parts of Upper and Lower Downtown are further divided into unofficial subsections - over 800 of them at the last count. The residents tend to form groups along cultural lines, and over time these groups have formed themselves into distinct areas with individual lifestyles and customs.

Paradise

One of the largest subsections is called Paradise by its residents, and compared to many of its neighbours, it deserves the name. At the best end of Upper Downtown, set against the perimeter wall around Suburbia, Paradise is never bothered by flash floods, and few Carriens venture this far. Unfortunately, Paradise has more than its share of serial killers. This may well be because the media are more willing to send personnel into this relatively safe section to cover stories, meaning that the lunatics get better publicity if they indulge their revolting interests in this area.

The Bayou

At the other end of the scale is the subsection known as the Bayou. Deep in the bowels of Downtown, the Bayou is separated from Cannibal Sector One only by the security wall with its 24-hour Shiver presence, and suffers

constant raiding by Carriens, scavengers and the mutated animals that creep up from the sewers at night. Only those who cannot find a place for themselves elsewhere will come down to the Bayou, and no-one is ever turned away. The residents of the Bayou help anyone to settle there as long as they do not rock the boat, and examples of every culture in the World of Progress can be found here.

The leaders of the Bayou are a group called the Cabal, and these people act as a kind of improvised town council for the residents of the section. The head of the Cabal is a young Orientan known only as the Lady of the Right. Skilled with Tarot cards and - according to some reports at least - a powerful witch, she commands the residents of the Bayou through fear and awe.

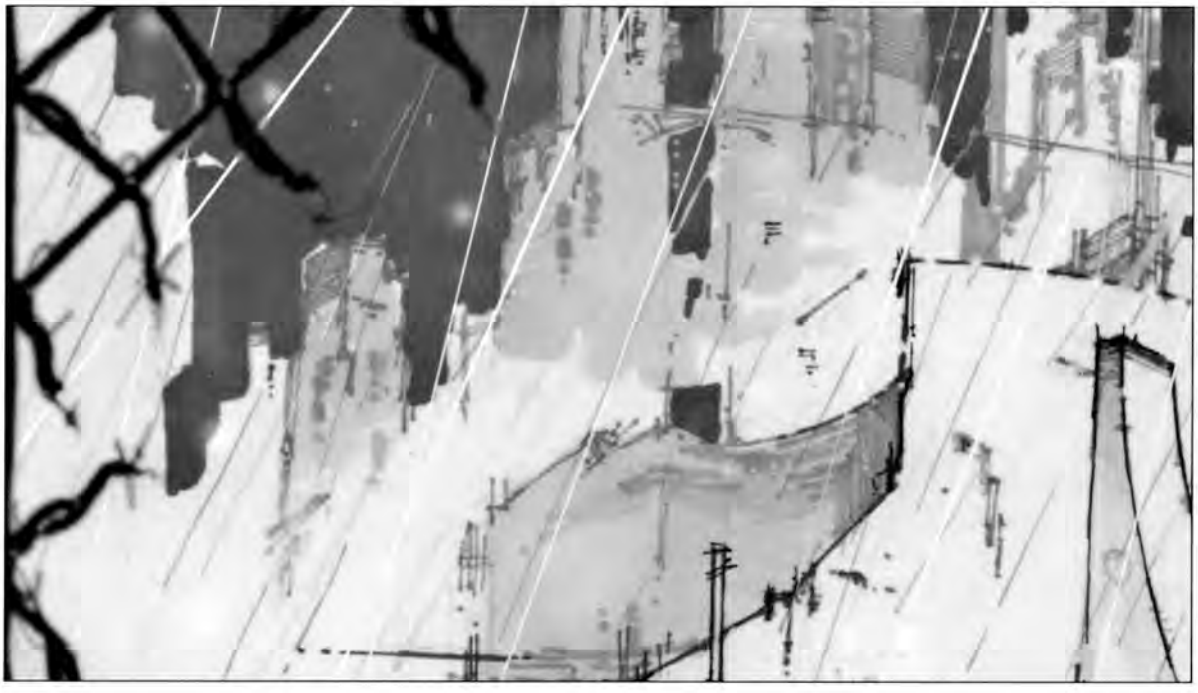
Fat Chance Stadium

Everyone knows of the many gangs that roam through Downtown, and of the savage rivalry between them. Few outsiders know of the existence of a place where all these gangs can meet on neutral ground.

Development Stadium, as it was originally named, was one of a number of initiatives begun in the days before SLA Industries decided that attempts to improve Downtown were uneconomical. It was to have been a huge sports complex, with indoor and outdoor arenas, full-size athletic tracks and pitches for various sports. SLA policy on Downtown changed before the complex could be completed, and it was left, half-finished, where it stood. It is now little better than a ruin, abandoned and avoided by all who do not wear gang colours.

Fat Chance Stadium, as they call it, is a safe ground for all of Downtown's gangs, and it is used for meetings to resolve territorial claims and other grievances - the only such location in the whole city. Meetings between the leaders of the city's major gangs take place about once a month, with each gang taking turns to hold the chair - although that is rather too formal a description of what goes on - and act as arbitrators. Without these meetings, Downtown would dissolve into perpetual anarchy as the gangs fought each other for whatever they could get, and ultimately the gangs would wipe each other out. The stadium's neutrality only extends to gang members, however; anyone who ventures there without the protection of gang membership is in extreme danger.

Once a year, every gang in the city will send delegates to the stadium, which is filled to its design capacity and beyond by street punks wearing the different colours of their gangs. At these yearly meetings, which can go on for days, the lesser gang leaders are allowed to have their say without having to worry about being overshadowed by the larger gangs. The meetings are very chaotic, disorganised affairs, but problems that might otherwise have sparked off major gang wars get resolved without bloodshed. After the meeting is over, there is a 12-hour amnesty for delegates to return to their own turf before normal hostilities are resumed.



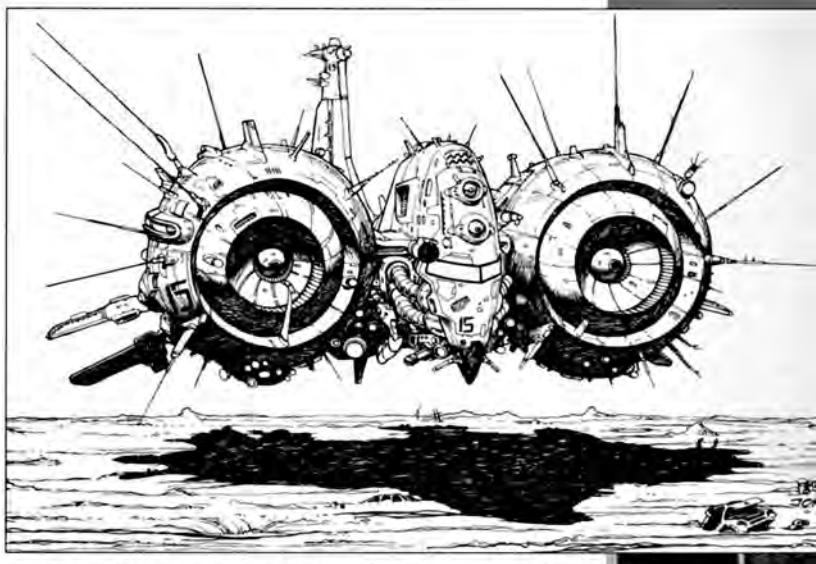
The Black Market

Anything can be bought in Downtown, for a price. The black market can supply weapons, drugs, luxury goods, forbidden knowledge; virtually anything in fact, provided the buyer has enough money and the right contacts. Guns and drugs can be bought on almost any street corner, but for more exotic items a would-be purchaser must find a supplier. Most have multiple identities, and nearly all have other, more legitimate businesses as fronts. All are protective of their privacy and suspicious of prospective customers who approach them without proper contacts and referrals.

To avoid problems, the buyer must spend some time establishing a presence on the black market, and building up contacts. This is a risky business at the best of times; everyone is on the lookout for undercover Operatives, and suppliers will run a surface check on a buyer. If the check turns up anything suspicious, the buyer is likely to be found face-down in a gutter, if they are ever found at all. If the check is satisfactory, the buyer will be contacted and the deal arranged. DarkNight are behind the majority of black market deals that go down in Downtown, and they skim their greatest profits from this area of activity. SLA has tried to shut down the black market on more than one occasion, but every time it is suppressed, it returns as healthy as it was before. A stronger effect on the black market is being generated by the new upsurge of Scavs - scavenger bands of all species - who are rising up out of the lower levels and making off with everything they can find.

THE CANNIBAL SECTORS

Since the fall of Salvation Tower in 300SD, the Cannibal Sectors have been a deadly wasteland, avoided by all but the most foolhardy. These five Sectors are the remains of the outer districts of Mort, but they bear little resemblance to the large housing areas that they once were. Now, the Cannibal Sectors are tracts of broken land, littered with the crumbling remains of the tower blocks, housing tenements and walkways that were destroyed when Salvation Tower fell. Amongst these skeletal remains dwell the cannibal families for whom the Sectors were named. Many of the vid-channels forget about the cannibals, focusing their reports instead on the more fearsome-looking and photogenic Carriens - but to those who are forced to travel through the Cannibal Sectors, it is usually the cannibals themselves that are the greatest threat.



During the day, the Cannibal Sectors are relatively quiet. Airborne Shiver units patrol the skies above the ruins, but even they are not safe; swarms of giant insects abound in the Sector. A swarm will readily attack a SCAF, clogging engine intakes and blinding the pilot. More than one Shiver's last report has been of a dark cloud approaching upwind. On the ground, little stirs other than the occasional unlucky Operative with a mission in the Sectors. Below ground, however, the Cannibal Sectors are a hive of activity. Sewers and tube tunnels are home to cannibals, Carriens, serial killers, Scavs, mutant pigs and the most feared of all residents of the Cannibal Sectors, the Manchines.

Once darkness falls over the wastelands, things begin to liven up. Serial killers and DarkNight mercenaries travel into Downtown, using the sewer systems as their own personal roadways. These dangerous madmen creep through the slime and refuse of the tunnels, armed with guns and flares to ward off the pigs and rat packs that haunt the tunnels, praying that there will be no floods until they reach their destination. More dangerous than floods, pigs or rats, however, are others of their own kind. Serial killers do not take kindly to the DarkNight mercenaries using their paths, and fierce conflicts break out whenever representatives of the two groups meet. Carriens also use the sewers to sneak into Downtown, and will attack anything they encounter, be it human, rat, pig, alien or other Carriens.

Night also brings thousands of cannibals from their hiding places. In the relative safety of darkness, they wander across the rubble of the Sectors looking for food - which in their definition is anything that moves. Cannibals from other families are a dietary staple. When two groups meet, the fighting is vicious, and is followed rapidly by dinner.

The cannibals are driven purely by their hunger, being too stupid and desensitised by their nightmarish existence to know fear or pity. Clad in rags from previous victims and wielding crude clubs and knives, the cannibals wander the Sectors in family units, usually ranging in size from 5 to 20 individuals. As they run through the concrete jungle, the cannibals sing their strange war-chants; each family has a distinctive song that only they use, and the chants rise in volume and pitch as the cannibals sense they are getting close to making a kill.

Manchines, serial killers and DarkNight mercenaries lurk in all of the Cannibal Sectors, though they are adept at avoiding detection if they wish to do so. There is no way of telling just how many of these creatures make their lair in the ruins, but it is thought that their numbers are steadily growing. SLA holds strong hopes that the Domino Dogs, the latest product from Karma, will be a great help in keeping down the number of creatures that wander around outside the walls of Downtown. All Operatives are reminded of the standing reward of 10 Credits for every documented kill of a Carrien; cannibals carry a lesser reward of 2 Credits per head.

Sector One

Each of the five different Cannibal Sectors varies in the exact ratios of its inhabitants by species. Sector One is probably the most notorious, being dominated by the ruined Salvation Tower and the presence of the Manchine known as Digger. The ruins in this Sector are relatively undisturbed by cannibals and Carriens, possibly because the Manchine does not like intruders; certainly everyone who has been fortunate enough to return from a visit to Sector One has talked of a feeling of being watched for the entire time that they were there.

While fewer in number, the cannibals and Carriens of Sector One seem to be more advanced than their brethren in other Sectors. The cannibals are more likely to make use of weapons robbed from their victims, and analysis of Carriens packs shows a larger proportion of Greater Carriens than in other sectors. Carnivorous pigs are rare, but rats of all sizes are common, roaming the streets and tunnels in packs hundreds strong. All sources agree that Sector One is the most dangerous of the Cannibal Sectors, and there can be no doubt that the danger increases closer to the monumental folly that is Salvation Tower.

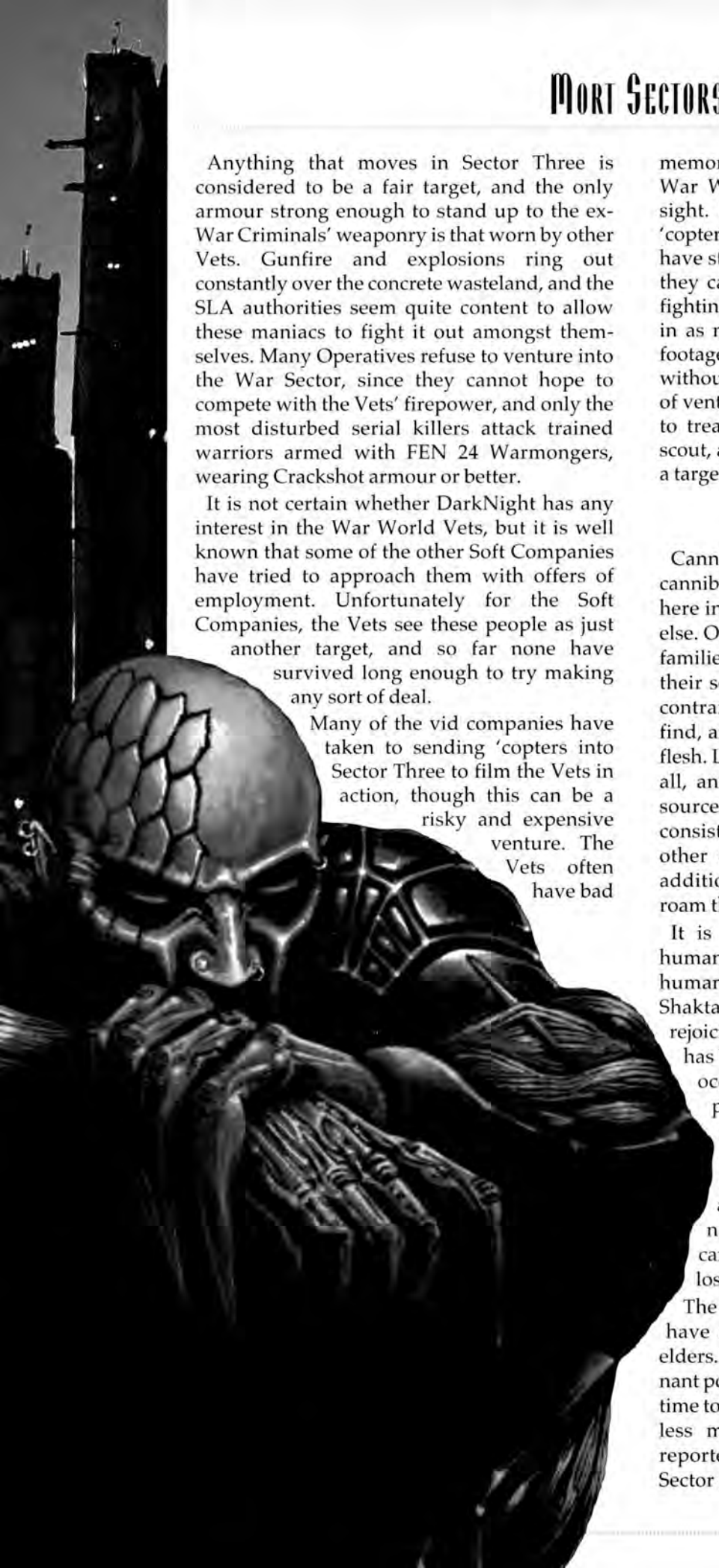
Sector Two

Sector Two is infested with Carriens, and vicious monsters are the undisputed rulers here. Dozens of Carrien clans roam the rain-soaked streets, and all raiding bands have at least one Greater Carrien with them. Many of the Carriens of this Sector wear armour, and a few have been known to carry and use powered weapons taken from the bodies of those Operatives, serial killers or DarkNight mercenaries who have been unfortunate enough to cross their path.

The leader of the Carriens in Sector Two is a huge monster, with large horns that have been sharpened to razor points and dyed blood-red. It is these horns that have given the creature the nickname by which it is known among Operatives and others: Bloodhorn. From its lair in a maze of old subway tunnels at the heart of Sector Two, Bloodhorn sends out an army of mutant Carriens to enforce its will. It is known to be highly intelligent for its kind, and there have been reports of it using automatic weapons; certainly it is now accepted that the Carriens in this Sector are better armed, armoured and organised than those from elsewhere. For now, the numerous stories and rumours of Bloodhorn's abilities have not officially been confirmed, but if they are proven to be true, then the Carriens from Sector Two will have to be taken very seriously indeed.

Sector Three

The third of the Cannibal Sectors has been virtually taken over by the ex-War Criminals in the last few years. These confused, traumatised and psychotic veteran warriors return to Mort and quickly end up in the Cannibal Sectors; for some reason known only to the Vets, most of them have gravitated to Sector Three, which has become known as the War Sector. The Vets have virtually wiped out the Sector's Carriens and cannibals - not intentionally, it seems, but rather as incidental casualties in the Vets' own private wars - and those few non-Vets that do remain move through the Sector very carefully indeed.



Anything that moves in Sector Three is considered to be a fair target, and the only armour strong enough to stand up to the ex-War Criminals' weaponry is that worn by other Vets. Gunfire and explosions ring out constantly over the concrete wasteland, and the SLA authorities seem quite content to allow these maniacs to fight it out amongst themselves. Many Operatives refuse to venture into the War Sector, since they cannot hope to compete with the Vets' firepower, and only the most disturbed serial killers attack trained warriors armed with FEN 24 Warmongers, wearing Crackshot armour or better.

It is not certain whether DarkNight has any interest in the War World Vets, but it is well known that some of the other Soft Companies have tried to approach them with offers of employment. Unfortunately for the Soft Companies, the Vets see these people as just another target, and so far none have survived long enough to try making any sort of deal.

Many of the vid companies have taken to sending 'copters into Sector Three to film the Vets in action, though this can be a risky and expensive venture. The Vets often have bad memories of helicopters from their time on the War Worlds, and will shoot them down on sight. Rather than go on losing expensive 'copters and trained crews, some vid companies have started to pay Operatives for any footage they can bring back of the Ex-War Criminals fighting. Especially violent fire-fights can bring in as much as 20 credits for every second of footage that goes to air, but such profits are not without risk. Quite apart from the normal risks of venturing into the War Sector, the Vets tend to treat anyone with a camera as an enemy scout, and their relative strategic importance as a target rises accordingly.

Sector Four

Cannibal Sector Four is the main base of the cannibals, and these sub-humans can be found here in much greater numbers than anywhere else. Once darkness falls, hundreds of cannibal families venture out onto the surface and begin their search for food. Despite rumours to the contrary, cannibals will eat anything they can find, and do not restrict themselves to human flesh. Life in the Cannibal Sectors is harsh, after all, and nothing can afford to overlook any source of sustenance. The cannibals' diet consists mainly of carnivorous pig, rat and other cannibals, varied occasionally by the addition of the feral cats and wild dogs that roam through the Cannibal Sectors.

It is true, however, that cannibals prefer human flesh if they can get it. The capture of a human - or, for that matter, of a Wraith, Shaktar, Ebon or Stormer - is a signal for great rejoicing. The cooking and eating of the victim has been developed into an almost religious occasion by most cannibals, although the precise nature of the rituals will vary from family to family. Nearly all cannibals prefer a living victim, so that they can extend their rituals to killing as well as cooking and eating, but they will have no hesitation about killing a quarry who cannot be taken alive without unacceptable losses to the family.

The cannibals live in their family units, and have no loyalty to anyone other than their elders. It is usually females who hold the dominant position within a cannibal family, but from time to time an exceptionally cunning and ruthless male will rise to power. The largest reported family lives on the far side of the Sector and is led by an ancient woman who has

over 10 children and 40 grandchildren. The matriarch is grossly fat and never leaves the home base, which is in the ruins of a gauss station that was once part of the Northern Bypass line. Like most cannibals, the family has developed the eating of human flesh into a ceremonial experience, and many elaborate preparations have to be carried out before the cannibals eat the flesh of a victim. Chanting and dancing go on for many hours before the matriarch cuts the raw heart out of the victim's body and holds it above her head, crushing it in her massive fist and drinking the blood that cascades down. Then, and only then, the victim is cooked and the feast will begin.

Each cannibal family has a home base consisting of one particular area of the sewers or subway tunnels; they return here at dawn, and will fight with insane ferocity to defend their home from anyone brave or foolish enough to intrude upon it. A cannibal home base normally consists of a sleeping area and an eating area; the eating area is the more important, and tends to be larger and better defended.

Within the twisted culture of the cannibals, it is vitally important that the cooking fires are never be allowed to go out. The younger members of the family are invariably given the task of collecting fuel while the elders go out hunting. If the fire is ever allowed to die, the cannibals believe that the place is jinxed. No matter what the dangers, they will no longer live in a place that has been cursed by a cold fire-pit. They will immediately seek out a new home base, and will not eat until they have found one and kindled a new fire there - or, more commonly, until they have attacked a neighbouring family, driven them out and taken over their fire. This strange belief is one of several reasons why cannibal families seldom spend long in any place, but are constantly on the move.

Sector Five

Sector Five is the smallest of the Cannibal Sectors, and is not dominated by any one group. However, the creatures that live in Sector Five are not quite like their cousins in the other Sectors; most of them have some kind of physical mutation. After the fall of Salvation Tower in 300SD, the centre of Sector Five began to subside, slipping gradually into the depths of the earth until the Sector had become a large bowl-shaped depression, the centre of which was quickly filled by the never-ending rain. Now, a large, fetid lake - known, paradoxically, as Clearwater - occupies the middle of the Sector. The water drains away slowly into the depths, ensuring that the lake's level remains reasonably constant, never overflowing despite the unending rainfall; the pollution remains, however, growing ever stronger as the rains bring more and more poisons. This concentration of pollution is believed to be the reason for the unusually large number of mutations that are found in Sector Five.

These mutations have been growing stronger and more obvious over the last hundred years, and many of the creatures now found in Sector Five are only vaguely recognisable as members of their original species. There are cannibals, for instance, who have grown extra limbs, tails and even heads. Some have developed features that more closely resemble reptiles than the humans they once were, and there are persistent rumours that some cannibals have even developed psychic powers - and more, that those powers come close to rivalling the abilities of the Ebon race.

The Carriens in Sector Five are afflicted with a much larger number of mutations than in any other area, but, perhaps unsurprisingly, the metal Manchines do not appear to have been affected in any way.

The wild cats and dogs that are found in great numbers throughout the Cannibal Sectors often grow to an unusually large size in Sector Five, and many of them also show signs of increased intelligence. These animals hunt through the Sector in large packs and will tackle anything they encounter, relying on weight of numbers to bring down victims that are often much larger than themselves.

Clearwater itself is home to a gigantic squid-like creature with pearly-white skin and razor-sharp claws down all of its dozen tentacles. No-one knows what this creature originally was, but there is little doubt that the polluted water of the lake has turned it into its present monstrous form. One rumour claims that it is no more than an unusually super-mutated Carrien, but few who have actually seen the thing agree. The rare Ebons who have encountered the Clearwater monster and returned claim to have sensed a great deal of both intelligence and pain in the creature, but they also say that the beast is completely insane.

TRANSPORT OFF MORT

The Mort Spaceport was finished in 2SD, some distance out from the growing city, to ensure it would be usefully located in years to come. Today it stands on the edge of Uptown, conveniently near to Suburbia, where a lot of its freight business comes from. The Spaceport is a desolate, depressing place, and even the massive crowds who use it, colourfully dressed as they are, do little to brighten the place up.

Mort Spaceport was built for functionality rather than for pleasure and enjoyment, and this architectural grimness shows. Today, its main use is the shuttling of passengers to and from the Foldships and large Ion-Drive ships hanging in orbit around the planet. Other usage of the site comes from shipments of freight and supplies, and from the occasional citizen rich & privileged enough to own a private spacecraft. Small Ion-Drive shuttles ship the passengers from the surface up to the waiting vessels.

The spaceport itself is extremely secure, and has never had a successful attack made against it by DarkNight or any other Soft Company or group. Dark Finders can be found patrolling the passenger terminals, always vigilant for any signs of subversive behaviour or terrorist activity. Shiver units patrol all other areas of the spaceport. As with all spaceports, the expensive shops here stock the best brands available throughout the World of Progress, such as the latest fashions from New Paris.

The spaceport is 12.5 Kilometres square, with the terminals in the centre and maintenance buildings and emergency services situated along the edges of each surrounding quadrant. The area between the terminals and service buildings is taken up by a vast array of landing pads for the many shuttles and freighters that stop here all day and night. At the very centre of the spaceport - with the terminals building constructed around it - is one of the most important landmarks on Mort, the Glyph Pillar named Besinkievkedo (Guidance).

The Mort Spaceport is a vast construction of dark grey concrete that appears to have risen out of the ground rather than to have been built. In the year 1SD, SLA Industries realised that they needed a fixed point of arrival for the fleets of ships and shuttles bringing materials down to Mort to expand the city and its manufacturing plants, as well as to provide the growing population with a facility for interplanetary travel. A Spaceport was the obvious answer to the problem.

Besinkievkedo

The pillar was built to provide the Foldship pilots with a beacon that they could use as a reference point (or Fold Point to the Ebons) when reality-folding through space. The pillar itself is 300ft tall and 60ft wide at the base, narrowing to 30ft at its top. Humans generally find it extremely disconcerting.

Planets to Visit

Polo:

The home world of the Wraith Raiders, Polo is a gleaming Ice planet that sees little in the way of traffic. Details of the Ice world - and how the Wraith Raiders came to be there - are few and far between. Polo guards its secrets jealously.

Dante:

Said to be "Hell incarnate", Dante is the largest war world in the World of Progress. This is where the real wars against the two major Soft Companies are fought. Once a beautiful planet, Dante has been scarred beyond recognition by centuries of struggle. Foldship or Ion ship access to this area is only possible with military clearance.

"The glyph pillar placed here by our lord Preceptor serves as a beacon to our kind as we travel through the barren emptiness that is space and reality. We trust in its guidance to bring us home".

'Void' Ebon
Foldship Navigator SCL6A

Kn'nth:

The birthplace of Shaktar society, Kn'nth is one of the few planets to survive the Conflict Wars. Still largely ignored by the World of Progress, Kn'nth holds strongly to its culture and religion. Every Shaktar can find peace here in the full nobility of their society. Mighty Ion-Drive ships are a common sight, but even they need permission to approach.

Static:

The original home of the Ebon race, Static is a place of unspoiled nature, untouched by progress. This is the Jewel in the Ebon Crown, a place of mystic beauty for a mysterious people. Foldships constantly arrive at the planet, transporting in via the energies of the Ebb.

New Paris:

A melting pot of cultures, New Paris is one of the most popular tourist planets in the World of Progress. Its young and vibrant culture is rivalled only by the beautiful architecture. New Paris City is rightly considered the fashion capital of the World of Progress, and all the truly sucessful styles are created here. SLA Industries rules New Paris, but with a chic lace glove. Far from the pressure of Mr. Slayer, New Paris is noticably tolerant with its population.

A DAY IN THE LIFE...

MAXINE SMITH

07:00 Woken by the alarm call from my office. Every day I ask to be woken at 07:30 and every morning the call comes at 07:00. Maybe I should forget the call and buy an alarm clock.

07:05 Enter the shower and take about 15 minutes to wake up properly.
There's nothing better than relaxing in the luxury of hot water and it is always a supreme effort to get out of the shower.

07:25 Breakfast: fruit juice, real coffee and, if I feel greedy, a bowl of cereal. I shouldn't really have the cereal, it plays havoc with the diet, but I will need something to eat before lunch.

07:45 Dressing and make-up. Never have the time to do my face properly but I do the best I can in the time that I have. I always wear a suit to work; it gives the proper impression both to my boss and to the employees. **Dress to impress.**

08:15 Cab. The cab that the office sends arrives to take me to work. The driver always tries to make conversation but I just don't have the time. I have to go over the day's schedule that the office faxes to me.

08:50 Arrive at the office. My secretary hands me the notes for my first meeting, which is at 09:15. The woman is a treasure, I don't know what I would do if she left me. Just after the notes, she hands me a cup of coffee.
I would be completely lost without her.

09:15 Meeting. I have to convince a pleb from the Finance Department that we need a higher credit rating if we are to ensure a decent back-up service for the Shivers. We need more money so we can employ more people to keep the files in order. My office is responsible for keeping a complete record on anyone that has any contact with the Shivers and it is just not possible with the resources that I have at the moment. Trying to get a financier to understand that, though, seems futile.

10:20 End of meeting. That man is impossible. "In the current financial climate, I cannot authorise a credit input into your office." People like him infuriate me, but I'll get even. His name has gone down in my Black file and he'll get what he deserves, eventually. My secretary arrives with another coffee and some files for me to read through and sign.
A boring but essential part of the job.

11:45 Lunch. Today I'm taking an early lunch because I have a meeting with my boss at 13:30 and I want to be ready for that. I have arranged to meet Kenneth at Laurie's, the new cafe bar that has just opened in 376th Street.
Kenneth is sweet. He's not too bright, but I'm not interested in his I.Q.

12:05 Laurie's. Kenneth was early as usual. It's nice to see that he is as keen as ever. I ordered for both of us since he wouldn't have a clue. Kenneth spent most of the time pledging his undying love to me and playing footsie under the table. Just to make sure that he stays interested, I promised to take him out tonight. It was most amusing, watching him trip over his tongue as he left the cafe bar.

13:20 Office. Back at work and my secretary wants to know how I got on with Kenneth. It's hardly surprising that she's interested; she was engaged to him before I showed her what a rat he is. Anyway, she hands me my notes for the meeting with the boss and I brace myself for the storm. He wants a progress report on our new filing system and he is not going to be happy when he knows just how badly things are going.

15:45 After meeting. I do not believe what that bitch has done to me. The notes my secretary gave me had absolutely nothing to do with the filing system. They were the reports on the office sweepstake! I've been fired and it's all that hag's fault. No-one, but no-one does that to me. I will get her back for this and when I do she will wish that she had never clawed her way out of her diseased mother's womb.

18:10 Home. Would you believe that I had to get a public cab? The office said that company cabs were for company employees only. I don't know how I'm going to pay the bills. The rent's due at the end of the week and my company credit card has been cancelled. That bitch has screwed me completely.
I might even have to move out of my apartment into somewhere cheaper.

21:45 Home. The bottle's empty now, all the pills gone. I should have thought of it earlier, it's the answer to all my problems. No worries about

my apartment, no worries about cash, no worries about what my friends will think. I phoned Jeremy earlier and he didn't want to know me any more. Kenneth called to cancel our date. He said that he would be going out with my secretary instead, my ex-secretary that is. Can't believe that I trusted her, confided in her. Why would she do something like this to me? I never did anything to hurt her, nothing. It's getting harder to think now, all the straight lines have blurred and the room's starting to spin. This isn't so bad, it's a lot better than trying to face everyone. I couldn't hold my head up again, knowing that the bitch had got the better of me. I can just imagine her now, out there with Kenneth, laughing at me, both of them.

22:30 I think that I ought to lie down now. It is getting very difficult to stand up and I don't want to fall and hurt myself. Silly really, worrying about getting hurt when I'm about to die. Always have been a coward, strange that I can admit that now. Never been able to do it before, not even to myself. Very hard to keep my eyes open but I don't want to close them because when I do I can see her and Kenneth wrapped around each other, on my desk, in my office.

23:40 There's a funny light in the room, don't know where it's coming from and I don't like it much. Don't like things that I don't understand. Don't understand where I went wrong, everything was going so well but now it's all over. All that time and effort wasted. Everything that I've done will be forgotten, no-one to remember me or to care about me. Like I never existed. Thought that I was someone important, but it looks like I was wrong about that as well. All I cared about was money and what people thought of me. Don't know why I bothered, all gone now, nothing left.

23:50 It's starting to hurt now. My stomach feels like it's on fire and that light hurts my eyes. Wish that I didn't have to die. So many things that I never did. Want to speak to my secretary, want to tell her that I forgive her, don't hold any grudges. Oh, it really hurts. Can't keep my eyes open, hard to stay awake but I don't want to die in my sleep.
I don't want to die on my own.
I don t want to die.

24:00.. 24:00.. 24:00.. 24:00.. 24:00..

THE PIT

There has always been a great demand for bars and night-clubs in the bustling and energetic world of Mort, and the city has more than enough of such places to suit everyone. Unfortunately, a distinct split exists in the population between Operatives and civilians, and this division used to cause many bar-room conflicts over which group had the most right to use a particular bar. Needless to say, the Operatives won virtually all these disagreements by virtue of their superior firepower. As serious feuds developed, the losses of skilled personnel and damage to company properties reached such a level that the issue came to the attention of SLA Industries

In the fall of the year 887 SD, Mr. Slayer commissioned the construction of a night-club that would be solely for the use of Operatives and corporates. Architects were consulted, plans drawn up and for ten months a 2 kilometre square area of Mort Central was fenced off as construction work went ahead. No expense was spared; the Transport Department office was amongst the buildings demolished to make room for the new development, and their whole operation was relocated on the other side of the Sector. There was a great deal of curiosity over what the bar would look like inside - from the outside, it resembled nothing more than a huge fusion-blast shelter.

Operatives queued up to enter the club on its opening night, and when the doors slid open all architectural disappointments were forgotten. The construction had largely taken place below ground level, and this was the largest, loudest, most extravagant club that had ever been seen in the World of Progress - The Pit was born!

THE VIEW FROM OUTSIDE

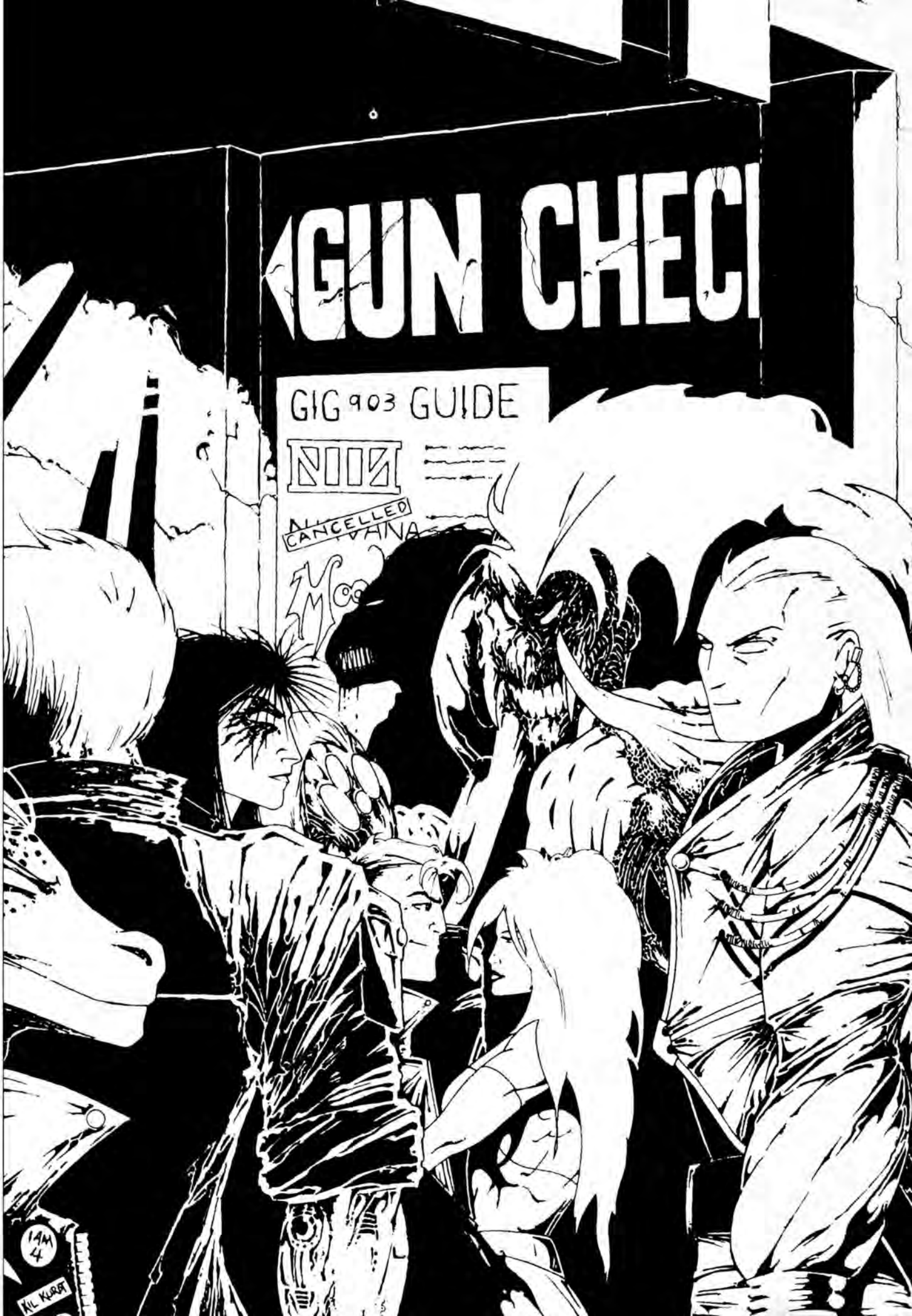
The only part of The Pit visible from the outside is the grey and forbidding entrance block. Known as Deth's Door, the block stands in the middle of a gigantic parking lot that boasts a capacity of 150,000. The wedge-shaped building is made of thick, featureless reinforced concrete, and does not present the outward appearance of being the busiest night-club on Mort. The front wall of the building is 240m wide, and this is mostly taken up by five sets of immense double doors mounted on gauss rails. Each door is 10m wide and 4m high; they are made from solid blocks of black granite, rumoured to have been brought all the way from the mines on the desert world of Karast. The words "The Pit" are laser-etched into the granite of each door in letters 2m high; below this, in smaller letters, is the inscription "Laseiate ogin sperenga voi ch'entrate", which translates into "all hope abandon, ye who enter here" in the Killan tongue.

At 8:30 every evening, the vast, slab-like doors slide silently open to admit swarms of party-goers into what is surely the most impressive monument ever dedicated to the art of having a good time. The Pit aims to cater to the tastes of all races, and management have greeted Karma's recent news of the new Operative Stormer variants - and the Vevaphons - with customary aplomb, and a promise to have appropriate facilities available soon. The bars close at 4:00am, and according to policy The Pit should be empty of customers by 4:30am. It can take longer to persuade some of the more persistent revellers to leave, even with The Pit's large, well-trained and tactful security staff.

DETH'S DOOR

Once the doors are opened, all customers have to go through an extensive security check before they are allowed into the club. This is the responsibility of a Shaktar called Deth and his staff of over 200 guards. A further 3000 guards are scattered around the various levels of the Pit, but this does not prevent regular fights from breaking out. Once through the vast front doors, customers must make their way across an entrance hall that is more than 200 metres long and just under 100 metres wide. This hall is filled with a zigzagging network of barriers that are designed to slow the flow of people, to avoid crushes and trampling. Forty security guards are on hand here, to ensure that there is not too much of a free-for-all as customers head for the check-in alleys. There are sixteen alleys in total, each with two lanes 150 metres long; one for entering The Pit and one for leaving.

The entrance lanes are lined with scanners and sensors to detect concealed weapons. Anyone trying to smuggle weaponry into The Pit is immediately stopped by the security guards,


GUN CHECI
GIG 903 GUIDE
CANCELLED
I AM 4
KIL KURA

and politely asked to hand over the weapon which they must somehow have overlooked. They are given an ultrasound tag, which they can exchange for their weapon upon leaving The Pit. The tags are colour-coded for race, and have a small bar-coder that is set to match the SCL badge of the Operative to whom they are issued; these precautions are intended to stop patrons using stolen tags to claim weapons that are not their own. A matching tag is placed on the weapon before it is taken to the security vault; when a weapon is claimed at the exit lanes, the customer's tag activates an ultrasound signal that guides the vault staff quickly to the matching weapon.

For those unlucky or careless individuals who lose their tags or are otherwise unable to reclaim their weapons upon leaving The Pit, Deth opens one of the doors every day at mid-day. Then tags found by cleaning staff can be matched with lost owners and embarrassed, hung-over Operatives can reclaim forgotten weaponry.

The only exceptions to this rule are natural weapons including teeth and claws, Karma implants and weapons belonging to Necanthropes. Necanthropes do not have to hand over any weapon, but misuse of this privilege is immediately reported to Preceptor Teeth.

Once the customer has passed through the security alleys, there is a final random security search before the stairs and escalators that lead down into the first level of The Pit itself.

BASIC LAYOUT OF THE PIT

All nine levels of the night-club are situated below ground, stacked on top of one another in an inverted cone. The levels are all circular and the first level - Stasis One - has a diameter of 600 metres. The next level, The Cave, is 540 metres in diameter, and each successive level is 60 metres smaller than the last. Treachery, the lowest level, has a diameter of just 120 metres.

THE WELL

The top seven levels of the Pit all have a large hole at their centre. The Well allows a view of the levels above and below, and many customers are perfectly happy to stand by it and watch the bustle going on around them. There is a high, clear barrier around the edge on every level, mainly to prevent suicides, murders and accidental deaths. Like The Pit itself, the Well is cone-shaped: 300 metres wide on Stasis One, with the diameter decreasing by 30 metres per level until on level eight, Sinokenon, it is only 90 metres across.

At the centre of the Well are the 32 gauss elevators which are the main means of transport in The Pit. Grouped around a Glyph Pillar that runs the entire depth of The Pit, the elevators can be reached by a number of walkways which stretch across the Well on every level. The walkways are completely sealed over with the same clear material that forms the barrier around the Well, for the same reasons. Even so, some customers are not comfortable walking across the vast drop, and there are up to forty escalators on each level, though these are nowhere near as fast as the elevators.

The view of the different levels and the tens of thousands of bodies is an impressive one and many people - especially those using Bliss - have been known to stand and stare down the Well for hours on end.

THE GLYPH PILLARS

The main structural supports in The Pit are the famous Glyph Pillars. These monolithic structures are 30 metres in diameter, and covered with intricate glyphs. These glyphs drain flux as soon as it is summoned for use, preventing any Ebon or Brain Waster from using or misusing their powers while in The Pit. Flux collected by these pillars is channelled down to level nine, where it is siphoned away and stored for use by the Department of Ebb.

Any member of the Ebon races who attempts to use his or her powers while in The Pit will experience an uncomfortable draining feeling as the flux is drawn out of their body and absorbed by the pillars. Some Ebons claim that the pillars work rather too well, and complain of being drained of flux without even summoning it, just by standing too close to a pillar.

STASIS ONE

The first and largest of the levels in The Pit is one vast night-club, known as Stasis One. The stairs and escalators from Deth's Door all lead into this level, so that all patrons of The Pit have to pass through here, no matter what level they wish to go to. This level's claim to fame is that it is larger than any other bar in the World of Progress, and has held up to half a million clubbers in a single night.

Four massive walkways span the Well at this level, stretching out to the gauss lifts. The edge of the Well and its walkways are usually crowded with people looking out over the lower levels. From Stasis One you can see all the way to Sinokenon on level eight, although it is so dark down there that it's not possible to make out anything more than indistinct shadows.

The Dance Floors

There are four separate dance floors, each about 150m long by 100m wide. Music constantly blasts out across the floors, and holographic laser displays cut through the smoky air. Stasis One has been dedicated to the art of dance in all its forms, and from 8:30pm when the doors open until 4:30am when The Pit closes, the dance floors are constantly in motion, and almost always crowded.

The eight Glyph Pillars on this level are positioned one to either side of the four dance floors, and as a result Ebons and Brain Wasters normally try to hog the centre of the floors. The only patrons who have no trouble finding space to dance are the Stormers; regulars at Stasis One leave the floors at speed as soon as the DJ starts playing industrial or hard-core music, before the Stormers lose themselves completely in the violent frenzy they call dancing.

For most of the night, the floors in Stasis One are crowded with dancers of all races - though it is unusual to see Shaktars, and few Wraiths can tolerate the heat for long. Stasis One is a sea of different colours and styles from all over Mort; dancers strive to outshine each other, often aided by the drug Lumo and elaborate DNA hallmarks. Many of the dancers use drugs like Alice to push themselves to new heights, and every night the staff have to carry out scores of customers who have literally "bopped 'til they dropped".

The Bar

The outer wall of Stasis One is one continuous bar nearly 2km long, which is constantly busy despite a staff of 1,000. Service is usually swift, though on the busiest nights, patrons may have to wait up to ten minutes simply to get to the bar. A further 500 staff work out on the floor, collecting glasses, emptying ashtrays and picking up litter; these floor staff also deal with any minor incidents that may occur. The 800 or so security guards assigned to this level only step in when things look to be getting out of hand.

The standard price for all but the most exotic drinks is 1 Credit, and they are served in lightweight, shatterproof plastic glasses that are not heavy enough to make dangerous missiles, and will not break to a sharp edge. The only food available on this level consists of light snacks such as crisps and nuts, but very few people come here to eat. Slosh is available in Stasis One at a cost of 2 credits per can and is extremely popular. Some patrons - mostly Frothers - hold competitions amongst themselves to see who can drink the most before falling over in a drunken stupor. The current record-holder is Jacko Derga, whose score stands - or rather, collapsed - at four and a half cans.

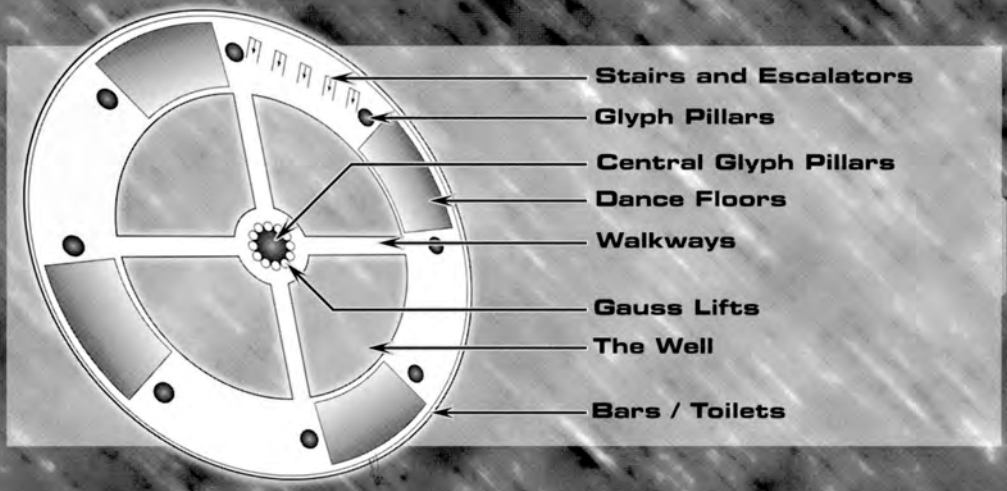
The Cage

Spanning the roof of Stasis One is the metal framework that holds the major lighting system for this level and the speakers for the dance floors. Known as the Cage, this network

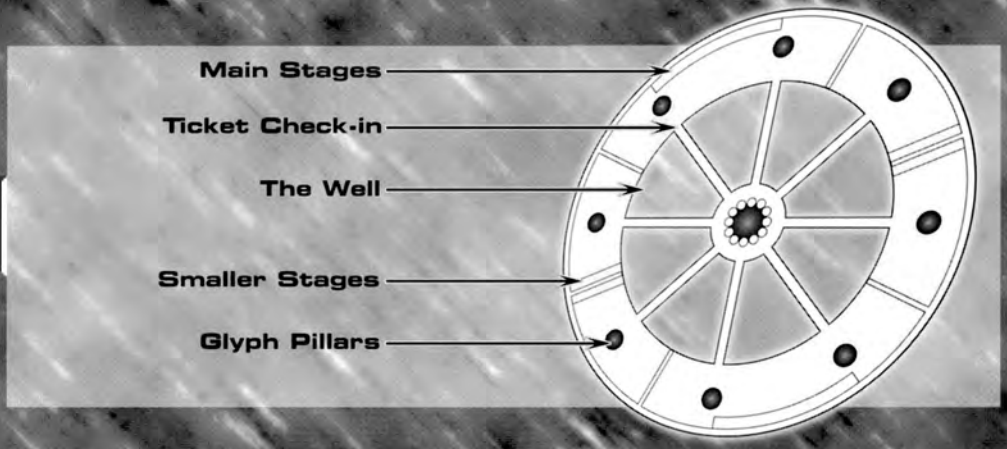
THE PIT

LEVEL 0: DETH'S DOOR

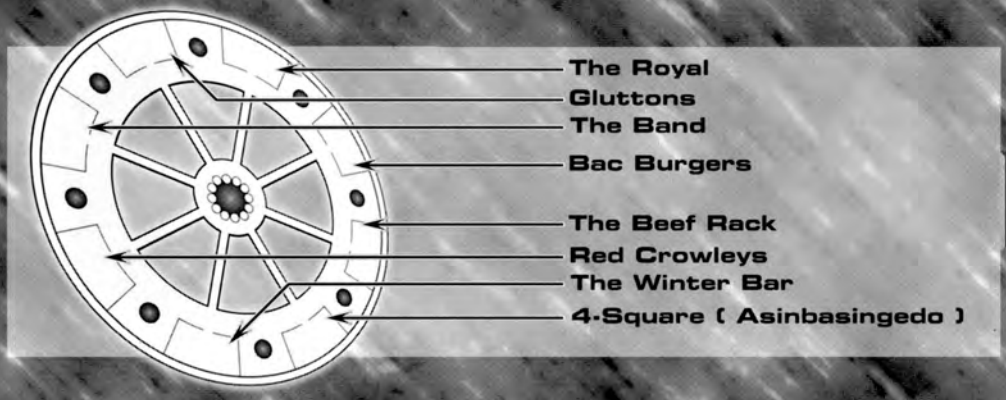
LEVEL 1: STASIS ONE



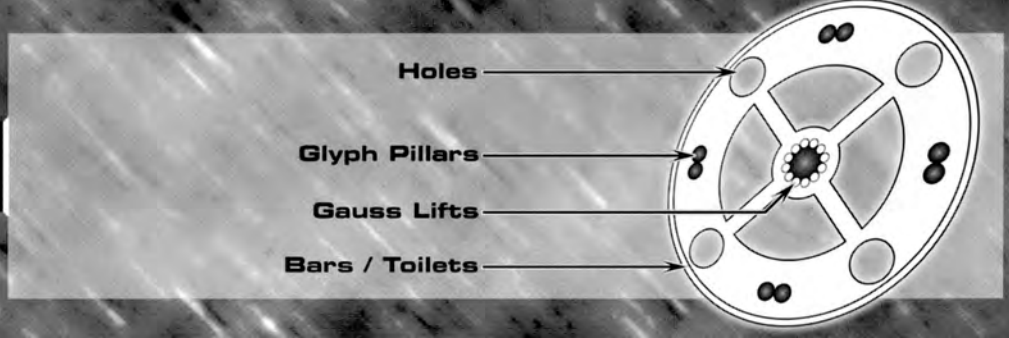
LEVEL 2: THE CAVE



LEVEL 3: THE TROF



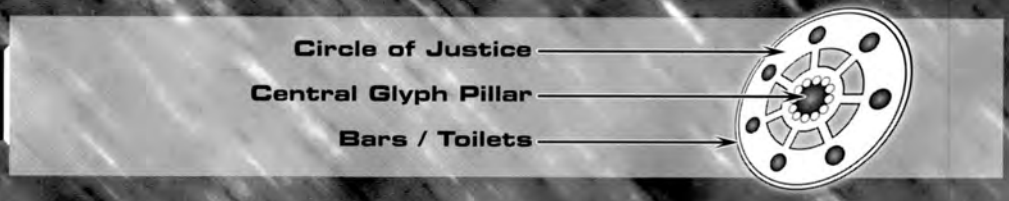
LEVEL 3: THE SINK-HOLE



LEVEL 5: VIRTUAL

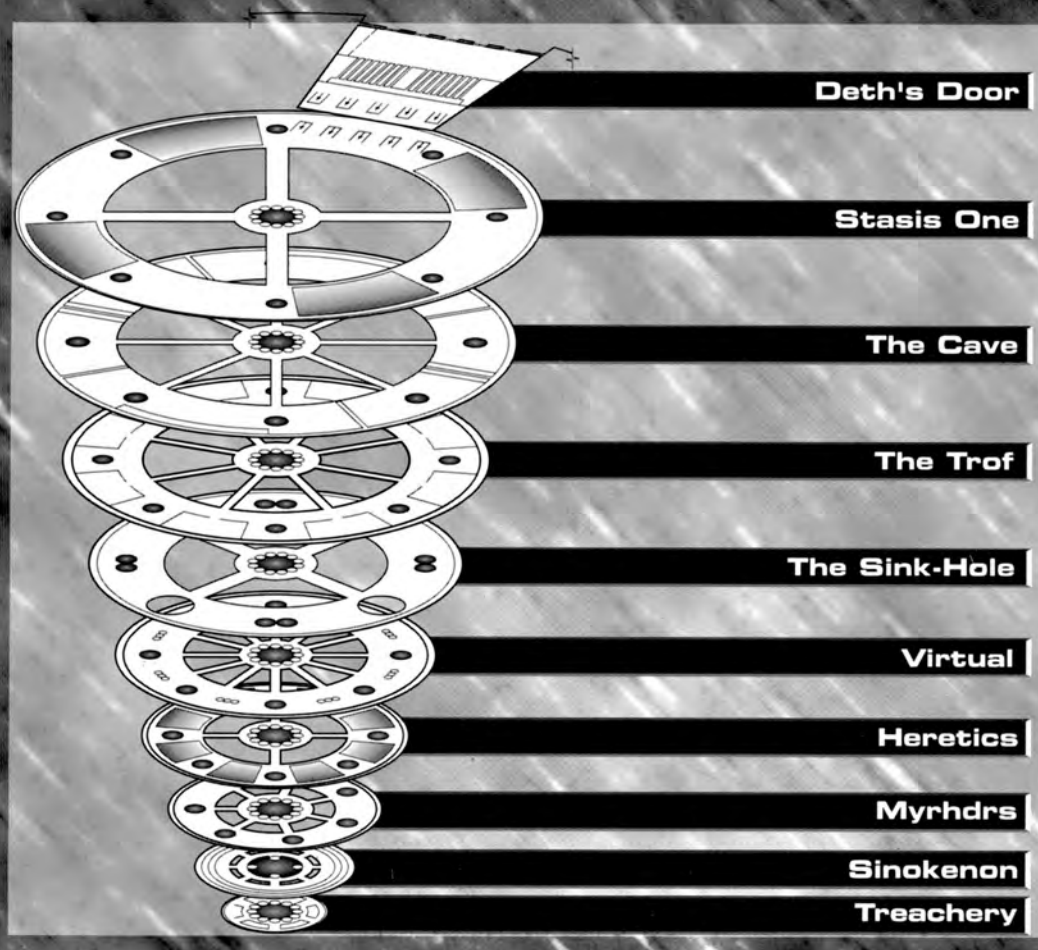
LEVEL 6: HERETICS

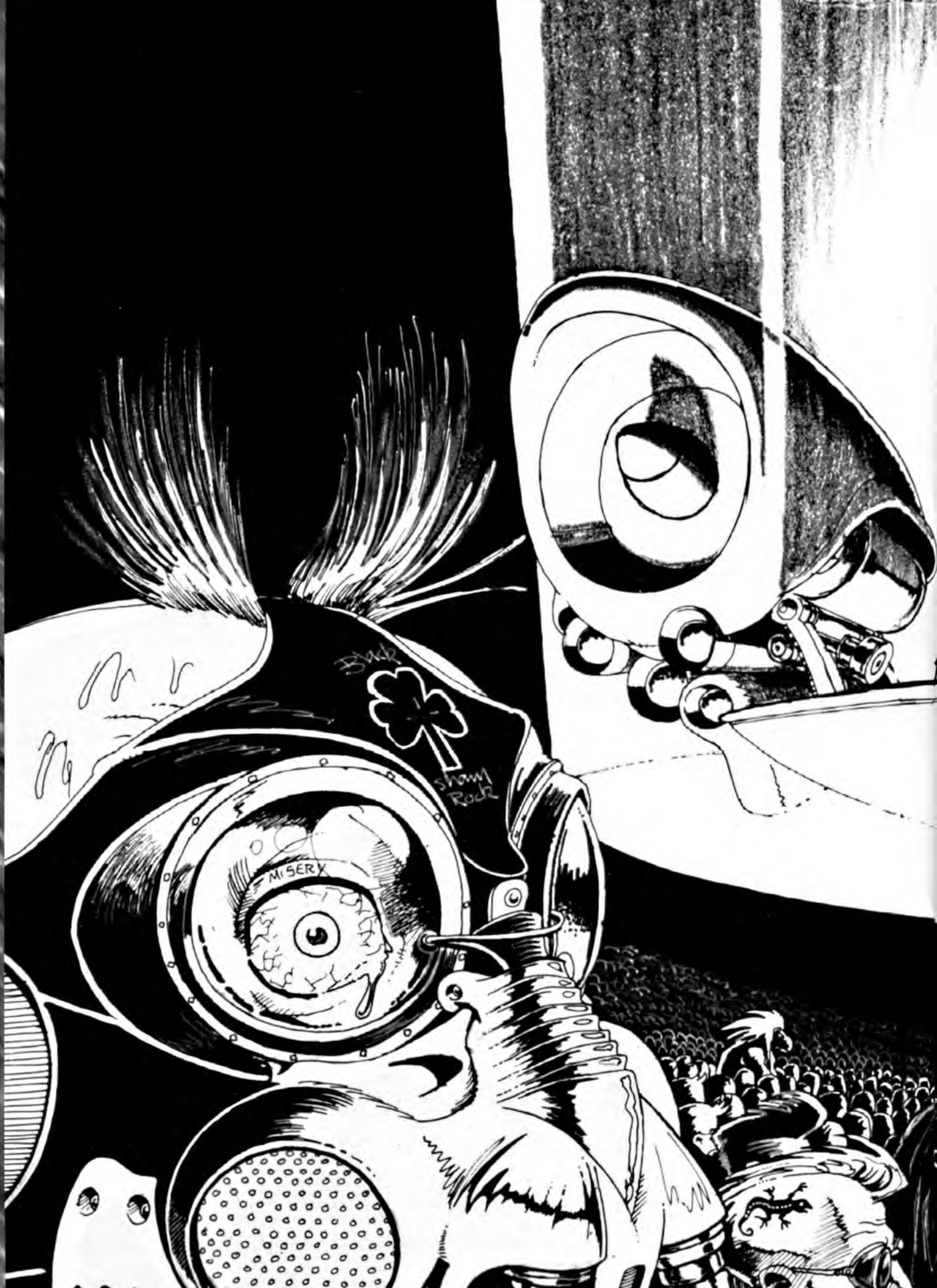
LEVEL 7: MYRHDRS



LEVEL 8: SINOKENON

LEVEL 9: TREACHERY




BLACK
Sham Rock
MISERY

the pit.

consists of more than 15 kilometres of metal frameworks and precarious maintenance walkways, and many patrons have decided that this is the ideal vantage-point from which to watch the action. The management discourages climbing up here, and has notices posted all around the level disclaiming all responsibility for injury and death resulting from a fall. The drop from the Cage to a dance floor is well over 10 metres, and over the Well, of course, it is considerably more. These warnings are ignored by many, and for most of the climbers the thrill is directly linked to the risk. Amongst some of the Frother clans, crossing from one side of Stasis One to the other by climbing across the Cage has become a sort of rite of passage, and anyone attempting this feat will attract a large crowd of cheering onlookers - not to mention a flurry of side-bets. To date there have been 15 deaths due to falls from the Cage, but this does not seem to deter the thrill-seekers.

THE CAVE

The Cave, the second level of The Pit, is given over to live entertainment. Bands play for the crowds seven nights a week, and most of the time the level is filled to near its capacity. There are two main stages, at opposite sides of the level, and a further four smaller ones in between. Each auditorium is separated from its neighbours by clear sound-proof barriers. On this level, eight walkways span the Well to the gauss elevators: two to each of the main stages, and one each to the lesser ones. Signs above the entrances tell where each walkway leads, and when the performances begin.

There are four separate bars in The Cave, each of which serves one lesser hall and one side of one of the main halls. They work at a frantic pace, and the noise of the concert often makes ordering near-impossible; seasoned regulars write their order down beforehand and show it to the bartender rather than trying to make themselves heard over the noise of the bands.

Tickets

Tickets are required to pass from the walkways into the concert areas; this is the only area of The Pit that has an entrance fee.

Customers purchase tickets that are valid for a length of time, rather than for a particular performance, and a ticket will admit its holder to any or all of the concerts during its life-span. A 24-hour ticket costs 2 credits, while one for 48 hours costs 3 credits, a week-long ticket costs 10 credits and a month-long one 25 credits. A year pass, the longest-duration ticket available, costs 285 credits.

The tickets are made of a programmable biodegradable polymer, and actually disintegrate at the end of their specified lifetime. Many customers with an interest in hydrocarbon chemistry have tried to prolong the life of their tickets, but so far, none have been successful.

The Stages

The main stages are almost 200 metres wide and much of the room is taken up with sound systems, light displays and huge vid screens that show the bands on a scale large enough for everyone to get a good view. The smaller stages are slightly less than half this size, and are used for back-up bands and smaller, more specialist concerts. They are just as well-equipped as the main stages, and can still put on an impressive show.

The four lesser stage halls each have a Glyph Pillar located at their centre, and the larger halls have two. Seats are positioned around the walls of the stages, and - depending on the style of music - fill rapidly, leaving standing room only for the majority of the audience.

Many of Mort's small, struggling new bands cherish a fond dream of playing in The Pit. For some, the dream comes true, as there is a weekly spot for new bands on one of the smaller stages. Bands from all over Mort Central and Uptown flock to these evenings, hoping that the two numbers they are allowed to play will lead to discovery, recording contracts, wealth and fame. They face a highly critical audience, however; those who frequent The Pit are used to seeing and hearing the best, and tend to signal their displeasure by throwing drink cans and plastic glasses at the stage. Many Operatives go to these "talent nights" specifically to harass the groups, and it has been known for bands to flee under a hail of missiles before they can even play a note if the crowd is in a particularly ugly mood. Brain Wasters in particular seem to enjoy forcing bands off the stage, regardless of the quality of their performance.

Deth's security staff are in The Cave in greater numbers when any of Mort's biggest bands are playing. This is particularly true for industrial groups, since Stormers and Frothers tend to become over-excited whilst enjoying the music.

In the crowded conditions of the stage halls, dancing Stormers or Frothers can cause serious damage to people and property without even noticing. The furniture has been designed with this in mind, and is strong and functional rather than decorative or expensive. Breakages are common, and as much of the income from ticket sales gets spent on repairs as is used to pay for the bands.

The Cave has a policy of putting on any kind of music that is popular, and this can sometimes lead to trouble between devotees of radically different styles of music. Rockers have clashed with industrial fans, while rap fans and advocates of reggae have had "heated discussions" over the relative merits of their favoured musical forms. The security staff do their best to anticipate problems and separate fans from different concerts, and when trouble does flare up, the performance stops immediately and is only restarted once peace is restored. These abrupt silences come as a shock after the earsplitting volume of a concert, and this alone can be enough to stop trouble-makers; knowing this policy, The Pit's regulars usually supply their own crowd control, to avoid interruptions in the performance.

THE TROF

Level three of The Pit, the Trof, is devoted to eating. This level has a diameter of 480 metres with the Well 240 metres wide at the centre. Spanning the Well are eight walkways, each leading to a different restaurant. Between the restaurants are park areas with plants, shrubs, trees and other assorted bits of greenery designed to create a relaxing atmosphere and put the diner at ease. Many small walkways run through this atmospheric indoor woodland from one restaurant to another, and they are carefully tended to present the kind of natural look that Mort's inhabitants only ever see on the vid. Even the eight Glyph Pillars on this level have been disguised as huge trees, or otherwise hidden. The illusion of a natural setting is broken, of course, by looking up or down the Well.

Gluttons

If there is such a thing as a typical restaurant in Mort, then it is Gluttons. It deals in a wide range of cuisine from all over the planet. The meals are good quality and the portions are generous, but Gluttons is nothing out of the ordinary; indeed, it was specifically designed to cater for the less adventurous eater. Each table has a set, electronic menu and a credit terminal, and an average meal in here will cost between 3 and 4 Credits.

BacBurgers

BacBurgers is one of the most popular fast-food chains on Mort, and their outlet in The Pit has become their corporate flagship. No meal on the menu will ever take more than a minute to arrive, and the average length of stay in BacBurgers is just under 7 minutes. Prices range from 0.5 to 1 Credit, and this restaurant is strictly for those who wish to spend as little time away from the dance floors and virtuality machines as possible.

The Beef Rack

As its name suggests, the Beef Rack deals in steaks, chops, and ribs, and offers large portions. This is certainly no place for vegetarians or delicate eaters. The menu is simple: all you can eat for 3 Credits, which makes it very popular with poorer Operatives. The Beef Rack has been granted special exemption from the Racial Equality Program, and bans Shaktars and Stormers on account of their enormous appetites.

This decision was made after the first two of weeks of operation, during which time the Beef Rack came very close to bankruptcy. There are still occasional protests about the policy, though most Shaktars and Stormers acknowledge that it was prompted by business sense rather than racial bigotry. There have been some representations to the management suggesting that the larger races be allowed in at a higher price, but no agreement has yet been reached as to a cost that would be acceptable to both sides.

4-Square

4-Square, or Asinbasingedo in the Ebon tongue, is a restaurant aimed specifically at Ebons, Brain Wasters and the occasional Necanthrope.

The diet of the Ebon races differs only slightly from that of humans, and the menu is in fact very similar to the one in Gluttons; the only major difference is in the decor. 4-Square has been designed to make the Ebon races feel at home, and is decorated with many glyphs and runes that would induce a feeling of slight hunger but overall well-being if they were charged. Because of The Pit's policy on Ebon

powers - and The Glyph Pillars throughout the building - these glyphs cannot be made active. However, the management believes that the mere sight of them can make Ebon customers more comfortable, by a kind of psycho-subliminal process of suggestion. Whether this works or not is open to debate, but it certainly unsettles the non-Ebon races enough to make the restaurant unappealing to them. Brain Wasters are as high-spirited at the dinner table as anywhere else, and 4-Square is rather unpopular with Pit staff.

While there are no separate seating areas for Ebons and Brain Wasters, the two groups tend to keep to opposite sides of the restaurant. On the odd occasions that Necanthropes wish to eat in 4-Square, they sit wherever they want to, and everyone else keeps rather quiet.

The Winter Bar

The Winter Bar is one of the few places on Mort that caters solely and specifically for Wraith Raiders. It is kept at a steady temperature of 1 degree Celsius, and has been designed to look as much as possible like the ice worlds that are home to its customers. The walls are painted with murals of distant, snow-capped mountains, the floor is covered with a thick, white carpet woven from a semi-rigid polymer that crunches and squeaks slightly underfoot, and a steady, chill wind blows through the restaurant.

The menu in the Winter Bar includes many dishes that are normally only available on the Wraith Raiders' home worlds. The cheaper meals are cloned, the mid-range of the menu is captive-bred on Mort, and the most expensive dishes are shipped in daily or weekly. Selected dishes can even be brought to the table while still alive, the height of culinary luxury for the discerning Wraith Raider. The management thoughtfully provides white-noise ear-plugs for the very rare non-Wraith patrons, who might find the shrieks and squeals of a "live course" disturbing.

Because of the specialised menu and expensive ingredients, the price for an average meal in the Winter Bar is 7 Credits, and a luxury meal with one or more live courses can cost a great deal more.

Red Crowleys

Above the doorway of Red Crowleys is a sign reading "Never Mind the Quality, Feel the Width". The menu has been created for those who want plain food, and lots of it. Burgers, pasta, steak, rice and French-fries are the mainstays of the menu, and the servings are immense. Like the Beef Rack, it has an all-you-can-eat menu, but the price here is only 2 Credits. The food quality is not as good as the Beef Rack, but the customers never complain. Stormers and Shaktars are not banned, but come here only rarely, as they are irritated by the task of separating the meat from the mass of pointless vegetable matter that is normally served around it. The management takes in its stride the occasional order for twenty-five burgers without buns or a dozen rare steaks without sauce, fries or side salad.

The Pit

The Band

The Band is the least spacious restaurant on The Trof - many regard it as positively cramped - but it is extremely popular with the Shaktars for whom it was designed. The reason for the lack of space is that much of the restaurant is taken up with what a human would consider to be a huge tree. To a Shaktar, it is actually a Dwarf Pine Shrub, and it was brought from the Shaktar home world and put in place while The Pit was being constructed. The whole restaurant has been built around the Shrub, and is crafted to look as authentically Shaktarian as possible; there are many items of decor that are only normally found on Kn'nth, and the Shaktar customers appreciate this attention to detail.

Like the Winter Bar, the Band's main drawback is the price of the meals. The food that has to be shipped from Kn'nth is subject to import tax, and other ingredients have to be cloned or raised under Kn'nth-like conditions on Mort. The price for a full Shaktarian seven-course meal will be somewhere in excess of 24 credits, rising to as much as 35 credits for a traditional banquet with rare, imported ingredients.

The Royal

The Royal, a plush, elegant restaurant, seems a bit out of place in the hectic bustle of The Pit, but it is proving to be surprisingly popular. It is aimed at a more select clientele than the normal, run-of-the-mill Operative, and this is quite obvious from the decor, the prices, and the amount of ceremony that accompanies a meal there.

The door to the restaurant is opened for a guest - they are never, ever referred to, or even thought of, as customers - by a uniformed doorman, and a suavely smiling maitre d' in full evening dress steps forward with a word of welcome, briskly supervising the lackeys who take coats and check reservations. After a masterfully delicate credit check, diners are escorted to their table by an immaculate waiter, and left to peruse the menu and wine list. In one corner, a string quartet quietly plays a selection of classical music, adding to the refined atmosphere without being loud enough to distract a diner from the business of the meal.

The table is set with a bewildering array of cutlery and glasses, and the menu is in the language of New Paris. The waiter will translate if requested, though this is a sure sign of social inadequacy - as is using the wrong cutlery for any particular course, or ordering an inappropriate wine. The waiters are all highly trained in the exquisitely intricate codes of ettiquette, manners and appropriate choice, and are adept at conveying withering contempt while remaining impeccably respectful. All food is cooked to order by highly qualified chefs, and there may be a wait of up to half an hour after ordering - but the management would be the first to point out that the Royal is not the place for someone in a hurry. The average price of a meal for two in the Royal, including wine, will be approximately 40 credits, while the very best of everything, along with suitable tips, will cost over 50 credits per person.

THE SINK-HOLE

The fourth level of The Pit is known as The Sink-Hole, and has long been claimed as clan turf by the Frothers. It is 420m in diameter, and the Well has a diameter of 210m at this level. There are four large holes in this level, each one 50m across and surrounded by the same type of barriers that secure the Well, dividing the Sink-Hole into four distinct sections. The four largest Frother clans have each claimed one of these sections as their own territory. It is an act of great stupidity, if not war, for a member of a clan or one of its associated minor clans to go into a section belonging to one of the other clans. The four clans that claim the Sink-Hole as their own are the four main clans of the Frother heritage; the McGivers - the largest clan - the Cullens, the Morrigon, and the Derga, who are the smallest of the four. The smaller clans, of which there are a great number, are all affiliated to one or more of the large clans. The head of Clan McGiver is acknowledged as the leader of the Frothers, and he commands respect from all Clan Frothers, even the Chiefs of the three other major clans. Some of the others may not like it, but the McGiver has tradition - and the power - to back his authority.

There are two bars and two sitting areas in each of the four clan sections, and these bars are under constant pressure to keep their customers supplied with the vast quantities of Slosh that they consume. There are large numbers of security staff on this level who do their best to keep the peace, although it is an almost impossible task. For the most part, the guards only step in to prevent certain death or structural damage.

Each section has been decorated in the tartans of the clan that claims it, and a violent sort of competition has evolved whereby each clan tries to steal or destroy as much tartan from the others as possible. This game has got out of hand on many occasions. It is quite normal for members of rival clans to stand by the holes that separate their territories, hurling insults and cans at each other. Sooner or later, large numbers of Frothers from one clan will invade the opposing clan's turf, and a huge brawl ensues that is thoroughly enjoyed by all the participants and that the management has learned to accept. The breakages are expensive, but the Frothers' enormous expenditure on drink more than covers any damage.

The Frothers have embraced the drug Lumo with delight, and it is common to see hundreds of different colours of flesh in the Sink-Hole. Their habitual outrageous displays of hair and clan colours have been taken into a new dimension by the ability to turn their very skin any colour they wish, and colour clashing has been raised to an art form. Impromptu contests are organised to decide who has the best display in a clan, and opposing clans are challenged to produce something better. The winner for the night has their drinks bought for them for the rest of their stay in the Sink-Hole that evening, and by tradition must try to drink everything that is bought for them - usually one drink from each member of the same clan.

The clear barrier that surrounds the Well and the four holes is higher on this level than on most of the others. This is to prevent people from being thrown down into lower levels during the near-continuous fights that plague the Sink-Hole. It also stops the Frothers from spitting or vomiting on the games players in the level directly below.

VIRTUAL

The fifth level of The Pit has a diameter of 360m, and the Well is 180m wide here. Virtual is dedicated to electronic entertainment, and is filled with hundreds of arcade machines.

The games here are all state-of-the-art - indeed, it has become increasingly common for a new machine to be launched at Virtual before distribution to other outlets - and cover everything from road racing to blasting Carriens. Their full-motion, 3-D real-time Holo-Graphics are almost indistinguishable from reality, and they are designed to be as addictive as possible to players with a wide range of psychological profiles. They all have credit terminals, and cost 1 Credit per game.

One area of Virtual is set aside for gambling machines. These are very popular with the human Operatives, but the area is seldom frequented by members of other races. The machines are all equipped with terminals for finance cards, so that wins and losses are entered directly into the player's account. The machines are programmed to pay out just 65% of the money they take, but many Operatives still try their luck, most of them leaving the level considerably poorer than when they entered it.

The eight bars on this level are much smaller and quieter than those elsewhere. They sell more snacks and soft drinks than alcohol, as the visitors to this level normally want to keep a clear head for playing the machines. Music can be heard throughout the level, but it is never loud enough to drown out the digitised gunshots, screams, explosions and other noises from the games.

The Virtuality Booths

The crowning glory of Virtual is the 96 virtual reality machines that are distributed across the level. Constructed by Dark Lament, the virtuality booths are powered by ebb and run by glyphs. One of the major difficulties in their construction was finding a shielding device to prevent the Glyph Pillars from draining their power.

The virtuality booths are spherical containers filled with a thick, highly oxygenated plasma that allows the users to breathe while depriving them of all sensory input. Inside the booth, the user's mind is tapped into by the ebb using built-in glyphs, and a highly detailed, programmed hallucination is projected directly into the user's consciousness. These hallucinations can be of any nature, but the most popular ones are of active combat on the fields of Dante where the user plays the part of an Operative fighting against the forces of Thresher, and Gygidion, a multi-player Powersuit combat simulation. In Gygidion, different booths may be linked up together to allow users to compete against each other in massive suits of powered armour with devastating short range weaponry. Dark Lament is continually striving to offer new and improved hallucinations for the booths and the images are slowly becoming harder and harder to distinguish from reality.

One of the other features of the virtuality booths is a holographic field around the top of the device, which projects whatever is seen and experienced by the user. These images draw great crowds, and can be much more entertaining than watching the vids. The current Gygidion champion is a female human Operative known as Cassy. Holding an SCL of just 9.3,

Cassy is a frail woman who looks as though she would be more at home behind a desk than piloting a deadly Powersuit. Despite her looks, she is undefeated at Gygidion, and draws huge crowds to Virtual whenever it becomes known that she has decided to enter her favourite booth.

The virtuality booths cost 5 credits per hour, and users are usually limited to one hour at a time. This is both to ensure that no one person hogs a booth all evening, and to help prevent psychotic addictions arising, whereby the user becomes dependant on the virtuality experience and unable - or unwilling - to deal with real life. More than one Op has suffered a severely shortened career - not to say life - as virtuality addiction undermined his or her ability to do the job in the real world.

On Friday evenings, the holographic fields above the booths are switched off, and special simulations are run for customers. These offer sexual hallucinations which are said to be both graphic and wide-ranging in the choice of encounter. These private sessions cost 10 credits per half hour, and are mostly frequented by unknown Operatives. No-one with an image to protect would dare use these booths on Friday nights, and many human Ops sneer at them as a game for losers, claiming that the truly successful can get all they want for real, and for free.

The few Stormers who have tried these Friday-night sessions have emerged from the booths looking puzzled, and been noticeably bad-tempered for the rest of the evening. Wraith Raiders tend to come out looking extremely dishevelled, although they will give no explanation for this beyond a toothy smirk. Brain Wasters have now been banned from these sessions altogether since one machine was spectacularly destroyed from within, causing a fire that damaged almost half the level. Shaktars and Ebons avoid Virtual completely on Friday nights.

HERETICS

Level Six is the domain of the Brain Wasters. Known as Heretics, it is an area of dark colours, harsh music and aggressive attitudes. Few non-Wasters ever venture here. The gauss lifts open up onto four walkways that span the 150m diameter Well and lead onto the crowded dance floors that take up most of the level.

The decor of this level is uniformly black. The walls and floor are black, the ceiling is black, the furniture and the bar are black, and this suits the Wasters just fine. The walls are covered with paintings and designs including a lot of skulls, snakes, spiders, motorbikes, guns and naked Brain Wasters, both male and female. The parts of the walls that haven't been used for paintings are mostly covered with layers of graffiti proclaiming the skills and superiority of various Wasters. Much of the graffiti is also dedicated to the slandering of the other races, and any non-Waster would probably not only be shocked at what the Wasters think of their race, but also grudgingly impressed by the Wasters' vocabulary and imagination.

The eight Glyph Pillars on this level are placed between the dance floors, and most of the Flux generated in The Pit originates from Heretics. As the Brain Wasters cannot seem to learn to control their abilities, vast amounts of Flux are drained away from them every evening. The Pillars almost seem to throb and come alive with the amount of energy that is channelled through them, and the Wasters try to keep as far from them as possible, packing themselves into the middle of the dance floor.

The Dance Floors

There are eight dance floors on this level, and they are usually crowded with Brain Wasters, dancing frantically and generally trying to draw attention to themselves. The hyperactive, aggressive nature of these Ebon warriors gives them a distinctive dancing style that others find hard to distinguish from a wild brawl. Bodies crash against each other, limbs are swung about wildly, heads thrash, and tempers often fray. Fights are common, but are usually over quickly. Since almost no-one can tell a fight from a dance (nicknamed 'Wrecking') here, combat draws little attention, and the participants swiftly lose interest.

The music played in Heretics is very loud, very gloomy and always has a very strong beat to it. It is the kind of music that is guaranteed to sweep the Wasters up into its rhythm and have them jumping about the dance floors in a peculiar manic trance.

The Bar

Heretics is constructed along similar lines to Stasis One in that the bar runs the entire length of the outer wall and is always busy. The staff of The Pit work the different levels on a rota system, and most will do almost anything to get out of a shift on Heretics. An unusually

high level of 24-hour viruses and sudden attacks of food poisoning amongst the personnel due for a shift on this level means that it is always short-staffed, and tempers on both sides of the bar can run high. The top of the bar is twice as wide as in any of the other venues, mostly to prevent irritable customers from reaching across and grabbing an unfortunate member of staff. It is also sectioned off into various units that can be rapidly sealed by dropping large steel shutters. These shutters take under a second to fall into place and lock, and anything or anyone unlucky enough to be caught below them is crushed. The shutters are only dropped in circumstances of extreme danger to the staff, but most sections get triggered at least two or three times a night.

When they are not dancing, most of the patrons of this level are trying to get drunk as quickly as possible. Fewer pints are drunk here than elsewhere as the Wasters prefer spirits - perhaps because they offer more intoxication by volume than beer - and seem to scorn Slosh as being 'too easy'. The current fashion is to drink as many different types of spirit as possible in one night. This leads to mind-splitting hangovers the next day, but most other races would agree that a Brain Waster with a headache can hardly be any more unpleasant than a Brain Waster without one.

MYRHDRS

The seventh level of The Pit is has been designed for use by the Shaktar race. In honour of Shaktarian beliefs, there are seven Glyph Pillars instead of the usual eight, and seven walkways stretching across the Well from the gauss lifts. Forty-nine small bars are scattered across the level, which is furnished with many groups of tables and chairs. Small private booths line the outer wall.

The level is decorated with many plants common to the Home Worlds, and they are tended with great care by the staff of the level. It would be an issue of great personal shame to the Shaktars if the plants die, and very few people wish to annoy the large, powerful aliens. Unusually for The Pit, most of the staff on Myrhdrs are assigned here as permanent, rather than being rotated around the various levels. If a member of staff performs to the satisfaction of the Shaktar clientele, and is happy to be assigned here permanently, the management is pleased to allow it.

Many items are taken from the Shaktar Home Worlds to make the level appear more like home. Carved onto the walls of Myrhdrs are the seven themes of the Shaktar's code of honour: Honour, Family, Friends, Truth, Faith, Loyalty and Purity. Written in the Shaktarian tongue, these words are over a metre high and can be seen throughout the level. Paintings of the gods and renowned elders of the race are common, as are designs showing young Shaktars battling against the Shahantian bulls. All the furniture and bars are seven-sided, and everything is kept scrupulously clean.

It is a matter of pride among the Shaktars that their level of The Pit is neat and civilised, especially compared to the mayhem that lies directly above. The Wasters often look down on this level - both literally and figuratively - and jibes, dropped glasses and worse outrages can provoke large groups of Shaktars into going up to Heretics and dealing out generous helpings of instant justice. This is frowned upon by The Pit management, but there is little that can be done to prevent it.

The Shaktars tend to group themselves into family units while in Myrhdrs, and each family will habitually use only one of the bars in the level. Although there is no animosity between the various families, they tend to keep to themselves and when they are forced to talk to another family for any reason, it is done in a very formal and polite way. It is extremely unusual to see a Shaktar get drunk on this level of The Pit, since they would not wish to do anything that would result in disrepute. In other levels, or in different bars, there is no compulsion for them to stay sober, but in Myrhdrs it is seen as a direct insult to one's elder to become intoxicated in his presence.

Any non-Shaktar who ventures into this level is treated with great politeness, but will not be able to mingle with any of the families or join in any discussions that are taking place. The exception to this is a person who wears a braid of friendship given to them by a Shaktar. The wearer of such a braid will be treated with the utmost respect, and given a place of honour within any family they choose to visit. The Shaktar that gifted the braid to them does not even have to be present, since the Shaktars believe that simply to be in possession of one of these braids means that the owner has proved his honour and friendship.

The music played on this level is composed of the light and delicate sounds of instruments created on the Home Worlds. It shares certain characteristics with human classical music, and is very gentle and soothing. Looking at the size and strength of the Shaktars, it is hard to believe that they find enjoyment in listening to something so intricate and fragile. The music is never accompanied by singers, but occasionally one of the Shaktars present will recite some of the old tales and histories, using the music to add depth and emotion to the scenes being described.

The Circle Of Justice

One of the major features of Myrhdrs is a large combat ring, a Shaktarian Circle of Justice. The Circle is ten metres in diameter, and is raised slightly off the floor. Little more than an open sand pit, the ring is used when two Shaktars have a disagreement that cannot be resolved without fighting. Although the Shaktars do not fight without good reason, their code requires bloodshed over various matters of honour, and tradition dictates that the only proper place for this to happen is in a Circle of Justice.

When two combatants enter the ring, they must fight to the death, using only their claws. A warrior who is driven out of the Circle loses the fight by default, and has the choice of ritual suicide or death at the hands of the eldest Shaktar present. The elder, however, will only honour the loser by taking his life if he has fought bravely and well. Usually, one of the combatants is killed in the ring. When this happens, the sand in the ring has to be destroyed, and replaced by fresh sand brought in from the Home Worlds. No grudges are allowed to continue after a matter has been resolved in the Circle, and there can be no feuds resulting from any such deaths.

Sinokenon

The eighth level of The Pit is called Sinokenon, an Ebon word that translates loosely into the Killan tongue as "Union". The Well ends at the ceiling of this level, and there is no way to see into the level below. Only four of the gauss elevators stop here, and the Glyph Pillar that forms the mainstay of the elevator is shielded to prevent it from draining any Flux that may be used once outside the confines of the lifts. There are no other Glyph Pillars on Sinokenon, and it was designed this way as a mark of respect for the Necanthropes who reserve it as their own.

Sinokenon looks very similar to a stadium or arena. The centre of the level, where the gauss lifts discharge their passengers, is an open, flat area surrounded by six steps or layers that are set higher and higher as they get closer to the far wall. This allows the Necanthropes on the furthest layers to look down on all the other layers and have a good view of everything that goes on around them. Each of the layers is 8 metres wide, and each one contains bars, private booths, vid screens, enclosed seating areas and open tables.

This level is the sole domain of the Necanthropes, and very few of the other races would wish to come here even if they were allowed to. This is also the only level where weapons are a common sight, as the Necanthropes are exempt from the obligation to hand over equipment at Deth's door. Despite this, it is one of the calmest levels of The Pit and there is seldom as much as a raised voice, let alone fighting.

There is a distinct pecking order in Sinokenon, and the higher levels are reserved for the more powerful Necanthropes. There are exceptions

to this rule, and newer Necanthropes may be invited to the higher levels if they have proven themselves to be worthy of the honour, but there are usually distinct separations by age and social standing amongst the Necanthrope community. Any younger Necanthrope who decides to take a walk through the different layers will be quickly reminded of their proper station. A stern warning is normally enough to send them back to their rightful position.

The walls and ceiling of this level are covered with runes and glyphs designed to make the Necanthropes feel comfortable, and many of them are charged with Flux and fully functional. Since there are no Glyph Pillars on this level, the Necanthropes are quite able to manipulate the Ebb here if they wish to do so. The lights are kept low to give an aura of privacy, and the music is never loud enough to be intrusive. The private booths vary in size, seating from four to eight people, and are nearly always in use.

The humans who work behind the bars in this level do so quietly and politely, and the Sinokenon shift is almost as unpopular amongst The Pit staff as the Heretics shift. Like all non-Necanthropes, staff members complain of feeling very uncomfortable on this level, and usually try to leave as quickly as possible. Ebons and Brain Wasters who use the Gauss lifts to pass through here on their way to Treachery can always tell when the elevators reach here, as the aura of so many Necanthropes in close proximity permeates even the ebb-shielded lifts.

TREACHERY

The deepest and smallest level of the Pit goes by the name of Treachery. It is fully enclosed, with a solid ceiling and floor, and is just 120 metres across. Unlike the other, larger levels, Treachery is not dedicated to one particular theme or race. Instead it contains 5 separate bars, with a motorcycle race track around the outer edge.

The bars in Treachery are all very similar to the ones that can be found in the city far above, but obviously they cater for Operatives and corporates only. They are usually quieter than the huge bars and night-clubs of the upper levels of The Pit, but they are still crowded and bustling compared to the civilian bars of Mort. Each of the bars in Treachery has a different theme and caters for a different clientele.

The Track

The racing that takes place in Treachery is the only official sporting event in The Pit, and it is an extremely popular attraction. Five riders compete against each other over a set number of laps - most commonly 10, 20 or 50. The management of The Pit offers substantial cash prizes for the winners, and many Operatives are drawn by the lure of easy money. There is no official betting on these races, but a lot of money changes hands unofficially.

The Pit-Stop

One of the more popular bars on this level, the Pit-Stop also doubles as both a garage and service area for the motorcycles that compete in the races. The patrons of the Pit-Stop spend much time comparing machines and riders, and commenting on the day's races. It is from here that most bets are placed, and certain corporates and financiers with an eye for riders and a flair for numbers can make a lot of money here. This is not approved of buy the management, but it is far too popular to be shut down.

The Pit-Stop has one open wall that offers a ring-side view of the track. A couple of medics are always stationed here for injured riders, and a few mechanics for damaged bikes. Below the bar is a storage area for the machines when they are not in use, and half of the bar-room is given over to a service area with facilities for fuelling and repair. The Pit-Stop does not charge for storing the machines or for the use of its service area, but it does expect the riders and their mechanics to drink there.

The Mass

Three of the gauss lifts open directly into the bar called The Mass, an establishment where customers come to indulge their sensual side. This large bar is staffed by attractive young men and women wearing much in the way of gauzy films of fabric and tiny strips of leather but very little else, and is extremely popular with some of the more liberated human Operatives. It is rare for anyone other than a human to be in the bar, though members of the other races, particularly Wraith Raiders, can be spotted on occasion. Large vid screens constantly play the Alien Sex Channel and some of the more exotic vid-slugs, while the same varied sorts of scenarios are continually enacted throughout the bar.

The Mass also provides specialist staff who take care of customers with needs that are some-

what more unusual or physically harmful than the norm. It has many private booths available as well as the public areas, and while non-participants are not permitted in the bar, some guests always prefer to indulge in their own company while enjoying the conducive surroundings.

The Mass does not charge for any of the services that it provides, but the drinks are more expensive than elsewhere in The Pit. The average drink here will cost 3 Credits rather than normal price of 1 Credit in most of the other bars. Personal Interest can also be bought over the counter at The Mass for a standard price of 5 Credits per dose.

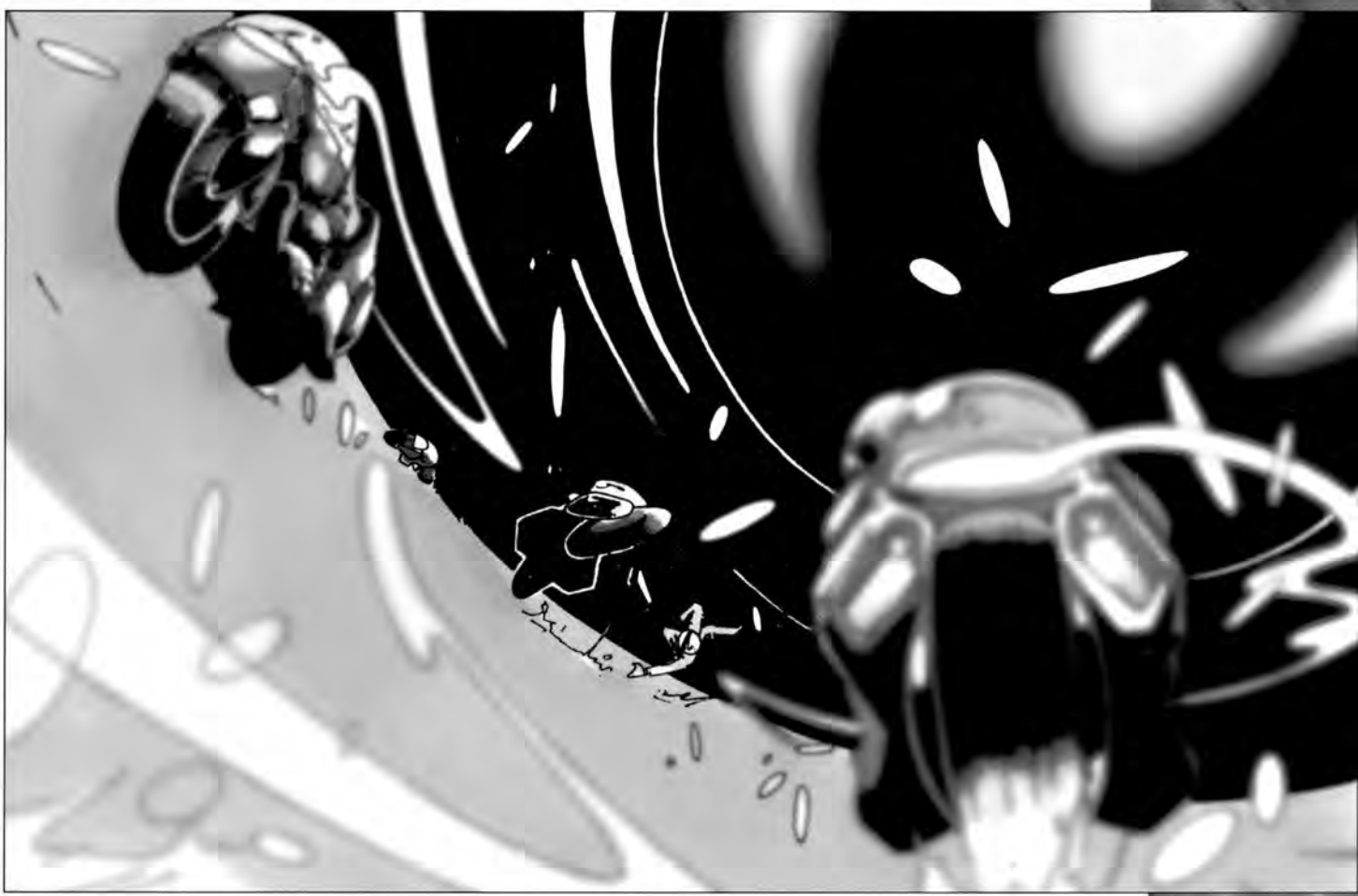
The Respite

The Respite is one of the smaller bars on this level, and the restful atmosphere it tries to project seems strangely at odds with the noise and commotion of the rest of The Pit. Music plays softly over hidden speakers, small tables are surrounded by comfortable chairs, neatly attired bar staff wander round the tables taking orders and removing empty glasses, and the whole appearance is that of an old-fashioned country club.

One part of the Respite has been sectioned off to make a vid-lounge where customers can go to watch the news channels. Most of the patrons of this bar are regulars, and are known to the staff by name. The management of the Respite aim to give personal service to every customer, and is quite happy for its staff to take the time to chat with people and make them feel comfortable. The drinks in here cost 2 Credits each, but the customers don't seem to mind paying over the odds in exchange for the friendly, courteous service and pleasant atmosphere.

The Joint

The Joint is a bar that is dedicated to the many different drugs that are available in Mort. Beat, Alice, Personal Interest and even Drum can be bought and used in the Joint, but Flip is the most common drug here. The smoky bar is dimly lit with red and green lamps, and rhythmic music plays in the background. Customers purchase their drugs over the counter, and can use one of the many private booths or open tables to take whatever they need to get them through the evening.



Most patrons of the Joint are getting themselves ready for a night of partying in the upper levels, but a few of the more dedicated customers settle themselves into the bar, make sure that they have a good supply of snacks to munch on, and simply mellow out for the night. Gigantic vid screens produce light displays that are intended to aid the customer in reaching the desired mental states, and bar staff wander around the tables to ensure that no-one has had a bad trip or simply fallen asleep in the private booths.

Close checks are kept on the customers of the Joint. If it is deemed that any Operative is becoming too dependent on the drugs they buy, or has reached the point where their habits would impair their efficiency, a report is made to the individual's superiors so that treatment can be arranged. This policy is not advertised, and most of the regulars at the Joint would probably go elsewhere if they knew about it.

Bradleys

Bradleys is a small live music bar, with an act on every night. In contrast to the lavish shows upstairs at The Cave, this entertainment normally takes the form of someone playing the guitar and singing, but it is still a popular place. The room is definitely too small, crowded with tables that make it difficult to reach the bar.

Drinks here are cheap, most of them costing only half a Credit, but then the management spend very little on maintaining the place or providing staff. Most nights there are two people working the bar, although a third is often brought in for the weekends. The bar is dingy, smelly and cramped, the music is normally not particularly good, and yet Bradleys is always full. No-one is ever quite sure what the attraction of the place is, but the customers keep on coming back.

"Yeah, it was like excellent, man! This girl gets up on stage right, and she starts playing these folk songs, like 'with a hey nonny no' kinda stuff. She actually did quite well. She managed four songs before they dragged her off the stage. Why do I come here? It's dark, smelly and the music is crap. Kinda like home!"

Wee Davie, age 26, SCL 9.2, Frother (Death Squad).

HOUSING

A CITIZEN'S APARTMENT

The average citizen cannot afford a high-quality apartment, and Downtown is packed with cheap places to live. These residences usually consist of a kitchen/living room, a variable number of bedrooms and, if it's a particularly good site, an individual bathroom. Many apartment blocks have only one bathroom per floor however, which the residents have to share.

If there is a bathroom, it will be small and cramped, with a tiny bath. Walls are tiled, but those tiles that remain tend to be cracked and filthy. The torn linoleum on the floor is home to all kinds of bugs and germs. Hot water is uncommon - heating water costs money that could be better spent on other things.

The bedrooms are always tiny, with just enough room for a bed and possibly a drawer unit or some other form of storage. The paint flakes off the window-frames, and the walls are spotted with mould. Damp is a serious problem on a planet where it never stops raining, but the average citizen cannot afford waterproofing. The owners - any of a number of SLA subsidiaries - know that only minimal expenditure on maintenance is really necessary; so long as the building still stands, it will continue to bring in rent-money. Disgruntled tenants may try looking for better accommodation, but standards are the same everywhere.

The main room that makes up the living area and the kitchen is hardly ever large enough for all the furniture that people try to pack into it. The kitchen usually comes supplied with a basic electric cooker, a sink and nothing much else. Lucky tenants will have a small refrigerator, and the extremely lucky might be able to afford a washing machine. The unfortunate ones might find that a previous tenant has stripped the apartment of all appliances before moving out.

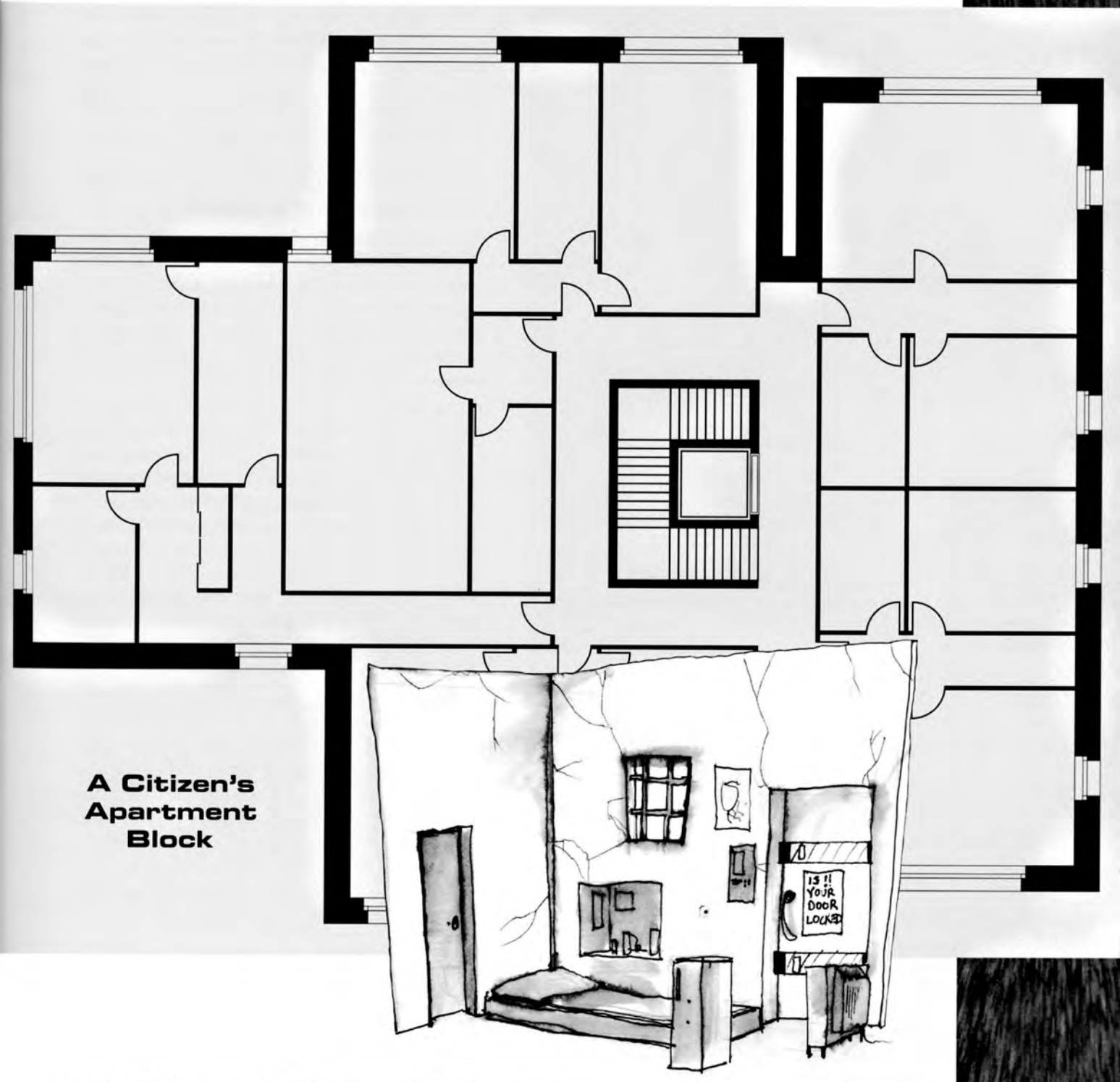
The only piece of equipment that you can absolutely guarantee to find in a Downtown apartment is the vid. The screen is usually in a corner, where it is in clear view from all parts of the room, and it is always on, even when the place is empty. There is no on/off switch or volume control. Other furniture is arranged around the vid, and can consist of anything from beanbags to deck-chairs. Citizens of Downtown make use of anything that they can find, buy or steal - after food and other necessities are covered, the unemployment check does not leave enough for the average person to pay much attention to interior design.

The walls do very little to cut out noise from neighbouring apartments, and there is a constant buzz of voices, audio from the vids and other sounds. Privacy is a luxury that few citizens can afford, and most families have many more children than bedrooms. It is common to see children sleeping 3 or 4 to a tiny room, or even sleeping on the floor in the living room.

Most apartment buildings have old fire escapes running up their decaying sides, and these are often crowded with kids playing and fighting. Despite the fact that they are crumbling and breaking away from the walls, no-one ever tries to stop the kids from taking them over. What would be the point?

Apartment doors can be opened with a simple key, and are usually covered with graffiti. Most apartments have a main entrance door that is also locked, and a caretaker who is paid to keep everything in proper working order. Caretakers' opinions vary widely on the thorny issue of what 'proper working order' involves, but almost all agree that, as the owners' representative, they are vastly more important than mere tenants, and their word is law within their own building. Despite these precautions, break-ins are common and junkies and drunks are frequently to be found sheltering from the rain and the cold in the hallways. Piles of garbage are a common sight in the corridors of many apartment buildings; often no-one knows what to do to have them taken away, and more commonly still, no-one cares. Rats run around the corridors as freely as the children.

Once safely inside their own apartments, very few citizens are willing to respond to any kind of alarm. Minding one's own business is regarded as the greatest social virtue in Down-

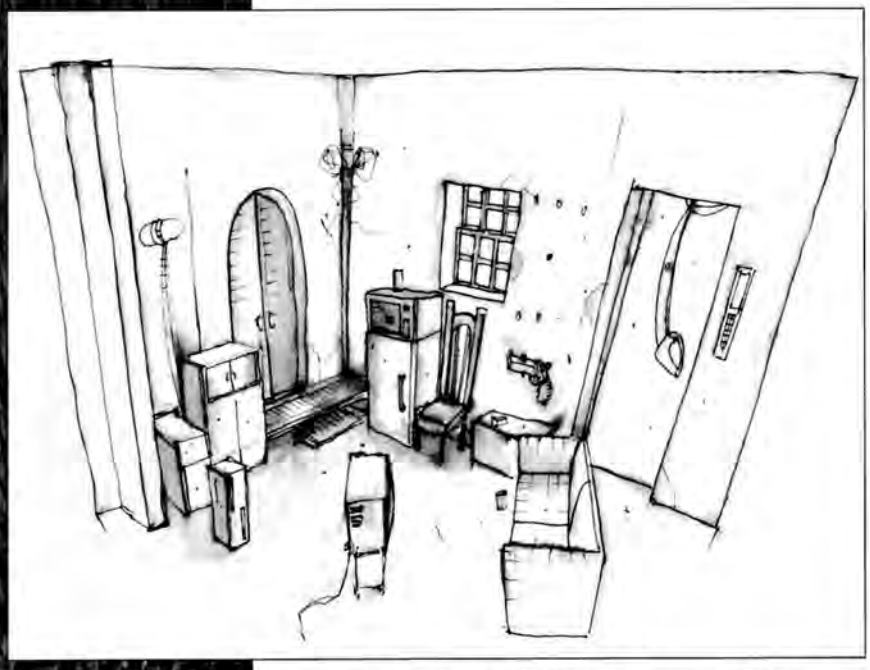


A Citizen's Apartment Block

town, and no-one wants to become caught up in someone else's problems. Screams and gun shots are ignored - indeed, they are so common that the vast majority of people hardly even notice them - and most citizens would rather step over a dying child in a passageway than stop to offer help. The general attitude is to try and remain unnoticed as much as possible, and to avoid any dealings with other people.

"This place ain't so bad. It's only a stop-gap apartment till I get enough money together for a semi or something in Uptown, anyway. How long have I been here? Oh, about seven years, but it's a home. Hey, stop laughing."

Andrew Markham, Shiver Sergeant



AN OPERATIVE'S APARTMENT

Most Operatives live in a standard apartment consisting of one bedroom, a kitchen, a bathroom and a main living area. The main room comes equipped with a vid, a phone/fax and often a computer terminal. All these machines - other than the vid - cost one Credit per usage, and it can become expensive if the Op makes use of them regularly. There is no charge for the vid, since it does so much to keep the populace sedated and to promote loyalty to SLA values and products. Besides, there would be riots if a charge was introduced for watching the vid - people can do without phones and computers, and without sanitation and running water if they have to, but vids are an absolute necessity.

The living room also holds some comfy chairs and a desk, where the phone/fax and terminal are normally positioned. The window looks out onto an identical building, but it is possible to have a view, if one is prepared to pay a much higher rent. The walls come in basic white, but the Operative is free to decorate so long as no structural damage is involved.

The kitchen comes equipped with ultra-wave oven and standard washing and cleaning facilities. It is just large enough for one person to work in comfortably. The bathroom holds a toilet, wash basin and a shower, along with an extractor fan and a socket for an electric razor. Like the kitchen, it has been designed to take up the minimum space while providing the maximum possible efficiency.

The bedroom has only a single bed - often with a second phone on the wall - and some storage for clothes and the like. Most Ops also have a specially designed strongbox to hold their weapons and armour; these boxes are normally fitted with code-locks and voice-print security systems, though some wealthier Ops have custom-made lockers with more elaborate security precautions, and even booby-traps.

The apartments are reasonably soundproof, but shouting and other loud noises will carry through to next door. It is considered polite not to cause too much noise, but an unlucky Operative could find themselves next door to a dedicated heavy-metal fan with a superb sound system and a bad case of noise-induced deafness.

The door to an Operative's apartment is always high-security and blast proof, with code-number and voice-print locks. There's also a vid-phone that allows anyone inside the flat to see exactly who is knocking before opening the door. Because of their wealth - and the large quantities of top weaponry that are the tools of the trade - Operatives' apartments are highly attractive to burglars, and even a relatively unsuccessful Op will pick up enemies along the way. Heavy security measures are an accepted part of the Operative lifestyle.

Although small, the average Operative's apartment is quite comfortable, and of far better quality than most citizens can expect. Even company employees are lucky if they can get such good quarters. Of course, the more successful Operatives prefer to pay higher rents and live in even more luxurious surroundings. Along with the glamour and status, Operatives can apply for housing of virtually any quality - even mansions - so long as they can afford to pay for it.

An apartment like the one described above tends to cost something in the region of 40 Credits a month; the actual level of the rent varies according to location. The rent is deducted from the Operative's credit automatically, and there should be no problems so long as credit remains good. If an Op's credit rating falls too low, it is normal to allow them one week to pay any rent that is due, plus a further month's rent in advance. Those who fail to do this will be evicted, and must either apply for some cheaper accommodation or join the unfortunate masses on the streets. The task of obtaining alternative accommodation will be made more difficult due to the Operative's poor record.

"What the hell is this place? It's the fucking pits! Where the hell do you guys get off with dumping this kind of rat infested shit hole on pe... What? No, no, no, of course I'll take it. Sorry, I just got a bit carried away. Yes, it's a lot nicer than the cardboard box. Thank you."

Vitriol, Brain Waster, SCL 10

A LUXURY APARTMENT

The top end of the accommodation scale houses the rich, the famous and the extremely lucky. The best housing to be found in Mort is located in Uptown and in a very few places in Central. These areas are less cramped than the rest of the city and some even have the space to allow for such niceties as parks and gardens.

An average apartment in the better areas has three to four spacious rooms, usually a living room, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom. Some of the larger apartments have spare bedrooms, studies and adjacent parking areas, even an actual underground garage in some cases. All apartments have at least two vids.

The apartments that are in these areas are secure - something that is almost unheard of in Downtown - with door-cam security and buzzer entry systems as standard. Some of the larger complexes have doormen and on-site security men to look after the community pools and bars as well as to stop unwelcome visitors. These parts of Uptown and Central are probably the safest areas of Mort, and there is little crime in such places. The policing of these districts is taken care of by Dark Finders and certain particularly skilled Shiver units. This ensures a safe and relatively clean living environment for the rich and important residents.

The people that live in places such as this are from all walks of Operative life, but all have one thing in common - wealth. The majority of occupants are corporates and their lackeys, but Contract Killers and other wealthy "street Operatives" can be found making their homes here. There are even some immensely rich private citizens of Mort who have the Unis to live in these districts.

The whole feel of these zones is one of wealth, and this can be easily seen in the sheer snobbery of the residents. Life here happens at the fast pace of the idle rich: constant balls, parties and social gatherings that could almost rival some of the functions held by Mr. Slayer himself.

Spending a small fortune on the latest fashions is a basic prerequisite for getting along in the better-off areas of Uptown - you have to be one of the "beautiful people" to succeed in this area of the City. The famous and the fortunate are welcome - only the cream of SLA Industries' Operatives get the chance to crawl out of the muck and mire that is the vast majority of Mort City.

A CAMERA'S EYE VIEW

Malcolm Hayes is seated at a computer screen, reading a report on the latest serial killer. They call her Lady Muck. Her style is to kill bag-ladies, strip them naked, and leave them in rubbish bins, surrounded by all their belongings. According to the report, just last night she killed four times at least. That's why the vid companies have taken an interest in her.

Malcolm leans back in his leather-style chair, and looks around the crowded office. The air is thick with cigarette smoke and stale sweat, and through the haze he can make out the dark bank of vid screens that forms the far wall. There are ten desks in the room, each equipped with a computer terminal and a vid-phone. Half the people in room wear the symbol of Channel 414, the news channel of which this office is one small part, and for which Malcolm is a senior news editor.

The door swings open, and a hassled-looking young man rushes in, holding a vid-slug. He casts a swift glance around the office, spots Malcolm and hurries over to his desk.

"Sir," he gasps, partly out of breath and partly nervous at being in the editor's presence, "the slug from Janine - the Lady Muck story?"

Malcolm nods. "Put it on the main screen," he says, leaning back and resting his feet on the desk. The hum of conversation quietens as the screens flicker into life. The image fills the wall.

A garbage skip is guarded by a couple of Shivers. The time and date, shown in red at the upper-right corner of the shot, indicate that the film was taken late the previous evening. Malcolm stares at the vid-wall, leaving the office behind and letting the images flow over him.

Murky streams of rainwater run down the sides of the skip into the ever-present puddles on the walkways. Here and there, the water carries more dirt away than it leaves behind, allowing traces of the skip's original light-blue colour to show through the decades of grime.

Apart from the Shivers standing menacingly beside it - *posing for the camera, the vain bastards,* thinks Malcolm; *they'd take their helmets off and wave to their mothers if they thought they could get away with it* - the skip looks no different from the hundreds of others scattered through this part of Downtown.

The body was removed a long while ago, but the Shivers stay around to secure the area pending the arrival of the forensics team. They pretend not to notice the water streaming off their armour as they cradle their Browbeaters and act tough when any thrill-seekers come too close.

"Already, the remains of Lady Muck's latest victim have been removed," says a woman's disembodied voice. "Since the SLA Operatives have apparently reached a dead end, we are going to pursue our own investigations. That's right - Channel 414 News has received an anonymous tip-off that the serial killer known as Lady Muck is holing up somewhere in Sector 6a of Upper Downtown. Stay tuned to this channel as we go looking for this monstrous new killer, and do our best to end the reign of terror that now holds Upper Downtown in its icy grasp. Channel 414, working for the people!"

The image blanks out for a moment, then a huge tenement block appears on screen. There is nothing to distinguish it from the dozens of others. Rainwater streams off the rooftops, pouring over and around the pitifully inadequate gutters and drains to gush in dirty waterfalls to the streets below. The small apartment

Camera's Eye View

windows are mostly dark and lifeless; only occasionally does a gleam of electric light betray the lives being lived inside.

A small flight of stairs leads up to the block's entrance doorway. Sitting on the stairs are a bunch of kids, wearing the colours of Krosstown Traffic, passing around a couple of brown paper bags with bottles inside. The camera zooms in on one of them as she raises the bottle to her mouth. The girl is no more than 15 years old, but already her face is wrinkled and worn. Acne blooms upon her cheeks and forehead, and the silver stud in her nose has caused an infection that is rapidly spreading across her face. She drinks deeply from the bottle, but as she lowers it from her lips she starts to cough violently, spraying liquid across her legs and onto the steps. Her companions jeer and laugh for a few seconds, before returning to the ritual.

All of the kids are soaked to the skin, with their hair plastered slickly down the sides of their heads, but none of them seems particularly concerned by the water. Steam suddenly boils up from a nearby vent, making them all jump. One of the boys has a pistol in his hand instantly, then lets out an embarrassed laugh as he realises the source of the noise.

Water gurgles into drains as it makes its way to wherever it is going, somewhere far below on a lower level. Scraps of garbage spin and twirl in the currents, and are quickly snatched out of sight. The crowded buildings tower over the people who pass between them, filling narrow alleys with sinister and gloomy shadows which discourage even the unwary from taking such a short-cut; it might save them a few minutes, at the cost of their life. The camera holds on an alley for a second, allowing the viewer to think about what might be lurking in there, waiting for its next victim. Having paused, it slowly tilts up to the sky.

On an upper level such as this, it is simple to look up and see the grey sky overhead. Kilcopters and SCAFs speed past, their searchlights scouring the walkways and buildings as the Shivers continue their endless search for evildoers. Taxi-cabs and the occasional private vehicle pass by on the wet roadways, reminding the more streetwise viewers that this is, after all, one of the better parts of Downtown. The passers-by seem fascinated by the camera, and most of them stop and stare for a few seconds before moving on. In the office, their faces are blown up to wall-size; lifeless, hungry eyes the size of footballs, mouths like pale scars.

One individual stays in the picture for a long time. He is wearing black jeans, a long, black fake leather trenchcoat and heavy black boots. The coat is old and weathered - it has the look of a treasured possession. He seems to be in his late teens or early twenties; he has a week's growth of stubble and shoulder-length black hair hanging down around his face. It looks like it was greasy even before the rain got to it. His red-rimmed blue eyes peer out at the camera with a moronic fascination.

"Is that thing on, man? Am I gonna be on the vid?" He self-consciously raises a dirty hand to smooth back his hair.

The reporter's voice comes out of nowhere again. "We are looking for the murderer known as Lady Muck. Do you know anything about her, where she might be or even who she might be?"

The half-dead eyes widen, in fear or surprise. "No way, babe! I don't know nothin' 'bout that one. I don't want to, neither. Never mess with anyone more crazy than yourself, my momma always told me, and that is one crazy person. But, hey," - the voice drops a little, becomes more confidential - "I always wanted to be on the vid, y'know? Ever since I was a kid. Some of my buddies say I could make it, y'know -

what'cha reckon, babe, could you fix it for me?" His voice fades out along with the picture.

The screen cuts to a typical entrance hall in a typical apartment block. Strip-lights give just enough illumination to make the image intensifier shut down, and not quite enough to film properly without it. The picture is dark and sinister, fitting the subject. Malcolm nods to himself. *Good girl, Janine, leaving the camera lights off makes a great atmosphere shot.* We'll use that one for sure. The corridor stretches away to a flight of stairs with an elevator at one side. A sign hangs on the elevator door; it's too dark to read the words, but its meaning is obvious. There are doors on both sides of the passage - sturdy doors with many locks, a silent testimony to the fears that haunt all the citizens of Downtown, even the lucky few on the upper levels.

"Our informant has told us that Lady Muck is lurking somewhere in this building," says the reporter's voice. "We are going to speak with some of the people who live here, and see if anyone can guide us to the killer."

The camera moves forward down the hall. It's quiet, and the crew's footsteps echo slightly off the grimy walls. The camera stops at the first door on the left, fading up the lights and holding the shot on the number 1a. A pretty, manicured female hand comes into view and knocks.

For a few moments, nothing happens; then a petulant, muffled voice is heard from behind the door. "Who's that bothering me?"

The reporter's answer is crisp and professional, with barely a trace of contempt. "Sir, I'm Janine Walker from Channel 414 News. We'd like to interview you for the vid."

Immediately, there is the sound of bolts being drawn back and chains being unfastened. After a few seconds, the door opens and a round, balding face glistens in the camera lights. The eyes are screwed up against the glare, but the rest of the face wears an obsequious, yellow-toothed leer. The man is well into middle age, and his skin is almost black with grime and stale sweat. His grey hair and beard seem very light in contrast. His clothes are grimy and threadbare, and the shoes on his feet are mismatched. He has one hand up against the doorframe and scratches at his leg with the other.

"The vid?" he says, and his grin becomes improbably wide. He steps backward and waves the camera into his apartment with a sweeping gesture he probably once saw on a costume-drama vid. "Come in, come in." His wheezing voice is higher and faster, squeaking with the excitement of sudden fame.

"Excuse the mess, I haven't cleaned up yet today. My work keeps me pretty busy, you see." The apartment certainly looks like it hasn't been cleaned up today, or indeed the day before, or at any time in the last few years. Malcolm winces, his nose wrinkling at just the thought of the smell; at the same time, he grins faintly at the obvious pride with which the man speaks of having a job.

"My name is Harold," the man continues, trying not to look away from the camera while he moves some debris off something that might once have been a couch, "I'm the caretaker for this fine building."

The camera pans around the apartment as Harold continues to shovel junk off the couch. Everything has a dull brown tinge. Cans and bottles lie in piles in the floor, small, colourful mountains above a rolling plain of dirty clothes and half-finished carry-out meals. The one small window looks out onto the blank, grey wall of the next building. Wallpaper is hanging off in strips; the grubby plaster beneath is streaked with mould and running water.

When the camera returns to Harold, he is sitting dumpily in the small clearing he made on the couch, trying to look casual. "So, what can I do for you folks?" he asks.

His cracked yellow smile disappears at the mention of Lady Muck. "There ain't no mad lady in my building!" Harold's voice quivers

with indignation, and he repeats himself a couple of times for good measure. "This is my building you're talking about, understand? My building! You think I'd have a crazy person in my building - do ya? An' if I did, wouldn't I know about it? I'm the caretaker, see, an' I do a good job here, a real good job, an' don't you go saying I don't! Ain't no crazy woman in my building - so you just get out, go back to your station and put that on the vids! Go on, get out! Harold Easterbrook does a damn fine job, an' there's no mad, crazy murderin' woman in his building! You tell them that! Tell them!"

Harold is back on his feet, following the camera as it backs out of the apartment. The peeling door slams as he finishes his furious rant.

"Well, it looks like we'll have to go on without any help from Harold." Janine's voice is unruffled. "Viewers, you decide: did it look as though Harold had something to hide? Does he know something? What does he know? And why won't he help us? After all, his tenants are surely the ones most at risk. For now, though, we'll continue our search upstairs."

The camera moves down the hall towards the elevator. The sign does indeed say "OUT OF ORDER" in a large, childish hand. The camera swings round to the stairway as the crew starts upwards. Graffiti covers the walls with layer upon layer of scrawl, so much so that not even the newest is legible. A rat scurries away from the camera lights, quickly losing itself in the shadows. Bottles and cans litter the stairs, along with discarded needles and cigarette packets.

Malcolm thumbs a button on his chair-arm briefly, and the vid goes fast-forward for a second or two. When it returns to normal speed, the camera is shaking slightly, and the crew can be heard panting for breath in the echoing stairway. An unseen hand pushes a fire door open, and the camera moves out onto the second floor.

Malcolm turns to the young man who is still standing beside his desk. "How much more?"

The junior clears his throat nervously. "Uh - you could maybe skip the next ten minutes." Malcolm thumbs the fast-forward button again. When he lets it go, the view has hardly changed: another stairwell, another passage lined with doors. The camera pans to one marked 4c. Janine's voice returns an instant after the picture stabilises.

"We've tried most of the apartments on the last three floors, and everywhere it's been the same. No one knows anything about Lady Muck - or perhaps they're just not prepared to admit that they do. Maybe we'll have better luck here."

Once more, the manicured hand reaches out and knocks on the door. A few moments pass, and then the door opens to the length of a half-dozen security chains.

"What do you want?" The woman is young, dressed in a pale blue jogging suit, with her long blonde hair piled up on her head and secured by many clips and pins. Somehow she looks too clean to be living here. Like all the others, her expression changes as she sees the camera.

"Oh, come in," she says, unhooking the chains and opening the door wide, "I was getting ready to go out, but - please, come in!"

The apartment is similar to Harold's only in its size and shape. Everything is tidy, and as clean as the conditions permit. Bright plastic bowls are strategically placed to catch the water that drips from the ceiling and runs down the walls, and prints of landscapes from other worlds cover the worst of the stains. The vid murmurs to itself in the corner, showing the same picture as the camera that is filming it. An air purifier purrs reassuringly beneath the window. A three-piece suite takes up most of the room, and the woman gestures to the crew to sit.

"Samantha Jenks is my name - I've been watching your story, and I'm afraid I really can't help you. I've seen the reports about Lady Muck, but I'm sure she isn't anywhere near here. I think maybe you got a false lead. Still, I'm glad you came - can I offer you some coffee, or maybe something stronger?" Malcolm thumbs the button again.

Another stairway; this time the camera is moving downward. Janine's professional voice sounds just a little flat among the echoes of the stairwell.

"It does look as though we may have run into a dead end here, viewers. Perhaps our informant was mistaken - or could someone be covering up for Lady Muck? For now, we are going to have to leave our investigation, but this reporter will make you a promise. Channel 414 will not rest until Lady Muck has been brought to justice, but we need your help to do that. If you know anything about this evil killer, or have any suspicions, no matter how slight, call Channel 414 immediately. The switchboards are open right now, and remember - there is a considerable reward for any information leading to the capture of the madwoman!"

Malcolm's fingers are drumming idly on the desktop. He looks up questioningly at the younger man, who simply nods and points back to the screen.

The camera continues down the stairs. Lower down, a shape detaches itself from the shadows. There is a soft gasp from Janine as the camera picks it up - it is Harold, looking comical in a flowery summer dress, and holding a long, sharp kitchen knife that is not in the least bit funny. The light glints off it as the camera starts backing away up the stairs.

"Harold says you've been looking for me!" says the caretaker in a strange, cracked falsetto as he advances up the stairs. "Well, now you've found me. Isn't that nice?"

Harold springs up the stairs towards the camera. The picture tilts wildly for a second, and then the screen is filled with part of a stair and part of a wall. Malcolm curses under his breath. *Only audio from now on, then. Better be good audio.* He nods to himself as he listens to the screams and curses, the crashes and ripping noises. A rivulet of blood pours into view, and carries on down the stairs, pooling briefly before going over the edge. Malcolm shrugs. *It's better than nothing.* The screen flares white for an instant, then blackness. No sound, no vision.

"That's where the camera was destroyed, sir. There's nothing more."

Malcolm nods. "Tell Perry he'll have two minutes of highlights for the syndicated news at 10:15. Get Mike up here for voice-over. Rough cut'll be ready in ten." The young man nods deferentially and hurries out of the office.

Malcolm takes his feet off the desk and reaches in a drawer for a phial of whitish powder. He pauses briefly, and punches a button on the desktop.

"Lucy," he says, "Flowers for Janine. Have them at the hospital when she wakes up. Make them real ones - I ll authorise the cost. If anyone tries to give you a problem about it, remind them that she saved us from having to pay out the reward money for Lady Muck."

SHIVER UNITS

STREET & HOME INVESTIGATION, VARIABLE ESPIONAGE & RECONNAISSANCE

"Ladies and gentlemen, you have now completed the final stages of your training, and are about to go out on the streets to do your duty. I hope you do not expect to gain respect because of the uniform that you wear; if so, your first tour will leave you sadly disillusioned. Your uniform will make you stand out as a target - an enforcer of law and order. The civilians that you will come across do not respect law and order. They do not want law and order. They want anarchy, the law of the jungle, the freedom to do exactly what they want to do. It is your duty to protect the innocent and punish the guilty, to contain the violence that threatens to explode in Downtown, and to enforce the wishes of SLA Industries.

"One easily-forgotten facet of your duty is that you do not simply provide back-up for Operatives. It is also your duty to monitor them, to watch them for signs of disloyalty to the Company. Operatives are not perfect, and you must make sure that any irregularities in their behaviour are reported to the authorities. They are too dangerous to be allowed to roam through the city unobserved. Someone must ensure their loyalty. That someone is you.

"Operatives will have higher SCLs than you, but they are not gods. Do not, repeat do not, attempt to approach any Operative you think is behaving irrationally. SLA Industries has invested too much time and effort in you to have you killed by a 'rogue' employee. If you have any doubts, any at all, you will approach your squad officer and you will inform them of these doubts. You will never attempt to apprehend an Operative without strict instructions from your superiors. Watch them, study them, but if they step out of line, report them. Your first duty is to SLA Industries, and it is up to you to ensure that nothing happens to hurt the company. Whether civilian or Operative, if someone acts against the best interests of the Company, they will be dealt with.

"Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the ranks of the Shivers, and good luck!"

Excerpts from a speech by Captain James Buchanan to new Shiver Units, 903SD

Mort's Shiver units are regarded by many as the poor cousins of Operatives, lesser versions of the highly skilled individuals who defend the security of the public and dominate the media. In comparison with the Ops, the Shivers are poorly armed and armoured, have much less authority and are paid a pittance.

Shivers have a lot of responsibility, however; they have to deal with Mort's riots, fires, growing criminal element and violence. This is in addition to providing medical support and back-up for Operatives, cleaning up after their actions and being on hand whenever needed. Shivers also deal with the citizens of Mort on a much closer basis than Operatives ever will. As such, they are the targets of the citizens' rage and frustration. Despite all this, they provide an excellent service, but are still viewed with contempt by Operative and civilian alike.

Few people realise how important the Shivers are. Every day, they risk their lives for the civilians of Mort who treat them with such disdain. It must be remembered that for every Operative on active duty there are at least 10 Shiver squads. Armoured Shivers can be seen on every city street. From the shining spires of Central to the crumbling slums of Downtown, the Shivers patrol constantly, looking for any signs of unrest or trouble.

COMMANDER CRADLE

The head of the Shiver force is Commander Matthew Cradle, a man who knows every aspect of the Shiver organisation. He has a huge force of highly trained individuals at his command. Unlike Operatives, the Shivers are trained to work as teams and are extremely effective in large numbers. If they decided to act against the Company, all the Operatives on Mort would be hard pressed to prevent a rebellion or civil war. Commander Cradle's rise to power is often seen as meteoric, but is due entirely to his outstanding ability as a leader and his loyalty to Mr. Slayer.

COMMANDER CRADLE - CAREER TIMELINE

884SD	Born
861SD	Joins Shivers; goes on Sleeper duty. Age 17
863SD	Completes fourth Sleeper tour. Promoted to Sergeant. Age 19
864SD	Completes two more Sleeper tours as Sergeant. Age 20
865SD	Assumes desk duties. Age 21
866SD	Resumes active duty as Street Patrol Sergeant. Age 22
868SD	Promoted to Lieutenant, Newtown Sector House. Age 24
872SD	Promoted to Captain, Newtown Sector House. Age 28
877SD	Promoted to Divisional Assistant - Downtown, Shiver Control. Age 33
885SD	Promoted to Divisional Controller - Downtown, Shiver Control. Age 41
890SD	Promoted to Shiver Commander, Shiver Control. Age 46
903SD	Still Shiver Commander. Age 59

Cradle started duties as a 'sleeper'. After four gruelling and highly successful tours, Shiver Cradle signed on for a further two, this time as squad Sergeant. He was given the necessary training, passed the tests with flying colours, and went into the streets again. After the physical and mental exhaustion of so many sleeper tours, Sergeant Cradle spent the next year developing his administrative skills.

Ready again for active duty, he returned to the streets leading a standard Shiver squad. Two years later, his exemplary service was rewarded by promotion to Lieutenant. His first posting at this rank was the Sector House at Newtown. After four years a further promotion, to Captain of Newtown Sector House, came his way in recognition of his work combating Downtown's most powerful street gang, the Johannas. These achievements seem yet more impressive since Newtown Sector is located next to the wall that separates Cannibal Sector Four from the rest of the city, and is therefore one of the hardest areas of Mort to police.

The remaining five years Cradle spent as Newtown Station's Captain led to the Johannas developing a major grudge against him after his continued frustration of their schemes.

Cradle's next promotion, to Shiver Control in Mort Central as a Divisional Assistant, was rushed through the system. Many suspect this was done for his personal safety, although official channels cite his professional capability. Whatever the reason, he retained this position for eight years before assuming the rank of Divisional Commander for Downtown.

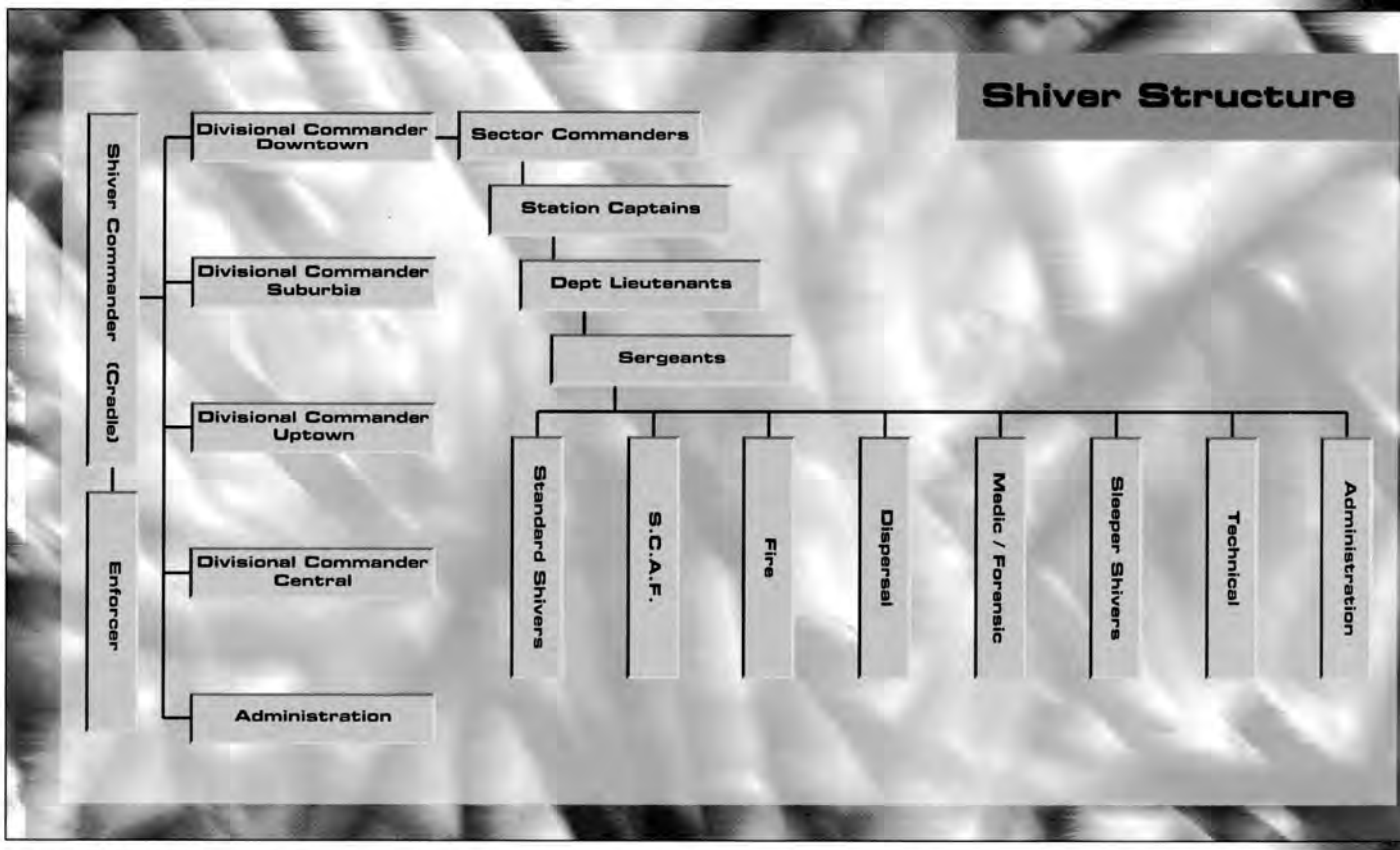
He had five years as Divisional Commander before the Shiver Commander retired. The committee seeking a replacement from the four Divisional heads elected Cradle as the natural successor. In the space of 34 years, Cradle had gone from being a standard Shiver to heading up the entire organisation. No mean achievement.

Commander Cradle oversees the whole force, and does his best for the people under his command. Having worked his way up from the bottom, he has a better idea of the true situation than most of his officers, who often enter Shiver Control as administrative assistants. He knows the streets, and what effect the orders given by the computer operators will have on the units implementing them. Cradle is a hard man who will not tolerate any disobedience from his underlings, but he is fair and will reward good work as often as he punishes bad. He may not be loved by his force, but all respect him.

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The Shiver organisation is headed by the Shiver Commander. The Commander's base is within Shiver Control in Mort Central, along with the bulk of the organisation's bureaucracy. It is this office which keeps the files on arrests made, reports and notes on each Shiver, pay records, and so on. Without this office, the organisation would grind to a halt in a tangled mess of paperwork.

Next in line are the Divisional Commanders for Central, Uptown, Suburbia and Downtown, also located in Shiver Control along with the Administrators. Information is constantly transferred between the divisions, as are squads of Shivers. If, for instance, Suburbia suffers a wave of riots, Dispersal Shivers could be called in from Downtown to help out. The four Divisional Commanders keep a strict record of who they owe favours to, and by whom they are owed favours. These favours will prove useful when Commander Cradle retires - the next Commander will be one of the divisional heads and they all want the job. Like the rest of Mort, the Shiver organisation suffers from endemic politics.



Below the Divisional Commanders are the heads of the different sectors within the city's zones. For instance, in Downtown, there are heads for Markham Sector, Wentmore Sector and each of the other districts, even the Bayou. Areas of Downtown that are not technically part of a sector - and there are many such areas - are divided up and allotted to the different Sector Commanders for control. As the boundaries are re-assigned on a yearly basis by the Divisional Commanders, most Sector Commanders spend a lot of time staying in their superior's good books. Each of the Commanders has a main Sector House where they are based, and from there they control all of their Stations.

In some of the larger Sectors, there can be as many as 20 stations under the control of one Sector Commander. Despite a recent non-discrimination program, three of the four Divisional Commanders and a massive 78% of the Sector Commanders are still female. Rivalry between the various Sector Commanders as they jockey for position within the division (each trying to prove themselves more competent and suitable for promotion than their peers) is widespread and intense.

Reporting to the Sector Commanders are the Captains of the various Shiver Stations scattered throughout the city. The Captains have authority only over the Shivers that are based in their Station. This, of course, includes the 'Sleepers' who originate at the Station. Arrest records, civil disobedience and crime levels are all taken into consideration when a Captain tries for promotion, so each Captain attempts to run their Station to the best of their abilities. Of course, some don't bother, resulting in poor arrest records, very high crime levels and sometimes even profitable agreements with local gang leaders.

Captains filter their orders to the rank and file through their departmental Lieutenants, who in turn delegate to the Sergeants. The Sergeants can only pass on so much work to the Shiver squads, so are generally bitter and unhappy.

Every department is headed by a Lieutenant who has a number of sergeants at their disposal, in charge of individual squads. Fire, Standard, Medical/Forensic, SCAF (Shiver Copter Airborne Forces), Technical, Dispersal and Administration departments will always be represented at every Station House. Sleeper forces are deployed only where necessary. A squad comprises one sergeant and nine Shivers. Of course, there are rigid and well-documented procedures for everything.

"I couldn't stand the smell."

"What smell?"

"The Gents."

"The Gents what?"

"No, the toilets. They stank, big style. You could smell them from halfway down the hall."

"Ours are nice and clean."

"Really? You're lucky. Still, at least the toilets mean that you are in the station. Sleeper duty nearly killed me."

"Sleeper duty? What the hell is 'Sleeper' duty?"

"Forget it. How many of your squad died last year?"

"Died? Here? None."

"None?!"

"Well, Carson broke her leg dancing with a Brain Waster, but apart from that nothing much happened."

"Fuck, you got it easy here in Uptown."

"Hey, we work our butts off up here..."

"Yeah, right! The worst thing you have to deal with is a drunk Slop or some corporate taking a leap because their FEN shares bottomed out or something. Try being stuck in the middle of a Downtown riot with no Dispersal back up for four hours. Try working in a Station that has no air conditioning, no working showers, a Sergeant that hits on anything with a pulse and Lieutenants taking enough in bribes to pay for the whole department!"

"You should report them to your Captain."

"My Captain? He was taking so many drugs he couldn't tell you what year it was..."

"Okay, okay! You win! Bartender, the same again please. I'm paying."

Conversation between Rebecca F Gordon (Shiver), Cranston Station (Uptown)and Jane Simmons (Shiver), Walker Station (Downtown).

Each individual Station has large holding pens for criminals and garages for APCs (Armoured Personnel Carriers) and SCAF vehicles. Some of the larger ones house the new DropShips. If necessary, the Captain can call on reserve Shivers from the Sector House, but can expect to wait a while. A substantial number of pooled APCs can be found at each location, with some of the more mobile SCAF units. Most of the APCs will be the MK VI 'Hammer Class' Armoured Personnel Carriers, but a few Stations still use the old FEN 0227 'Battle taxi'. The Hammer is the standard Shiver APC, and can be seen virtually anywhere in Mort, although they are not available for use by anyone other than Shivers.

There will always be one Sergeant with each APC that goes out from the Station, and any time that Ops call in for aid from the Shivers, a Sergeant must okay the action. Whether the officers realise it or not, the Sergeants are the key to the smooth running of the Station. Good leaders will always produce effective units, but sloppy management will undoubtedly result in abysmal crime figures.

The end of the line is the individual Shiver; they are the backbone of the organisation.

THE TRUE FACE OF THE SHIVERS

The public face of the Shiver organisation is one of cold efficiency, but the private face tells a very different story. Politics play a major part in the career of any officer, and everyone is struggling to get everything they can for themselves.

The promotional system within the Shiver organisation takes the talented elite and pushes them up the ladder. This is common knowledge, and every ambitious officer is constantly striving to be noticed, usually at the expense of their fellows. The Shivers are not very well paid, achieving a liveable wage only when they attain the rank of Lieutenant or higher. Competition is intense, with widespread bribery and blackmail.

The truly gifted have little to worry about, except perhaps a politically unaware officer slighting them. Officers of Cradle's calibre are exceptionally rare, however; few Shivers manage to claw through the ranks without greasing their path with some well-placed Unis. The paper currency is used for these 'deals' because it is virtually impossible to trace, unlike the electronic Credits which make up most of the currency of the city.

The cost of bribery increases every year, and a Standard Shiver wage will no longer leave enough to secure a good report. The money has to come from somewhere and the city streets are the obvious source.

Since the first tour of duty, corruption has patrolled Mort alongside the Shivers. Extortion is everyday currency. As soon as the new recruit gets out on the streets, they will be instructed in the practicalities of life.

Money is available from myriad sources, limited only by the Shiver's imagination. The most common method is for the Shiver squads to approach gangs or Soft Companies and promise to be looking the other way at the right

time for a price. Obviously this also produces better information for the squads. Any criminals not paying their cut are hunted down with great enthusiasm. Commander Cradle is powerless to stop this because it is so widespread.

Loyal but inexperienced Shivers quickly lose their idealistic notions. Crime can and does pay. It is depressing to enforce law and order while recognising that, at best, your efforts result in a stemming of the growth of crime. Those Shivers who do not simply give up quickly become hardened and embittered, until the only difference between them and those they fight is the Shiver armour.

The stressful working environment of most Shivers has serious repercussions in their private lives. Many have drink or drug problems, and very few have close family relationships. Coming home from a day spent amongst the criminals and punks of Mort can be difficult. They find it hard to switch off, and many treat their partners and children with the same harshness that they have to use in their careers. It is rare for a Shiver to be happily married.

Many escape to the oblivion of a bottle, syringe or capsule. As they see more and more of the depression and brutality of the streets, they become increasingly dependent on their means of escape. These habits can become expensive, and have to be paid for. Most Shivers cannot do without their daily fix. The money on the streets is there for the taking, and the Shiver needs it more than the street punks do, so why not? It is the creeps and scum that have driven them to this extreme, so they may as well be the ones who pay for it. It is not uncommon for the Shivers to become more dangerous than the criminals they are meant to be hunting down.

Each Station has at least one trained psychiatrist on the staff who is there to offer help to anyone who wants it. Unfortunately, the stigma attached to seeing a 'shrink' keeps most of them away, and the people who need help the most rarely receive it.

SHIVER SALARIES

Shiver units are not as well paid as Operatives, but they earn far more than most civilians can hope for. What follows is a list of Shiver salaries, before taxes, non-voluntary pension scheme contributions and other deductions have been removed:

Standard Shiver	- 80 credits / month
SCAF Shiver	- 85 credits / month
Sleeper Shiver	- 95 credits / month
Dispersal Shiver	- 97 credits / month
Enforcer Shiver	- CLASSIFIED
Shiver Sergeant	- 105 credits / month
SCAF Sergeant	- 110 credits / month
Sleeper Sergeant	- 110 credits / month
Dispersal Sergeant	- 120 credits / month
Enforcer Sergeant	- CLASSIFIED

Lieutenants earn between 250 and 400 credits per month, depending on their department. The salaries of officers ranked Captain and above is classified information, and varies on a case-by-case basis.

ROUGH GUIDE TO BRIBERY

It is common practice to bribe Shivers, but at least pretend to be subtle about it; a Shiver on another's 'turf' will not be happy about a fistful of Unis being waved openly in their face. Use Unis, not Credits. Shivers will not accept Credits as they are too easily traced. It is, of course, more difficult for an Op to bribe a Shiver than for a street punk - Ops earn too much and Shivers don't like that. Broadly speaking, the more you earn the more you can expect to pay. The table below indicates likely cost of the Shivers 'forgiving' the listed crime once committed.

Description	Street Value	Op Value
Vandalism	20 Unis	n/a
Petty Theft	50 Unis	250 Unis
Auto Theft	200 Unis	1000 Unis
Armed Robbery	500 Unis	2500 Unis
Assault	75 Unis	n/a
Murder	5000 Unis	25000 Unis

STANDARD SHIVERS

The Standard Shiver units make up the vast majority of the organisation. With their bright green Body "Blocker" armour and the GA 9442 Browbeater rifle, they are an unmistakable and forbidding sight as they patrol their areas. This type of Shiver deals with the everyday tasks that crop up on the streets of Mort.

Traffic Control is a tedious, unrewarding job, but one that is relatively safe. While on Traffic Control, it is up to the Shiver to try to keep everyone moving and to make sure that no-one blocks the roads by parking illegally. Occasionally a gridlock will occur, causing utter chaos and taking hours to sort out. Traffic Control duties are usually in the more prosperous parts of Mort, and it is very rare for any Shiver to be sent to Downtown for such a duty.

Forensic Support is another common Shiver work detail. This involves providing back-up to the Operatives and specialists that go to investigate crime scenes. Mostly, Forensic Support ends up as simple bodyguard duty, but can include passing information, transporting samples to the laboratories or following up on clues that the specialists discover.

Street Patrol involves a Shiver squad (one Sergeant and 9 Shivers) physically walking the streets. This is intended to act as an obvious deterrent. Whether this practice works to discourage criminals or not is open to debate.

Street Patrol is one of the most unpopular and dangerous duties. Certain Downtown gangs have initiation rites which involve killing a number of Shivers to an assortment of rules. Needless to say, members of these gangs are treated very harshly when they are apprehended by Shivers.

Standard Shivers interact with Operatives far more than any other type. Past friction led to the development of guidelines for these interactions, which can be seen in any Station House.

SLEEPER SHIVERS

The worst duty for any Shiver is the Sleeper Tour. Sleepers are Shiver squads who take an APC into Downtown and occupy an allotted area for six months. The APC is provisioned with enough food and ammunition for several weeks. The Shivers report back to base once a day by radio as they patrol the depths of Downtown, where SLA Industries is nothing more than a name.

A Sleeper squad is made up of 10 Shivers, one of whom will be a Sergeant. The individual Shivers take turns manning the communication, computer and gunnery systems, with the others either resting or patrolling their given area. Two of the passenger spaces within the APC are converted into bunks; they take it in turns to make use of them. The Shivers take Drum to provide sufficient rest on this long and exhausting tour of duty. Each APC carries large supplies of the drug, and the Sergeants dish it out as and when they deem it necessary.

Every Sleeper APC holds a pair of tiny cells, little more than upright coffins that prisoners can be locked in. These are used when the APC is far from the nearest Station and needs to bring a captive back. For preference, the Sleeper squad will simply call for back-up from the nearest Station and let them deal with the details, such as paperwork and arrests. Sleeper squads tend to deal with any trouble they come across quickly and harshly, leaving the soft approach to their colleagues who are based at a Station.

Whenever supplies start to run low, the Sleeper squad will head towards the nearest Station and re-stock before going back onto the streets. Apart from getting supplies and dropping off prisoners, Sleepers have no personal contact with other Shivers or Stations.

It is standard practice, if against regulations, for a Sleeper APC to hold non-standard weapons. Most Shivers (and all Sleepers) carry a weapon other than their Browbeater. The Browbeater is all well and good but, in most Shivers' opinions, it is nothing more than an overgrown pea-shooter. The Sleeper squads like to have something with a bit more stopping power. No Sleeper would consider beginning a tour without being certain that every member of the squad had a side weapon to complement their issue rifle.

In the deepest and most dangerous parts of Downtown, far from Shiver Stations and Observation centres, Sleeper squads patrol the streets enforcing the laws of SLA Industries. These regulations are not appreciated by the residents of the area, and the Shivers are regarded as fair game for anyone that cares to take on a fully armed APC. Unfortunately, there are plenty of people disturbed enough to do this, and the mortality rate amongst Sleeper squads is high.

Being on edge for six months solid is extremely stressful. By the end of the tour, the squad can no longer recognise mistakes. They

take risks that they would normally avoid, their reactions have slowed down, and much of the rigorous training and obedience that has been drummed into them has been forgotten. It is common for Sleepers to use drink or drugs to release tension and the ragged crew members coming off a tour are a far cry from the efficient company employees that started it.

Living in a confined space with nine other people for six months brings pressures all of its own. The Sergeants of Sleeper squads have been trained to cope with psychological problems and personality clashes, but tempers still run high. It is not unusual for fights to break out amongst the crews, and these have occasionally ended in one or more deaths.

Despite all the problems and the risks involved, the Sleeper squads are a vital part of the Shiver organisation. They take SLA law to the parts of Downtown that are not normally accessible to either Shivers or Operatives.

FIRE SHIVERS

Fire Shivers wear adapted Body Blocker armour, easily identified by the darker green panels on the shoulders, knees and elbows, and travel in modified APCs, known as Extinguishers. The Extinguishers sacrifice much of the cargo area of the standard APC for the tanks that hold compressed fire-dampening foam. The foam is jetted from high-power nozzles located at the rear of the vehicle. They are placed at the rear so there is less chance of their being damaged when the vehicle forces its way past obstructions. If necessary, these powerful jets can be turned on crowds, and in this sense, they act in exactly the same way as a water cannon.

Fire-fighting detail is an exciting but dangerous duty. Whilst assigned to this, the Shiver is based at a Station and does not leave until a fire has been reported. As soon as the fire report is received, the Extinguisher crashes through the city at terrifying rates. Fire is such a danger in the crowded, built-up streets of Mort that collateral damage and loss of life caused en route are considered irrelevant. Few are foolish enough to stay in the path of a moving Extinguisher. The adapted APCs have specially strengthened armour in the front of the vehicle and are often used to force other vehicles off the road. Occasionally, they have been seen crashing through buildings to get to a blazing property.

It is a little-known fact that many more people are in fact killed by the Shivers that disperse crowds watching fires than are killed by the actual fires themselves.

DISPERSAL SHIVERS

With their suits of PP8 Exo (Heavy) Armour and FEN 603s loaded with standard rounds, these Shivers are a far cry from the Standard squad. They are more skilled in the use of their Pacifier Batons than other Shivers and the riot shield that they all wear gives them a great deal of protection. The shield sits in a rectangular housing unit on the left arm of their armour, stretching from the knuckles to the elbow. Upon activation, moulded ceramic plates fan out to form a circular shield, 60cm in diameter. The use of these riot shields is strictly limited to Dispersal Shivers.

Dispersal Shivers are basically a quick response riot suppression division, called on whenever a civil disturbance of any size (more than 50) erupts. They are dangerously efficient and induce terror in all who see them.

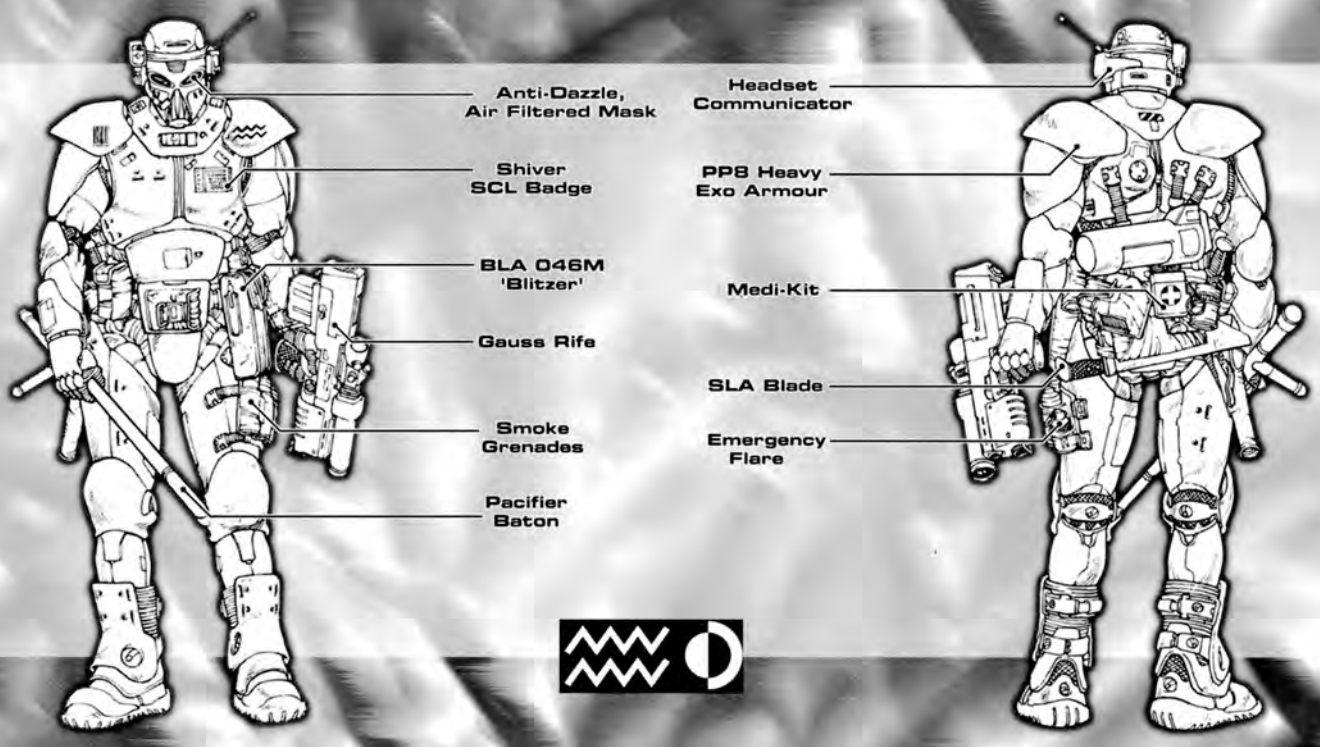
Operatives have no control over these units. In fact, any Operative interfering in the duties of a Dispersal Shiver will find themselves in very serious trouble indeed. The minimum they can expect is a fine of 1,000 Credits and the greatest penalty is summary execution. Dispersal Shivers are sent out for specific reasons and nothing and no-one should interfere with them while they perform their assigned tasks.

Once the Dispersals are called out, they do not make arrests or listen to excuses, they simply break up any gathering at the area that they have been sent to. Once the crowd has been scattered, the Standard Shivers arrive to make arrests and patch up anyone who was unlucky enough to get caught in the charge.

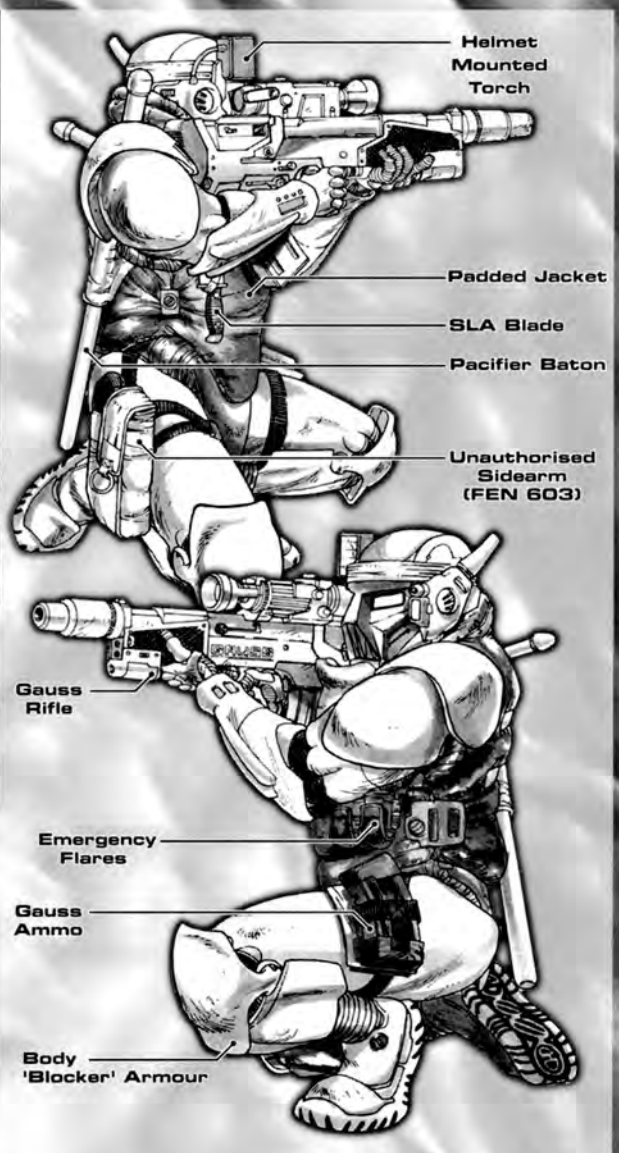
From the first days of their training, Dispersal Shivers are taught to work as a synchronised unit. Their greatest advantage is they way that they work in complete unison during their baton charges. There are never any weak links in the charge and the Shivers can rely on their companions to either side of them to do their jobs. They only need to concern themselves with the criminals in front of them, trusting completely in their colleagues.

Dispersal Shivers will never question an order from a superior officer. They are the least corrupt of Station-managed Shivers.

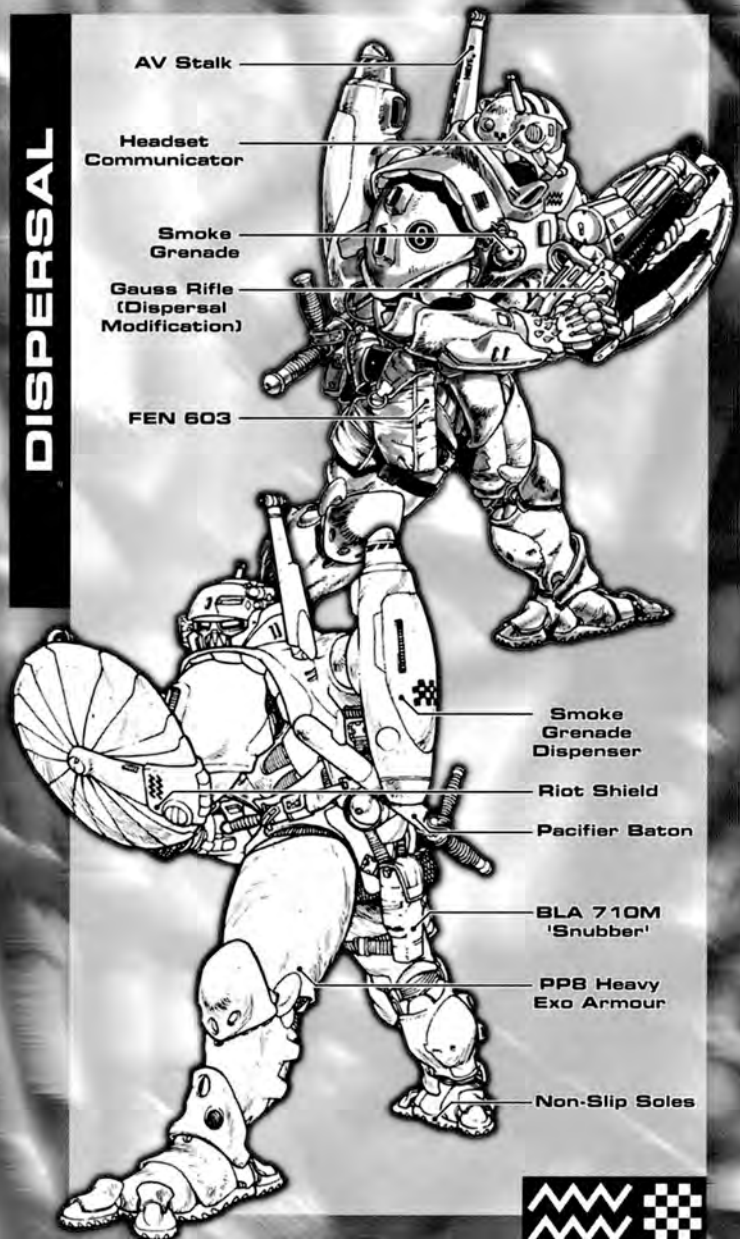
ENFORCER



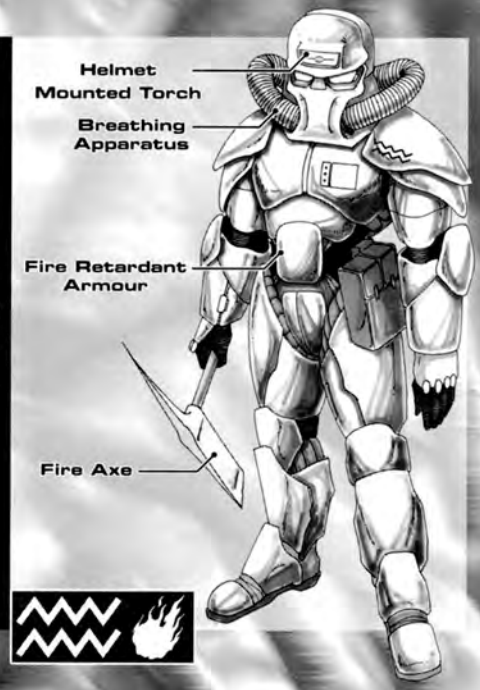
STANDARD



DISPERSAL



FIRE



ADMINISTRATOR

PARAMEDIC

D.A.C. HANDLER

"They must have been ready for us. We started our protest and they suddenly appeared out of the side alleys, lobbing gas grenades as they advanced. They were like solid walls on all sides, rows of riot shields locked together. We panicked and ran, but we were blocked in. The Dispersals took us apart man, they came straight at us hitting anything that got in their way. A few of us tried to fight back, to lash out against the oppressive system. Most of 'em are now in hospital... or the morgue."

Simon Collins, Human protester, currently serving a minimum of 5 years prison sentence for sedition.

ENFORCER SHIVERS

Of the assorted types of Shiver, the Enforcers are surely the most mysterious and least understood. Seldom seen and heard less, the Enforcers Shivers go about their business silently and efficiently. Wearing dark green PP8 Heavy Exo armour, these Shivers deal only with the most difficult and covert tasks. These normally involve the suppression of any activity SLA Industries deems detrimental to the fabric of the Company.

An Enforcer will never speak to anyone. If approached, they will either walk away or stare silently through their helmet until the intruder leaves. In addition to standard equipment, they carry BLA 046M Blitzers loaded with HESH rounds; if called out, their intention is not to make arrests. The Enforcers' most disconcerting practice is known as 'bagging'. Essentially, bagging consists of shrink-wrapping dead and dying criminals, resulting in stiff, upright corpses to ease transportation and storage.

Enforcers are trained killers who have had all emotion drained away from them and blind obedience put in its place. No one is allowed to stand in their way.

SHIVER COPTER AIRBORNE FORCES

There are 100,000 SCAF pilots in Mort City. Everyone has seen them, flying around on their small helicopter bikes, acting as scouts or rapid response units. Even though the pilots normally avoid dangerous situations, they can be an effective force, thanks to the ball mounted FEN 706 Power Reaper that is part of the heli-bike. This weapon connects to a Head-Up Display in the pilot's helmet that permits hands-free targeting and firing.

The sight of armoured police bearing down at 400 km/h on a heli-bike can be terrifying. Few will even attempt to face down a SCAF patrol. One drawback to this presence is visibility; SCAF make excellent targets for the murderous and insane. Their best defence is speed, but the need for surveillance often makes travelling flat-out unfeasible.

SCAF pilots are used heavily to patrol the edges of the Cannibal Sectors and the more remote areas of Downtown. It is often the SCAF pilots who alert ground forces to hazards, dangers and potential criminal activity. In times of crisis, the SCAF may mobilise as a coherent aerial assault force.

All SCAF pilots carry pistol versions of the Browbeater Rifle, held on a special mag-holder. The pilots wear customised armour designed to keep out the cold and driving rain. The armour has had to sacrifice some of its strength, but few pilots mind that.

SCAF pilots may not be the most vital part of the Shiver organisation but they are surely the most extravagant and stylish. The public and the media love the SCAF units, and anything that keeps the public happy makes SLA Industries happy. The Shiver Copter Airborne Forces are here to stay.

SHIVER HISTORY

Over the years, the Shivers have been subjected to constant abuse from the population of Mort as they struggle to maintain law and order in a city that breeds hatred and fear as part of its daily TV programming. The Shivers are hated but always needed. The organisation is so commonplace today, few can imagine the World of Progress without it.

The end of the Conflict Wars brought major changes to all aspects of life on Mort. As the new Mort grew out of the rubble of the old city, Slayer recognised that the old government police force - that would become Monarch Security - was not strong enough to control the expanding population. Something new was needed.

By the year 10SD, a lot of the old Conflict War armies were being disbanded as their services were no longer needed. One such unit, the 2nd Nitro Legion, found new employment as a static defence force for Mort.

The 2nd Nitro Legion found their new job unfulfilling and constantly complained that they wished to be put on active duty again. Slayer granted their request.

In 16SD the Nitro Legion, some 65,000 men, were renamed 'MDOs' (Mort Defence Officers). They were put on a salary structure and began an extensive retraining program. This involved learning the basics of law enforcement and population retraining. Few wanted to accept this, but no one had any choice. Most saw the whole exercise as a chance to legally loot Mort and for the first few months of service as MDOs, almost all of the 65,000-strong force used the city as their own personal bank. Soon after this

started, new officers began to appear in the ranks of the MDO and exert 'iron-fisted' control over the force. This led to rebellion which was quickly crushed by the DarkFinder officers wherever it crept to the surface. By January 19SD, the MDO had become a fully functioning police force owned and controlled entirely by SLA Industries. Come summer of that year, Mr. Slayer implemented a recruitment programme to expand the MDO to a force big enough to patrol Mort City completely. At the same time it was decided to give them a face lift; new uniforms, weapons, transport and a new name. It is at this time the Shivers were born as a fully-fledged organisation.

By May 20SD the Shiver ranks had swollen to almost double the original number, some 115,000 employees. Little has changed in the basic structure of the organisation to this day. Some of the more obvious changes are seen in the appearance of the different types of Shiver squad. The first of these was the Dispersal Shivers. During some rather heated exchanges between Shivers and civilians in 129SD, it was apparent that the Shiver organisation was not properly equipped to deal with growing unrest. In 130SD the first Dispersal units were seen in action, quelling riots and enforcing civil obedience wherever they were deployed. Created as a temporary measure, the Dispersal Shivers have remained a constant presence.

The next subdivision of the Shiver forces to come into existence was the Sleepers. These units, pulled from the ranks of standard Shivers, were created as a direct response to the Fall of Salvation Tower in 300SD. The Tower slid into the substructure of Mort, causing utter mayhem. In the ensuing chaos, bereft of power and communication links, the Sleeper units were used to provide a visible presence during the construction of the walls, built to protect Mort citizens from the most dangerous areas by preventing access to them. The isolated sections rapidly deteriorated into the area known today as the Cannibal Sectors. Now the Sleepers are used to stop things getting through from there into Downtown.

Within 20 years, it became apparent that ground based troops were not sufficient for the level of surveillance required. Thus the first airborne Shivers came into service. The SCAFs were deployed to act as scouts on flyby missions into the Cannibal Sectors.

No other changes took place in the Shiver structure until 820SD when Mort witnessed the terrifying sight of the first use of Slayer's own Enforcer Shivers. These emotionless creatures were sent to disperse a mass prayer meeting of one of the larger Downtown cults. As the cultists gathered to pray the Enforcer Shivers appeared and executed the entire gathering.

Now the Shiver organisation is complete, and is deployed across the World of Progress wherever required.

INTERACTION

"The public face of the Shivers is far removed from the way the Shivers view themselves. Shivers are the single most insular and mistrusting breed on the face of this planet. No wonder they are so corrupt! I have spent my life trying to make them understand: Protect and serve... I fear I will die trying."

Comments made by
Commander Cradle 901SD
(CLASSIFIED SCL 2:
Not for public or internal use)

In an organisation the size of the Shiver force, it is impossible to keep out the territorialism and bigotry inherent to Mort society. The different factions of the department have far more loyalty to their own than to other sections of the force. One of the major causes of this animosity is the pay structure. Most Shivers are paid a pittance and they hate it. Nearly everyone overestimates their own importance, and the Shivers often resent their colleagues and superiors. The Shivers with the most to gripe about are the Standard squads, who pick up the boring and hazardous duties that others manage to avoid. The most bitter and twisted Shivers, the Standard squads are responsible for most of the friction with other Shivers.

This animosity leads not only to departmental problems, but also to a dangerous communication breakdown on the streets. It is not uncommon for Shivers to ignore calls for assistance and back-up from other squads simply because the responding squad doesn't like (or has had a disagreement in a bar with) the squad needing help. The Dispersal Shivers are as guilty as Standard Shivers for this.

"Why the hell should I bother? I got 15 years of this bullshit until I can retire. I'll be dead before then and for what? I'll tell ya, a big fat nothin'. I bust a gut out on these streets day in day out and all I get is shot at, stabbed, stoned and stuff you don't want to hear about. Do they thank me for

the 654 arrests I made last year? No! I give up... this city sucks. I make 80 credits a month. You know how much those friggin SCAFs make? 110 credits a month! I mean come on. What's the game here? They don't know what an arrest is. You know what I mean? How the hell can you arrest someone when you're doin' 400 klicks an hour? Son, never be a Shiver."

Shiver Gail Barnet,
Downtown Station 45, 903 SD

Dispersal Shivers are the most arrogant of the different divisions, although many consider the SCAF to be worse. With a job that, to all intents and purposes, entitles them to beat the living hell out of anything that gets in their way, the Dispersals have a tremendous problem controlling their aggression, both on and off duty. This has earned them the reputation of mindless psychotics and bullies with other Shivers. The Dispersals see themselves as the true saviours of order, stopping chaos from completely swamping the city.

"The main problem here is that Mr. Slayer doesn't give us enough control. We need the same freedom to operate as his Enforcers. That way we could happily kill people without doing all that really boring paperwork at the end of it. Eh... No. Sorry. I mean widen our jurisdiction so that we can enforce the law quicker and keep the streets safe. That thing isn't on, is it? Oh..."

Dispersal Shiver Mary Kimberly 902SD,
just before transfer to Sleeper duty.

Although on the edge of a nervous breakdown 99% of the time, Sleeper Shivers seem to be more content than most of their colleagues. These individuals have seen more of the horrors of Mort than Standard or Dispersal Shivers see in a lifetime of street work. With all the hideous creatures that come crawling out of the Cannibal Sectors, the Sleeper squads are glad just to be alive, and have little time to enter into the petty squabbles of the other divisions. In any bar-room argument or brawl involving Shivers there will normally be a Sleeper there trying to restore the peace. Although not passive or weak, Sleepers do tend to keep themselves to themselves, and seek the company of other Sleeper Shivers rather than enter the inevitable bitching. Sleepers are perceived as the strange ones, the kids at school that had no friends but found a common link with the other weird kids.

"I've seen it. I've seen the soul eater. Digger. It came over the top of Gate One. We let rip with the 60mm, but it just bounced off him. Nothing can stop it... and you want to know why I do Sleeper? I'll tell you. It keeps me away from all the madness of Shivers stabbing each other in the back. Why bother? Digger can do it for you. You see this scar..."

Sleeper John Fergison 903SD

The SCAF pilots are a breed of self-centred and arrogant 'Flyers'. They are only above all others in terms of physical location - they have heli-bikes, after all - but don't tell them that. They perceive themselves to be guardian angels, protecting Mort City from danger. They are a constant irritant to most other Shiver divisions, as they take great delight in baiting any Shiver who is not one of their own. If the situation turns violent, they can always fly away from it. This is all well and good when they are on duty, but there are hundreds of reported cases of SCAF pilots having 'accidents' in Shiver Stations after completing their daily duties.

"Well, lets see. I've been flying now for... oh, 10 years and never been hit once. They just keep making us Flyers better and better. That's why they pay us so much, because we are the best. Those groundhogs don't know nothing about what it's like to police a city. They only see a little bit of it down there in the shit. We see the whole thing. We are the true police of the city, not those other saps."

SCAF Judy Richards 899SD

The Enforcer Shivers are the exception to the rule of inter-divisional rivalry between Shivers. The Enforcers have been in service for over 80 years, and still have no contact with the rest of the organisation. Kept as pets or guard dogs to Slayer, they are rarely seen but talked about endlessly. They are perceived as evil killing machines with no remorse or compassion. The only time someone directly encounters an Enforcer is if they are a target. Not so much hated as feared by the rest of the Shiver forces, the Enforcers are — with the blessing of Slayer — a law unto themselves.

"There is one thing that I don't like about the way the Shivers operate. Those Enforcers. They kill people for nothing. Isn't it wrong, or something? Don't these guys have feelings like everyone else? I was there that day in Host Park,

when they came down and killed a whole load of demonstrators for no reason. All they were doing was mellowing out in the park and chanting and stuff. When the Shivers arrived, we thought that they would just bust a few heads and leave, but no. They came out of the APCs with guns blazing. The sound of Blitzers filled the park. In seconds, men, women and children were cut down in the hail of fire that the Enforcers laid down. I saw 50 people die in seconds. I think that SLA should take a long look at the way in which their Shiver units operate. Someone important could have been killed. Lucky it was only civilians."

Sue Dickinson, civilian(Chairperson: Halloween Jack Fan Club) 899SD

INTERACTION GUIDELINES

To deal with the problems between Ops and Shivers, a set of guidelines have been laid down. These rules are to be obeyed by both Operatives and Shivers alike.

1. No Operative may ask a Shiver to endanger a civilian without written authorisation.
2. No Operative may interrupt a Shiver who is working for an Operative with a higher SCL.
3. No Operative may ask a Shiver to interrupt Fire-Fighting detail for any reason.
4. No Operative may ask a Shiver to fulfil a task that the Operative is being paid to perform.
5. Before a Shiver can perform any task for an Operative, authorisation has to be obtained from a Sergeant or other officer.
6. An Operative must take full responsibility for the actions of any Shiver working under their direct orders.
7. Operatives have no authority whatsoever over Dispersal or Enforcer Shivers.
8. Shivers must remember that the safety of civilians is of paramount importance.
9. If any Operative has doubts over the performance or abilities of a Shiver, they must report it to their superiors, not attempt to deal with it themselves.
10. If any Shiver has doubts over the performance or abilities of an Operative, they must report it to their superiors, not attempt to deal with it themselves.
11. No Operative may countermand the orders of a Shiver unit of Lieutenant rank or higher.

These guidelines were created to try to prevent the resentment that is growing between the Shivers and Operatives. They have eased the problem but nothing is likely to completely resolve it. The guidelines are open to interpretation on many points but they have at least helped Operatives know exactly what they can and can't ask Shivers to do.

Shiver Interrogation No. 118846/b12

"Is this recorder working? Okay, this is Lieutenant Margaret Liddel beginning interview number... What number is this one, anyway?"

"118846/b12, sir. Donald Baird is the subject." Shiver Sergeant Jane Slater looked up from her notes and studied her superior. Liddel looked as though she would be more at home in a tuxedo or a business suit than a Shiver uniform and Slater could never figure out why a rich kid like Liddel had wanted to be a cop anyway.

"I know that Baird is the subject," snapped Liddel. "Don't try to teach me my job."

"Yes sir, sorry sir."

"What's Baird in for?" asked Liddel, conveniently forgetting that knowing these details was also her job.

"Possession of a finance chip scanner and an unauthorised weapon, sir," replied Slater, checking her notes again. "It appears that he was carrying a BLA 446M."

"Ah," muttered the officer. "A BLA 446M."

"That's the new Derringer pistol, sir," sighed Slater. "Little gun with a lot of power."

"I know what a BLA 446M is, Slater! Go and fetch Baird, and make sure that he's cuffed."

"Yes, sir."

Slater got up from her desk and left the interrogation room, leaving Lieutenant Liddel on her own. The officer paced across the bare cell a few times before sitting on the edge of the desk. The desk held Slater's computer, an ashtray, two cups of coffee and the controls for the video cameras that were positioned in two corners of the room. There were two chairs on this side of the desk and a much less comfortable, metal one on the far side. The metal chair was attached to the floor and wired to a control panel on the far side of the desk.

She had been through interviews like this dozens of times before but this didn't make her feel any more comfortable with them. Especially with a prisoner like Sergeant Baird. Baird had been a street Shiver for years and he was as hard as the streets that he patrolled. People like Baird made Lieutenant Liddel very uncomfortable indeed.

As Liddel was sitting on the desk, the door to the room swung open and Slater walked in, followed by Donald Baird and couple of armoured Shivers. The two Shivers forced Baird to sit in the seat, cuffed his hands to the arms of the chair and walked out of the room. Neither said a word for the entire time that they were in the room.

Liddel looked down at the prisoner. He had a large, purple bruise spreading across the right hand side of his face and was sporting a week long growth of beard. Baird was a large man, standing close to two meters and he was broad with it as well. Normally an impressive sight, he looked ridiculous in the paper pyjamas that all prisoners wore.

"You are Donald Baird?" the officer asked.

"Sergeant Baird, sir," replied the prisoner, contempt dripping off every word.

"Yes, right. Well, ex-Sergeant Baird, you are in a great deal of trouble. Are you going to co-operate with this interview? "

Baird looked at the woman who was sitting on the desk. This was the sort of Shiver who had never seen active duty in her life, the sort that spent her time punching keys on a computer terminal. People like this didn't understand what it was like on the streets. They didn't know the kind of pressure that was put on hard-working Shivers. Shivers like Baird.

"You have got to be joking," laughed Baird. "Things can't get much worse for me, so why should I make things easier for you? No, I am not going to co-operate."

Baird turned to look at Slater, who was sitting directly across from him and asked, "Is this tart for real? How can you put up with her?"

Privately Slater agreed with Baird, but she wasn't about to let a prisoner talk to her like that. She moved her right hand a few centimetres and pressed a button that was located on the underside of the desk. This button was the trigger for the electrical current that was waiting to flow through the chair that Baird sat in. When the button was pressed, the current surged up through the chair and into the person sitting in it.

Baird's back arched as the current forced him away from the chair. His hands spasmed open and closed and his screams echoed around the room. Liddel turned to Slater and nodded, the signal for Slater to cut the electricity.

As the current stopped, Baird slumped into the

chair, his head hanging forward. His body was shaking with the effort of drawing breath and the two Shivers allowed him a few moments to recover from the warning.

"Now, Mister Baird," said Liddel. "Perhaps you are ready to continue with our conversation. But let's get a few things straight first. When I ask you a question, you will answer it to the best of your abilities. You will be respectful and polite to myself and my assistant at all times and you will not, repeat not, speak unless you are spoken to. Do you understand me?"

Baird didn't answer. Tears were running down his face and his knuckles were white as he gripped the arms of the chair.

"That was your last chance, ex-Sergeant Baird," Liddel said. "Sergeant Slater, if you would...."

"No!" interrupted Baird. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, just don't hurt me again. I'll do what you want. Really I will"

The end of the sentence disintegrated into a coughing fit and Liddel looked at the pathetic man slumped in the chair. At one time Baird had been a good Shiver... now he was a wreck.

"I'm glad that you've come to your senses, Mister Baird. Perhaps now we can get somewhere with this interview."

Slater glanced up at her superior and saw the indifference in Liddel's eyes. It was the same every time. Liddel was one of the few Lieutenants impartial enough to carry out these

interviews. Slater felt revulsed by seeing her so devoid of emotion, but hoped to emulate it one day. She would go along with whatever Liddel wanted and try to forget about it afterwards. Not that it was an easy thing to forget. Slater didn't know what was worse, the pain and degradation of the prisoners or the callousness of the Lieutenant.

"Now, Baird," continued Liddel. "You are here because you were caught with unauthorised equipment. Is that correct?"

She turned to Slater and raised an eyebrow.

"Yes, sir," said Slater. "A Derringer and finance chip scanner."

Slater knew that there was no point in getting upset about having to repeat herself. Liddel never listened to anything that she said anyway and she had grown used to having to say everything at least twice over the last couple of months.

"Thank you, Sergeant Slater," said Liddel as she turned her attention back to Baird again. "Do you have an explanation for having these items in your possession?"

Baird looked up at his tormentor, careful to keep the hate out of his eyes. He knew that he would have to be very careful because otherwise the power would be turned on again.

"Yes, sir," said Baird. "Those things were mine and I'm not going to try to deny it."

"I asked why you had them." replied Liddel. "Tell me why you broke regulations by having them. You can start with the gun."

Baird went to lift his hand to his face before the clank of the cuffs reminded him that he was chained down. He looked down at the steel cuffs and wondered how he could ever explain anything to Liddel. There was no way an officer like Liddel could ever understand what the streets were like. Downtown was a jungle, a jungle of killers, thieves, psychos, wild animals and mutants. The organisation expected you to be able to survive in there with just a Browbeater but it was just not possible. Oh yes, the Browbeaters were great for breaking up crowds of kids in Suburbia but they weren't much use against an armoured madman in the depths of Downtown. The company didn't care about that sort of thing though, all they cared about were their stupid rules and regulations.

"I carried the weapon for protection, sir," muttered Baird.

"Speak up, man!" demanded Liddel. "I can't hear what you're saying."

"I carried the weapon for protection, sir!" repeated the prisoner.

"Protection? You were supplied with a weapon to protect yourself." Liddel calmly regarded Baird. "Isn't the company Browbeater good enough for you, Mister Baird? Why do you think you deserve something more than every other Shiver in the organisation?"

"No sir, it's not that. It's just..." began Baird.

"It's just what?" interrupted Liddel. "You didn't like the Browbeater because it didn't kill things? Is that it, Mister Baird? Do you like to kill things? Is that why you got yourself another little gun to use, so that you could go around killing the people you were meant to protect?" Liddel's monotonous tone reinforced her utter boredom.

"No, sir. It's not that at all. There's just times when you need something more than a

Browbeater." Baird gazed up at Liddel and saw no trace of emotion in the officer's eyes. All he could pray for was to get out of this room with the minimum amount of pain. He knew that his career and probably his life were over.

"You need something more than a Browbeater," muttered Liddel. "Explain what you mean by that statement."

"There are things in Downtown that are difficult to stop," replied Baird. "The Browbeater is great for crowd control but there are monsters in Downtown and they just laugh at you if you turn a Browbeater on them!"

"Monsters," said Liddel flatly. "Mister Baird, fairy tales of the bogey-men that come out at night and eat children are just stories that mothers use to make their children behave."

Lieutenant Liddel leaned towards the prisoner.

"There are no monsters in Downtown, Mister Baird" she said. "Now, why did you carry an unauthorised weapon?"

"I have seen a giant Carrien burst out of the sewers in front of me!" exclaimed Baird. "It was too big to come through the man-hole so the thing came through the road. It broke apart the concrete like it was wet fucking cardboard. I've seen Thresher troops pull buildings down to escape the Operatives that were chasing them. Hundreds of people died when the building collapsed but the Operatives didn't even slow down the chase. All they wanted was to get the guy in the metal suit."

Tears were streaming openly down Baird's face but it was impossible to tell if they were tears of fear, rage or frustration.

"Halloween Jack tore two of my men apart in front of my eyes," he continued. "He ripped them apart with his bare hands and then he disappeared like he was a ghost. The rumour on the street is that he *is* some kind of ghost and I'm starting to believe the rumours. I have had my APC blown apart by an Operative who decided that she didn't like Shivers. I have watched a Necanthrope torture civilians and I haven't been able to do anything about it. The beast was tearing the skin off a woman while her daughter was forced to sit and watch it and I had orders not to interfere. I still have nightmares about the kid crying and the mother screaming.

"I was on Sleeper duty when my squad went to investigate screams from a building. Three of my men never came back, they went into the

building and simply vanished. To this day, I don't know what happened to them. I have seen friends die. I wake screaming in the middle of the night. I have seen more evil than you could ever believe exists."

Baird seemed to have run out of emotions. He slumped down in the chair and looked blankly at the disinterested Lieutenant.

"You live in my mind for one day," he said. "And then you can tell me there are no monsters in Downtown. "

For a long moment, no-one in the room said anything, as though everyone was waiting for something to happen.

"Now that you have that out of your system..." Liddel said. "If these 'monsters' are as dangerous as you say, Mister Baird, surely your Derringer would be no more help than the standard issue Browbeater?"

"I always loaded it with HESH rounds, sir," muttered Baird. "It stops most things."

Baird sounded tired and defeated. He knew that no matter what he said, Liddel would never understand what the streets could be like. It was pointless trying to explain what gutter life was like to the Lieutenant.

"HESH rounds for a Derringer are very expensive" Liddel turned to look at Slater.

"Seven credits a round, sir," replied Slater after tapping a few keys on the computer.

"Thank you, Slater," replied Lieutenant Liddel. "Seven credits per round, Mister Baird. How could a man on your salary, with your well documented alcoholic tendencies, afford that sort of money? As a Sergeant, you would have earned 105 credits a month. How did you manage to afford HESH rounds?"

"I was on sleeper duty most of the time sir," said Baird. "That's 110 a month for Sergeants."

"Mister Baird, where did you get the money?" repeated Liddel.

"From the streets, sir!"

"Explain what you just said, Mister Baird."

Liddel got up from the desk and started walking around the cell behind Baird. She slowly paced up and down the room for a few moments and then stopped directly behind him.

"How did you get the money?" she asked.

"I took it from the street punks sir," replied Baird quietly.

"I see," said Liddel. "You stole the money that you used to buy unauthorised ammunition for your unauthorised weapon. Did you use this unauthorised weapon to threaten the people that you stole the money from?"

"Yes sir," mumbled Baird.

"Thank you, Mister Baird," she said. "You stole, you threatened, you blackmailed, you did anything you had to to get the money?"

"Yes sir," mumbled Baird.

"You killed for this money. You killed the civilians that you are meant to protect. You were employed to protect the people of Mort; you were trusted to do this. But you betrayed this trust, didn't you Mister Baird?"

"Yes sir."

"Of course you did," continued Lieutenant Liddel. "The chip scanner was in case the company caught you, wasn't it? Just in case someone thought you were important enough to send Operatives to investigate?"

"Yes sir," replied Baird

"Mister Baird," said Liddel. "I am sure you realise the severity of your actions. Do you have anything further to say?"

Baird couldn't see the officer standing behind him, but he could sense her presence. What was the point in saying that everyone did what he did. That you had to be hard just to survive on the streets, that you had to have respect from the scum in the gutters. Liddel would never understand that, she would never believe that you had to be corrupt to survive.

"No, sir," Baird said. "I have nothing to say."

Liddel walked around the desk and sat in the seat beside Slater. She put both elbows on the desk and leaned forward.

"I am sorry ex-Sergeant Baird, but by your own admissions you have committed acts that are detrimental to the Company. I have no choice but to authorise your immediate termination."

Liddel stood up and walked to the door, closely followed by Slater. The two Shivers that had escorted Baird in were standing outside, waiting for the command that they knew would be coming soon.

"Shivers," said Lieutenant Liddel. "Take ex-Sergeant Baird back to his holding cell and await further orders."

As the door closed on Baird, she turned to Slater. "Well," she said. "What's the next case?"

DAM

VEHICLES

FEN 5009 'STINGRAY'

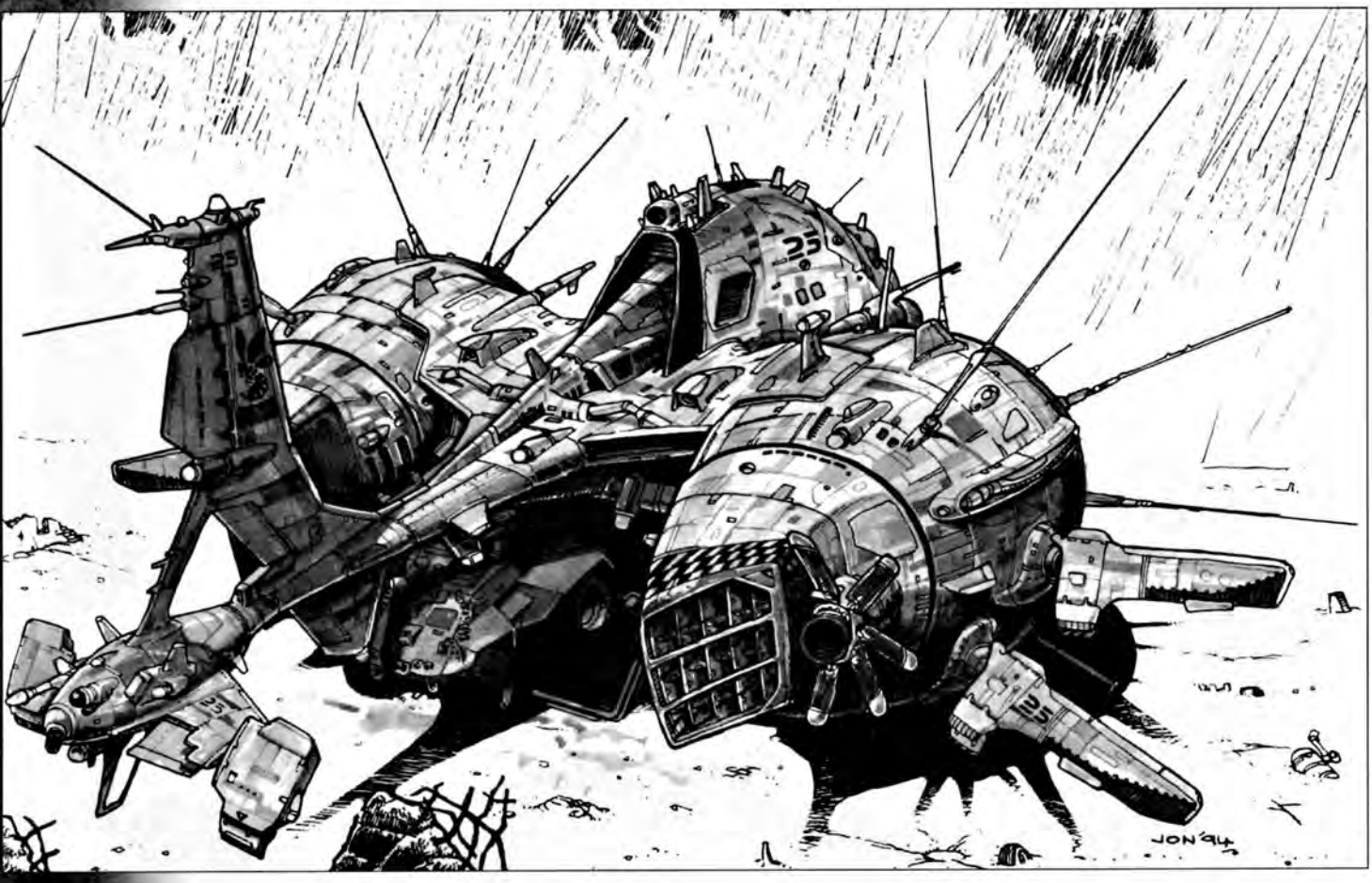
DROPSHIP

Type:	DropShip
Max. Speed:	850 km / hour; 136 m / phase
Dimensions:	45m length, 35m width, 15m height
Weight:	180 tonnes
Crew:	1 pilot / 3 gunners
Passengers:	100 maximum
Cargo:	1 APC and 4 SCAF
Skill:	Pilot, Military
Armament:	2 x 40mm Chain Guns
	1 x 60mm Chain Gun
Cost:	3,850,000 Credits
Armour:	PV 30 ; ID 3500
Acceleration Rate:	6
Turning Circle:	0 Stationary, 110 at full speed

There can be no doubt that the Stingray is the most impressive release from the FEN military transport workshops to date. Adapted from the troop carrier DropShips of the War Worlds, the Stingray is designed to carry either large numbers of Shiver units or an APC and SCAF copters. The drive unit and directable jets make it an extremely manoeuvrable piece of equipment, allowing it to hover despite its size and weight. The Stingray can land in virtually any part of Mort City or the Cannibal Sectors. When the area is too built up, it can deploy SCAF helibikes without needing to reach the ground.

In normal use, the helibikes, APCs or Shivers leave the DropShip via a ramp located at the rear of the ship. Despite the size and complexity of the Stingray, it needs only one pilot to crew it. Normally three gunners take care of the weapons systems, but if necessary the pilot can operate the weapons with the aid of the ship's computer.

The two 40mm Chain Guns are located fore and aft, in the tail and nose sections of the ship. The larger 60mm Chain Gun is amidships, and can be used effectively to clear a landing space. All of the weapons are set in ball joints for precision firing.



All Stingray DropShips come complete with an ejectable cockpit unit for the pilot's safety, grasper claws that can be used to either secure the ship in rough terrain or to hold and carry vehicles of up to APC size, electronics counter-measure systems and the most advanced radar scanners currently available on Mort.

The Stingray is equipped for both atmospheric and space (Ion Drive) flight, and will easily fit into the cargo hold of most Fold Ships. It is so successful that although it has only been in the field for six months, non-Shiver departments are already showing strong interest. It is likely that further refinements will be added to the next model of the Stingray, but it is extremely effective as it stands, and will be seeing a lot of service in the near future.

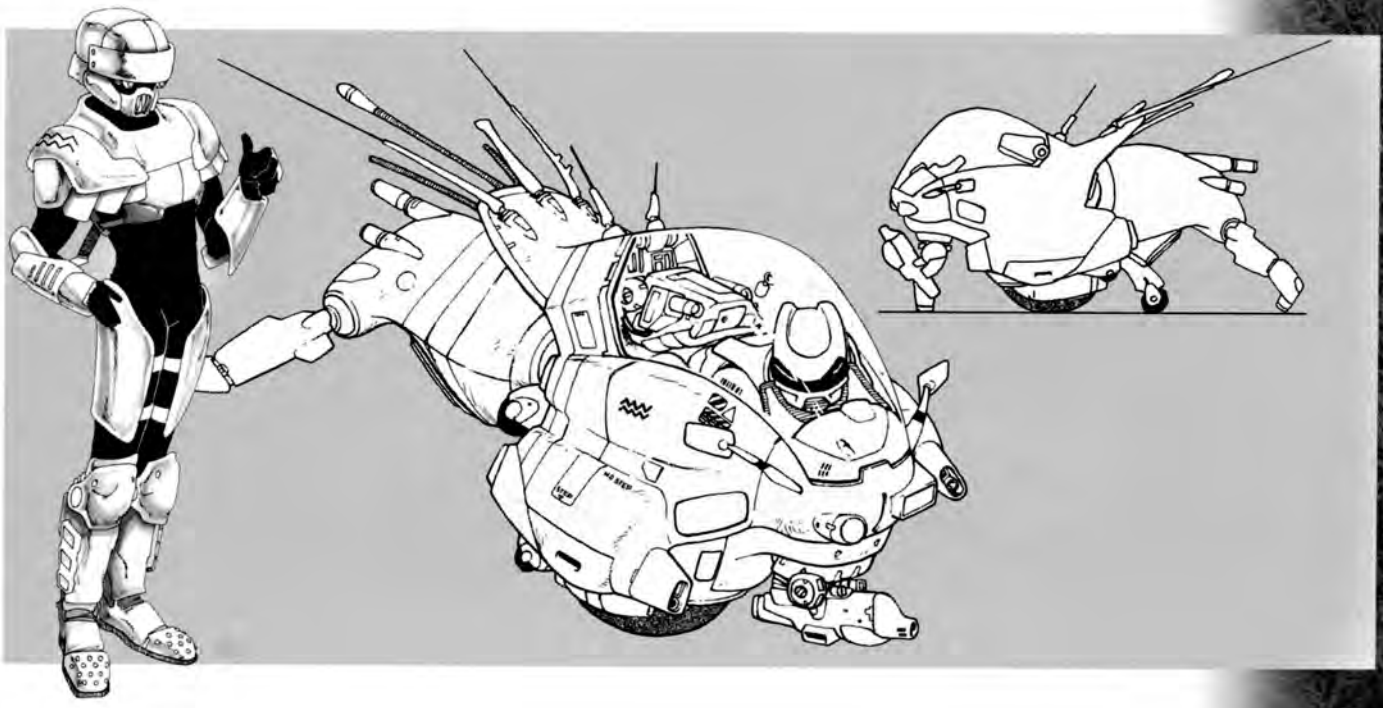
FEN Shiver Forces Equipment Catalogue, 903SD

FEN 4998 SCAF

HELI-BIKE

Type:	Heli-Bike
Max. Speed:	400km/hr; 64m/phase
Dimensions:	2.5m length, 1.5m width, 1.2m height
Weight:	.75 tonnes
Crew:	1 pilot
Passengers:	none
Cargo:	none
Skill:	Pilot, Military/Drive, Motorcycle
Armament:	Ball mounted FEN Power Reaper
Cost:	125,000 Credits (disarmed)
Armour:	P.V. 15, I.D. 250
Acceleration Rate:	6
Turning Circle:	2 on ground, 0 hovering, 50 in flight

This rapid deployment vehicle, used by SCAF Shivers, has a large multi-prop turbine on its underside. This allows the bike to hover. Other smaller jets and fans on the bike give the copter its forward propulsion properties using the power from the main turbine. The vehicle has a large hydraulic system on its undercarriage. This is to allow for the storage and deployment of the bike's wheels. When the copter is about to land, the pilot may lower the wheels for either landing purposes or to use the copter as a ground vehicle. The avionic capabilities of the vehicle are excellent (it has full vertical take-off and landing) but the ground manoeuvrability is somewhat restricted because it is unable to use its main turbine and must rely on the smaller jets and fans for its propulsion. To assist the SCAF pilot in duties, the heli-bike is equipped with a single barrelled Power Reaper which is ball mounted to the underside of the vehicle. The fire control system is connected to an HUD (Head Up Display) unit on the pilot's helmet for accurate and hands-free fire control.



FEN 4461 MK VI 'HAMMER CLASS'

Armoured Personnel Carrier

Type:	APC
Max.Speed:	190 km/hour; 30.4 m/phase
Dimensions:	9m length, 4m width, 3.2m height
Weight:	10 tonnes
Crew:	1 driver ; 1 gunner
Passengers:	10
Skill:	Drive, military
Armament:	30mm Twin Barrelled `Prometheus' Cannon Smoke and tear gas grenade launchers
Cost:	150,000 Credits
Armour:	PV - 25, ID - 800
Acceleration Rate:	1.6
Turning Circle:	6

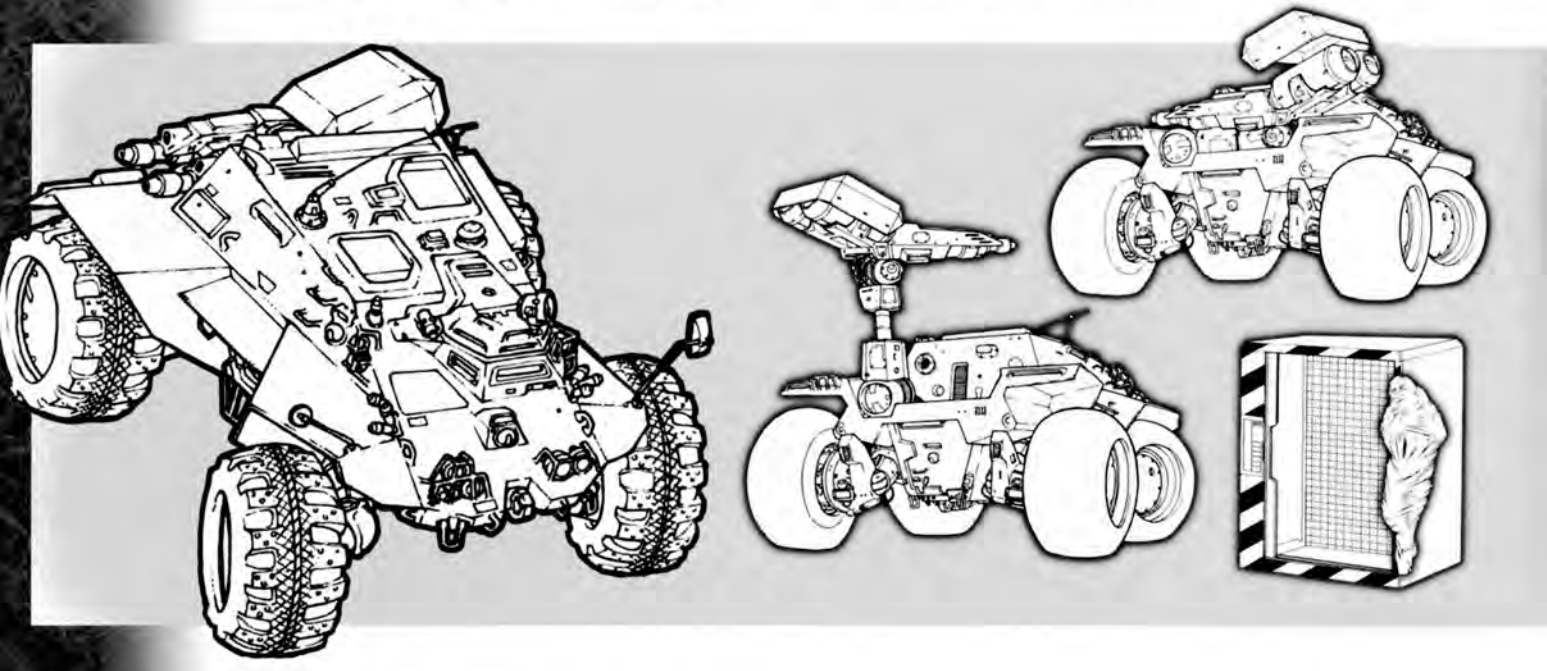
The FEN vehicle department have followed up the success of their 'Battle Taxi' and 'Kilcopter' with an improved design of APC. The Hammer is the APC which the vast majority of Shivers drive in everyday use, and this model has seen a lot of hard action in the streets of Downtown. The Hammer has been designed for a crew of two - gunner and driver - but can function without the gunner if necessary. It is large enough for 10 passengers, and the designers have taken the size of Stormers and Shaktars into account. Although most Shivers are human, there are occasions when the larger races might need to use the APC.

The Hammer uses a computer controlled suspension system that makes it extremely safe and manoeuvrable. With a highly-articulated 4-wheel drive and full crab steering, the Hammer is an extremely versatile machine. GA Sure-Track tyres give unequalled grip and security on wet concrete.

Access to the Hammer is through three doors, one to either side of the vehicle and one to the rear. There are also two smaller hatches on the roof, and three on the underside that can be used when needed. The roof hatches have gun mountings that can be used as required.

The Hammer APC comes complete with a full air conditioning system that can either use internal air reserves or outside vents, a retractable radio antenna for radio, vid and fax signals, computerised infra-red terrain sensors to detect blockages or obstacles in the road, and fire extinguishers both inside and outside the vehicle. There are viewing and gun ports in every hatch and door, and further ports at the front and sides of the vehicle. The driver can leave the vehicle through the main crew doors or through a smaller hatch in the front of the cab. The gunner sits in a specially designed zone for maximum comfort and security.

There is storage space within the Hammer for extra ammunition, and holding pens with capacity for two prisoners, or four in an emergency. Cupboards can hold personal possessions, and electronic vid and fax links. Spotlights are placed on the front and rear of the vehicle, and can be retracted into the main body of the vehicle if necessary.

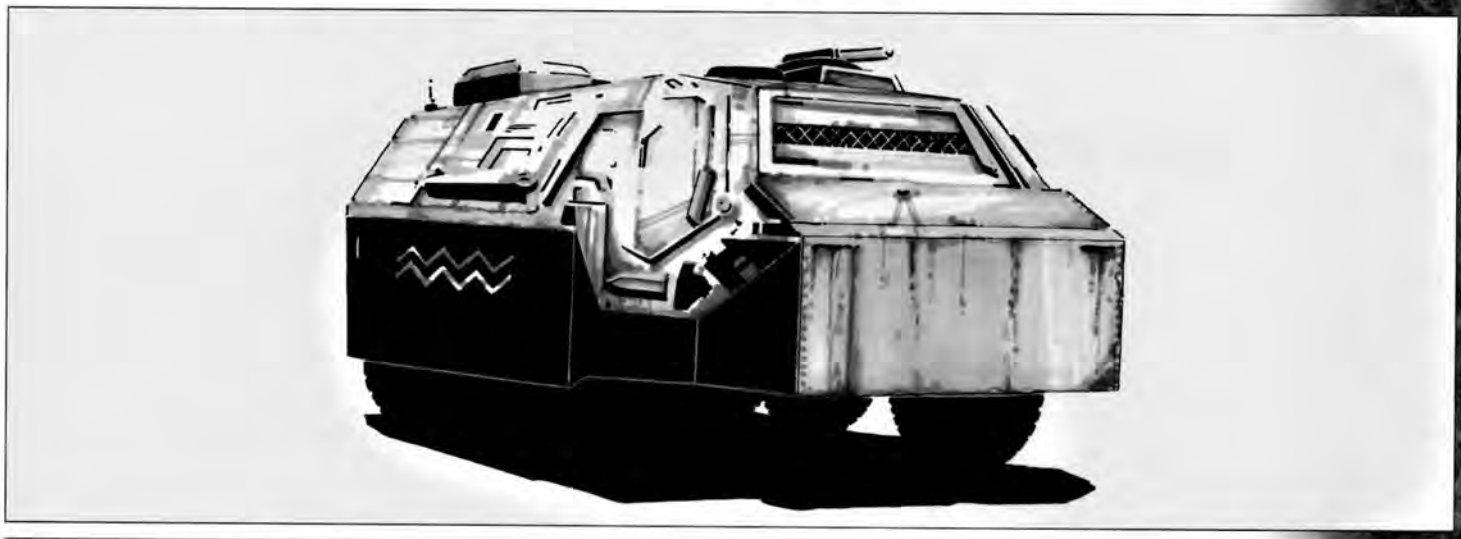


The FEN APC is an invaluable piece of transport for the Shiver Forces. With the capacity to carry 10 humans, it is also large enough to transport the larger races, Shaktars and Stormers. The rectangular shape of the vehicle has given rise to concern about the effectiveness of the armour plating against AP shells but the 20,000 of these deployment vehicles in service on Dante seem to have no problems with armour panels. The APC has a side sliding door as well as a pilot hatch. To the rear is a fully folding ramp door which opens the back of the APC to allow for quick deployment of troops. There are 10 eyeholes/slots in the sides of the vehicle, 4 on each side and two at the rear. The turret is a small dome just behind the driver's position. The dome unlocks and slides back to allow for the use of a rail mounted Reaper Cannon, not normally supplied with the vehicle. There is also an electro-magnetic belt feed system available for delivery of up to 6000 rounds to the Reaper. The power plant on the APC is located under the floor in the centre of the axle system. The fusion reactor gives enough energy output for 25,000 hours of continuous use of the APC.

FEN 0227 'BATTLE TAXI'

ARMOURED PERSONNEL CARRIER

Type:	APC
Max.Speed:	180 km/hr; 28.8m/phase
Dimensions:	9m length, 4m width, 2.6m height
Weight:	10 tonnes
Crew:	1 driver ; 1 gunner
Passengers:	10
Skill:	Drive, military
Armament:	Fitted for Power Reaper
Cost:	150,000 Credits
Armour:	PV - 25, ID - 750
Acceleration Rate:	1.5
Turning Circle:	8



SHIVER EQUIPMENT

All Shivers are issued with standard equipment, detailed in their individual descriptions above. They receive training in how to use and maintain their equipment and are expected to survive on the streets with just that. Most realise that they need slightly more fire power, and virtually everyone carries a back-up weapon of some sort. A FEN 603 pistol is usually selected, but some have been known to carry KK Panthers, or even BLA 046M Blitzers. Full specifications can be found for non-standard issue equipment in the SLA Industries rulebook.

Carrying non-standard weaponry is strictly illegal, and Shivers caught doing so can expect to be dealt with harshly. However, even to a Shiver, life is precious and they will take the risk to improve their chances of survival. Those superiors who remember the streets will 'overlook' this behaviour.

More serious is carrying miscellaneous tools such as Finance Chip Scanners or Motion Trackers. The only possible reason for carrying a Finance Chip Scanner is to avoid speaking out of turn - by definition if a Shiver has one, they have something to hide. Summary execution is not an unusual punishment for this offence.

ARMOUR

PP664 Body "Blocker" Armour

PV:	5	
Colour:	Bright Green	
ID -	**Head:**	8
	Torso:	14
	Arms:	10
	Legs:	12

The Body "Blocker" Armour has high pressure, moulded ceramic plates with a heavy flak fibre jumpsuit. The long endurance power motors to disperse the weight of the suit hold a 5000 hour charge. The helmet comes with a full anti-dazzle, air-filtered mask and is fully enclosed with a headset communicator.

The basic suit is worn by most Shiver squads. However, Fire and SCAF squads wear slightly modified versions. Fire squad armour is treated to be fire resistant, and is identified by the darker green panels at knee, elbow and shoulder. SCAF armour is environment proofed, resulting in a slightly decreased defence, PV 4.

PP8 Exo (Heavy) Armour

PV:	8	
Colour:	Bright Green	
ID -	**Head:**	15
	Torso:	35
	Arms:	25
	Legs:	28

The PP8 Exo-Heavy Armour comprises high pressure, moulded ceramic plates, with flak buffers to absorb knife blows and a full power chassis with more baffling. The fully enclosed helmet sports an anti-dazzle visor and a filtered air system. The whole suit is charged for 5,000 hours continuous operation.

Both Enforcer and Dispersal Shivers wear this suit, the only difference being that Enforcers wear dark as opposed to bright green.

Dispersal Shields

PV:	6
ID:	25
COST:	6,500 Unis on the Black Market

The dispersal shield is mounted on the arm of the wearer in a closed housing. Upon activation, high pressure moulded ceramic plates spring out and fan round to create a 60cm diameter circular shield. This shield is only available through official channels, and to Dispersal Shivers only, although the few that have reached the open market have changed hands for the price listed above.

While the Dispersal Shivers are using the shields, any non-missile attack that the Shiver is aware of is made at a -4 penalty. Any attack that would normally have hit, without the penalty, is considered to have been blocked by the shield and armour damage is dealt to the shield as normal. Once the shield has taken 25 points of damage it cracks or shatters and is considered useless.

WEAPONS

FEN 706 Power Reaper Mk 2.1000

Clip:	100
Cal:	10mm
ROF:	10/5
RCL:	10/7
Range:	26m
Weight:	14.5 Kg

The FEN 706 Power Reaper 2.1000 squad support machine gun has enjoyed fantastic success for some years now, serving the military without a flaw. With the advancement in ceramic manufacturing techniques, we can now offer you this unique weapon with a full ceramic barrel. It is ball mounted onto the undercarriage of the SCAF helibike for ease of use. The Power Reaper is hard-wired to the HUD in the pilot's helmet and has a 100 round electro-magnetic belt fed ammunition bin. It has a full or semi-automatic switch.

BLA 046M Blitzer

Clip:	6
Cal:	12.7mm
ROF:	1
RCL:	7
Range:	20m
Weight:	1.5kg

Our Blitzers are made of the finest silicate and carbon fibre materials. Each revolver is hand crafted by our skilled weapon technicians and each is individually numbered to identify the weapon for you, its owner. The revolver itself has a double action trigger mechanism and

fully moulded grip to suit your own hand size. The Blitzer is coloured dark green, to match standard Enforcer armour. The Blitzer is chambered for six 12.7mm HESH pistol rounds which are custom made at our production plant. Each Blitzer comes with a BLA maintenance kit / carry case for the gun, and laser painter, silencer, flash suppresser, sights and recoil baffling as standard.

FEN 603 10mm Automatic Pistol

Size: P
Clip: 20
Cal: 10mm
ROF: 3/1
RCL: 3
Range: 12m
Weight: 0.5Kg

The FEN 603 is the most popular auto pistol ever produced. It has a full ceramic frame and barrel with gas operated double-action. It comes ready to accept silencer, flash suppresser, pistol stock and sights. The compact box magazine has a 10mm capacity of 20 full rounds with either a single shot or full auto switch. The FEN 603 has an 'easy grip' handle with a fully cushioned rubber grip. It has a low recoil and comes to coloured to match Dispersal armour.

Ball-Bearing (BB) Browbeater Round

DMG: 3
Pen: -4
AD: 0

A specially-designed 3mm spherical nickel-ferrite slug coated in memory plastic. When fired, the slug expands to 30mm diameter to reduce tissue damage yet ensure successful crowd control.

GASH Pacifier Baton

DMG: 5
Pen: 0
AD: 5
Weight: 1kg

This high-frequency baton will cause great discomfort to anyone on the receiving end of a blow. With its finest-quality carbon fibre moulding, it will last for at least 200,000 skull fractures without damage to the baton. It has a 3000 hour power supply.

GA 9442 Browbeater

Size: R
Clip: 300
Cal: N/A (BB)
ROF: 20
RCL: 0
Range: 15m
Weight: 2.4kg

The standard-issue Shiver rifle, the Browbeater has been used successfully in Mort for many years now, yet retains its popularity. Constructed with full ceramic case and barrel and a Bull-pup ammunition configuration, the gauss ammunition feed system is capacitor-charged for 3000 hours of continuous use. The Browbeater boasts an incredible rate of fire and the clip capacity to maintain it - the pinnacle of crowd-friendly defence. Comes fitted with telescopic sights as standard.

GA 9443 SCAF Mini-Browbeater

Size: P
Clip: 100
Cal: N/A (BB)
ROF: 15
Recoil: 0
Range: 10m
Weight: 0.5kg
Black Market cost: 3,000 Uni

A handy pistol-sized version of the standard Browbeater, designed for use by the SCAF. The Mini-Browbeater retains all the utility of its full-sized relative, whilst still being small enough to stay convenient.

MISCELLANEOUS

Boopa Medical Kit

The medi-kit contains all the necessary consumables and equipment for a wide range of injuries. Along with the normal bandages, patches, plasters and pain killers, the kit also contains a small selection of surgical instruments to perform small field operations such as stitching wounds, removing bullets, cleaning wounds etc. The drug pack in the kit contains 4 x Kick Start, 10 x Bio-Block and 50 x Pain Solver. The Medi-kit is completely sealable and waterproof. A full box of consumables for the Medi-kit is available.

IN THE EYES OF OTHERS

Danny On Lower Downtown

"Have you ever been down to ground level in Downtown? I was there for a few months, y'know? Man, gettin' out of that hell-hole was the best thing I ever did. The place is a maze, narrow streets twisting everywhere. Like, most are dead ends. Half the walkways have just slipped away and they usually suprise you by ending suddenly in this big drop. It's always dark down there. Yeah, you're lucky just to get a chance to see the sky, and there's never any daylight."

Danny is sitting with one leg slung over the arm of the chair and staring at the ceiling. He is idly picking at a scab on the back of his left hand, and doesn't seem to realise that a slow trickle of blood is oozing out from it.

"Yeah, man, the daylight doesn't reach you, but the rain sure as hell does. The walls pour with the stuff most of the time. Well, it's sort of water, y'know? Usually, it's more like oozing muck. The drains just can't handle the amount of water there is down there. You people living in your nice homes in the upper sectors, like you don't think about where the rain goes. When you live down on the bloody ground, it's in your face all the time. I've seen houses fall to bits because they've just rotted away, y'know? The water is full of chemicals and stuff it picked up on the way down. It eats into the buildings and eventually they collapse. No warning, nothing. One minute it's home to loads of people, and the next it's just a big heap of rubble. Maybe it's because all the buildings are so old. They look as though they're about to fall down. I reckon the only thing holdin' them up is the damned filth on the walls."

Danny notices the blood on the back of his hand, and absently raises it to his mouth to lick it clean. Moving his leg from the arm of the chair and dropping it to the floor, Danny leans forward and concentrates on his cut hand. With a slight frown, he wipes his other hand across his lips and looks at it for traces of blood. Finding none, he starts to speak again.

"The place I lived in was like this real hole. It was just one room, man - bed, kitchen, toilet, everything all in this one room. Yeah, the water I got from the tap was a horrible cloudy brown most of the time. Hot water was a standing joke, y'know? Sometimes, if I was real lucky, I might get a couple of litres that was warm, but nothin' more than that. It was damp in there all the damned time. Somebody must have put wallpaper up once, but it had gone soggy and was falling off. The bloody walls were way soft. You could rip lumps out of 'em with your hands. Noise went straight through them like they weren't there. I could hear my neighbours all the bloody time. Everything they said or did, I knew about. Screwing, fighting, getting drunk, getting high, I heard it all. Usually, it was fighting. They didn't get on very well, I guess. This whore lived on the other side of my room, but she didn't bother me much, y'know? She never had many customers. Not many people down there could even afford a cheap tart like her. I certainly couldn't, though it would have been great to give her some work if I hadn't been so broke.

"I was lucky, though - my apartment was like on the second floor. The folks below me were always gettin' flooded out. After any heavy rain, their floor would be calf-deep in this filthy, oily water. There wasn't anything they could do to stop it, y'know? They couldn't afford to move any place else. They just had wait for it to drain away. The flash floods are the worst though, man. It had been raining big-time for three or four days. I was just lyin' on my bed, trying to watch the crappy vid that I had. The picture was terrible, but it was better than staring at the four walls, y'know?"

The cut has congealed again, and Danny has lost interest in it. He starts to draw the toe of his boot across the floor in front of the chair, backwards and forwards, again and again. Abruptly he stops and tucks both feet under the chair, as if to prevent them from moving.

"Like I said, I was lying in my room when I felt somethin' weird. The walls and floor started to shake some and I could hear this rumbling noise. It

got louder and the walls started to shake more. Like, bits of plaster and stuff were dropping all over the place. 'Shit', I thought, 'it's a bloody earthquake', and I went over to the window, ready to jump and run for it. I got to the window, opened it and looked out. There was like this wall of water coming charging down my alley, filling it. It was - my apartment was on the second floor, right - and this water was higher than my window. I just couldn't believe it, man. It was like I was on a bad trip or something. I mean, you don't expect to be hit by some huge wave in the middle of the city, y'know?

"By this time, the whole damned building was shakin' itself to bits. I didn't know what to do, yeah? If I stayed where I was, the building was going to fall on top of me. If I went out into the street, the water would just swamp me. Man, I'd be squashed in seconds. In the end, I stayed where I was and hoped for the best, y'know? The water came crashing down the street and it burst through my window hard enough to knock me down. It like really flooded out my place, man.

"By the time I picked myself up and got back to the window, it was all over. The streets were pretty clean - most of the rubbish had gone, y'know? - but a few big things had been left behind. There was a this guy's body, wrapped around a friggin' lamppost like he was someone's sick idea for a new kind of poster. His body had just burst open, must have been when he hit the post. Ain't no better way to describe it than burst. It was really gross, man. Bits of stomach and who knows what, just spread all around him. Normally I ain't squeamish, but this... I stood there for a while, just kind of looking at the bits. I'm not a ghoul or nothin', I just couldn't look away from it, yeah? After a while, all these bloody rats came out and started munching away at the body. A couple of the bigger ones got into a fight over which of them would get the eyeballs, just like kids arguing over sweets. It was almost funny, watchin' the two of 'em - till you remembered what it was they were fightin' over."

Danny has been hunched over in the chair for a few moments, staring at his feet. Slowly, he straightens up and leans back, with his hands behind his head. At some point, the cut on his hand has opened again and it is leaving a small bloodstain on the chair. Danny stretches his legs out in front of him, and crosses them at the ankles. He stays like this for a short time, and then reverses the movement so that his legs are crossed the opposite way.

"I finally got the nerve to go downstairs and like see what had happened to the folks down there. The whole place was flooded out - totally wrecked, man - and there were all these greasy puddles lyin' in the main hall. The floor had been swept clean, though. Probably the first time I'd ever seen it without any trash lying around, y'know? I didn't bother to knock, because there wasn't any door left. The room looked like DarkNight had bombed it - furniture and clothes all over the place. It had been seriously trashed, yeah? The water must have come in through the windows and the door and swished around and around, with no way out till the flood let up. Man, it would have been like being inside one of those pressure washers you get at fancy laundrettes.

"My neighbours were lying in a corner, all tangled up with each other. Their arms and legs were broken and pointing the wrong way, man. Most of their clothes had been shredded off, and they were covered with cuts and scrapes. They looked like a couple of dolls that had seriously annoyed some kid - broken, thrown away and forgotten about. They lay down there for a week before the bloody Shivers finally cleaned them out. I didn't go back down there, but like there wouldn't have been much of 'em left by then. Every night, I could hear the rats and the dogs down there. Oh man, I just lay in my apartment hopin' they'd all stay down there.

"Eight people died from that flood, just in my block. Like, can you imagine how many people that water killed all together? And that was just one flood. Man, I don't know how many floods there are each year. Do you? Anyway, the scariest thing was after the flood, with all the folks who had lived in the area for a while, y'know? They just carried on with their lives as if nothing had happened. I was freaking about everything and these guys were just actin' as if it was no big deal. I talked to one of the older women - she must have been at least 35, yeah? - and she just shrugged and said everyone had seen floods before, and with a bit of luck, we'd all live through the next one. Nothin' we can do, she said, so why waste time worrying about? Man, I still don't know if I'm impressed by what she said, or scared. Like I'll never understand her, that's for sure."

Danny is shaking his head slightly as he speaks. There is a distant look in his eyes as he remembers past fears. He snaps out of his reverie with a slight start, and coughs quietly. Pulling himself straight in the chair again, he continues.

"The smog was maybe as bad as the floods. Like, we only had floods occasionally, but the friggin' smog was there pretty much every day, y'know? They told me it was a mix of the rain, the pollution and the heat from all those people and machines. Most afternoons, you'd wake up and the smog would be filling the streets. It was dirty yellow and grey, and it got so thick sometimes that you really couldn't see your hand, even if you held it in front of your face, man. The street lights just vanished in the murk, and y'know, you could only find your way around by learnin' all the walls and pavements, like ten foot at a time. Yeah, if you wandered away from your patch, you wouldn't have a chance of getting back until night-time, when the smog faded a little and you could see the lights again, and the few crappy street signs they put up.

"A couple of times, I managed to get lost in the smog. Man, it ain't fun. That stuff muffles and ruins all the sound. You can only see shapes in it, you can never see no details. It comes rolling through the alleys and walkways, just like the floods do, but in slo-mo. Before it reaches you, you can like see it climbin' over the little buildings and oozing around the bigger ones. It just smothers everything that gets in its way. Most days it wasn't too bad, but when it came in real thick, I just stayed at home and waited for it to go away, y'know?

In The Eyes Of Others

"A lot of the folks in my area were pretty sick, coughin' all the time, with headaches and dizzy spells and feeling weak, yeah? Some said it was the smog that did it, but I was never sure. I mean, a bit of thick air can't do you any harm. Anyway, I never saw no rats coughing, and they breathed the same air we did. Lived in the same houses and ate the same food too, y'know? Those little bastards were everywhere. Man, I really hate rats. They were probably the real reason why I got out of the lower sectors just as soon as I could."

Danny has drawn himself together, as if to protect himself. His feet are pulled under the chair and his arms are wrapped around his shoulders. Unconsciously, he glances around the room, looking for the rodents he hates so much. Despite the fact that there are none to be seen, Danny does not relax, and his voice is edgy as he starts speaking again.

"I've seen all the vids of the Cannibal Sectors, and man, I tell you the ground level of Downtown is every bit as bad. You show any weakness down there, and you're torn apart and divided up amongst the things that are after you, y'know? There's dogs, pigs, the bloody rats, serial killers, the skin trade, the Gore Zones, Shivers, gangs, Monarchs - all of them are out to screw you for everythin'. It's not safe to walk the streets during the day, unless you got yourself some kind of protection, and at night you'd better forget it. I wouldn't go out into the ground levels alone for all the credits in Central. To those things down there, you're either target practice or dinner, and it's like not just the animals that want to eat you. Some of those serial killers are seriously crazy people, man.

"A lot of the lowlifes didn't have nowhere to go at night. They had to sleep out in boxes and such. I felt real sorry for those guys, 'cos as they went to sleep, they knew that they wasn't likely to wake up again. You saw them walkin' around at night, bundled up in rags that fell off as they walked. Their knuckles always stood out white from holding onto their bags, man. Everything they owned was in those bags, y'know? They tried to sleep in the day, when it was a little bit safer. At nights you could see loads of them huddled around little bonfires, looking all around real scared-like. Sometimes they'd be passin' around a bottle in a brown paper bag. Don't start gettin' soft on 'em, though. They'd kill you for a scrap of bloody food as soon as look at you, if they thought they had a chance. One on his own might be nice and polite, but more likely he'd avoid you if possible. You get a bunch of them together and they'll hassle you for hand-outs, try to steal anything you had, and if there was a real lot of them and they were feeling brave, they'd like try to mug you or even kill you. Getting mugged is probably worse, yeah? You may still be alive, but you'll have like lost everything, and then you'd have been turned into one of them."

Danny seems to have forgotten about the rats; at any rate, he has relaxed a little, stretching out in the chair again and examining the cut on the back of his hand once more. He stretches his arms above his head and yawns loudly.

"So you see, the next time you're out walkin' those nice safe streets in Upper Downtown, don't start feeling too comfy, y'know? Just think about what's happenin' down there, only a few levels beneath your feet. You sure as hell won't feel safe after that!"

Danny On Shivers

"Shivers, oh man, don't talk to me about Shivers! Those bitches go struttin' around town in their stupid green armour, acting like they own the bloody place. I tell you, I've been on the streets a long time, okay? In that time, I've seen a whole load of Shivers, and I'll tell you this; out of all of them, there's only been two or three that I'd piss on if they were on fire. Most of them treat you like crud, like they're doing you some big favour by taking time out of their busy schedule to give you grief. All the ones that patrol my area, they hassle you 'cos they got nothing better to do, y'know?"

Danny stops talking for to light a cigarette. Leaning back in his chair, he takes a long draw and blows out a couple of smoke rings before continuing.

"Like I was saying, you see a couple of Shivers walking down your street. The best thing you can do is get out of their way and hope they ain't noticed you, y'know? Maybe it's part of the job description. "Shivers wanted, must be bad-tempered arseheads!" You try talkin' to 'em sometime. They look at you through those helmets of theirs, and you can't even see their eyes. No way to tell what they're thinking, what they're going to do, or if they're even listening to you. Man, it can be really spooky. You look at all that armour sometimes, and wonder if there's a human being inside it, or if it's just empty, or filled up with pure, distilled nastiness and attitude, swillin' around like a bucketful straight out of Clearwater. Yeah, I've

heard it said that they do something to you when you join the Shivers; an operation or something, where they take away your soul and put in a chip with all the rules and laws instead. Me, I don't buy that. I've had too much trouble from bent Shivers to think those scum are anything but human. They're just nasty, aggressive assholes, that's all."

The red glow at the end of the cigarette flares briefly as Danny takes a heavy drag and closes his eyes for a moment. He seems to be thinking hard, or maybe dredging up an old memory from somewhere. When his eyes open, they remain out of focus for a few seconds until he runs a hand over his face and blinks.

"Yeah - there was this one of 'em hung around my area for a while. Big sucker he was, mean as a Carrien with a toothache. One day he caught me and a couple of friends boosting this 'cycle, y'know? Top of the range Calaharvey, silver and grey with a spaceship design on it. Man, it would have got us 5,000 Uni easy. Anyhow, JoJo had just got round the bloody brake security system when a couple of Shivers strolled right into the alley. We were caught, man - nowhere to run, and not a hope in hell of ever talkin' our way out. JoJo made a run for it and the other Shiver went after him. Left her big buddy to deal with me, I guess.

"Well, this Shiver walks up to me and like slaps me hard across the face. So what, you're thinking - well, I'll tell you, with armoured gauntlets and knuckle studs, it hurts like hell, y'know? It knocked me right onto my back. I thought he'd busted my jaw, for sure. Then he bends down and picks me up, which is nice 'cept he's holding me by the throat and by the time my face is level with his visor, my feet are way off the bloody ground. He's holding me so close to his face, all I can see is my reflection, with blood down one cheek and eyes bulgin' like they're about to burst, man. He holds me there for a little while, just to be sure I get the point. Then he puts me down and starts talkin'.

"He tells me I can call him Mister Baird, and I work for him now, and my job is to make sure he gets his share of whatever goes down, and if I try to screw him around it'll be the last thing I ever do, apart from a lot of screaming. Man, I just like stood there when he put me down and kept noddin'. My throat didn't feel much like talking, y'know? There wasn't a whole lot for me to say anyhow.

"So from then on, I had to meet him in that same bloody alley every week, with his cut and all the news on what was hot. He like made sure the other Shivers didn't take too much notice, or so he said. I met with Baird twenty or thirty times, but I never did see his face. He was usually alone, but sometimes he had a couple of buddies with him, y'know?

"Yeah, there was one week when I tried to keep back part of his damned cut. Oh man, was that ever a bad move! I don't know how the hell he knew, but he knew and he kicked me all around the alley. Then, he told me how he didn't like me thinking he was dumb, and asked me how much I thought my life was worth. All the time I was like hanging there with his hand around my throat and my feet level with his knees, watching my reflection turn a whole mess of blue in his visor. He took everything I had - it came to about three times what I'd tried to hold back from him - but he let me live, y'know? "Next time," he said, "you better be a whole lot smarter." His cut went up after that, but I never, ever tried to hold out on him again."

Danny is breathing hard, and there are beads of sweat on his forehead. His hands are gripping the arms of the chair and all his knuckles are white. Once again he closes his eyes, and with an obviously huge effort, forces himself to relax. Slowly he releases his grip on the chair and raises a hand to wipe the sweat from his forehead. He takes a long drink from the mug of coffee that sits beside him and grimaces at its cold bitterness.

"One week, Baird just didn't show. I didn't think much of it and just tried again at the same time the day after. He like wasn't there then either, or the next day or any time in the next two weeks. I kept going back every bloody day - there was no way I was going to take a chance of him arriving and not friggin' finding me there. After two weeks, though, I figured that Baird wasn't ever going to turn up again, so I just kept well away from the alley from then onwards. I never did find out what happened to him, y'know? Maybe he got busted, or maybe some psycho nailed him, or maybe he just got moved to another sector. I didn't try to find out what had happened. I was just pleased that he wasn't on my case any more, so I didn't push my luck.

"Maybe I've been unlucky with Shivers, and only met the few bad ones, y'know? I don't think so, though. If there are any good Shivers, they sure as hell aren't in bloody Downtown. It's different for the folks up in Suburbia. The Shivers have to be nice to you up there because you're Someone, and they like

know you might have the power to fix them if they piss you off. In Downtown, you have to have a gang behind you — strong one, too — before you get any kind of respect from the Shivers. Otherwise, you just have to take whatever grief they hand you, and thank them afterwards. Man, for me and the rest of Downtown, the Shivers are just another natural disaster, like the smog, the floods and the friggin' rats."

Danny shudders a little at the mention of rats, takes another swig of coffee and looks down at the stub of his cigarette.

"Hey man, you got another one of these?"

Danny On Operatives

"Can't live with them and can't live without them, that's what most folks say. Most of the Slops I've met have been bad folks to mess with, but they do a damn good job. I'm not saying I like them, but I'm glad they're around, y'know? Without those guys, DarkNight would have brainwashed us all, or poisoned us, or done something nasty to us long ago. Yeah, if it wasn't for the Slops, the psychos would be able to do anything they wanted and man, I'm sure happy the likes of Halloween Jack don't have everything their own way."

Danny takes a deep breath and frowns suddenly, scratching the upper part of his left arm. After a few seconds, he raises the sleeve of his T-shirt and takes a close look at the area he's been scratching, then shrugs, pulls the sleeve down again and continues.

"There's one friggin' thing that really irritates me about Slops, though. Why do they have to ship so many freaks in from off-planet? There are like plenty of folks right here looking for work. I'm not saying everyone has what it takes, but some of us must do. I mean man, why bring in all these Shaktars and Wraiths and — okay, I admit the Ebons are pretty handy to have around, but why the hell do we need so many damned Brain Wasters? They're bloody dangerous! And then you got Karma going around makin' more people — well, sort-of people anyway — and giving them jobs, too. I mean, if you have a job you need doing, why like make a whole new person when you could have your choice out of the millions who are already here?

"Okay, the Stormers are tougher than most, but you like give me their guns and their armour and I'd be pretty damn tough myself. I mean, how difficult can it be to point a gun at someone and pull the trigger? All I see is all these bloody jobs going to off-worlders when there are millions of us here with nothing. Don't get me wrong man, I ain't no racist or anythin' like that. I've got nothing against the reptiles or pussycats, but if they all went back to where they came from, there would be a lot less problems on Mort and a lot more jobs, y'know? But that isn't going to happen. Those guys know when they got a good thing goin', and they ain't about to give it up."

Danny rubs a hand across his face, and for a moment he seems surprised by the amount of stubble there. He squints and pouts in an attempt to see the hair on his upper lip. With a sigh, he pinches the bridge of his nose and then runs a tired hand over his eyes. For a moment, he keeps his eyes closed, then opens them and pulls himself up into a straighter position.

"Yeah, Operatives, that was the thing, wasn't it. Well, the way I look at it they're just like everybody else, except for like their special trainin'. Now, I know that has to be pretty intense, man. One of

the kids from just a few blocks away, he got taken off by some sort of Operative talent scout, and when he came back he was real different - didn't want to know his old friends any more, acted like he was too good for us now, y'know? But I say if they can train up a crummy punk like him to be a Slop, why can't they train more people from the streets instead of making them at Karma or bringing them in from off-world? This kid was tough, but he wasn't that special, yeah? There are millions like him all over Downtown, so why'd they pick him and leave the rest?

"Whatever the reason, the kid has it made now, clothes, cars, women, credits, whatever he wants. Man, it's the easy life! Well, maybe it ain't exactly easy, but I know plenty of folks who have it harder, all in all. Some of the Slops make fortunes, man - especially the ones who get sponsorship. They just put the name of some dog food or something on their armour, and they get paid like an extra few million a year, plus as much dog food as they can eat, or somethin'. Like I say, a lot of people have it far worse."

Danny looks down at his scruffy jeans and T-shirt, and the dirty trainers with a split in one sole. He glances at his old digital watch. It has gone blank again.

"Sure man, the Slops take risks, but they get well paid for it, and as long as they stay alive they have everything they want, y'know? They can like buy whatever they want, screw whoever they want, eat whatever they want whenever they want it, and as if that wasn't enough, they get their ugly mugs all over the vids all the bloody time. I mean, what else is there, man? They really do have it all, no matter what you say about the danger and all. Anyone has any openings for Operatives, I can think of a few million applicants, man, startin' with me. I'll take my chances, for a shot at that kind of life."

A Civilian View Of The Monarchs

"The Monarchs are those guys who pretend to be Shivers, aren't they? Yeah, they come along and bust you for things like dropping litter. Heh. What a waste of space they are. I heard that a few of the gangs have started a kind of league to see who can take out the most Monarchs. It's kinda fun for them, though I guess the Monarchs ain't too happy about it. Ahhh. My heart bleeds."

Tony Grant (Unemployed)

"I think the Monarchs do a fine job in a difficult situation. More citizens should be like them, prepared to risk their lives in the defence of their fellow citizens. Not that I myself, you understand... one has to be a certain type of person, after all. And trained, of course. I'm sure their training in firearms, the law, self-defence and so on must be... What? None at all? Are you absolutely sure? What are they, mad? They're insane, that's what it is! They're totally howling crazy!"

Shiela Glendle (Shop Assistant)

"I hate those nosy bastards. They come along an' pry into fings that don't concern 'em. The sooner they learn to pull their 'eads in, the better for all of us. It's not like they actually do anythin', they just go around pissin' everyone off and bein' a total pain in the arse.

"Good target practice, though."

Spikes McGee (Gang member)

"When I was little I wanted to be a Monarch and wear a uniform like they do. I almost joined up, but then I realised that I didn't need to become a Monarch just to enjoy a fetish for uniforms. There are much easier ways of getting a thrill."

Andy McCulloch (Unemployed)

"The Monarchs are such a badly-treated group. They do a damn good job and we should appreciate them more. Just a few weeks ago, a couple of Monarchs saved me from being mugged. I'm sure they would have done the same for anyone. I don't understand why people give them such a hard time. They are a great bunch of people and I think there should be more of them."

Stephanie Flint (Unemployed)

"Monarchs? What the hell are they? Aw, who cares. Hey lady, can you spare a Uni?"

Jacko (Unemployed)

A Monarch View Of The Monarchs

"Yes, I do realise what people think of our organisation, but the loudest critics would be the first to complain if we weren't around. Despite our lack of equipment and training, I think we do a lot to keep some peace on the streets. I would be the first to admit that we don't have the same authority as the Shivers, or the same means of commanding respect as the Operatives, but we're always out there, doing our best to keep things running smoothly.

MONARCH
PAISLEY 94
MONARCH

"We are constantly being accused of never doing anything more than arresting minor criminals, like black marketeers and whores. What's so terrible about that? If we weren't doing it, thousands of Shivers would be called away from their duties to take care of these lesser menaces. Is that really what you want? The Shivers and Operatives to be kept so busy controlling minor crime that they have no time for the serious threats? If you had a serial killer on the loose, I'm sure you wouldn't want to be told that there are no Shiver units available to respond because they're all out hunting pickpockets.

"So before you say we're not doing enough, at least understand what it is that we actually can do. Understand, too, the constraints within which we are forced to operate: the levels of funding, training and equipment we receive. If we were to be given the support and backing that we feel we need and deserve, we would be able to do much more, but until that happens we will continue as we are, doing the best we can with what we've got. Doing our best to keep your streets safe and getting no thanks for it.

"Thank you citizens. We would appreciate your support."

Jenny Wilson, Monarch Captain

An Operative View Of The Monarchs

"Yeah, I've had a few dealings with the Monarchs over the years. What a bunch of no-hopers. You see them in their pretty uniforms, acting like they're someone - man, you don't know whether to laugh or cry. A lot of them tried out for Operative training, you know that? They couldn't cut it, so they had a go at the Shivers. The losers who weren't even up to Shiver standards, they ended up with a simple choice. Either they join the rest of the grunts in Downtown, or they join the Monarchs and get to push the grunts around.

"It's all a power thing with those guys. Anything is better than being at the bottom of the pecking order, so they take all they can get. I can't see the attraction of it, myself. You're out on the streets, all you've got is some CAF trash, and a flak jacket if you're lucky. You have a nice, pretty uniform for all the punks, hoods and crazies to aim at, and absolutely no kind of backup if things turn ugly. And they say Ops take risks. Sheesh.

"Imagine it - this psycho has just worked his way down the block, killing everyone who happens to be wearing a black T-shirt, or whatever else constitutes the Enemy in what's left of his mind. It's up to you to stop him. He's naked to the waist, he's drenched with blood and he's waving a large axe around his head. You point your CAF spud-gun at him and tell him to drop the weapon. Yeah, right. He's really going to do put down his axe and come quietly. That guy is going to come at you howling, and try to give you a centre parting down to your toes. So you get mad and let rip with the CAF. Big deal. You make a few small holes, maybe slow him down a little, but that's all. By the time the wacko's brain gets the message about the body getting shot, the Monarch is tomorrow's ratfood.

"No, all the Monarchs are good for is pushing whores and pimps around. Anything more serious than that and they just call for the Shivers or a squad of Ops. It was real funny; about a week ago I saw this Frother getting out of his skull in a Downtown bar. He started to smash the place up, so I just sat back to watch the show. The junkie with the sword was really getting into it when a couple of Monarchs rushed into the room and started yelling at him to stop and put down the sword.

"Well, everything goes silent. The Frother turns round and stares at the Monarchs.

"'Excuse me?' he asks, very calmly and quietly.

"Once more, the two Monarchs tell him to put down the sword. They don't quite manage to sound like they're not scared. The Frother looks at them for a moment, like he's trying to figure out what they said.

"'No', he says, and he goes back to trashing the bar. Well, the Monarchs look at each other, then they look at this maniac with a Power Claymore, and then they look at each other again. Then they just turn around and walk back out, like nothing's happening. On their way out, one of the Monarchs spots me there, just sittin' and grinnin'. He gives me his best Sunday glare, the one he uses on the real tough candy thieves and jaywalkers. I send him on his way with a friendly one-fingered wave, and wouldn't you know it, after a while the Shivers appear and take out the Frother.

"You need anything done, call on the professionals, not a bunch of no-hopers who don't know one end of a BLA 046M from the other. All the Monarchs do is embarrass themselves.

"Monarchs are wimps!"

Simon Cormack (SCL 7B) Human Operative

In The Eyes Of Others

An Operative View Of Operatives

"I get seriously pissed off when people complain about our attitude. They whinge and whine that we demand too much from life, or we're arrogant and obnoxious - but they still shout for help whenever things get dirty. That's what really gets on my nerves. All these bleeding hearts moan non-stop about the way that we treat people, and then they ask us to risk our lives to help them out.

"They want us to be killers, but only when it suits them. It doesn't work that way. We've been trained to be violent and to get what we want, so that's the way we are. We can't turn it off and on at will. Every day, we risk our skins for you jerks because you're too weak, untrained or plain candy-assed to take care of yourselves, and then you say we ought to show you some respect. What is there to respect?

"You don't really think I do my job because I love the public, do you? I do it for the money and the other rewards. I have a good apartment, a great bike, the latest fashions and enough money to be able to go out and get wasted every night. How many of you can say the same thing, huh? Not many! I work hard for my money, and if I want to have some fun off-duty, no pencil-necked key-puncher's going to stop me.

"So what if my buddies and me get a little wild sometimes? After what we go through every day, we need to let off some steam. How'd you feel about going up against DarkNight Interceptors, serial killers, Carriens, Thresher Powersuits, street gangs, traitors, Scavs and psychos all day, every day? A little stressed maybe? Damn right, you'd be stressed! We can't just flip a switch at the end of the day and say 'Hi, honey, I'm home' - we need to work off some of that stress, and sometimes that means we get a little loud, a little raucous, but hey, we got a right. What did you do today, office boy?

"Sure, Ops tend to push civilians around a little, but we risk our necks to look after 'em all day. A thank-you now and again would be nice, but instead we mostly get moaning and attitude from these stupid little geeks who have no way of backing their words up. Is it surprising that one of them gets slapped around a little from time to time? I'm sick and tired of people complaining about us. If you don't like us, fire us, then get out there and do the job yourselves."

Sherman Morrison (SCL 9B)
Human Operative

"Man, I love working for Mr. Slayer. I started on the streets and I would have stayed there if it hadn't been for the talent scout. They trained me up, gave me a gun and this groovy armour and told me to get out there and fight the good fight. Not a problem. Everything I am, I owe to SLA - everything - and I will not let them down.

Snake Morgan (SCL 10)
Human Operative

"It's what I do. It's my living. Now get out of my face while you still have your living!"

Rage (SCL 7A)
Brain Waster Operative

"The dangers are great, but so are the rewards. We take our lives in our hands every day, but we're given the training and equipment we need to look after ourselves. Who else on Mort gets the chance to see what we see - even to go off planet, and find strange, new things? Very few share in such opportunities. There is no doubt. To be an Operative is to be part of the greatest hunt in the World of Progress."

Wisper (SCL 6A)
Wraith Raider Operative

HUD
Wiper

GOIN' UNDERGROUND

Ask any non-Operative resident of Uptown or Suburbia what lies beneath the city's surface in the underground sprawl known as Lower Downtown and their answer is likely to be "Oh, factories, warehouses, manufacturing centres." To a certain extent, they would be correct. Below Central, Uptown and Suburbia, the top levels are mostly composed of vast factories, filled with 'Low-Wave' Stormer drones churning out the endless stream of products to be shipped out to the World of Progress. The media channels tend to claim all of Lower Downtown is the same, but the truth is very different.

In theory, the dividing line between levels 1 and 2 of Downtown is the natural surface of the planet, although there is little natural that remains to identify it. The surface sectors of Downtown may be a tangled, dangerous maze of buildings and walkways, but the lower levels are far more deadly.

UNDER THE SKIN

Beneath the surface and far from the natural light lies a city made up of crumbling slums and narrow walkways, a place of darkness and fear that the media generally tries to ignore. Over the years, the lower levels of Downtown have fallen into such a state of disrepair that they are now all but impossible to improve. Many of the major roadways have rotted away and most of the area is impassable to vehicles. Further down, few light sources still work and the entire district is shrouded in damp darkness that hides forgotten secrets.

The residents of the deeper levels of Lower Downtown are different in many ways to the people who live far above them. The oppressive darkness seems to have bred wary, introverted people who are extremely mistrustful of outsiders in general and of SLA Operatives in particular. They become silent and defensive when questioned and would prefer to deal with any problems themselves rather than bring in the Shivers or Monarchs. The law enforcement agencies are neither wanted nor welcomed on the streets of Lower Downtown, but they still patrol some of them - Shivers will generally venture down to Level 30; Monarchs rarely go half that deep.

The further from the surface that you travel, the more introverted and mistrustful the residents become. They will stand and stare as a stranger goes by, unmoving and silent until they are out of sight. Then, and only then, will they go back to their normal business.

It is not only in attitude that the residents of Lower Downtown are different; the years of living far from the daylight have changed them physically as well. The deeper you venture into the darkness, the more obvious it becomes that the people are horribly thin and pale. Their complexions are waxy and unhealthy, and many of them suffer from disfiguring skin diseases. Their bodies are scrawny, and virtually everyone walks in a stooped, hunched fashion as though they fear something falling from above.

Once you get into the deeper levels, the vast majority of the unfortunate residents do not even exist according to the records held by SLA Industries. These people do not get registered for welfare purposes, they have no access to the SLA housing lists and to all intents and purposes, are not there. Virtually none of them have jobs of any sort, and the only way that they can get hold of money is by stealing it from someone more fortunate. In the lower regions of Lower Downtown, there is simply not enough money to go around, and most of the people have no source of income at all. Without the cash to buy food, most of the residents have adopted other, less pleasant dinner arrangements, and rats, giant pigs and wild cats and dogs are all seen as legitimate food sources. These people have not yet degenerated to the state of the cannibals that roam the ruins outside the city, but they cannot be far from it.

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

Once below the first few levels, the brave traveller will find that the air is becoming hard to breathe. The smog and pollution from the city settles in the streets and alleys of the underground, and it is continually misty at the best of times. The air will choke anyone who is unused to it and who is not protected by a respirator, but the residents seem to have little difficulty in breathing the air without protection. The yellowish mist obscures vision and muffles sound, making it very difficult to tell

where noises are coming from. Even the most observant Ops have a hard time detecting anything in the smog. It is extremely easy to become disorientated and lost, particularly when a heavy bout settles in.

Surveys taken by the Environment Department have shown that the smog is a serious danger to health; prolonged exposure to it can lead to a localised break-down of the body's immune systems, producing a multitude of respiratory and lung disorders. The Department has advised anyone who intends to travel the underground levels of Downtown to wear a respirator at all times and to seek immediate medical advice if they are forced to breathe the raw air for any more than a few hours.

The Environment Department also states that the residents of these areas have long since adapted to the quality of the air that they are breathing; they are no longer in any danger from it. Despite the official reassurances, many concerned citizens believe that the pollution harms everyone who breathes it and that SLA Industries should do something to clean up the atmosphere. Unfortunately, the Human Rights organisations that spend so much time demanding that SLA Industries do something never seem to be able to suggest exactly what it is that should be done. They demand results without offering any ways to achieve them.

Down in the lower levels, the citizens of what is still technically lower Downtown become less and less recognisable as the humans that they once were. Deformations and mutations are common down in the depths, although no one is certain whether these are the results of pollution or inbreeding. The deformities become more commonplace and more extreme as you go lower, and it is not only people who fall victim to the transformations. Pigs, rats and even the rampaging Carriens and cannibals are all ugly and twisted, barely recognisable as the creatures that they have devolved from. The mutants seem to hate their normal brethren and will kill and devour anyone or anything that they come across. Most of them carry vile diseases and poisons on their filthy clothes and bodies and take great delight in infecting anything they cannot eat. Those unfortunate enough to become contaminated after contact with a mutant, approximately a third of all survivors, would be well advised to seek medical aid as swiftly as possible.

One of the more common mutations causes the skin to break out in a large number of weeping sores. The dull yellow liquid that oozes from the

broken ulcers has a distinctly acidic odour to it, similar to that of vinegar in many ways, and contact with the liquid can cause severe irritation and burning to the skin. It has been discovered that the acidic liquid can also cause temporary blindness if it gets in the eyes and will lead to serious vomiting when ingested.

Another extremely frequent mutation involves the deformation and twisting of limbs — even to the point of extra limbs being present, or the complete absence of a limb. There is one grouping of mutation that takes the form of great elongation of the arms and legs, which grow to almost twice their normal length. While this allows the victim to move at great speed and provides superb reach in hand-to-hand combat, it does leave the mutant very vulnerable to broken bones and muscular strain.

At the very bottom of the lowest levels, should anyone both superbly equipped and extremely stupid decide to go down that far, just 14 feet of reinforced concrete separates Downtown from the Cannibal Sectors. If Downtown at this depth is a dark, twisted nightmare then the Cannibal Sector on the other side of the wall would have to be hell itself. For anyone breaching the wall at this point, life expectancy ceases to be an issue.

An Explorer's Guide

The last official census estimated that there were 285 levels to Downtown, but it is difficult to know the exact number. Buildings collapse, walkways become unstable and levels are crushed together as buildings drop down from above. Between level 1 — ground level — and level 20, there is little real difference, save for the bleaker, more industrial emphasis of the underground levels. Below this is where the changes start becoming noticeable.

Most of the street gangs have their home territories between levels 15 and 18; this is out of the way of most Shiver activity, but not too close to the dangers of the lower levels. The main gang storehouses and production areas are at this level, and the gang leaders tend to hold court down here. The day-to-day business of gang life — thievery, protection rackets, forgery and the such — usually takes place far above, where pickings are richer, and favourite gang haunts for relaxation and night-life are also to be found in more pleasant districts. Between levels 20 and 30 is the domain of those unfortunate citizens who have just enough money to survive but cannot afford to live in any of the more

hospitable areas. Below 30, the increasingly decaying levels are sparsely populated by tramps, psychos and those people with something to hide. No-one who lives below level 30 has any loyalty whatsoever to SLA Industries and most seek to avoid any contact with the Company and its representatives.

The only contact that SLA Industries has with the levels below 30 comes in the form of the brave Operatives who explore the depths on occasion. With fewer and fewer Ops willing to take the risks involved in this area, any trek into the underground walkways comes under a Black classification and the financial reward is a staggering 1500 Credits to every Operative who survives the journey. To earn this standing reward, the Ops have to have proof that they travelled below level 100, and they have to bring back information that aids in the mapping of Lower Downtown.

There has been no serious attempt to map the underground warrens since the Shaktar Lord Shahanti and his Honour Guard set out more than a decade ago. During the mission which lasted 12 days, four of the Honour Guard were slain and when the party finally stumbled out of the sewers that spewed into Cannibal Sector 2, they were a far cry from the proud and noble group who had started out on the BPN. Armour was broken and torn, barely even concealing the harsh wounds that all the survivors bore, and none of the party had a single round left for any of their weapons. Despite horrific injuries, Lord Shahanti survived his period of hospitalisation, and was able to give a full report detailing what he had come across in his journey.

The Shaktar spoke of Manchines, Carriens and cannibals, nightmarish mutants and ferocious, oversized pigs and rats. He told a tale of narrow, twisting tunnels filled with the pale, large-eyed humans who lived in them, and ruined buildings that were so unstable they shook at the sound of a voice. Had the story not come from a Shaktar, it would probably have been discounted, but Lord Shahanti was beyond any reproach.

Lowest Downtown was shown to be a network of levels and tunnels that bore little resemblance to the ancient maps and plans that SLA Industries had. Still, there was little for SLA to fear from the denizens of the underground realm, so nothing was done. A few squads of Operatives would eventually creep into the area, when it was required, but no-one paid much attention to what was going on beneath Downtown.

The situation stayed at that point until a few years ago, when the steadily growing volume of reports detailing disturbances in the area finally reached a level that could no longer be ignored. Many squads were sent in to investigate the problems, and the few who returned brought word of rapidly growing numbers of cannibals and Carriens, along with increased activity on the part of the serial killers, Manchines and mutants that had always been down there.

The rumours in Downtown claim that Digger, the infamous Manchine of Cannibal Sector One, has been tearing huge holes in the perimeter walls and allowing the denizens of the Sectors to creep through. In truth, the Gore Zone vid teams have often left service hatches open, and many of the creatures from the Cannibal Sectors have found their way into Lower Downtown

through these handy entrances. This was bound to happen at some point, and in itself would not present much of a problem for SLA Industries. The city is, after all, full of highly skilled Operatives who could easily deal with the influx of savages from the ruins beyond the walls, but along with the Carriens and cannibals came a new threat - the Scavs.

The Scavenger Menace

Some of the squads who returned from Lower Downtown brought news of nomadic scavenger bands who would attempt to steal anything of value, even to the point of attacking Operatives for their weapons and armour. These scavenger bands, or Scavs as they have come to be known, include creatures from every race, even some of the more advanced and intelligent Carriens. They work as organised teams, killing anyone and stealing everything they come across as they hunt through the underground.

It seems as if the Scavs come from the Cannibal Sectors, carefully making their way into Downtown through the service hatches and Gauss train tunnels. Cloak Division have stated that the Scavs do not sell the equipment and goods they acquire on any known Black Market, and it is presumed that a completely new and secret Black Market is spreading through Lower Downtown. The presumed fact that the Scavs do manage to sell their booty is a serious worry in itself; who or what is buying it?

Little is known about the origins of the Scavs. They may work for some rival company, or be residents of the Cannibal Sectors who have banded together for security and profit, or even come from another, unknown source. The security forces have speculated that the Scavs are searching for a way into Mort Central through the sewers and tunnels that run underneath the city. The sweep-like pattern of their raids and hunts certainly suggests that they are looking for something, but no-one really knows exactly what they are searching for. They certainly seem not to have found it yet.

The Scavs are always ragged and filthy from their long, dangerous treks through the Cannibal Sectors, but despite their battered appearance, they are not easy targets. They are armed with a wide selection of weapons and wear bits of armour from past victims. In combat, the Scavs act with a cunning that can keep even experienced Operatives guessing as to what they will do next, and their smooth team work makes them even more dangerous.

Although they mostly look scrawny and ill, the majority of the Scavs are surprisingly strong and agile, and they have been known to take

much larger opponents — such as Frothers and Shaktar — with nothing more than hand weapons. This has led some to speculate that the Scav behind the ubiquitous respirator may not always be entirely natural. Indeed, examination of Scav remains has revealed that some possess implants similar to those produced by the workshops of Karma. Whether the Scavs with implants were originally Operatives who have gone rogue or the implants come from another source is still uncertain, but the matter is being very carefully investigated.

For all the trouble that the Scavs are causing for SLA Industries, they are a worse threat to another group, the Props. The Depth Charge, the gathering point for the Props in Downtown, is buzzing with talk about the arrival of the Scavs. Killing clients, ransacking stockpiles and supplies and upsetting the Black Market, the Scavs are extremely bad for business. Any civilian offering a contract based around the Scavs will get themselves an extremely generous deal. There are even rumours floating around that the Props will attack Scavs without being paid to do so, although there is no actual evidence to back this up. It does seem highly unlikely; Props never do anything without being paid in advance.

Perhaps surprisingly, the Props do not have any real advantage in battle with the Scavs. The scavenger groups are usually just as well armed and armoured as the Props are, and they are skilled fighters in their own right. There can be no doubt that the Props are suffering at the hands of the Scavs. Until recently, this has been viewed quite favourably by SLA Industries, but the balance is starting to tip too much in favour of the Scavs, and Operatives are now being sent out to hunt down and destroy them.

While the Props are concentrating on the Scavs, some of the other usual dangers of Lower Downtown are being left unchecked. The mutants that normally dwell only in the lowest levels are creeping upwards, eating residents and infecting whole areas with the poisons and diseases that they carry. These mutants are normally kept under control by the Props, but recently they have been busy elsewhere. Mutant attacks have increased but, as yet, SLA Industries has taken no steps to control them. The reasons for this reticence have not been given, but more and more civilians are demanding that SLA takes steps to control this latest menace threatening an already-beleaguered sector. What Mr. Slayer intends to do about the problem is not yet known, but the situation is getting more serious.

The Art of Self-Defence

Downtown is protected in many different ways: apart from the swarms of Operatives, there are flash floods that sweep away anything that lies in their path, the Props who protect whatever they are paid to protect, the serial killers who fight amongst themselves and kill enemies of the city as often as they slaughter the public, and the gangs who will defend their interests and territories against any outside threat. For all of these, however, one of the most effective — and least publicised — lines of defence is the Gauss train.

These 8m high and 6m wide trains are often more than 400m long and coast at minimum speeds of 400km/h. Often, they get up to Mach 4 on long journeys. They have no chance whatsoever of stopping suddenly — even warning signals tend to be several kilometres ahead of the appropriate stopping point — and so tend to mash anything in the tunnel in front of them. There have been numerous reports from Operatives on Blue BPNs of mangled bodies lying around the Gauss tunnels. For the average Carrien or cannibal lacking the wits to take evasive action, a Gauss train speeding down the tunnel means certain death; the regular service does vast amounts to keep the numbers in check. The intruders from the Cannibal Sectors enter the city through the sewers and service hatches and, as often as not, they stumble across the seemingly convenient Gauss tunnels. Such journeys into Downtown end quickly and messily.

SLA Industries has recognised the protective value of the Gauss trains and pays a "roadkill" bounty for every death that the in-cab cameras pick up. Over the years, the bounty has become a vital part of the train drivers' income and many of them rely on the roadkills to supplement their standard wages. The importance of the Gauss trains was highlighted a few years ago when a critical signal failure brought the entire Gauss network under Mort to a complete standstill. By the end of the third night, the Sanitation Department alone had lost 12 workers more than usual. The total number of deaths (including civilians) that were directly linked to the absence of a Gauss service over the three nights was finally estimated at between 250 and 300. The figure was only kept so low because the more intelligent denizens of the Cannibal Sectors hadn't had time to realise the tunnels were temporarily safe.

The Keys to Power

The depths of Lower Downtown also hide several large shafts that have been forced down towards the core of the planet. These sinkholes work on the principles of heat exchange to create vast amounts of electricity; they are a vital part of the city. Without the power that these shafts produce, there would not be enough energy to meet the demands of Mort's population. The exact number and location of these power shafts is a closely guarded secret that rival companies such as Thresher and DarkNight would pay well to uncover. If these shafts could be damaged or destroyed, the city's defences would be greatly weakened. There have been no successful raids on the shafts as yet, but the Soft Companies are not about to stop searching for them.

The power that the shafts produce is siphoned off to various points in the city by huge power cables hidden in the ground for much of their distance. These lines have occasionally been damaged, both by natural calamities such as floods and by enemy actions. When disruptions occur, they need to be taken care of immediately. Quite a few Operatives have found themselves handed Red BPNs in which they have to act as guards and protectors for the maintenance teams that are sent to repair the damaged cables. This sort of activity draws a lot of attention from the creatures in Lower Downtown, and can be very dangerous indeed.

Scattered throughout the tangled mazes of buildings, walkways and sewers in Lower Downtown are many ways for intruders to gain entry into other parts of the city. Service hatches, sewers and Gauss train tunnels can all lead into Suburbia and then on to Uptown and, in some cases, even Mort Central itself. Many things seek these entry points. Carriens, serial killers, Manchines, Scavs, cannibals, DarkNight Interceptors and Thresher Powersuit troops all try to make their way through these tunnels and it is the Operatives who stand between them and the city. As soon as one entrance is closed and secured, the invaders find another, and ensuring the safety of SLA Industries is an endless task.

Despite the Company's best efforts, it will never be possible to close off the levels beneath Downtown completely, and there will always be creatures that fight their way into Suburbia. Until the time when Mort itself is completely safe and secure, Operatives will have to venture into the oppressive and concealing darkness of Downtown and seek out the enemies that threaten SLA Industries. Until Lower Downtown is completely depopulated, there will be monstrosities and outlaws hiding there. Downtown may be a maze of depravity and danger, but it is the only thing that stands between the city and the Cannibal Sectors. Mr. Slayer will do all that he can to maintain the delicate balance that keeps his company functioning in a harsh and unforgiving world.

MENY - CITY UNDER GLASS

For the past nine centuries, Meny has been at the heart of the training and education programme for new SLA recruits, and continually produces the best Employees and Operatives of any educational facility on any world. One of the most lovingly nurtured metropolitan environments in the entire World of Progress, the island of Meny is without doubt the most important and prestigious centre of learning used by SLA Industries.

Meny's beginnings, however, did not hint at such an illustrious future. Before the end of the Conflict Wars, Meny was the site of one of the first huge atmosphere maintenance plants that were developed to purify Mort's increasingly polluted air. The plant developed signs of an unavoidable reactor failure, and the whole area was evacuated because of the gigantic bio-hazards posed by a meltdown. When, some years later, the reactor finally blew, scientists monitoring the processing plant from afar were amazed and relieved that all of the fail-safe features actually worked perfectly, closing the plant down safely. To ensure that there could be no possible future risk, the entire island was enclosed in a dome some 96km in diameter, so that the dying remains of the fragile eco-system of the planet would be safe.

Forty years after Meny had been sealed, by which time the environmental disintegration of Mort was complete and SLA had founded the World of Progress, a nervous team of scientists and engineers entered the mist-filled dome to examine the remains of the processing plant. What they discovered decided the fate of the island. The plant's automatic maintenance systems had rebuilt the damaged areas, and once these repairs had been completed, they had brought the plant back on-line.

A lush natural environment now flourished under the dome. Forests and even the beginnings of jungles had started to develop in this artificial Eden. Animal life thought extinct due to the horrifying pollution across the rest of the planet had found its last refuge in the embrace of the Meny atmosphere maintenance plant. The opportunity to study this new-found paradise, however, was short-lived as SLA developers moved in to prepare the area for a new city project.

The scientific community was outraged by the thought that the only healthy part of Mort was to be transformed into the same type of industrialised hell as the rest of the planet. Their fears were premature — SLA Industries had different plans for the site. The island was to be home to a new clean city, a city that would serve as the blueprint for a brighter era of civilisation. After the nightmarish devastation of the Conflict Wars, the new Meny would be a much needed symbol of new hope and faith in the future. Plans were drawn up for this new city and, despite the bitterest pleas of the scientific community for more time to study the only remaining healthy wildlife on Mort, seven years later construction began.

The environmentalists need not have worried. Contrary to normal SLA procedures, the island was not stripped of resources to help build the city; instead, the forested districts and the larger enclaves of animal and plant life were protected from the construction of the main city area. After the first six years of development were successfully completed, Mr Slayer showed the world what Meny was to become.

"This shall be the shining light of knowledge for all the World of Progress. I shall gather the finest minds to teach here, and you will learn."

Mr Slayer, Public address on the future of Meny, 020 SD.

The future of Meny was set. It was to become the educational centre for SLA Industries. Nearly all SLA employees would be trained here, no matter what their final role was to be; Investigator, Scout or Pilot, all could learn at Meny. All of their needs would be taken care of. Everything they needed to know would be taught to them here.

Today, Meny has changed very little since the first students entered in 34SD. It is still the lush, green city that was described in the original plans. It is true that the use of the woodland areas is not exactly what the designers had visualised; these regions are extremely useful as

Meny - City Under Glass

training grounds for students at the various academies in Meny. In addition, Meny also now boasts a 6 km square area that is an exact replica of a region of Mort's Downtown, which is also used for training purposes.

One of the main attractions of Meny is that it is still a clean city, something unique on Mort. This is due to the protective properties of the dome that covers it; ironic, given that its original purpose was to contain hazardous pollution, not keep it out. The dome has done its job well. For 900, years Meny has been protected from the worst outrages that Mort's weather had to offer.

Meny was a designer's dream, an opportunity for SLA Industries to construct a perfect city. Meny was to be able to support its population cleanly and comfortably. It would avoid the mass overcrowding and dreadful pollution problems that plague other cities on Mort and on industrial worlds across the World of Progress.

The centre of Meny, nicknamed 'The Tank', holds almost all the educational facilities of the city within a 7 km area. Each building in this district is geared to suit one of the many forms of training that relate to employment as an Operative for SLA Industries. The buildings themselves are built as if they were large gothic libraries. Impressive entrance halls flanked by huge stone columns lead into equally impressive assembly areas. Enormous marble staircases rise up to every level of the building. Classrooms and training halls are to be found on each floor, and all the different educational buildings have their own firing range, gymnasium, medical facilities, cafes and restaurants.

Outside of the Tank are the sections of the city that house the students, staff and support personnel for the colleges. The housing in Meny is a mixture of high rise apartment blocks and quiet suburban areas that meld into each other. Student accommodation is not as luxurious as some of the more wealthy areas of the city — these more expensive districts are populated by wealthy SLA employees that have retired to Meny for a cleaner life — but it is adequate for any person spending most of their time in college.

The outer reaches of the city of Meny hold the small industrial sector, and beyond that is to be found the green belt that is used as training grounds. This pleasant area is what remains of the forests that once covered the island. This forested zone now takes up only some 40% of the surface area of the island, but this is still a sizeable amount of plant life, enveloping over 60 square kilometres of land.

Most of Meny's necessities and supplies come from external sources; power, food, machinery and other goods such as luxury items all come from other cities. All of this material is brought in on cargo shuttles and freighters, arriving at Meny's only sea/space port, 'Trisdenty'. Originally started as a colony to house the work-force that built and maintained the city, the area was also the site of all deliveries for the construction project. Once construction of the city had been finished, it was a simple matter to convert the colony into the busy port that it is today.

EDUCATIONAL LIFE

Education or Exploitation?

Students at any Meny College are expected to study for at least 14 hours every day, both in class and privately. These are long and exhausting hours for the students, but they do serve as a gentle preparation for their work as Operatives, when they will discover that missing several nights' sleep to complete a BPN on a tight deadline is a fairly common occurrence. Some of the students are unable to cope with the constant exams and long hours, and suicides are an everyday event. Most survive the process, with the help of fellow students, tutors and assorted drugs.

Long hours are not the only problem that the students have to deal with. The education system in Meny provides students who are involved in a full training program with a small sum of money for their use in the purchase of books and other equipment that they will need to complete their studies. This grant of 100 Credits per month does not quite stretch far enough to allow the student to live comfortably, even though accommodation is free. The grant does not take into account any recreational pursuits, for example, as the opinion of the Faculty is that any student who has time to relax and spend money is not using their year to its full potential. This does not stop Meny town from being the Friday and Saturday night gathering point for the majority of students.

The nightlife in Meny is rather fast-paced, as Mort Central used to be when, after serial killers and Soft Companies, an Operative's weekend of intense partying was the greatest danger that it was possible to stumble into. The local entertainment industry has tailored itself to the support of a young, near-broke population, with special rates and services in the various clubs and bars directed at student needs, i.e. free entry and cheap drinks.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Will the Bubble be Burst?

The most striking feature of Meny is, unsurprisingly, the atmosphere dome that covers the city. When the island was reopened and it was decided to use the site for the construction of a city, the insulating properties of the dome (nicknamed "Slayer's umbrella") were found to cause a problem with the supply of enough oxygen to support an entire city. Either the dome would have to be removed, or an extra source of oxygen would need to be found. Removing the dome was unthinkable; doing this would have let in Mort's real weather, destroying the forests and other vegetation on theisland.

The answer adopted by the construction teams was to build huge ventilation ports in the dome that would allow enough oxygen into the area to sustain the projected population but would also filter out the pollution generated by the rest of the planet. The dome was recognised as a prime target for Soft Company terrorism and extensive security measures were taken; they remain in force today.

The mainstay of the Dome's defences is a squad of 250 members of the Black Chapter who are permanently stationed on the dome's surface. To aid them in their task, the dome has thousands of automatic sensors that can detect

and pinpoint the location of anything from an incoming missile to an intruder walking on the dome itself. The security of the dome is based upon a series of gun platforms, 500 in total, that are controlled by a tactical strike team of Black Chapter members from a safe location inside the dome. Each of these gun platforms holds two 30 mm Chain guns, one 60mm Chain gun and six surface-to-air SMART missiles. They are well camouflaged; from the air none of these lethal emplacements are visible. The only things that can actually be seen on the dome are the ventilation stations that stand tall on the dome's surface, large black spots on a blue bubble.

There are several entrances into Meny, all of which are located at ground level. The island has a large perimeter wall that functions as the physical support of the dome. Set into this wall are many gates of a type similar to those that can be found in the perimeter wall of Mort, holding back the creatures of the Cannibal Sectors. From the outside, Meny looks more like a fortress than an educational facility.

Print is Dead! Explain

One of the most interesting sights in Meny is the main resource library located in the Tank. This immense building in the heart of Meny is regarded as one of the greatest storehouses of knowledge in the entire World of Progress. Named Meagre Tower, the library should have easily been the most impressive structure in Meny, but a design flaw — the library was taller than the Dome — meant that part of the tower had to be built underground. For most scholars, this petty fact does little to detract from a building that is one of the most vital repositories of information in existence.

Meagre Tower is next only to the Tas-Tuo on Static, the Ebon home world, in terms of the sheer amounts of data that it contains. However, unlike the Tas-Tuo, Meagre Tower has embraced the modern technology that can help with the maintenance of such a large amount of data. Anything that a student needs to know can be found in the Meagre, be it information on the Ebb or the rudiments of weapons maintenance. Everything is here, stored for the needs of the future on massive main-frame computers that can be accessed from any of the numerous Oyster terminals in the library.

The construction of the tower was kept as close to the original designs as possible, and the first sixteen levels now make up the basement area of the library. These floors are used as restricted-access storage facilities for rare and precious books that require very careful handling to open safely. It is from these basement levels that a number of strange stories arise; urban legends, in all probability. Such tales seem to involve bits of information, such as pieces of literature, that SLA wants kept out of the public eye, and dares not store on computer files for fear of theft; to ensure safety, they are brought to Meagre where they can be lost in the sea of books held in the basements and sub-basements of the library. If there was any truth to these rumours, it might explain why Stigmartyr agents take such an interest in the goings-on at the various colleges of Meny; always vigilant, they seem to be waiting for the day an extremely unfortunate student stumbles across a copy of Integration Twenty or some other deadly work.

AND THE PARTY GOES ON

The nightlife of Meny has been legendary — in Meny at least — for as long as there have been students in the city, even on the meagre allowance that SLA gives them. Meny students are some of the loudest, most fun-loving drunks that walk — or, on Sundays, crawl — on the face of the planet. Many of the more popular bars and clubs even attract fully trained Operatives, and some Ops make the costly Gauss journey to the island, suffering the indignation of travel at Mach 4 just for the weekend nightlife.

The most popular bar in Meny is, without doubt, the Giro. The bar began life quietly, as do many such places, but quickly became a firm favourite with the student population and has stayed in the top spot ever since. This may have something to do with 'Melt', a cheap, strong drink that is only served here, but the popularity of the bar is more likely to be due to the owner. A young man by landlords' standards, still only 27, Rufiss Conner knew what the kids wanted because when he opened the Giro, he was still one of them.

At the age of 17, Rufiss entered the education program at Meny to begin training as a scout for SLA Industries. Just after his 18th birthday, before Rufiss had even reached the half-way point of his course, his father died. The old man had been a SLA corporate working in a large Dark Lament research lab on Static, and left his son a sizeable amount of money. Despite being upset by his father's death, or perhaps because of it, Rufiss proceeded with his studies at an accelerated rate, finishing his course and graduating in the next few months. He then bought an old bar, and invested almost all of his father's legacy into it. After several months of renovation and decoration, he opened the bar to the public, giving all his friends free entry for life. Since then Rufiss has kept his finger firmly on the pulse of student desires, making himself rich and making the students happy.

Although the Giro is one of the biggest bars, and definitely the best of them, there are thousands of other bars and clubs of all shapes and sizes in Meny, catering to all tastes. Amusement arcades are another popular recreational venue, and a great range litter the streets of the city.

With such a high student population (nearly 70%) the city can become fairly wild, particularly at weekends. This could go some way towards explaining why the Shivers in Meny are so antagonistic (and violent) towards the students. The budding Operatives are more or less taught that when they enter full employment with SLA Industries, they will be able to use the Shivers in whatever way they see fit. The result of this is students abusing privileges that they have not yet been granted.

The Shivers understand this, and try, in their own way, to show the students that Shivers are there to help them with their job, not just to be pushed around. Unfortunately, demonstrations of this point usually take the form of savage beatings, harassment and frequent arrest. It should be no surprise that this attitude does not generally produce Operatives with any respect for Shivers. Despite numerous warnings from Commander Cradle at Head Office, the Shivers of Meny take great delight in their work, making the most of the brief opportunity to lord it over the fledgling Operatives. They seem to have no intention of changing their hostile treatment of the student population of Meny.

ORIENTA - CITY OF SECRETS AND SHADOWS

Located over 200,000km away from Mort Central on the other side of the planet, Orienta is a city of whispers and illusions where everything is available, if you are able to pay the price. While the city is relatively near to Central, on an interplanetary scale at least, it is still more than distant enough to hide its secrets from the prying eyes of SLA Industries.

Orienta is a chaotic sprawl: there is no Uptown or Downtown, no cosy segregation of the rich from the poor. There are no walls to divide any districts, and no suspicious Shivers prying into the everyday lives of the residents. Luxury mansions jostle for space with grim, decaying tenement blocks and new, upbeat apartments. Every square inch of available space has been used. There is very little in the way of park land or recreational space in Orienta; the main area of this kind is named 'Tranquillity Walk', a kilometre square enviro-domed park with a small lake and several peace gardens where meditation and thought are encouraged. For the last few years, all the meditation in this once-pleasant area has been chemically induced. Orienta's drugs trade grows steadily, with each week seeming to bring a new drug and new addicts to accompany it.

The city is primarily inhabited by humans. The other races are generally thought of as outsiders who do not belong, even those who were born and bred in Orienta. To be accepted by the general populace, you have to be human. Shaktars have a slightly easier time of it than the other races do, as they share certain character traits and affinities with the city's culture and traditions. Ebons simply cannot comprehend how the city manages to survive, and the Brain Wasters are far too busy insulting the 'little yellow people' to really notice the city around them. Wraiths understand the nature of Orienta very well — a living demonstration of the principals of stealth and secrecy — and to them it's just a big hunting ground, where the local wildlife is hostile. The majority of the city's inhabitants originated off-world, with the remainder being brought in from the two other major cities on the planet, Mort and Meny.

Organisation of a City

The SLA Industries of Orienta is a very different corporate entity from the vast, faceless bureaucracy that rules Mort Central. When Orienta was built, SLA Industries placed a core team of five faithful employees in the city to oversee activities. These employees were to make all decisions for themselves, and send Quarterly reports to Mort Central. Orienta wasn't considered sufficiently important to merit further attention; it was just a smallish development in the middle of nowhere, and SLA could easily afford to let it run itself. However, it is in the nature of the city to corrupt, and it did not take long for the SLA overseers to become fully absorbed into the city's systems and networks. They seized control of the flourishing crime syndicates which had grown up in the short time the city had been active, and started to finely hone them. SLA research complexes were converted into private drugs manufacturing plants, and the Shivers rapidly became a private army under the complete control of the overseers.

Eventually, rumours of corruption reached Cloak Division in Mort Central, and representatives from Head Office were dispatched to Orienta to see if the truth could be uncovered, but the teams found nothing to support the allegations. The cover-up was — and still is — executed on a vast scale; from the Core Team overseers to the lowest-ranking maintenance worker, all working in complete harmony to hide the real nature of business in Orienta. To this day, SLA officials in Mort know that something is wrong in the way Orienta deals with business, but they are absolutely unable to prove even the smallest allegation. Mr. Slayer, of course, is fully aware of everything that is going on, and he approves thoroughly. As long as they keep themselves within the guidelines he gave them decades ago, he will continue ignoring the situation, preferring to enjoy the precision and skill of their deviousness and to use the city as a stick with which to prod his executives.

Crime and Punishment

The criminal element of Orienta operates in an entirely different manner to that of Mort. The phrase 'there is no honour amongst thieves' does not hold true here. Orienta has the lowest rate of violent crime not only of the cities of Mort, but also of most of the cities in the World of Progress. The criminals of Orienta have their own code of laws and customs that may not be violated; the penalty for transgression is a swift, messy death. These internal laws make sure that Shiver duty is an easy life in Orienta. When you also take into account all the little 'incentives' provided to Shivers in order to make sure that they stay blind, deaf and dumb, the duty also ends up being extremely profitable. In Orienta, crime not only pays, it does so up front, in cash, on the first of the month! Idealists do not survive for long in the city. Orienta has two main criminal factions, one of which works very closely with the SLA overseers. The other organisation has set itself in direct competition to this partnership, and it seems to be growing in strength.

The Trang

The Trang are Orienta's 'official' thieves and drugs barons. They supervise almost all the criminal activity in Orienta on behalf of SLA, and provide the company with a large cut of their profits. The Trang take their orders directly from the SLA Core Team, dealing through the special agents of the overseers. They also act as SLA's unofficial police force, dealing out swift, merciless justice to those whom the Shivers cannot or will not interfere with. Rogue criminals, acting on their own, are not tolerated in Orienta.

The Rising Sun

A new menace has started to spread its tentacles through the underworld of Orienta. This subtle organisation is called The Rising Sun. Little more than the name is known; so far, they have restricted themselves to disrupting the drugs trade by introducing new narcotics and mind-altering substances into the marketplace. To date, their presence has been minimal, but reports suggest that this will change in the near future. The brain behind The Rising Sun is a mysterious being who, so it is told, is a Necanthrope, and a very powerful one if even half of the rumours are true. Agents of The Rising Sun have yet to be captured alive; they die rather than risk revealing their secrets.

The Black Market

Orienta has the most extensive black market on Mort. Anything is available here, from SLA Industries weaponry to White Earth Artefacts. The main difference between this market and the one in Mort — apart from the slightly lower cost of the goods in Mort City — is that the black market in Orienta displays itself openly, peddling its wares blatantly on the streets. Nobody bats an eyelid when they see what is obviously stolen weaponry for sale, or illegal drugs being supplied from small booths. The reason for this is simple; everyone who is anyone in Orienta receives a cut of the profits. From the lowest Shivers on street patrol to the SLA Core Team, all are 'on the take'.

The market itself, the Shifting Bazaar, covers 500,000 square feet of the south end of the city with colour and noise, a maze of scents and distractions. Equipment and narcotics are not all that the market has to offer. The biggest-selling commodity is information. Almost any knowledge can be bought in the market, including some of SLA Industries' juicier secrets, but the price for the more tempting titbits is astronomical, beyond the means of most citizens of Mort. Many Operatives could afford the financial cost of Orienta's knowledge, but there are hidden extras involved; with most of the facts, knowing the secret means dying as soon as the Company discovers the extent of your learning.

During one period, SLA Industries repeatedly sent Operatives in to break up and close down the market, until it finally became a normal street market. A few years later, the black market activity returned, bigger and brighter than before. There was a difference, however; this time it was the SLA Core Team in Orienta who had set it up. The reasons for this were two-fold, claimed the reports to SLA Headquarters. Firstly, they wanted to keep an eye on subversive activity in Orienta, and the best way to do that is always to be behind the subversives; secondly, control of the black market gave excellent scope for rumour control. The real reason, of course, was corruption; sheer lust for wealth and power. Mr. Slayer knows that his officials are corrupt, but he will not take action against them. In their own way, they are still working for him. He receives reports on their activities — accurate reports — and as far as he is concerned, they are doing a good job.

THE SHIFTING BAZAAR

The vast size and maze-like geography of the Shifting Bazaar have been deliberately exploited to make people drift into areas that they might not otherwise bother exploring. After all, a stall can only sell its goods if customers find it. Guides are available for hire to ensure that you actually get out again. People have been known to get lost and not emerge for days, finally returning broke, loaded down with useless goods and with a silly drug-induced smile on their faces. Some never come out at all.

The stalls themselves help add to the general organised chaos. They not only move constantly, redefining the alleyways as they go, but their construction is such that the whole area has a surreal, flowing quality. Silks and other brightly patterned materials are loosely hung on basic wooden frames, left to blow freely whenever there is a breeze. Somehow they manage to resist the effects of the acidic rain that falls here constantly, just as it does all over Mort. Set against the grim weather, the colourful cloths seem incongruously bright and cheerful in this haven of perversity. Small bells sewn onto the sides of the sheets add a soft, musical note to the shifting walkways.

Blowing lightly through the silk-lined alleys is "The Mist". The fumes from the various drug stalls hang in the damp air, twisting and curling into bizarre shapes — or is that the effect of the fumes themselves? The smoke often seems to have a life of its own and adds to the overall unearthly atmosphere of the bazaar. Many visitors swear that the blue-tinged, sweet smelling mist follows them through the market, but it is more likely that their passage through it gives an impression of movement and even intelligence that the smoke could not reasonably possess.

The weather here is as unsettling as the bazaar. As well as the constant, depressing rain, there is a steady breeze that shapes the nature of The Mist and keeps the sheets of material dancing. Every now and again, a stronger gust will tear through the market, causing a cascade of noise as the bells and chimes on the stalls are whipped into action. It is warmer in the bazaar than it should be, and this just adds to the heady, swirling atmosphere down among the stalls.

Every now and again, standing out harshly from the oriental splendour that surrounds it, a neon-lit refreshment stand will be waiting for passers-by. Because of the genuine attempts at regulating food hygiene brought about after several outbreaks of terminal food poisoning, these unlovely metal vans have replaced the more traditional cooking establishments that haunted the market in the past. The steam, smell and general smoke from the burning of assorted unidentifiable foodstuffs only adds to the Mist. Food is cheap and mercifully hidden at the bottom of numerous spicy sauces. Curiosity as to the origin of the meats is best left unfulfilled.

Many of the stalls sell trinkets of a dubious nature and quality. Whilst many claim to be artefacts of ages long-past, even the time before SLA Industries, most are junk produced by the poor and desperate in sweat-shops further out in the city.

There are plenty of stalls that deal in weaponry; much of it is stolen, and it is all available "no questions asked". Anything and everything can be found here if you look hard enough. High-spec armaments smuggled from the various war-worlds, DarkNight weaponry and Thresher Powersuits jostle for space with other, more specialist items. If you require the personal touch, then there are those who will repair or create the item you desire, if you have the purchasing power.

The only way to obtain goods such as these is to pay up-front, and nothing traceable will be accepted. The power of barter is not dead here, unlike many other areas of the World of Progress, and if hard cash is not available, then perhaps payment in kind can be negotiated. You may know something valuable, or you might be able to do a 'little favour' in return for the services you've commissioned.

The drug stalls are among the most interesting and popular areas of the Bazaar. Designer drugs are the current trend and the designers are truly warped; all have the use of the many facilities that Karma has to offer. Anything can happen when you sail the chemical tides that run through Orienta. Many have been caught in drug-induced storms, never to make it back to the dry land of sanity. Some loll by the stalls, oblivious to everything around them. Stealing from them is definitely a mistake; it is far harder than it may seem. The stall-holders tend to keep a watchful, caring eye on their customers; a thief making off with their next cash injection would be very bad for business.

The dangers of the myriad drugs available are many-fold; they are all highly addictive and many cause permanent psychological damage. Quite often, the only release is through death and this is frequently one of a whole range of interesting side effects.

Many stalls deal openly, though occasional raids by the Shivers mean that they can lose a day's stock and a day's profits. The raids are infrequent, a mere gesture, as the Shivers take a cut of the profits. They are more in the nature of a public relations exercise — generally only undertaken when visiting big-wigs appear from Mort Central — than a serious attempt at curbing the trafficking, which would be an impossible task. A clamp-down on drugs trading would also seriously damage the finan-

cial stability of Orienta, for the city has, ironically enough, come to depend on the drugs that provide so much of its illicit income.

Some drugs peddlers still prefer to deal covertly, using the many mundane stalls as a front. These tend to be the pushers who are trying out new substances fresh from the backstreet labs. The extra danger of trying the next generation of narcotics is taken by few; those who take the risk are the foolish, the desperate and the jaded, desperately craving an experience bright enough to take them out of — and away from — the real world.

There are a few permanent buildings huddled in the centre of the Bazaar. Most are seedy, rundown bars and drug dens for those requiring a little more privacy than the street stalls. One of these permanent buildings holds the market administration office. All stalls must have a licence, issued by the administration office, that details their location and business. Very few are correct as few of the stalls have permanent sites and even fewer bear even the slightest resemblance to the actual business of the stall.

The woman who runs the office is an Orientan born and bred. She has no illusions as to what goes on beyond her four walls and knows that her official job is merely a front. The main task of her administration office is to ensure the smooth running of the black market.

Tsung-Li works for the Trang, who are nominally responsible for both the black market and the bazaar. They ensure the safety of the stallholders, the pushers and the customers. Tsung-Li is an intelligent woman, quite elderly, but with a quiet air of confidence and impassivity. Very little can rattle her calm composure, although those fools who do break through receive a nasty shock. Despite her age, Tsung-Li is still more than able to take care of herself. In addition to the hidden pistol that she keeps below the desk, she is a master of several martial arts, with a strength and suppleness that few people even a quarter of her age can match, and she has the astonishing reflexes that come with long years of practice. Tsung-Li can also pin-point the location of any stall at any time with uncanny accuracy. The explanation is more mundane than fantastical, but she would never admit to that.

As well as Tsung-Li, the Trang have many agents hidden deep in the bazaar, keeping an eye on things and preventing any nasty situations from developing into full-blown firefights. It is this network that ensures Tsung-Li knows exactly who is where.

Disturbing the carefully guarded peace in the bazaar brings the Trang down swiftly on the offender, and if death is not an appropriate punishment, then banishment from the bazaar is always an option. While this may not seem particularly serious, the bazaar is the city's lifeline. Anyone unfortunate enough to be banned from it loses all touch with their world and their income. Nobody from the market will deal with a banished one, or even speak to them, and neither will anyone who deals with the marketers. It is this promise of living death that keeps the denizens in line as much as the threat of actual violence.

There are things of greater intangibility on sale in the Bazaar than ecstatic visions of false realities. There are darker sections lurking within the market, sometimes around the edges, sometimes hidden in the centre, home to some of the most lethal citizens of Orienta. These are the people who have seen much and learnt more, people who know something of the truths in the World of Progress. If you want to learn something, anything, that is not strictly within the limits of your need to know, seek out "The Unfortunate".

No-one could tell you who they are, even if they would be prepared to do so; The Unfortunate live in a world of shadows and paranoia, never knowing who may have been sent to kill them and remove their troubled knowledge from the universe forever. They are almost mythical, referred to only in whispers on the rare occasions that they are mentioned at all. Asking for them will bring an uncomfortable silence, full of suspicion and malice. They will find you, and it is never the other way around. Once in the presence of a group of The Unfortunate, it is best to make the most of the occasion; try as you may, you will never, ever come into contact with those individuals again. There is no second chance for a meeting. If you are seeking The Unfortunate, then stay alert, for the grey glove will come only once.

The grey glove is the symbol that you have been granted an audience with the Unfortunate. It is usually displayed subtly by a masked street performer, of which there are many in the bazaar. The performer will lead you by a confusing route to what seems like the outskirts of the bazaar. Ushering you into a grubby, smoky club, he or she will then leave you at an

office door. The lighting is always poor, and the atmosphere thick enough to cut with a MAC knife. Privacy is everything here.

On the streets, no-one is sure what happens next. Those who have met The Unfortunate refuse to talk about the experience and if they actually want to survive, will never admit that they have seen them at all.

Those who have had the experience are scarcely better informed. Memory as to exactly what happened or where they were before is lost, but questioners find themselves in what appears to be a black cavern, stretching off into the endless distance. The only illumination comes from several pools of light; in each of these stands a cloaked and hooded figure. The actual number of The Unfortunate standing ready to answer questions varies between four and six, although there can often be anything up to ten other members of The Unfortunate standing behind them in the darkness. Now is the time to ask your questions, and hope for answers (or not; do you really want the truth?). The nature of answer depends on the nature of the question and of the questioner; it can range from subtle and confusing to shockingly blunt. Sometimes just one Unfortunate will answer; other times, all may give part of an answer, conflicting answers, or even all say the same words simultaneously. Once the audience is finished, the supplicant will find themselves, after a moment of disorientation, back in the bazaar, in a different area to both the starting point and the club. It is never possible to find the club again; The Unfortunate are not stupid. It can be very dangerous to pry. There are those in the bazaar who protect The Unfortunate, although they are more than capable of covering their own tracks. The whole experience can prove quite traumatic to sensitive minds.

CHASING THE DRAGON

Unlike the other cities of the planet, Orienta does not have a distinguished, productive past. Instead, Orienta has lent itself to less stable, but equally lucrative, forms of business. The largest of these business sectors is under the aegis of SLA's main sub-division, Karma. The number of small firms working for this SLA giant reaches well into the thousands in Orienta. These little independent corporations work in nearly every form of biogenetic research that is of interest to Karma, and Karma is interested in almost all fields of biogenetics. Some of the most brilliant minds working for Karma today are from - or still live and work in - Orienta. This is the acceptable and encouraged side of Orienta, with the locals towing the SLA line.

Biogenetics, however, is not immune to the single, shadowy rule of Orienta: for every honest and legal action, there is an equally corrupt and criminal reaction. In fact, this is

especially true of the various Karma facilities in Orienta. Because most of the laboratories are research stations and not just production plants, it is very hard to keep track of exactly which group is working on what projects, or what any given lab is actually doing. Constant observation does not seem to help much either, as the many investigations into the affairs of the bio-scientists have never manage to turn up any incriminating evidence.

One of the most profitable forms of illegal use of a SLA R&D (Research & Development) facility is the drugs market, and Orienta's is one of the largest in the World of Progress. The narcotics that are produced are aimed purely at the pleasure end of the drugs spectrum, catering for rich and poor alike. The bio-scientists that control these operations have made some of the most powerful, intense and deadly drugs imaginable.

Selling these incredibly illegal substances doesn't seem to pose much of a problem. Normally, it would be impossible to actively work for SLA and also be able to traffic large enough quantities of drugs to supply a city the size of Orienta, due to the rather extreme nature of most of the drugs. This seems to cause little, if any, concern to the pushers. Of course, everyone in the entire system, from the most senior Controllers of Karma facilities down to cargo handlers and Shiver security, is taking a cut from the operations. This collusion goes far to explain why Cloak Division have so little luck in closing down these operations in Orienta.

If there is one person who could be responsible for the bulk of the corruption, it would seem logical that it would have to be the highest-ranking Karma official in Orienta. Today, that rather shady title belongs to Keston Celpa, a Wraith Raider from Polo. She has been the overall head of Karma in Orienta for the last four years. During that time, Keston appears to have had a relatively quiet and easy time of it; such a high-ranking position should involve stressful work for pretty much 24 hours a day, but Ms Celpa has found plenty of time to become a society figure and media attraction throughout Orienta, attending all the most fashionable parties and gatherings. At these occasions, she is accompanied by an entourage of Wraith Raiders hand picked from the best Operative squads in Orienta, all of whom are totally loyal to her.

FORT CHIMERA

One of the major problems involved in policing Orienta is the maze-like nature of its streets. Most people consider Mort to be a nightmare to navigate, but Orienta is a thousand times worse. Without any clear districts and no containment walls separating zones as there are in Mort, Orienta's architectural style runs wild and unchecked, and changes constantly as you move through the city from one end to the other.

This makes it impossible for any form of proper law enforcement to take place; it would be completely impractical to attempt to map the city for the purposes of patrol routes and the like. Without any real map, officials trying to reach a particular, out-of-the-way location would have no chance. This leads to Shiver stations carving out small pieces of the city, no more than a few kilometres across, usually, and policing them. To the extents permitted by the all-pervading corruption of the city, these Shivers can go some way towards creating themselves a stronghold of legality, where they can be sure of being able to maintain some level of authority and control, or financial gain anyway.

There are hundreds of these bastions littered throughout Orienta. Some are larger than others, and the biggest of them all is to be found very close to the centre of the city — Fort Chimera.

The central base of operations for Shiver activity in Orienta for the last 75 years, Fort Chimera was once a set of warehouses. The Fort (as Shiver station houses here are also known) was purchased by SLA to provide a location for the Shiver HQ, after the first one fell victim to major structural flaws. These flaws lead to the building falling into the lower reaches of Orienta and it killed thousands in the process. The new Shiver HQ looks more like a horrifying nightmare prison that has erupted out of hell itself. This is perhaps closer to the truth than many people realise.

Due to the absence of any Monarch force, Fort Chimera is the main prison in Orienta. The entire prison complex is underground, and is manned by Shivers from the Fort. The prison stretches down for 127 levels, going from just below ground level to deep into the crust of the planet. The top hundred levels or so are the main area in use. The bottom levels, however, have been the focus of much embarrassment amongst the Shivers.

Orienta - City Of Secrets And Shadows

Forty years ago, a well planned and well-executed jail break took place on one of the lowest levels of the prison. The daring escape would have been a complete success if the prisoners had not become distracted with killing every Shiver warden they could find. By the time they had finished their bloody riot, the insecure levels of the prison had been locked off. This in itself was a major embarrassment for the Shiver forces, but worse was to come.

Four days later, when a large team of Dispersal Shivers went into the sealed area to bring the various sections of the prison back under control, they made an almost unbelievable discovery: all of the prisoners were gone. Not a single prison inmate could be found on any of the sealed levels. The prison security system had been destroyed during the break-out, and so no audio or visual record of the escape had been made. After completing a full sweep of the area and removing the dead Shivers, the team captain sent a full report of the disaster to Commander Cradle in Mort, a report which many people would dearly like to read.

Two days later, SLA officials from Internal Affairs and Stigmartyr descended on the prison like a swarm of furious bees. They brought with them a sizeable number of Dark Finders. All the heads of staff at the prison — and their aides — were sent to Mort for 're-training'. They were replaced by officers from the Shiver operation on Artery, a planet well-known for the vicious malevolence of its security force.

Sixty Dark Finders were sent into the sealed area of the prison, and it was then locked after them with a standing execution order servable on anyone who tried to re-open the area. To this day, rumours as to what lies at the heart of the prison are whispered in noisy bars. These extravagant flights of the imagination range from escape tunnels built by the prisoners, leading into Orienta's highly polluted sewer system to stories of a portal to another universe that opened and sucked in all the missing inmates. Whatever the truth actually is, it is unlikely that anyone will ever find out; the Dispersal Shivers, those who are still alive, anyway, now serve on Dante as MPs (Military Police), and even if a curious person could find a way into the sealed area of the prison, they'd be killed as soon as they returned. The Unfortunate probably know the truth, but most locals would rather risk the Shiver Fort than visit the cloaked ones.

Back Street Bio-Labs

These semi-independent R&D establishments are to be found scattered throughout Orienta. All are ultimately controlled by Karma, although they have a large degree of freedom from their parent company. As well as producing biogenetic implants and doing basic research, these labs are the home of Orienta's thriving drugs industry.

A typical lab is fairly small, perhaps supporting only one or two highly skilled techs. Larger labs can have up to ten technicians, along with a supervisor and support staff. All are spotlessly clean, which often comes as quite a surprise after the grime of the back streets. Everything is lit with UV light and, as a result, goggles must be worn at all times to prevent blindness. Apart from the ones who wear masks and/or body suits for protection, the technicians actually have the nearest thing to a suntan that can be found on Mort.

What is produced in the labs will determine atmospheric conditions within the lab itself. Research into cryogenics or delicate tissue would result in a cold lab and the technicians would be equipped with thermal suits to keep them warm. Most labs, however, tend be uncomfortably hot, due to the amount of machinery packed into them. Electrical equipment that is continually active in an enclosed space produces a large amount of heat, especially incubators and standard refrigeration equipment. The technicians in labs like these are more likely to be wearing as little as possible, once personal safety has been taken care of. In some of the less biologically demanding laboratories, you can find bronzed, healthy-looking techs wearing just a pair of dark glasses and the latest in stylish Arcadian beach-wear!

As a clean environment usually has to be maintained to preserve the integrity of the work and keep it free from contaminating traces of foreign DNA, air conditioning is not possible in most labs. Frequently, ionisers are also scattered all around the lab in an attempt to remove dust from the atmosphere. The smell is unique, an uneasy blend of boiled air and pungent organic ripeness.

Equipment in the labs varies from large pieces of electrical gadgetry to small, delicate sets of forceps and needles. Again depending on what the lab produces, there may be several vats of growing limbs, tissues or organs peering out of their nutrient soup. The atmosphere can be rather unsettling for those who aren't used to it.

Hidden somewhere within the establishment - often in a basement, or nestled behind a sliding piece of wall - will be the more profitable side of business. The drugs labs, the cradles of the narcotics industry, are always carefully concealed from prying, rival eyes. Standards of cleanliness and personal protection in these hidden labs are far higher than in the official biogenetics labs. Contaminated products can cause nasty reactions and lose money, so it's in the technicians' interest to keep their standards high.

The drugs labs look rather like a standard chemistry workspace, with burners, glass tubing and distillation equipment neatly set up all over the available workspace. Production is most likely to take place at night, when the temperatures are slightly lower and the labs are as pleasant as they will get. Generally, technicians have one personal speciality drug that they manufacture, which is often the one that they have developed and nurtured from initial brain-wave through to final production. Being frequently made from temperamental and volatile chemicals, passing production of a drug to another technician will often lead to the failure of the whole batch, or the production of something that is highly unpleasant and practically worthless.

BPNs

SCL 10 Requirement

BLUEPRINT NEWS

DEPARTMENTAL AUTHORISATION

Contact Department of: ENQUIRIES

Training Package Recommended: Any

COLOUR CODE: BLUE

Leith Avenue and Durward Ridge, Downtown.
Control and suppress any civilian disturbances in this area.
Squads only, no solo Operatives.

ENt157559/DT

THIRD EYE

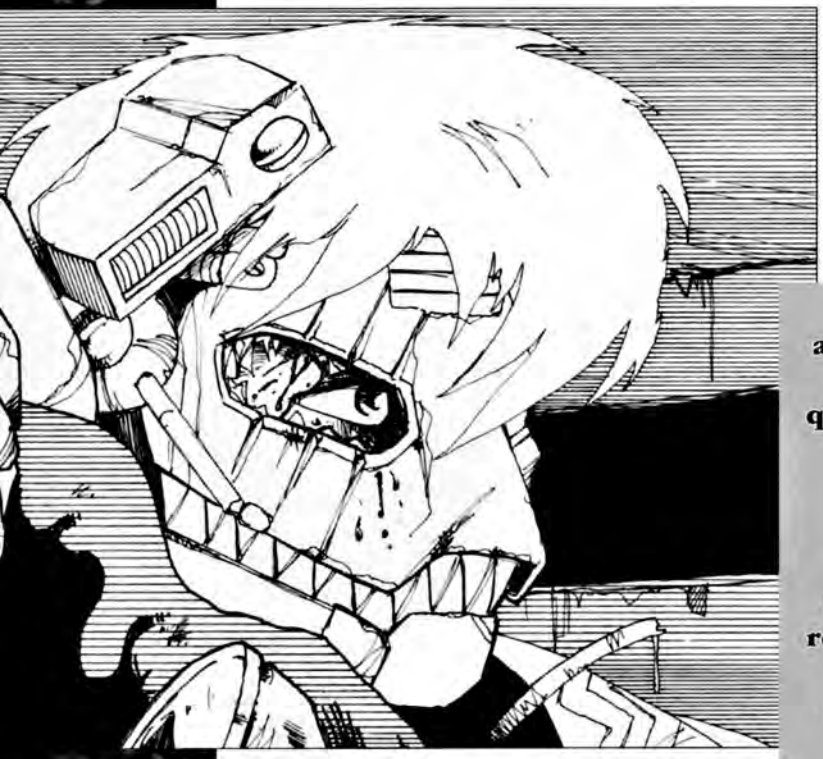
Station Analysis ☐
Third Eye News ☒

Consolidated Bonus Scheme
50₵ / Day

Per Op. ☒
Per Squad ☐

GANG VS GANG

At some point in this BPN, the squad will become involved in a gang fight between The Tigers and The Shadows. They are small, weak Upper Downtown gangs armed mostly with knives, chains, broken bottles and a few CAF weapons. Individually, none of the gang members would present any problems to an Operative, but there are at least two dozen members of each gang present. If the Ops don't seem impressed, remember that the gangs have just wrecked a Shiver APC (with squad) in the area.



There are many ways of dealing with the situation: calling for Shiver back-up (which might not prove too useful, as they won't risk another squad for 30 minutes, when things will have died down a bit), standing back and letting the gangs fight it out, siding with one gang against the other, and so on. It is a chance for the squad to make contact with a Downtown gang and gain a potential ally or friend, but it is equally possible that the squad will make long term enemies out of one or both of the gangs. If the players side with one of the gangs, then that gang will be most grateful and help the players on future occasions, provided they win. If they lose, the players will get blamed for interfering in gang business, and will have made two enemies rather than one.

It is also a very good chance for the Operatives to look like heroes in front of the media if they think to call for a team from one of the Vid channels. There is a relatively low risk factor, and footage of Operatives battling against 'impossible' odds always looks good on the vid.

Whichever gang feels that they got a raw deal from the Ops will make sure that they tell the other gangs in the area know about how badly a particular bunch of Slops treated them. This could become tricky for the squad, when they try and get out of the sector alive and find every gang in the area waiting to teach them a lesson. No-one intrudes on home turf and messes about with its gangs. Of course, the gang that the squad helped will have to join in on this witch-hunt, or will be persecuted by the other gangs as collaborators.

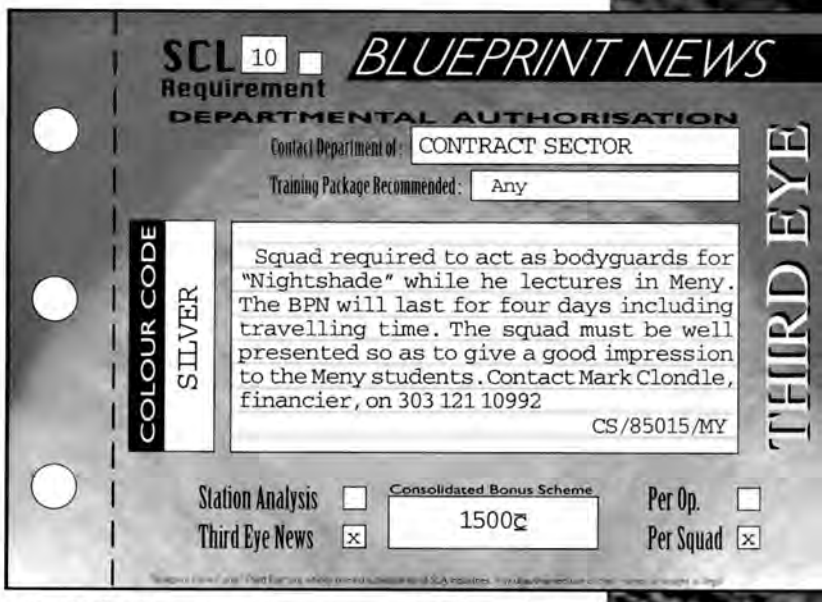
This is the turf of the Tigers, and you just had the mis-for-tune to step onto it. I think you want to leave real quick... while you can still leave, that is.

Tigers gang leader Tornes

The Tigers don t know shit and think they own this place. Well, we got some real bad news for them. The Shadows are the rulers of this sector and no fly-by-night bunch of kids is gonna take this turf off of us.

The Shadows gang leader Hallson

BODYGUARDS



Nightshade is a well-known Contract Killer who has been on the circuit for a few months now. Mark Clondle is his financier, and he wants Nightshade to have bodyguards so that he appears to be more important than he really is. Nightshade has been hired to lecture in Meny for two days, plus a day travelling and a day returning, and the squad will have to be with him the entire time.

The lectures consist of talks and demonstrations in the various college buildings in Meny. Most of these lean towards the more physical side of training, and crowd control on these occassions will be difficult.

The Contract Killer is arrogant, rude and generally obnoxious to the squad. At some point during his lectures on what the Contract Circuit is like, Nightshade will be heckled by a group of students. The squad will be told to shut them up by Mark Clondle and the students will indeed be quiet, for a while.

A few minutes after the squad have returned to the lecture podium, the students will start heckling again and this time, Nightshade will react very badly. He will draw his Vibro Sabre and charge the students, intending to 'Teach them a lesson they'll never forget!'

Mark will now get the squad to restrain Nightshade without hurting him. The squad will also be required to try and cover things up afterwards and will not be allowed to talk about Nightshade's 'problem'.

The cover up can be handled in many ways, but the most effective might be to find the students involved and buy them a few drinks to help 'smooth' relations. Some students might be more difficult to convince and could cause trouble if they are not properly compensated — a few drinks might not do the trick in such a situation. Money or equipment might be needed to ensure silence.

Nightshade uses a Vibro Sabre, but his other weapons and stats are up to the GM, depending on the power of the squad. If the squad makes an enemy of Nightshade, he will not forget it when they return to Mort Central.

SCL 10 Requirement

BLUEPRINT NEWS

DEPARTMENTAL AUTHORISATION

THIRD EYE

Contact Department of: Transport

Training Package Recommended: Strike / Death

COLOUR CODE: RED

A Gauss train has been blocked under Cannibal Sector 4. Squad required to clear blockage in tunnel and allow train to continue journey.
Squads only, solo Operatives need not apply. Contact Mr. Allen Ingles on 404 2743 27444.

TRt338934ZDT

Station Analysis ☐ Third Eye News ☒

Consolidated Bonus Scheme: 1500₢

Per Op. ☐ Per Squad ☒

GAUSS TRAIN

A Gauss train has been stopped at a signal by a cannibal family who, with the aid of a mad serial killer and his tame Carriens have blocked the tunnel with girders, concrete blocks and other obstructions. The squad must rescue the train from the nasties, remove the blockage and then ensure that the cannibals do not attempt the same trick again.

Mr. Ingles will arrange transport into the tunnels for the squad, and they will then be facing a large group of hungry cannibals. The killer and his Carriens may have moved off, or they may not have. The cannibals are laying siege to the train and should succeed in breaking into the carriages just as the Operatives arrive. The scene inside the train, will be a chaotic mix of screaming civilians, panicking staff and vicious sub-humans.

Once the cannibals have been killed or driven off, the squad should be able to remove the blockage in the tunnel with the help of the train staff. It will take about an hour of back-breakingly hard work to remove the steel girders and reinforced concrete blocks that have been made into a crude barricade.

The cannibals broke into the Gauss tunnel through an old, abandoned service tunnel that they discovered. If the squad follows the tunnel, they will find themselves face to face with an entire tribe of hungry, angry cannibals. The service tunnel can easily be collapsed through the use of grenades or even concentrated gunfire on the supports.

If the squad does not follow the tunnel or collapse it, about a week later they will be contacted by Mr. Ingles and told that they have to go back down and do the whole thing again, because the cannibals have built another barricade. This time they will be required to work without pay, because they did not complete the BPN. They will have to show proof to Mr Ingles that they have completed their mission this time. A media crew might go with them if they can be guaranteed good shots of cannibals being blown apart — if not, a vidcam of them sealing the tunnel should be enough.

"Would everyone please remain calm, and make their way to the back of the train. There are exits... oh my god! No! Aaaaaagghhhh..."

Fiona Freeman, Gauss train supervisor.

SPACEPORT

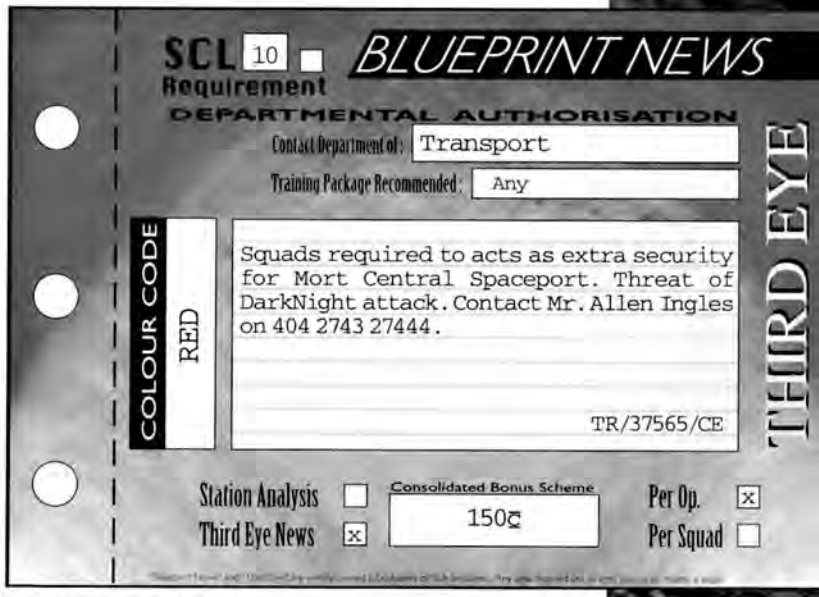
There is a threat of a DarkNight raid on the Spaceport in Central tonight, and extra security is needed. Mr. Ingles will tell the squad that the threat is probably just a bluff, but that they can't afford to take any chances. The squad will be required to patrol the Spaceport grounds on foot and take any steps necessary to maintain security. It must be remembered that there are a lot of valuable shuttles and properties in the 'Port that must not be damaged.

In the early hours of the morning, a DarkNight shuttle will make a strafing run over the Spaceport, but it will be shot down by security before it does any damage. The shuttle will crash near the squad and six DarkNight mercenaries will flee into the Spaceport. The squad will have to apprehend them in any way they can. There is a reward of 100 C per mercenary stopped, dead or alive, that Mr. Ingles will not inform the squad of in advance. Proof in the form of live mercenaries or their remains will be needed to claim this reward.

Given a chance, the DarkNight mercenaries will try to bribe their way out of trouble and if the opportunity arises, they will try to corrupt squad members. The mercenaries will possess good quality equipment and will prove to be experienced soldiers.

The DarkNight mercenaries have detailed plans of the Spaceport and will be difficult to catch or kill if they are allowed enough time to put their knowledge to use. This means that the squad will have to work fast to try and apprehend the mercenaries if they are to complete the BPN.

It should be remembered that while the squad must not damage any property, the DarkNight mercenaries are under no such restriction. The DarkNight mercenaries might also try and grab the odd hostage to use as 'human' shields and, if needs be, to bargain their way out of the Spaceport. If they can, they will try to convert the hostages to the DarkNight cause. If hostages are taken, the squad will have to find a way to rescue them; SLA Industries would not happily allow Spaceport personnel to be taken by the enemy.



"Control? We have a situation here. DarkNight presence in Central Spaceport. Please respond. I repeat DarkNight presence in...<fttz>"

Security guard on duty at Central Spaceport

SCL 10 Requirement

BLUEPRINT NEWS

DEPARTMENTAL AUTHORISATION

Contact Department of: ENQUIRIES

Training Package Recommended: Any

COLOUR CODE: BLUE

Squad required to patrol sewers below the wall of Cannibal Sector 2. Will be required to prevent anything from the Cannibal Sector making its way into the city. Squads only, solo Operatives need not apply.

EN/572600/SW

THIRD EYE

Station Analysis [x] Third Eye News [ ]

Consolidated Bonus Scheme 100₵

Per Op. [x] Per Squad [ ]

SEWER CHASE

While in the sewers, the squad will see the usual rats and pigs. At some point, they will spot a figure hurrying through the darkness, and this is where things start to happen. The furtive figure is a minor serial killer known as The Ratman whose style is to kill people who wear fur or fake fur clothing.

If the squad follows The Ratman, he will try to escape from them using the tunnel system, which he knows extremely well. He will take the odd pot shot at the squad with the CAF pistol that he carries, but he should be no real threat.

At some point the squad will lose sight of the Serial Killer but will soon catch up with him again. As the squad round a corner in the tunnels, they will come across a band of Carriens who have killed the Ratman and are feeding from his corpse. (Remember Fear checks).

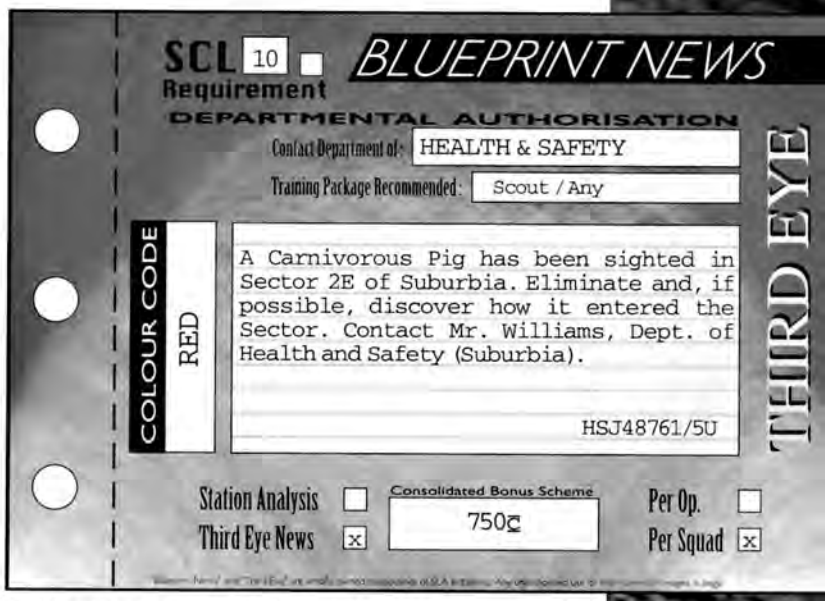
As soon the Carriens spot the squad, they will turn on the Operatives and attack them. The number of Carriens should depend on the strength of the squad. If the squad manages to bring back the remains of The Ratman, there is a reward of 500C for his elimination, as well as the standard reward for confirmed Carriens kills.

One of the biggest dangers that the squad will face in the sewers—apart from the Carriens and the pigs—is the chance that there might be a flash flood while they are down there. Flash floods start as a distant rumbling, followed by 500,000 litres of Mort's sewage rushing down the pipe at 150 kilometres an hour. This will easily wash the squad (make PHYS or swim rolls to avoid drowning during the process), the Carriens and the Ratman into the deepest and dirtiest parts of Downtown, or even into a Cannibal Sector. Wherever the squad end up, they will have to try and retrieve The Ratman's body and find their way out before the local inhabitants discover them.

"The sewers of this town are getting worse. Those damned Carriens and cannibals are digging their own fucking networks down there. How are you suppose to know your way around when the sewer system doesn't match up with the bloody maps?"

Sven Dilgtoe, Head of Department of Sanitation

WILD PIG HUNT



The pig mentioned in the BPN is roaming through a housing estate in Suburbia, causing havoc wherever it goes. Mr. Williams can tell the squad that a Mrs. Jackson reported it and she lives at 2011, Altine Towers, Sector 2E.

Mrs. Jackson is middle aged, greying and desperate for some company so, if the squad visits her, she will offer them tea and biscuits and start a long, drawn-out story of how she saw the pig. She will try to keep the squad for as long as possible, as she is lonely and wants someone to talk to.

The pig should be easy to find — just follow the screams and over-turned garbage cans. When the squad does catch up with it, the more observant amongst them might notice that it has a thick, studded, leather collar around its neck. The pig will be friendly unless approached aggressively, in which case it will attack viciously.

There is a name tag on the pig's collar. One side says "Pinky", and the other says "My home is 48, Altine Towers."

The huge, ugly, flesh-eating pig is the pet of a Frother, Melody White, who lives at the address on the tag. Earlier during the day, while Melody was in a drug-induced stupor, the pig escaped. Should the squad choose to return the pig, or just go to investigate, Melody will be coming round, but will still be unsure of what is happening around her.

It is, of course, highly illegal for her to have the pig and the squad should realise this. Melody is very attached to the animal, and if the squad is not in a position to return it to her, Melody will become extremely violent. She has a Power Claymore (skill 8) and two FEN 204 SMGs (skill 6) armed with standard rounds. She also wears a stitched mask made from pig skin. Other equipment is standard as per Frother NPCs. Melody is violent, unstable, dangerous and very protective of her pig. If the squad asks for guidance from their superiors, they will be told to take Melody to the nearest Shiver station where Cloak Division will take over.

MEDIA RESCUE

SCL 9 Requirement

BLUEPRINT NEWS

DEPARTMENTAL AUTHORISATION

Contact Department of: THIRD EYE NEWS

Training Package Recommended: Strike / Death / Any

COLOUR CODE: RED

Squad required to rescue crew of media 'copter that has been shot down in Cannibal Sector 5. No solo Operatives, combat-experienced squads only. Contact Miss Emma Loyden of Third Eye News. Possible media bonus for good performance.

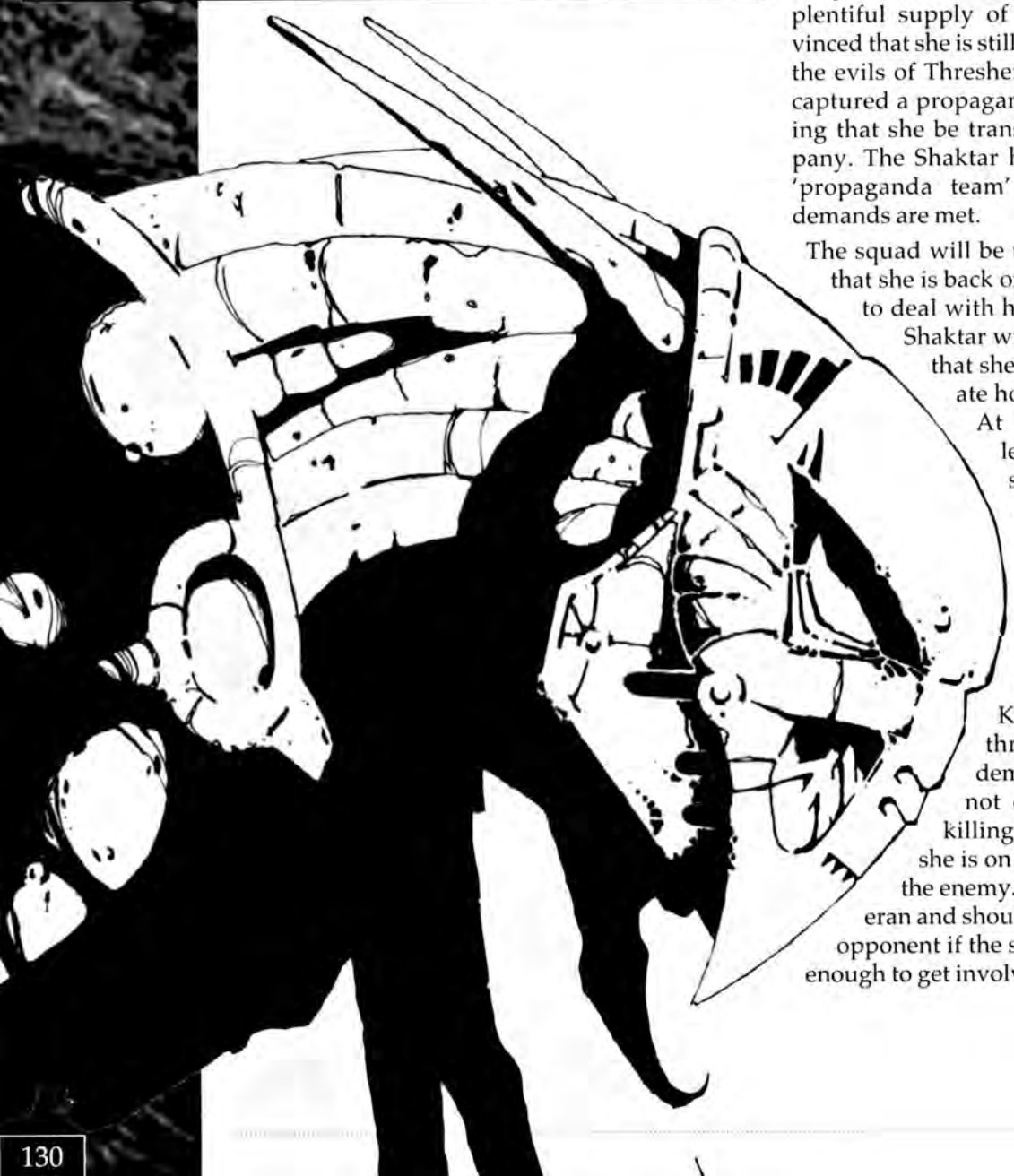
TEt4892544/C5

THIRD EYE

Station Analysis ☐ Third Eye News ☒

Consolidated Bonus Scheme 1250₢

Per Op. ☐ Per Squad ☒



Emma Loyden can tell the squad that the crew of Third Eye News 'copter 103 is being held captive in a half-demolished building in Cannibal Sector 5. The squad will be flown out to the area, dropped within sight of the building and told to contact the pilot when they are ready to be flown out again. A cameraman/reporter named Jackie Turnbull will be sent with the squad.

The captor of the crew is a Shaktar called K'thrr, a Dante veteran who shot the 'copter out of the sky and dragged the crew back to the building. She is equipped with a FEN Power Reaper, wears Crackshot armour and carries a plentiful supply of grenades. K'thrr is convinced that she is still on Dante, fighting against the evils of Thresher. She thinks that she has captured a propaganda team, and is demanding that she be transported back to her company. The Shaktar has threatened to kill the 'propaganda team' one by one until her demands are met.

The squad will be unable to convince K'thrr that she is back on Mort, but should be able to deal with her on her own terms. The Shaktar will not go back on any deal that she agrees to and will negotiate honourably with the squad. At the first sign of any violence or treachery however, she will kill the media team and turn on the squad.

The media team are bound, gagged and laid out against the wall of the room that the Shaktar is in. They have not been tortured or hurt, but K'thrr is serious about her threat to shoot them if her demands are not met. K'thrr is not evil, and does not enjoy killing, but she does think that she is on Dante and surrounded by the enemy. She is a highly skilled veteran and should prove to be a formidable opponent if the squad is unlucky or stupid enough to get involved in a fire-fight with her.

MEDIA BACK-UP

Emma Loyden can tell the squad that they are to act as back-up for a cameraman and reporter who are travelling down to the lower levels of Downtown. The media team are hoping to get down to level 60 or lower, and they expect to need fire-power in the depths.

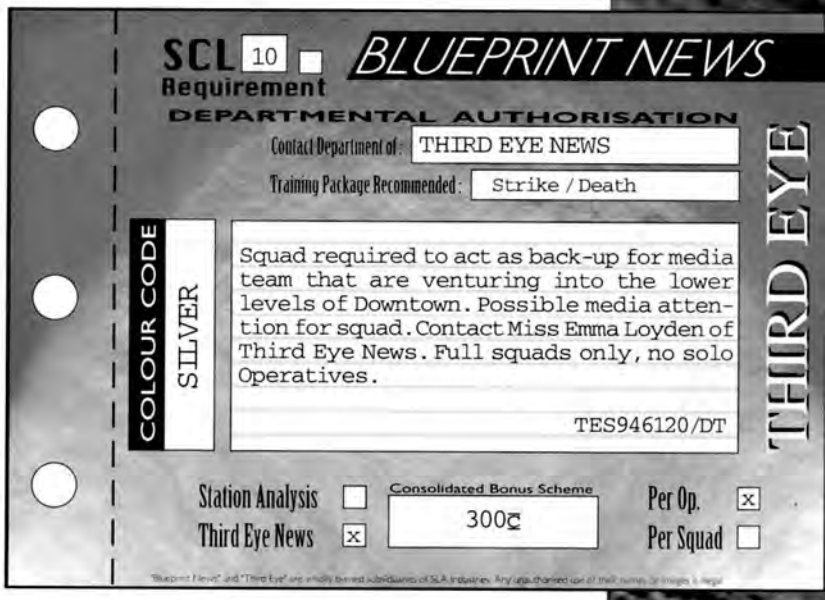
The cameraman (Sean Matheson) and the reporter (Sarah Bell) want to make a film to show people how lucky they are to be living in an area that is reasonably defensible, and not have to live in conditions like the lower levels. As the team travel lower and lower, they will leave the safe areas, go below the levels that Shivers refuse to visit and encounter people who have no loyalty to SLA whatsoever.

The team should meet up with Props, Scavs, mutants, down-and-outs and the like. Sarah will want to go as low as possible, and will promise the squad large bonuses if they will go lower.

The lower levels underground are filled with many weird and frightening creatures that have mutated from common creatures over the years, then bred and mutated even further. The squad come across one of these things asleep in a low level factory complex. The media crew think it would be a good idea for the squad to wake it up and let them film the battle as the Operatives kill the beast in close combat. The creature in question mutated from the common DNA Altered Canines. Over the years of wandering the networks of factory waste areas deep underground, it has become a formidable fighter (use Domino Dog stats, skills and abilities with beefed up physical stats). After the battle, the media crew will have enough footage for their show.

When the team look as though they are about to start back, they will be caught in a flood, as one of the upper reservoirs overflows. They will be washed deeper and deeper into Downtown, to finally be deposited in the sewers below Cannibal Sector One where they will be attacked by the creatures of the Sector. From here they should be able to call for assistance to airlift them out.

The squad should remember that they will be in front of the camera for virtually the entire mission and should act accordingly. If they manage to keep Sarah and Sean alive, they will have made a couple of useful contacts in the media industry.



SCL 10 Requirement

BLUEPRINT NEWS

DEPARTMENTAL AUTHORISATION

Contact Department of: ENQUIRIES

Training Package Recommended: Strike / Any

COLOUR CODE GREY

Operatives required to protect corporate employee over a 24 hour period. Corporate has received death threats from the Serial Killer 'Entropy'.
Contact Mr. J Hamilton 818 447 809040

IA/3658212/CE

THIRD EYE

Station Analysis ☐
Third Eye News ☒

Consolidated Bonus Scheme
200₢

Per Op. ☒
Per Squad ☐

CORPORATE PROTECTORS

A corporate named Genny Adams has had death threats made against her and it is up to the squad to protect her over the 24 hour period during which she is supposedly going to be attacked. Miss Adams has no idea why Entropy would choose her, and is terrified by the whole situation.

The squad will have to stay at her small flat in Uptown for the night, accompany her to her office where she works as a broker in the Stocks, Shares and Bonds Department and then stay overnight at her apartment again. It is possible that in this time, Genny will form a romantic attachment to one of the squad.

Entropy is a killer who chooses to attack people that look like she does, and Genny Adams is almost identical in appearance to the murderer. There will be no attack in the time that the squad is protecting Miss Adams, but a few days later, Genny will be attacked. If she has started a relationship with a squad member who happens to be with her at the time, Entropy may be driven off; otherwise, Genny will be killed. Either way, the squad will then be offered the task of finding the serial killer and eliminating her.

Entropy has a lair close to the Rust Alley Sector of Downtown and knows every inch of the area. She will not be easy to find because she is in fact a corporate who also works in Stocks, Shares and Bonds, and uses the Rust Alley area as a hideout after she has killed someone. She wants to eradicate all female corporates that look like her, so as to better her standing with her bosses. As the corporate sector of Mort is very fashion conscious, a lot of people look similar — they all follow the current fashion trends. After the run in with Genny (if she was not killed), Entropy, aka Kelly Visto, will stop sending death threats to people and simply start a killing spree of anyone that she can find who looks like her. The squad will have to stop her before the body count rises out of control. Kelly is not without power in the corporate sector and using her corporate identity, she can make it difficult for the squad to complete their mission, by altering files and records to throw them off the scent.

SCAF HUNT

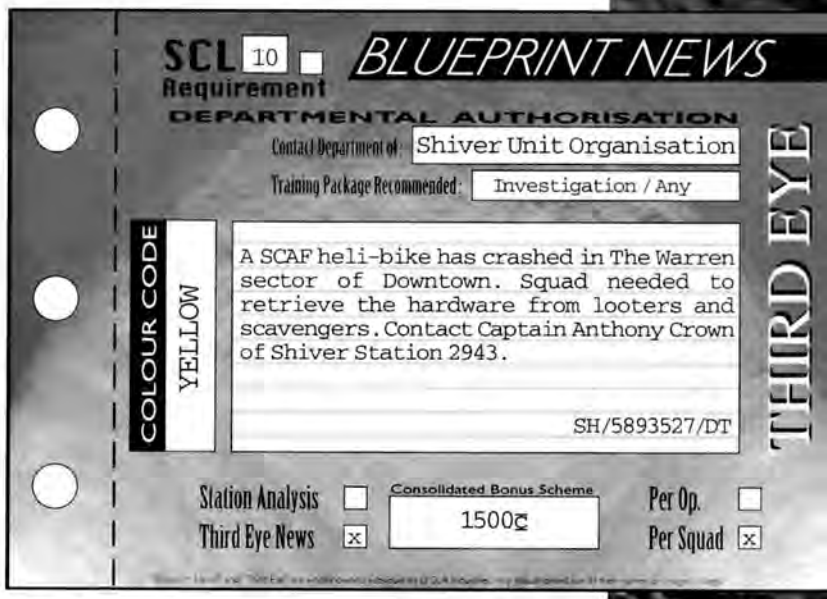
Captain Crown will inform the squad that the SCAF crashed due to unknown circumstances, and by the time that an APC arrived to pick up the pieces, the heli-bike, the Shiver and all the equipment had gone. It is up to the squad to retrieve as much as possible. No equipment, no Credits.

Street kids playing near the scene of the crash can be bribed or threatened to tell the squad that a Black Marketeer called Chuck Jones picked up the equipment. Chuck stays in the heart of The Warren and has no SLA record. Further bribes or threats can be used to find out his address.

Chuck has sold the Shiver's mini-browbeater to a Prop called Mystique who hangs out in the bar called the Rat-Hole. Mystique will not want to return the property, and if the players find him, they will soon learn that he is a skilled fighter and knows Downtown like the back of his hand. It will take good tracking skills to find Mystique and retrieve the Browbeater, if they let him get out of the bar and into the streets. The FEN Power Reaper mounted on the heli-bike has been sold to The Jesters, a Downtown gang who are trying to improve their standing with their peers. The Jesters are based in the Wentmore Sector of Downtown, and are long-time enemies of the gang named The Warlords.

The heli-bike itself has been sold to Sam's Garage, and Sam will have started stripping it down for parts as soon as he got it. The Shiver's armour is still in Chuck's store, but he will tell the squad that a fictional Prop named Laser has bought it. If the players decide to search the place anyway, they will find the broken down armour very easily, and they might also uncover one or two other unrelated objects that they could question Chuck on.

This BPN should involve the squad spending lots of time wandering through Downtown and meeting lots of potential allies and enemies. It should cost them a lot in terms of time, effort and bribe money. If the squad are not careful and let him get away, they may also find that Mystique (the prop) will be after them, seeking revenge for the 'hassle' they put him through.



"This is Victor 12. I'm hit! Will attempt dead-stick landing, Downtown sector...btzzzz"

SCAF pilot Rachel Newman (deceased)

SCL 10 Requirement

BLUEPRINT NEWS

DEPARTMENTAL AUTHORISATION

Contact Department of: Enquiries

Training Package Recommended: Any

COLOUR CODE BLUE

Newheart Square, Wentmore Sector, Downtown. Control and suppress any civilian disturbances in this area.
Squads only, no solo Operatives.

ENX151479/DT

THIRD EYE

Station Analysis ☐ Third Eye News ☒

Consolidated Bonus Scheme 50₡

Per Op. ☒ Per Squad ☐

AMBUSH

This will start as a standard Blue BPN, albeit in a rather notorious area. At some point, the squad should spot a young girl stealing from one of the stores that lines the square. If the squad gives chase, the child — Sally — will run away from them, always managing to keep just ahead by dodging through crowds, in front of taxis, etc. The child will flee into a side alley and when the squad follows, they will be ambushed by a group of The Warlords, a local gang.

The Warlords are fed up being a bunch of nothings and they want to get some decent equipment. The easiest way, they thought, would be to wipe out some Slops and steal their weapons and armour. There are between 5 and 15 Warlords, depending on the strength of the squad, and they are armed with CAF weapons. The head of The Warlords is a young man called "Lord Reeves", and he has a fanatical hatred of Slops in general.

The gang will be hiding on fire escapes and behind garbage cans and will attack as soon as the squad is trapped inside the alley. They will concentrate their initial fire on the most heavily armed Operatives as they see them as the greatest threat. If the squad manages to drive them off, they will have made an enemy of The Warlords. If the squad flees, The Warlords will announce that they frightened off a squad of Slops and word will spread around the Wentmore Sector that The Warlords are not people to be messed with. It is possible for the squad to negotiate with The Warlords, but given Lord Reeves' attitude it is unlikely to happen. Should the squad talk from a position of strength, The Warlords will do anything to save their own skins but if the squad haggle from a position of weakness, the Warlords will still try to get the equipment that they desire.

Should the squad choose to shoot the child rather than chase her, they will be seen by a group of concerned citizens and a loud cry of "brutality" will go up. Unless the squad can manage to keep the citizens quiet, it is likely that a riot will evolve.

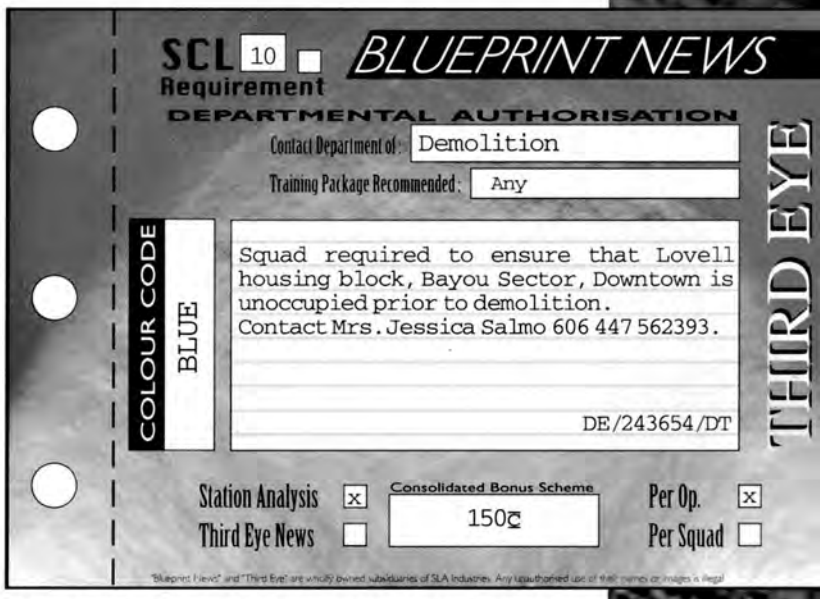
"Well, well, well...
Look what we got here. Some Slops, out of their depth and on my turf.
You are gonna *bleed*."

Lord Reeves,
Leader of The Warlords

CLEARANCE DUTY

Upon contacting Mrs. Salmo, the squad will be told that they are needed to ensure that there are no residents left in the Lovell housing block. The block has become unstable and is scheduled for demolition in the next couple of days. All the residents were informed two weeks ago that they would have to move, and most have done so, but there are a few who refuse to move. The squad has to deal with these stubborn few. The squad is not authorised to promise any other accommodation to the residents.

The people who refuse to move consist of a middle aged woman who has half a dozen children to look after and simply has nowhere to go; a young man who is always too drunk to know what is happening to him; a man who has barricaded himself into his apartment, taken his family hostage and refuses to move until he is promised somewhere else to live; a deaf mute who all the other residents think is possessed; other troublesome residents can be added as the GM sees fit.



Most of the people who remain in the housing block have nowhere else to go and will end up on the streets when they are removed from Lovell. If the squad goes to the Housing Department and requests accommodation for these people they will be told that there are simply no apartments available at this time.

GLOSSARY

Alice: Recreational hallucinogenic drug.

APC: Acronym for Armoured Personnel Carrier, the main transport used by Shivers.

Artery: One of the many planets in the World of Progress, Artery is known as the Karma 'Home world' because of the huge factory complexes that the sub-company has there. This planet is the main source of SLA's biogenetic creations.

Beat: Recreational drug.

Besinkievkedo: Literally 'Guidance' in Killan. This is the huge Glyph Pillar in Mort City's Suburbia, used by FoldShip Navigators as a reference point and beacon for the planet Mort.

BLA 046M: Also known as the Blitzer, this is a powerful 12.7mm pistol

Black Chapter: Elite SLA Operatives, used for extremely dangerous and sensitive missions, and also as personal bodyguards to Mr. Slayer.

Blitzer: The BLA 046M pistol, renowned for its power and for firing 12.7mm rounds.

Bloodhorn: Highly intelligent Greater Carrien, seemingly the leader of all Carriens in the Cannibal Sectors.

BPN: Acronym for BluePrint News file, a small blue card that contains basic information on an Operative's assignment; also the assignment itself.

BPN Hall: Administrative centre where BPNs are allocated.

Slayer's Crib: The largest and most famous BPN Hall, located in Central.

Brain Waster: Aggressive, hyperactive Ebon warriors, Brain Wasters are recognisable by a pattern of charred flesh around the eyes. Brain Wasters are commonly considered violent, unpleasant and touchy by other races.

CAF: Consolidated Arms Fabrication. Low cost civilian-class weapons producer.

Calaharvey: A type of motorcycle, popular with Operatives.

Cannibal: Person who eats those of the same species; specifically, one of the degraded humanoids who inhabit the Cannibal Sectors and feed on humans (and other races) whenever possible.

Cannibal Sectors: Ruined outermost districts of Mort City, filled to bursting with a wide variety of highly lethal life-forms.

Carriens: Tall, semi-intelligent carnivores that roam the Cannibal Sectors.

Central: The innermost district of Mort City, where the corporate business is dealt with.

Chain Gun: Fully automatic, multi-barrelled, electro magnetic, belt-fed machine gun.

Civilian: A person who is not employed either directly or indirectly by SLA Industries; a person without an SCL card.

Clearwater Lake: A huge toxic lake in the middle of Cannibal Sector Five.

Clearwater Monster: A gigantic squid-like creature that lives in Clearwater Lake, this monster is said to possess great intelligence and strong mental powers.

Conflict Wars: Historical period of great turmoil and bloody wars, before the creation of SLA Industries.

Contract Circuit: A highly-publicised group of events held on many planets, involving various 'games' of combat and skill, generally of a gladiatorial nature.

Contract Killer: A person who competes on the Contract Circuit.

Corporate: An Operative who works inside SLA Industries' administrative and management structure for a salary rather than completing BPNs.

Crackshot: One of the safest and most effective types of armour.

Credit: SLA Industries' internal currency. One credit is equal to ten unis. All credit transactions are electronic.

D-Notice: Notification placed upon information not suitable for release to Operatives or the public. A D-Notice effectively bans any further research on these subjects. Ignoring a D-Notice, requesting further information on such a topic or related area, or repeating a query that produced a D-Notice leads rapidly to termination. Note

that some pieces of information are considered so sensitive that the initial query carries a second or even third D-Notice flag, leading to immediate violation. There is no second chance; asking these questions is taken as a declaration of forfeiture of life.

Dante: The best known of the War Worlds. Dante is a nightmarish planet where SLA Industries' troops fight a constant battle against the forces of DarkNight and Thresher.

Dark Finder: Biogenetically altered human, used primarily as an internal police force for SLA Industries.

Dark Lament: A sub-company of SLA Industries that has administrative control of all Ebon-related matters and produces all ebb-based equipment.

DarkNight: Large subversive company dedicated to the overthrow of SLA Industries.

Deathsuit: A specially-designed body suit for channelling and storage of Flux, the Deathsuit also doubles as armour.

Deathwake Device: A mysterious piece of equipment that gives life to the biogenetically created Stormers. Its current whereabouts is unknown.

Depth Charge, The: An abandoned subway area in Downtown with a free power supply. Used as a hangout by Props.

Deth: A huge Shaktar, Deth is the doorman at the Pit.

Digger: The largest Manchine ever built. Digger is highly lethal, and can normally be found in Cannibal Sector 1.

Downtown: Surrounding Suburbia, Downtown is an extremely dangerous district of Mort City, containing decaying residences and automated industrial plants.

DropShip: Flying troop and vehicle carrier, used mainly by Shivers.

Drum: Drug used to condense sleep patterns.

Ebb: The creative formulae which Ebons, Brain Wasters & Necanthropes can manipulate in order to create or destroy.

Ebon: A race of attractive, pale-skinned humanoid aliens gifted with the ability to manipulate the Ebb and possessing great innate curiosity. Also applies as a general term to Brain Wasters and Necanthropes, as these races are derived from true Ebon stock. One of the few alien races to survive the Conflict Wars.

Ex-War Criminal: Insane War World veteran, usually placed into the Cannibal Sectors for the safety of civilians.

FEN 24 Warmonger : Old but powerful weapon used by military units on War Worlds.

FEN Power Reaper: A squad-support machine gun.

Financier: Corporate who aids an Operative or squad by procuring BPNs and information in return for a percentage of earnings.

Flux: The energy used by Ebons, Brain Wasters and Necanthropes when manipulating the Ebb.

Foldship: Craft used for interstellar travel, powered by the Ebb.

Fort Chimera: The largest prison on Mort, located in Orienta.

Frother: A human warrior culture based around dangerous combat drugs.

Gauss Elevator: Elevator using an electromagnetic propulsion system.

Gauss Train: Train using an electromagnetic propulsion system.

Glyph: A symbol encapsulating certain mathematical Ebb formulae that, when powered by flux, will have some effect on the universe.

Glyph Pillar: A column engraved with many glyphs. Different glyph pillars have different functions; some, such as the ones in the Pit, stop Ebb abilities from functioning, while others serve as markers, beacons or indeed almost anything else.

Gorezone: Event run in Mort City's Downtown, where areas are closed off and used for gladiatorial-type sport.

Greater Carrien: Larger, meaner and far more intelligent Carrien.

Guidance: This is the Killan name for the huge glyph pillar more commonly known as Besinkievkedo.

Halloween Jack: The most famous–and most dangerous–serial killer on Mort.

Internal Affairs: D - NOTICE.

Glossary

Ion-Drive: Ancient propulsion system for interstellar craft used mainly by Shaktars.

Johannas: Largest of the Downtown street gangs in Mort City.

Karma: A sub-company of SLA Industries that produces all Stormers and biogenetic material, and also administers LAD.

Kiestas: One of Mort City's three largest Downtown street gangs.

Killan: The official language of SLA Industries; the native tongue of humans and Frothers.

Kn'nth: The Shaktar Home world.

Krosstown Traffic: One of the three largest street gangs in Mort City.

LAD: Karma's incredible new Life After Death service, providing resurrection for Operatives with sufficient cash.

MAC Knife: A non-powered carbon-fibre and ceramic knife from Multi-Angular Cutters. The MAC is the most popular non-powered combat knife in the World of Progress.

Meny: The largest university city in the World of Progress, Meny is located on the planet Mort.

Manchine: Robots designed to eliminate 'vermin' in the Cannibal Sectors. Malfunctions caused them to turn into roving killers.

Monarch Law Enforcement: Civilian law enforcement agency, lacking any real authority or power.

Mort: The capital planet of the World of Progress; also the name of the largest city on that planet.

Mort City: A vast city some 2000km across, containing SLA Industries' administrative and corporate headquarters.

Mutant Carrien: A mutated Carrien, generally considerably more dangerous than its non-mutated cousins.

Navigator: The pilot of a Foldship or Ion-Drive ship

Necanthrope: The final stage of Ebon evolution. Necanthropes are extremely powerful, and loyal to Preceptor Teeth.

Necropolis: Massive multi-story cemetery.

New Paris: A planet famed for being the fashion centre of the World of Progress.

Nitro Legion: Large military units used by SLA Industries during the Conflict Wars.

Op: Contraction of Operative, generally used by other Operatives or corporates.

Operative: A trouble-shooter for SLA Industries, paid for assignments (BPNs) completed.

Orienta: A city on the planet Mort, well-known for its corruption and for producing more new street drugs than anywhere else.

Personal Interest: Recreational hallucinogenic drug; induces the sensation of sexual intercourse.

Pit, The: The largest bar/night club in the World of Progress.

Polo: The original Wraith Raider home world, Polo occasionally sees temperatures at high as -30 degrees centigrade.

Power Claymore: Large sword with an oscillating carbon-silicon blade. Much favoured by Frothers.

Powersuit: A large suit of armour which is piloted rather than just worn. These suits have hydraulics systems to aid and often enhance movement and lifting.

Preceptor Teeth: The leader of the Ebon races. Preceptor Teeth was the first Necanthrope.

Prop: A gangland mercenary or bodyguard for hire.

Rising Sun, The: Rapidly growing underworld crime syndicate based in Orienta.

Salvation Tower: Huge, ruined building in Cannibal Sector 1. A common haunt of Digger.

SCAF: Acronym for Shiver Copter Airborne Forces, the aerial wing of the Shiver organisation.

Scav: One of the mysterious scavengers that have recently started raiding Downtown for armour, weapons and goods.

SCL: Acronym for Security Clearance Level; used to determine access to information and to provide SLA Industries' employees with a measure of rank.

SD: Acronym for SLA Date, SLA Industries' scheme for numbering years. 0 SD marked the end of the Conflict Wars and

the start of the World of Progress.

Serial Killer: A psychotic with an irresistible compulsion to repeatedly commit murder.

Shahanti, Lord: The Shaktarian high lord, the ruler of the Shaktar race.

Shaktar: Tall, red-scaled aliens from the planet Kn'nth, Shaktars are fierce warriors who follow a rigid code of honour and dedicate themselves to their gods. One of the few alien races to survive the Conflict Wars.

Shiver: Acronym for Street and Home Investigation, Variable Espionage and Reconnaissance; SLA Industries' law enforcement agency.

Skin Trade: A Soft Company that specialises in the abduction and then sale of attractive young civilians.

SLA: Pronouced "Slay". This term is a contraction of SLA Industries.

SLA Industries: Pronounced "Slay Industries", this gigantic company owns and rules most of the known universe, referred to as the World of Progress. SLA Industries is headed by Mr. Slayer.

Slayer, Mr.: The immortal owner and director of SLA Industries.

Slop: Derogatory nickname for an Operative, used by some civilians.

SMART Missile: A self-correcting laser-guided missile. Almost always hits its target.

Soft Company: Subversive company dedicated to the overthrow of SLA Industries and/or other Soft Companies.

Squad: A group of Operatives who work as a team.

Static: The Ebon Home world.

Stigmartyr: D-NOTICE.

Stormer: Biogenetic creature grown in a tank and given life by the Deathwake Device. There are many different types of Stormer.

Suburbia: A residential and industrial district of Mort City, which surrounds Uptown.

Tas-Tuo: 'Brilliance' in the Ebon tongue. The main repository of Ebon Knowledge, the Tas-Tuo is the World of Progress' largest library, and is located on Static.

Third Eye: The largest media group in World of Progress, Third Eye are particularly famed for their one hundred 24-hour news channels.

Thresher: Rival company dedicated to overthrowing SLA Industries. Their main strength lies in their unsurpassed Power-suit technology.

Trang: Orienta's 'official' thieves and drugs syndicate.

Tranquillity Walk: A kilometre square enviro-domed park in the city of Orienta.

Trisdenty: Meny's only sea/spaceport.

Ultrawave Oven: A faster version of the microwave oven.

Unfortunate, The: A group of highly secretive individuals based in Orienta. It is said that the Unfortunate know everything that there is to be known.

Uni: Civilian currency of the World of Progress. Ten unis are equal to one credit. Unis are a paper currency.

Uptown: Mort City's best residential district, surrounding Central.

Vet: Veteran. Normally refers to the survivor of conflicts on a War World.

Vibro Sabre: Medium-sized sword with an oscillating carbon-silicon blade.

Vid: Contraction of Video. Also refers to television and similar audio-visual equipment and broadcasts.

White Earth: D-NOTICE. D-NOTICE.

White, The: The mysterious area which Ebons & Brain Wasters enter in order to undergo the transformation to Necanthropes.

World of Progress: The known universe of planets owned and administered by SLA Industries.

Wraith Raider: Lithe, bipedal feline aliens from an extremely cold native environment. Wraith Raiders are known for their reflexes and speed. One of the few alien races to survive the Conflict Wars.

INDEX

Entries in *italic type* refer to an illustration; those in **bold type** direct the reader to another entry.

4-Square 37
Abhorrent *103*
Academy, The 14
Adams, Genny 132
Administrator, Shiver 62, *71*
Alien Sex Channel 46
Apartment, Civilians' 50, *51*, 88
Apartment, Luxury 53, *53*
Apartment, Operative's 52, *52*
APC 64, 68, 69, 82, 84-85, *84-85*, *127*, 133
Arena *9*, *9*, 14
Arial *8*
Asinbasingedo 37
Atmosphere Dome 111-112
BacBurgers 37
Bagging 72
Baird, Donald 76-80, *77*, *79*, *81*, 93
Band, The 39, *39*
Barnet, Gail 74
Battle Taxi, APC 64, 85, *85*
Bayou 17-18, 135
BB (Ball Bearing) Round 87
Beef Rack, The 37
Bell, Sarah 131
Besinkievkedo 24
Biodegradable Tickets 36
Biogenetics 120-121, 123
Bio-labs 123
Bio-technicians 123, *123*
BLA046M 86
Black Chapter 11, 111-112, *112*
Black Market (Downtown) 19
Black Market (Orienta) 115-119
Blitzer 86
Bloodhorn 20, *21*
Body "Blocker" Armour *70-71*, 86
BPN Hall 12-13
BPNs 103, 106, 124-135
Bradley's 48, *48-49*
Braid of Friendship 44
Brain Wasters *33*, 37, 38, 42-43, *43*, *49*, *98*, 98
Bribery, Shivers and 64, 67
Browbeater (Gauss Rifle) 68, *70*, 87
Buchanan, Captain James 60
Cabal, The 18
Cafe Royal 10, *10*
Cage, The 31-36
Cannibal Fires 23
Cannibal Matriarch 23
Cannibals 20, 22, 126
Cannibal Sector 1 10, 20, 131
Cannibal Sector 2 20
Cannibal Sector 3 20
Cannibal Sector 4 22, 62
Cannibal Sector 5 23, 130
Cannibal Sectors (General) 19-23, 73, 74
Captain (Shiver) 63-66
Caretakers 50
Carnivorous Pig 129
Carrien Clave 10, *10*
Carriens 20, *105*, 106, *107*, *126* , 126, 128
Carriens, Greater 20, *78*, *107*
Carriens, Mutant 20
Cassy 41
Cave, The *32*, *34-35*, 36-37
Celpa, Keston 121
Central 11-13
Central Park 9
Channel 414 54-59
Circle of Justice 44
Civilians *57*, *91*, 100-101, 135, *135*
Clearwater Lake 23
Clearwater Monster 23
Cloak Division 114
Clondle, Mark 125
Conflict Wars 108
Conner, Rufiss 113
Contract Circuit 9, 14, 125
Contract Killers 14, 125, *125*
Control, Shiver 62
Core Team (Orienta) 114, 116
Cormack, Simon 97
Corruption, Shivers and 64
Cradle,
Commander Matthew 8, 60-62, *65*, 73
Cranston Station 64
Crown, Captain Anthony 133
Cullen 40
DAC *71*, 131
DAC Handler, Shiver *71*
Dance Floors 31
Danny 88-94, *89*, *94*
Dante 24
Dark Finders 53, 122
Dark Lament *8*, *9*
DarkNight 127
Deathworld 9
Depression, Shivers and 65
Derga 40
Derga, Jacko 31
Deth 28, *30*
Deth's Door 28, *30*, *32*

Development Stadium 18
Dickison, Sue 74
Digger 10, *10*, 20, 74, 103
Dilgtoe, Sven 128
Dispersal Shield **See Riot Shield**
Dispersal Shivers **See Shiver, Dispersal**
Divisional Assistant (Shiver) 62
Divisional Commander (Shiver) 62-63
Doc Jug's 10, *10*
Domino Dogs 20
Downtown (See also **Upper; Lower**) 16-19, 63, 68, 77-78, 88-94, *90*, *101*, 133, 134
Drop Ship *19*, *82*, 82-83
Drugs, Orienta and 114, 115, 117-118, 121, 123
Drugs, Shivers and 65, 68
Durward Ridge 124
Dwarf Pine Shrub 39
Easterbrook, Harold 57, *59*
Ebons 25, 37, 38, *49*
Edwin Randle, Housing Block 16
Enforcer Shivers **See Shiver, Enforcer**
Eisner, Michael 9
Entropy 132, *132*
Extinguishers, APC 69
Exo (Heavy) Armour *70-71*, 86
Ex-War Criminals 20-22, 130, *130*
Factories 15, 100
Fast Food 15
Fat Chance Stadium 10, *10*, 18, *18*
FEN 603 87
FEN 706 86
Fergison, John 74
Finance Chip Scanner 80, 85
Financiers 13, 14
Fire Escapes 50
Fire Shivers **See Shiver, Fire**
Fire Retardant Armour 69, *71*
Flash Floods 17, 90-91
Flint, Stephanie 95
Flux 42
Fold Ship 83
Fold Point, Mort 9
Forensic Support 68
Fort Chimera 121-122, *122*
Freeman, Fiona 126
Friday Evenings 42
Frothers 40, *40*, *49*, 97, 129, *129*

GA 9442 87
GA 9443 87
Gangs, Downtown 16, 18, 102, 103, 133, *133*, 134, *134*
Gates, Cannibal Sector One 10, *10*
Gauss Elevators 30
Gauss Rifle **See Browbeater**
Gauss Train *105*, 106, 126
Giro, The 113
Glendle, Sheila 95
Gluttons 37
Glyph Pillars 24, 31
Glyphs 46
Gordon, Rebecca 64
Grant, Tony 95
Grey Glove, The 118
Gygidion 41

Halloween Jack *79*, *81*
Halloween Jack Fan Club 75
Hallson 124
Hamilton, J 132
Hammer Class, APC 64, 84, *84*
Hayes, Malcolm 54-59
Heartland 10, *10*
Heli-Bike **See SCAF**
Heretics *32*, 42-43, *43*
Homeless 92
Home Security 52-53
Home Worlds 43
Honour, Code of 43
Humans **See category,ie Operatives, Civilians, etc.**
Hypron 13

Industrial Levels 100
Ingles, Allen 126, 127
Interaction, Shiver-Op Guidelines 75
Ion-Drive 83

Jacko 95
Jackson, Mrs. 126
Jenks, Samantha 58
Jesters, The 133, *133*
Johannas 10, 62
Joint, The 47
Jones, Chuck 133
Jungles 10

Karma 8, *9*, 120-121
Kenneth 26
Kimberly, Mary 74
Kn'nth 25, 39
Krosstown Traffic 10, 56
K'thrr 130, *130*

Lady Muck 54-59
Lady of the Right, The 18
Laurie's Cafe Bar 26
Leith Avenue 124
Liddel, Margaret 76-80, *79*
Lieutenant (Shiver) 63

Index

Lower Downtown 17, 100-106, *102*, 131
Low Wave 100
Loyden, Emma 130, 131
Lumo 40
Manchine 20
Markham, Andrew 51
Matheson, Sean 131
Mass, The 46-47
McCulloch, Andy 95
McGee, Spikes 95
McGiver 40
Meagre Tower 112
Medical Kit, Boopa 87
Melt 113
Meny *8*, 108-113, *109*, 125
Meny, Night-life in 113
Mini-Browbeater 87
Mist, The 117
Monarch Security 72, 95-97, *96*
Morgan, Snake 98
Mort *8*
Mort City *8*
Mort Defence Officers (MDOs) 72-73
Morrigan 40
Morrison, Sherman 98
Motorcycle Racing 46
Mutants, Downtown 101-102, 105, 131, *131*
Mutants, Sector *22*, 23
Myers, Gwen 14
Myrdhrs 32, 43-44
Mystique 133
Navigators 9
Necanthropes 44-46, *45*, 78
Necropolis 9
Newheart Square 134
Newman, Rachel 135
New Paris 25
Newtown 62
Nightshade 125, *125*
Nitro Legion (2nd) 72
Operatives *12-13*, *29*, *30*, *49*, 94-95, 97-98, *99*, *107*, *119*
Operatives, Shivers and Orienta 75
Overseers (Orienta) *9*, 114-123, *116*
Pacifier Baton 114
Paradise 69, *70-71*, 87
Paramedic, Shiver 17
Personal Interest *71*
Pit Layout 47
Pit Security Check 30
Pit Stop, The 28, *29*
Pit, The 46
Pollution 13, 28-49
Polo 108
Power Reaper 24
Power Shafts 86
PP644 106
PP8 86
Props 86
Racers 105, 133
Rage 16
Rain 98, *98*
Rat-Hole, The 88
Ratman, The 133
Rats 128, *128*
Red Crowley's 90-92, *91*
Reeves, Lord 38, *38*
Rent 134
Respite, The 52
Riot Shield 47
Rising Sun 69, *70*, 86
Road Kill 115, *115*
Royal, The 106
Salaries, Shiver 39
Sally 67
Salmo, Jessica 134
Salvation Tower 135
Sam's Garage 10, *10*, 19, 20, 73
SCAF 135
Scavs 19, 56, 64, 72-74, 82-83, *83*, 86, 133
Science Friction 19, 104, *104*
Sector Commander (Shiver) 8
Sector House (Shiver) 63
Sergeant (Shiver) 63
Serial Killers 63
Sewers 92, 126, *126*, 128, *128*, 132, *132*
Shadows, The 16, 19, 128
Shahanti, Lord 124
Shaktarian Music 103
Shaktars 44
Shifting Bazaar *12*, 25, 38, *38*, 39, 43-44, *75*, 103, 130, *130*
Shiver Administrators 116-119
Shiver APC 62, *71*
Shiver Captain **See APC**
Shiver Commander 63
Shiver Control **See Cradle, Commander Matthew**
Shiver Copter 62
Airborne Forces **See SCAF**
Shiver, DAC Handler *71*
Shiver, Dispersal 69, *70*, 73, 74
Shiver Divisional Assistants 62
Shiver Divisional Commanders 62-63

Shiver Duties 68-73
Shiver, Enforcer *70*, 72, 73
Shiver Equipment 68-73, 85-87
Shiver, Fire 69
Shiver History 72
Shiver HQ 8, *9*, 60-62
Shiver Investigators *54*
Shiver Lieutenant 63
Shiver Paramedic *71*
Shivers 8, *55*, 60-87, *61*, *70-71*, *75*, *77*, 92-93, *124*
Shiver Salaries 67
Shivers, Bribery and 64, 67
Shivers, Corruption and 64, 93, 117
Shivers, Depression and 64
Shivers, Drugs and 64, 68
Shiver Sector Commander 63
Shiver Sector House 63
Shiver Sergeant 63-66, 68-69
Shivers, interaction with Ops 75
Shiver, Sleeper 62-63, 68-69, 73, 74
Shiver Squad 63, 68
Shiver, Standard 68, *70*
Shiver Station 63, 68
Shiver Structure 63, *63*
Shivers, Students and 113
Simmons, Jane 64
Sink Hole, The *32*, *40*, 40
Sinokenon *32*, 44-46
Sky, Blue 14
SLA Headquarters 8, 11
Slater, Jane *76-80*, *77*
Slayer, Mr. 11, 114
Slayer's Crib 12-13
Slayer's Office 11
Slayer's Umbrella 111
Sleeper Shivers **See Shiver, Sleeper**
Slosh 31, 40
Smith, Maxine 26, *27*
Smog 91-92, 100-101
Spaceport, Mort 9, *9*, 24, *25*, 127
Squad (Shiver) 63
Standard Shivers **See Shiver, Standard**
Stasis One 31, *32*
Static 25, 112
Station (Shiver) 63, 68
Stigmartyr 112, 122
Stingray 82-83
Stormers *29*, 38, *38*, *49*
Strand, Dr. Ernest 8
Street Patrol 68
Strip, The 10
Student Grant 111
Student Hours 111
Student Operatives *110*, 110-113, *111*
Suburbia 15-16, 128
Talent Night 36
Tank, The 110
Tas-Tuo 112
Taxis 56
Third Eye Cameraman *56*
Third Eye News 54-59
Thresher 139
Tigers, The 124
Tornes 124
Track, The 46
Traffic Control 68
Trang 115, 118
Tranquillity Walk 114
Transport Department 28
Treachery *32*, 46
Trisdenty 110
Trof, The *32*, 37-39
Tsung-Li 118
Turnbull, Jackie 130
Ultrasound Tags 20
Unfortunate, The 118-120
Upper Downtown 17, 54-59, 92, *101*, 124
Uptown 13-15, *15*
Vets 22
Vid Companies 22
Vid Screens 51-52, 88
Virtual *32*, 41-42, *41*
Virtuality Booth 41
Visto, Kelly 132
Vitriol 52
Void 24
Walker, Janine 54-59
Walker Station 64
Wall, Cannibal Sectors 102
Wall, Central Perimeter 12
Wall, Suburbia Perimeter 16
Warlords, The 134
Warren, The 133
War Sector 20-22
War World 24
Well, The 30, *32*
Wentmore Sector 134
Wildlife, Meny *109*
Wilkins Shopping Mall 16
Wilkins Walkway 16
Williams, Mr. 129
Wilson, Jenny *97*
White Earth 10, 115
White, Melody 129, *129*
Winter Bar, The 38
Wisper 98, *99*
Wraith Raiders 24, 38, *41*, *49*, 98, *99*, *120*

Wizards OF THE COAST

US OFFICE
P.O. BOX 707
RENTON
WA 98057-0707, USA
CUSTOMER SERVICE:
(206) 624 0933
custserv@wizards.com

BELGIUM OFFICE
P.O. BOX 16
B-2140 BORGERHOUT 2
BELGIUM
CUSTOMER SERVICE:
+32 / 3 / 272 05 11
custserv@wizards.be

UK OFFICE
P.O. BOX 1562
GLASGOW, G2 8BW
SCOTLAND
CUSTOMER SERVICE (UK):
0345 125599
(REPUBLIC OF IRELAND):
(+44) 141 2265205
nightfall@wizards.com

To join SLA-L, the interactive SLA Industries discussion on the internet, send email to listserv@oracle.wizards.com with the message subscribe sla-l <yourname>

Special Thanks

Chaz "El Presidente!" Elliott for far, far too many reasons to list, Peter & Cathleen Adkison (thanks for the support and dedication), Karen "Frother Woman™" Newis for getting it together, Anne, Jared and Dave–the Nightfall partners, Wade Racine for all the help, John Jordan, everyone at the US Office (we love you guys), Mjärk Ellis Walker, Kyle and his baby waistcoat, Chris Rush, Brian "Chippy" Dugan, Jay Hays, Mr. Slayer and everyone at WotC UK.

General Thanks

Fiona Robertson for finding Freddy's heart (I Love You), Jon Wilkie and the US Office SLA fanatics, The Kunt Klub (You're not Kunts!), RKF [not SPB] - thanks for the shirt!, Irn Bru, Irn Bru XS, Diet Coke, Guinness, Addlestone's Cider and Red Bull for making all this possible, Barbara McCabe for realising she's a goth and being cute, Bryany & Morrigan, Milk & Cheese and Hobbes (the R&D Cats), Mummy Mags for making things easier, Ken Cheung for being wonderful, Everyone at GenCon 95–we had a great time, Adobe, Quark and Altsys, Tesco Metro (Glasgow), Carol May for maintaining the deceit, Pauline Love for not killing Morton, everyone on SLA-L@oracle.wizards.com, all the artists who had the patience to wait for this one, Lee Fields and his wonderful toys, Frank Miller for giving us Marv, John Robertson and his amazing cocktails, Dan "Where are you, man?" Travis, Tony DiTerlizzi (Never Abandon Imagination), everyone at Apex Games (you're a brave man, Matt!), Magic: The Gathering (you know why), Em Goodwin, Wednesday and the Coterie of Thugs, AShtoN the Unsubtle, Ilamat and Tzimon Yliaster (for being there when it was vital), and all you wonderful people out there...

Legal Stuff

The Mort Sourcebook is a supplement to SLA Industries, the Nightfall Design Team's horror role-playing game. This game is recommended for mature gamers only. The Nightfall Design Team and Wizards of the Coast, Inc. cannot be held responsible for anyone who plays this game in a dangerous manner and causes harm to themselves or others: it's only a game. The views portrayed in this game do not necessarily correspond to the views of the Nightfall Design Team or Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

The stories, characters, places and incidents in this publication are all entirely ficticious. All concepts and characters are copyright 1995, Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All images are copyright original artist, with the exception of those rendered by Dave Allsop and Stuart P. Beel (apart from image on p.135, which is copyright Stuart P. Beel) which are copyright 1995, Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Any unauthorised use of copyrighted material is illegal. Support your local Games Shop.

Printed In Hong Kong By Euro Graphic-Asia

MORT

SOURCEBOOK

SLA INDUSTRIES

Mort, a city that hides a million sins, holding secrets and places that should never be known. Mr. Slayer sits in his office in Central, looking out over his city. From clean, residential Uptown to filthy, stinking DownTown and the nightmare Cannibal Sectors, Slayer's throne sits safely central, isolated in a city of extremes.

This guide will tell you where to be seen, where not to go, and what to expect when you get there.

Central

The heart of SLA Industries, dominated by the massive presence of SLA HQ and Mr. Slayer's office.

The Pit

The best club in the World of Progress, a seething mass of Operatives forgetting work pressures in the delirium of all out partying.You can find something to satisfy even the most extreme desires here, provided Deth allows you admission.

Uptown

The safe house where rich and influential urbanites crawl under the protective shadow of Slayer.

Suburbia

A shadowy area, one foothold up from despair - but only one foothold.

Downtown

The Civilian hive where desire, violence and oppression drive the struggle for escape.

Cannibal Sectors

Here is found the true meaning of pestilence, threatening to suffocate the city itself.

Tourists, employees and citizens alike will find this book almost as useful as having their own personal Operative bodyguard. You never know, it may make serving SLA Industries a little easier too!

CUSTOMER SERVICE ENQUIRIES

US OFFICE
P.O. BOX 707
RENTON
WA 98057-0707, USA
CUSTOMER SERVICE:
(206) 624 0933
CUSTSERV@WIZARDS.COM

BELGIUM OFFICE
P.O. BOX 16
B-2140 BORGERHOUT 2
BELGIUM
CUSTOMER SERVICE:
+32 / 3 / 272 05 11
CUSTSERV@WIZARDS.BE

UK OFFICE
P.O. BOX 1562
GLASGOW, G2 8BW
SCOTLAND
CUSTOMER SERVICE (UK):
0345 125599
(REPUBLIC OF IRELAND):
(+44) 141 2265205
NIGHTFALL@WIZARDS.COM

©1995, WIZARDS OF THE COAST.

FOR 2 OR MORE PLAYERS. REQUIRES: SLA INDUSTRIES.
MATURE GAMERS ONLY.

DESIGNED IN SCOTLAND

ISBN 0-9522176-6-X

$22.95

0 952217 176606