KARMA

Mort Edition - 15ū
MARCH 900($16.00•US)

S·L·A
INDUSTRIES

Life After Death
Operatives from beyond the grave...

Stormer Variants
Expose on new Stormer types

New from Karma
Vevaphon, Stormers, Nuke Tendon, LAD.
Full Review inside

PARENTAL
MATURE MATERIAL
ADVISORY

Wizards of the Coast

NIGHTFALL GAMES

WOC 1201

The gnarled and twisted trees were a far cry from the streets of her home. Even now the voice of her memory was like a distant whisper. She was motionless in the cold breeze. Her body had fallen into a state of trance. A statue of fear and frost.

The figure moved in close behind her, his warm breath brushed the back of her bare scalp, scattering her mind to the four winds as she fell amongst the folds of his ragged robes. The moon and stars had come to watch her die, and in this moment, beneath a foreign night sky, she knew how this love would end.

Tired and confused the girl rested her head against the figure's chest, as the blood droplets clung to her cheek like pleas of lonely rain. In the back of her mind she could hear 'Strawberry Fields', and a wave of such joy swept over her, a memory as graceful as her dying breath.

Why? She breathed.

'Yours is not to reason why, yours is but to do and...'

...die, She whispered.

The girl began to cry. He turned round and opened his arms to her. She laid her head within their grasp.

'You poor girl... Have you forgotten our... deal? The nights as I lived, within you. Have you forgotten me?'

The girl gripped him tighter, trying to catch his falling heart. He lowered his head to her ear, caressing it with his words and his lips.

'Remember me. I'd do... anything for you, dear... anything for you, dear, anything...'

The girl closed her eyes and wrapped herself around him.

Anything for you

The girl's words were final as the figure drew the dagger from his robes.

'Chain yourself... to me'

He cried, and drove the blade into the back of her neck.

Strawberry fields... forever.

KARMA

SLA Industries created by
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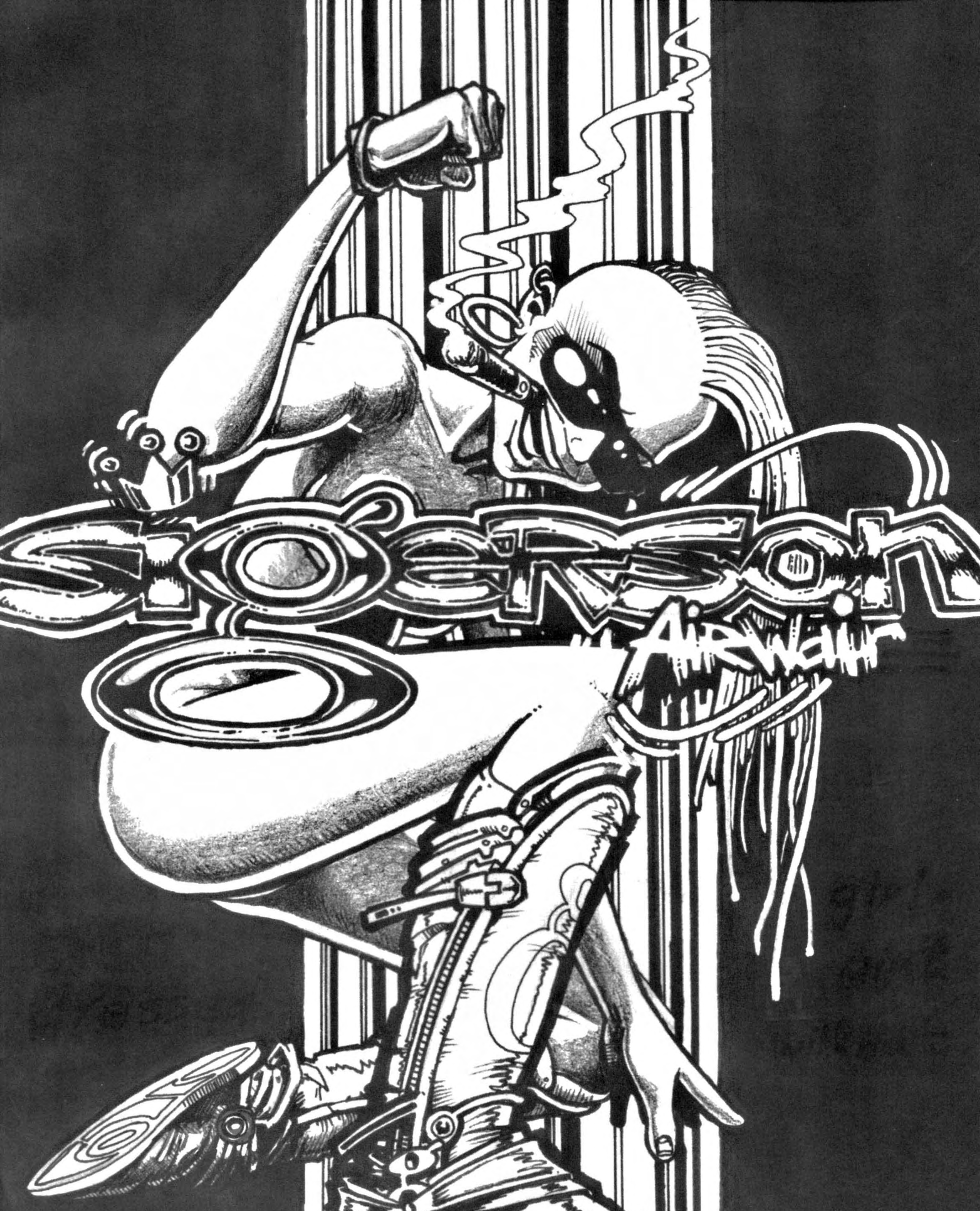
NIGHTFALL
GAMES


A girl just ain't
dressed without it!

KARMA source

900 MARCH

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Photograph by Phil Bond for DIG Denims.

KARMA

CONTRIBUTORS

Dave Allsop is destined to be hanged by his neck until dead this year for deciding to start up Nightfall Games but unlike the other businessey type people at Nightfall, Dave runs away when the phone rings 'cause 'suits' are always ringing–up shouting "Dave, where's all that money we lent you?" Unfortunately, Dave dropped most of it in the bath which makes him sad. However, he gets happy when scribblin' and drawin' and if you phone up to talk about cool stuff he'll send you a clean pair of underpants and a strawberry bun.





Jared Earle has worked in several jobs before settling–down in the games industry. After a brief fling as a Mail–Order Troll for Games workshop and a second for Fantasy Forge, he realised money could be made from his hobby. After being conned by Dave Allsop and Anne Boylan –with help from Chaz Elliott and a couple of pints of Guiness for breakfast at the Peartree on the way back from the dole office– that starting a real–live games company was a good idea, now he is constantly harrangued into waking up before mid–day (Ouch!). He can be found by day slumped over the Atari Falcon or still in bed.

At night, who knows where he roams...

Morton Smith has been with Nightfall Games since the initial stages of development, way back in '91, Roped in by Dave 'once again'. Although having no writing talent whatsoever, Morton has managed to lie his way through the last three years, scribbling his dyslexic drivel in the hope that no–one would notice. Filling his days with dreams of guns, violence and frogs, he fills his spare time with guns, violence and frogs...

Not knowing the meaning of plagiarism, Morton still has a lot to learn in the writing world but, given time and an occasional punch to the head, he will.





Mid '92, through associating with the wrong people and being in the wrong place at the wrong time, Stuart Beel eventually came into contact with a small crowd of then–bums who called themselves Nightfall Games. A year later, they rescued him from his extreemly boring job as a printer by saying "Come and work for us and make lots of money and be dead famous and stuff," followed by several moose noises emitted from Jared. Now, during the day, He works full–time for Nightfall and still can't find the key to the padlock and chain. At night he sleeps one floor up from Hell and is guarded by his tye–dye Triceratops called Trumpet.

The fame and fortune continue to evade him...

Other contributors

Chippy, James "Freddy" Lennon, Cameron Kerr, Stephen Goldie, Lee "Guns, Guns, Guns" Fields, Chaz Elliott, Red, Spencer, Dan Travis,

Thanks to

Chaz Elliott (how much can we say thanks...), Peter Adkinson, Cathleen Adkinson, Lisa Stevens, Victor Wertz, Jay "Mind the Gap" "Tofu Gigolo" Hays, Rev. Jesper Myrfors, Dave Howell, Steve Bishop, Beverly Marshall Sailing, Jeff Harris, Kyle Gizmo, Richard Garfield, Wade, Jana, all the rest at Wizards of the Coast, Wayne, Amber et al in Seattle, Mr Slayer, John "Mad Scientist" and Kate "The Good Doctor" Braithwaite, Brent Walker, Ian Peebles, Stuart and Adele, Dave Renton and Tina at RPI, Pete Brown for the review, Jan Forrest, Angus and Ray, Malcolm and Carol, Brian and Mr Grant the Landlords, All at Abbey Mill, Scott Jenkins and everyone at Euro GenCon (tm) 1993 and all we previously mentioned in SLA. Thanks to all the wonderful people who wrote to us after SLA (you know who you are...), Sam for the sandwiches, Ian for the stick, Stig for the party, Samurai Shodown (Gen–an, Hanzo, Haohmaru, Ukyo and Charlotte), Arby's, Atari, C & P Rossiter, System Solutions, The CY Services, Jonathan Finn, Nice n' Sleazy, Curlers, Not Seattle, The Vogue in Seattle, Denny's, AC's Cafe, Arkanoid 2, Hurloon Minotaur and all at Magic: The Gathering, Calvin and Hobbes, Andrew Richard Beel (6–1–94), The late FZ, Unca Bob, All our Mums, Dads and families, the No Mates Fan Club (coming soon...), NetHack, Trout, Irn Bru, Coke, The Thickets, Bennies and Spangles Institution, Dead Cat Motorbike, Stun Muffs, Wallace and Grommet (Don't forget the crackers...), Dog Toast, Groucho, Chico and Harpo, Brannigan Crisps (for the boxes), Ill–Logic, Mecha Defence Force, Jack Shit, Fanny Adams, Dog Meat (Yay!), Nightmare before Christmas, Belly button fluf, Kebabs, Pastry, Irving the dinosaur, Fat Bob Jumpers, Pooty, Bill and Opus, Ren and Stimpy, Vic and Bob, Dr. Seuss and a partridge in a pear tree.

Nightfall Games are

Dave Allsop, Anne Boylan, Jared Earle, Morton T. Smith, Stuart P. Beel, David "Jimbo" Boylan.

Set in 9.5 point Garamond, Halford's Car Paint and Potato Cut Printing using a 4Mb Falcon030, 2 STEs, Epson GT4000, 540Mb MiniS, 21Mb Floptical and loads of Dysan Floppies.

Disclaimer

Karma is a supplement to SLA Industries, Nightfall Games' horror role–playing game. This game is not recommended for young people. Nightfall Games cannot be held respinsible 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 Nightfall Games.

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HELL

TO ETERNITY

KARMA SHARPS

FROM

S·L·A

INDUSTRIES



EVERY TIME

Third Eye report by Sheven Fost

On the 30th December, 899 SD., a much loved idol of our time died barely a metre from The Pit at the height of her career. We are, of course, speaking of the late belle of fashion, Delia the Destroyer.

Not one hour since the tragic assassination, the World of Progress is in mourning and SLA is in uproar. Unlike the majority of Contract Killers working on the circuit, Delia was loved by the media, operatives and the public alike, all over the World of Progress. But now, 50 minutes after her murder, this theory is thrown to the wind along with her soul.

More upsetting than her actual death was the method of assassination and the nature of her murderer–a sixteen year old civilian boy known only as Icon. A heroine of Delia's stature deserved a greater demise than this, it is blasphemy for a Contract Killer to die out of combat, or at the hands of a lesser. Both of these have been Delia's fate. Extermination Warrants are already being furiously filled out by a variety of Contract Killers (Deity, Hael Maeri, Harvey Wallbanger, Ultra–Violet –the list goes on...) to deliver the head of Icon, for free, despite the 400₤ warrant on the killer.

The Icon mystery

Icon is presently being hunted by the cream of SLA Industries' combat operatives, most willingly. Many are puzzled by the questions that invariably arise with such a mysterious killing. Who is Icon? Why did he kill Delia? How did he escape without trace? We spoke to Dr Arthur Mellie, Head of the Department of Psychology and Psychoses, to ask for his educated opinion on the matter.

"Icon is obviously an obsessive, he is prepared to take risks that only obsessive characters would take. Upon reaching Mort Central, he chose Delia and Delia alone–judging from the forensic reports and Internal data, he is neither a genocidal killer nor a rival operative. What is likely is that Icon was a fan of Delia's for the course of her career, he was possibly deeply infatuated with her even though they probably never met. In these harsh times, Ms. Fost, an adolescent, lonely boy has a great deal of difficulty growing up in the slums of Downtown, sometimes the only solace for a tortured soul is celebrity worship. For whatever reason, perhaps an abused background or one of mental instability, this particular fan snapped and took the life of his goddess. The Contract Killer, slain by the hand that fed her. Icon, if you are watching, try to reach the Bethlehem Asylum, I will help you. Do not be fooled by the press– you are not evil, merely misguided. Delia has forgiven you, Icon, come and talk to me, I am waiting to help you."



Opinion

Icon–obsessive killer or misguided child? The public's hatred spreads, as does it's sympathy. As SLA Shivers, Cloak Division and embittered Contract Killers track him, weighty floods of letters from members of our public have washed up on the doorstep of SLA Industries pleading for Icon's life to be spared.. or taken.

"If we let Icon die, we are worse than he is. There is something twisted inside of his mind, or perhaps lurking in his past that makes him do things he shouldn't. How can we stop any killer, without understanding why he kills? Once we understand the more unstable mind, maybe we can prevent the terrible losses which occur everyday, of which Delia's was but one. I will miss her, and if Icon dies I will try to miss him too."

Anonymous Civilian

One question lies unanswered by all who are aware of the circumstances. How did Icon get through the SLA Perimeters, kill Delia on a busy street with only one witness and then escape back through the Perimeters undetected?

"I was just visiting the Uptown districts and Mort Central during my vacation, y'know, getting a few snapshots for the wife and kids back home when it happened. I was just about to take one of The Pit when I saw Delia the Destroyer leave

WE SAY GOODBYE...



"Its a bad way to go for a Contract Killer. She never even signed out with her Blitzer in her hand. We've all got to go sometime though, I suppose. Icon should know the rules, its kill or be killed. He's had his kill, now he gets killed, that's just the way it is."

Johnny AutoMatic, SCL 3B Contract Killer on R&R from Dante.

through the rotating doors at the front. I'm... oh, I mean, I was a big fan of Delia and was about to cross the street to get her autograph, y'know, I thought it would have been okay. She likes her fans.

"Then this kid walks right up to her, I thought he wanted her autograph too, 'cause she smiled, nodded and took out a pile of photo–prints. Icon pulled out his gun –a CAF Steel Death– and shot her in the head. It was point blank and she went straight down, her press photos were just falling slowly to the ground as Icon turned and walked away. It was a sin. I mean she wasn't even wearing her helmet, She musta been killed instantly. I sort of snapped back into reality and quickly took a snapshot, probably more by reflex than thought. He stopped as I raised the camera, I wasn't close enough to be heard, I don't know how he knew, he just turned and smiled. He was loving it, the evil sonovabitch."

Chris Evans, Factory Employee SCL 11

History

Delia started out as a SLA operative at the humble age of eighteen, trained in Investigation and started working in an operative team called 'The Black Twos' (remember them?). While operating with The Black Twos, she accomplished six Black ops and rid Mort of such dark names as The Basisto (Serial Killer, 86 kills), Overtones (Soft Company), Tosohmaki of The Great White (Thresher Contract Killer) and a massive collection of other rivals, too ghastly to mention. When Delia reached SCL 7D, it was time to leave The Black Twos and join the Circuit as Delia The Destroyer. She was welcomed with open arms, instantly receiving sponsorship with DIG™ Denims –she was offered a franchise deal with Beat but it was not to be. Alongside a life on the edge, fighting against SLA opposed forces, Delia became a household name in New Paris as a catwalk model for Antoine Cholo.

The key to Delia's success was her eye for style –she was always in fashion, regardless of the occasion. Delia was in vogue at press speeches, interviews, BPNs and GoreZones alike. Delia put on no act for her public, there were no gimmicks, no tacky 'one–liners', her abilities and her looks were all she had. At SCL 5, she had a global tour of Mort's televised Contract Circuit and there was talk of a lifetime sponsorship with Karma. Although Delia was one of the hottest contract Killers to rise on Mort, she still loved her fans– they'd taken her to the top through public recognition and appreciation. She always had time for her audience and their wishes.

Today she fulfilled one final wish for an obsessive fan and gave her life for her audience, the fate of all Contract Killers.

Now, Delia the Destroyer lives on in our hearts and on the silver screen of Third Eye's archives.

Delia, we will miss you, the sweetest roses in the garden of fame

fade young...

"I was there when they took her away. You know that feeling you sometimes get on the back of your neck when something beautiful or tragic happens, that tingling sensation? I could feel it when I saw her face, god, I was in tears when I looked down at that face. In death she was perhaps even more beautiful, celestial, angelic. The peaceful look on her face, like she was in the arms of a lover. I saw Geist there, too– he said that perhaps Delia was killed in her prime for a reason. Maybe so that she would always be unique and pure. Icon made a real sacrifice for his love of Delia... and for that I have to kill him."

Ultra–Violet, SCL 6C Contract Killer



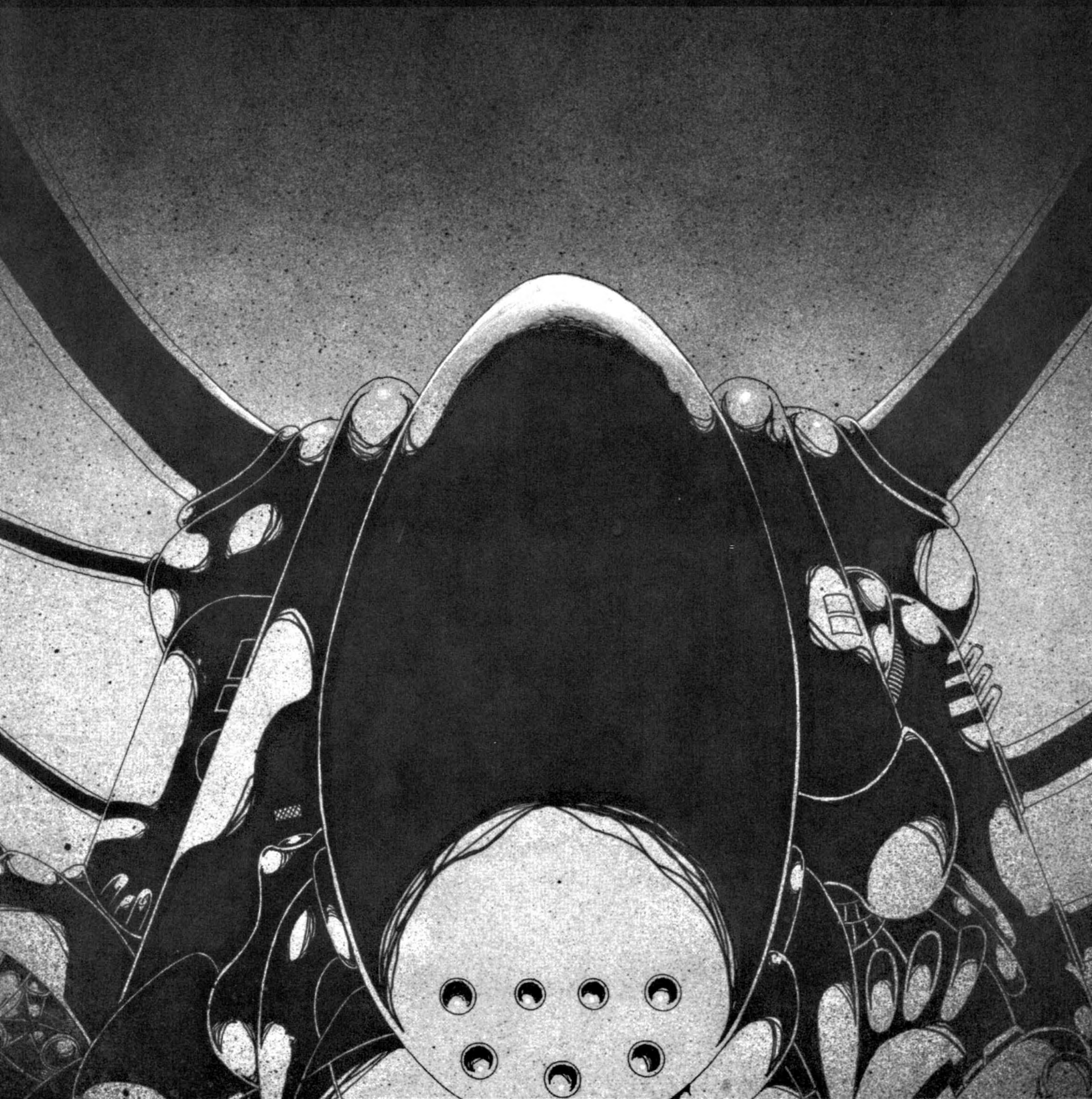


DELIA THE DESTROYER

876 – 899

doppelganger

COMING SOON...



Operative Words

If you have any problems, any questions to ask that nobody else will bother with or messages to other people you are unable to contact, write to 'Dear Jade', P.O. Box 33090, 275 Williams Walk, Mort Central.

Dear Jade

I am a 24 year old Kick Murder Ebon, SCL 8A. I know for a fact that the recent articles on Nuke Tendon Implants have stated repeatedly that Ebons and Brain Wasters are unable to have implants but I have never come across a credible reason besides the age old conflict between Dark Lament and Karma. I am of a more modern philosophy. I support 'Symbiote', Phantom and Geist, the cute one, enthusiastically. I also wish to enter the contract Circuit but since I do not take drugs, I might have problems with my physique – I am fast but not so strong and need to improve on this without the use of steroids. I am scared of becoming a Necanthrope too soon so is there any possible way that I could have implants, even temporarily, and if not, why not? I would appreciate it if you would not disclose my name in this article as my superiors would frown upon my intentions.

Anon.

Besides the reasons you mentioned, there is a very good scientific reason why Ebons and Brain Wasters are not allowed to have implants fitted. Nuke Tendon Implants are constructed in such a way that they are completely integrated into the body. This causes a breakdown of the original cell–structure of the host. In those not gifted with the power of the Ebb, it causes no problems but Ebons, on the other hand, have a very strong link with the Ebb and the powers that it creates. If an Ebon does undergo surgery to obtain implants then they will find that the new tissue will eat away at their powers as their own cell structure becomes mingled with that of the artificial tissue. My advise to you is to concentrate on your Ebon abilities. Rather than go for the brawn, work on the brain. By all means, enter the Contract Circuit but give yourself time to develop your skills, powers and abilities and I'm sure you will be successful.

Dear Jade

Is it possible to get counselling for Ytting, an SCL 8B Wraith Raider. She is suffering from severe anorexia and her work as a SLA operative is suffering severely. She is already tormented by malnutrition causing her dizzy spells, weakness and disorientation yet, she refuses to eat anything. Yesterday, I caught her licking the television screen during a yogurt commercial. She needs help but refuses to help herself. What shall I do as she is a fellow squad member and I cannot let her go on like this.

Cameron Kerr, SCL 8A,
Human Operative

Please make an appointment for your friend with a good counsellor. I suggest Dr. R. Pearson who you can call on 37–145–093–3957 24 hours a day. You should accompany your friend and give them as much support as possible. Do not give up. It is not just for our benefit that Ytting gets well but for yours as well as your squad shall suffer if she gets any worse. If you have any more problems, please call Dr. Jackie Welling, from the department of Psychology and Psychosis, on 37–101–008–3789, she should be able to help your friend further.

Dear Jade

What type of boots do the Shivers wear? My friend says that must be really tough, non–slip acrylic base but I don't believe him. Incidentally, are they called Shivers because they are out in the cold, wet rain all the time?

Vic, SCL 10B, Human Operative

The boots are Perrani Kickers™ and the name 'Shiver' comes from the term 'Street & Home Investigation Variable Espionage & Reconnaissance'.

Dear Jade

I am a Frother, SCL 9B, and my name is Savage Jim. I am wildly besotted by an Ebon called 'Rosebud'. Unfortunately, she has never shown much interest and hardly talks to me. Just recently, she went up a full five Security Levels, god knows how, but I don't think I will ever get to speak to her now as her friend has informed me that until I am SCL 4B, I will not get to speak to her. I have heard a rumour that she is dating Mr. Slayer but I always thought that Mr. Slayer was married and his wife left him (through the thirty seventh floor). Can this possibly be true and how can I win the heart of Rosebud? Is it possible to get a Security Clearance raise of five levels for Sewer Maintenance BPNs alone? Please help.

Savage Jim

The first thing that I would like to say is that Mr. Slayer's private life is none of your business and if I were you, I would watch that he does not send for Internal Affairs for the slanderous comments made against him. To my knowledge, the Ebon to which you refer has never 'been out' with Mr. Slayer. If you were to have a 100% success rate with a new Blue BPN every day (except weekends), it would take 1 year and 1 week to achieve five full Security Levels. However, I would seriously suggest that you do not stick to sewer maintenance as you may get demoted to Shivers if you seem to enjoy the job. Ms. Rosebud was heard to comment that even if you did reach that security level in allocated time, she does not care for your attention and never has. She does not enjoy the company of Frothers and is currently dating another Ebon. I suggest that you find a kindred spirit within your own clan and forget about her quickly.

Dear Jade

I am an SCL 10A Human. Just a plain old boring human being. I am very alone and in need of some female companionship. I have had one or two girlfriends but they left me because I was apparently too possessive. Now, anybody I meet and get to know would prefer to be 'just friends'. This is okay but they don't seem to understand that I have changed. Do you think that the DNA Hallmark I inherited from my father, the words 'disease carrier' which was, incidentally, his nickname that was put on his forehead one very drunken weekend, has got anything to do with my lack of success with girls?

Yours desperately

Tom Beagle (The Tattooed Man)

I am sympathetic of your position. The first thing that you should do is to go and see Nuke Tendon with regard to getting a skin graft over the tattoo. This may be costly but it would cover it up as you cannot get DNA tattoos removed. The second thing you should do is to try and join clubs where you will meet new friends other than those you do know. This way, they will be unaware of any previous bad relationships you may have had. Try to be reasonable about the situation. Would you go out with a female who had 'I am terrible in bed' tattooed on her head? I don't think so but as you know, it is not necessarily a true statement, as with yourself. Some people will understand, you will just have to try and find them. Be patient.

Dear Karma,

I am a Storma kold Kan. Me and my frends wood like to no who names us wen we are in our tanks. My Storma frends and me are not likin our names. My frends are Tin, Paynt, Ash, Dowt, Sig and Fag. Others ops laf at Fag and col him a girl. He is not a girl he is a Storma like me. Kood you ask who names us to meet us in the pit next Friday so we kan by him a drink and hav a tok.

Fanks

Kan

(Editors Note: This is the first letter that we have ever received from a Stormer. We decided not to remove Kan's wonderful spelling mistakes as this would have unfortunately ruined the innocence of his sorry plea.)

Thank you for your lovely letter, Kan. I understand that you are extremely bothered that no one cared to put much thought into what you are named, this much is obvious. We asked the bio–engineers at Karma if they knew who was responsible for this thoughtlessness. Unfortunately, we could not pin down the individuals. I suggest that you go to your nearest Department of Information for details on how you can change your name.

Necro, Mortis & Nauseam Solicitors
to Mr Hallowe'en Jack, (No fixed abode)
Letter transmitted on Channel 17,

January 15th 900 SD.

Dear Mr. Jack

I am writing on behalf of my client, Mr. Largo the Magnificent. I trust that this will reach you in good health. I understand that my client has suffered a severe career set-back which will affect him most gravely. Primarily, I would like to offer my sincerest congratulations to Mr. Hallowe'en Jack on his victorious conquest upon the field of battle. My client has not undergone the misfortune of defeat in combat to this day. Thus, he would like to take this opportunity to thank you wholeheartedly for this new and invigorating experience, especially given from such an esteemed professional as yourself, who has taken the trouble to find the time in your extremely busy schedule. For this I thank you. My client is at present adjusting to his new rendered condition.

He is currently in a state of limbo and will be resuming normal working day as soon as possible. We hope this is as swift as possible and I'm sure you wish him a quick recovery. Until such time as he has acquired the basic corporeal status he will not be making any public appearances, which is why I am writing to you on his behalf. However, after a period of rest Mr. Largo the Undead would like to throw down the gauntlet again. Defeat is a refreshing change but cannot be savoured like the sweet smell of success.

I look forward to your reply

J.T. Ellingsworth III, Solicitor

Mr Hallowe'en Jack has never been available for comment on such matters as these. If anyone does here him comment, please let us know.

opinion

views on the world of progress

"If one is to believe that the known universe, the World of Progress, is the limit of a being's existence, then it is fair and true to say that the Ebon race has gone beyond the limits of normal existence. Theway in which one race perceives the universeis completely different to that of another. Only those granted with the blessing of the Ebb can really see, orshould I say feel, what the World of Progress is really like. Being almost a part of it, the Navigators know best. They come closer than anyone to actually touching the fibre of space. Ask a Navigator `How's the universe doing?' They're more than likely tell you `Its ill' or `It's not very well today'. I've even heard one say that that the World of Progress had a bad head cold.It may sound strange but you can't help but think that for them to talk so personally about the subject, they have to know something. I think the World of Progress is a living, breathing creature that we should be very careful with. After all, we have only one."

Blake, SCL 6A Ebon, age 28.

FEATURE INTERVIEW

This week we managed to get a rare interview with the highly esteemed, and somewhat reticent, Reton -Mort's favourite sniper and Wraith Raider musician. We caught her in the World's End cafe drinking her favourite refreshment, fresh orange juice, and asked her about her past and present work.

Name: Reton Quarthar
Birthday: 5th day of the second moon (12.5.888 SD)
Age: 12
Where do you come from? `Polo'
What squads have you worked in so far? `G.B.H. and Chocolate and Razorblades'
What squad are you with now? `Chocolate and Razorbades'
Don't you find it quite disconcerting to be working with an all Ebon group? `Yes, I do'
What is your favourite type of BPN? `Extermination'
Any particular reason? `Yes -I enjoy big game hunting'
What is your favourite piece or combination of hardware? `The FEN 3032 hooked up to the Scout Helmet'
What qualities help you to be as successful as you are? I mean the media have been following you quite closely recently. `I don't like the media much because in the wake of my sponsorship with FEN they have been dogging my tracks -and I don't like being followed. My best qualities are probably my keen shot and my stealth abilities'
I believe that you play the violin, is that true? `Yes'.
Who taught you? `An old friend of mine that I met in college. I used to watch him play'
You were working on a project to open up a new bar, weren't you? `Yes'
Could you tell us a bit about it, the clientele, the atmosphere? `Quiet, relaxed. It's an almost businesslike bar with no trouble'
Is that what you enjoy? `Yes'
What advice would you give young Wraith Raiders on your home world who want to come and work for SLA? `Think about it carefully. SLA is a lot harsher in many respects than Polo'
Have you anything else that you would like to say? `Not really'
Thank you.

"I don't care much about what goes on out there. That's just space. Millions a miles between me an' the nearest War World. Nah! I think I'll just stay right here on Mort pluggin' Carriens for 10$ a shot. I die. So what? Read that, LAD, I got 4000$ in that account. When I come back, I's gonna look like a friggin' movie star. No shit. Got ma face all picked an' everythin' so you see I's got it made. Yeah, you wait an' see. I's gonna be goddamn famous. Contract Killer, the works. Make a million, retire and live off the biogenetic fat of the land, no problem."

Karl Asson, age 23, SCL 9A Human, Mort 900 SD. Recorded two days before anunfortunate accident involving our interviewee and a manchine, who is believed to be Digger. His body has not been found.

"Progress, that's a laugh. Ain't no such thing. Just the big boys knocking seven shades of shit out of each other every day. Where does it get them? Dead... and what's worse, the public love it. They can't see past their piggy little noses. All they want to see is the blood and guts of the day in full colour, on a 180cm wide-screen t.v. That's entertainment! Well, I don't think they'd find it interesting if they had the shit end of the stick out there on Dante. Even in Downtown, shitheads day in, day out, tryin' to kill you because its their job or their twisted idea of duty. Bull! Its all bull! Its all spot lights and razorblades, bullets and bandages, production and hairspray. Nobody really cares. Nobody wants the good guys to win anymore because they don't look hard enough. Who cares."

Trent Freeman, SCL 4B Human, age 32,

SLA operative

"You have everything anybody could-want here, thanks to good old Mr. Slayer. The World of Progress. Fuck, yeah! I believe it all. I never had such a good life. Taken off the streets and the drugs -course they gave me new ones, like UV an' Kick Start but they're much better than smack or PCP. Guns. Mad! Man, they give you a gun an' show you how to use it! Implants! That's another thing. I'm faster and stronger than any other asshole round my neighbourhood. Best of all is the bars. The Pit, what an awesome place; great booze an' fantastic women. God, the babes, wall to wall puntang, y'know what I mean! Hey, want to see a picture of my sister, its... "

Kevin McGillan, SCL 10B, age 19, Frother

"There is so much that is still a mystery to us in this universe. Much is still unknown about thousands of star systems, yet the races that populate the Known Universe consider themselves the masters. One day, we may find a new member of the universe that also considers themselves the master - and they could be right. My grandfather always told me that the deadliest enemy can carry the smallest blade.People should listen more to their elders. Wisdom is something that only comes with age. No amount of study can take its place. The World of Progress is a young pretender to the throne of ageless knowledge of the universe."

Lord Shahanti, Shaktar Highlord, ©Third Eye News, 900SD.

"Its a big place."

Susan Brown, age 21, Human civilian, bar manager.

Living Proof of Quality



Phantom Pregnancy

Working for a better future

GREEN BAG SHUFFLE

part one

Jeez, where do I start? Its difficult, y'know, considering it was the worst BPN I'd been on. I was always crap at white anyway and after all, I was working with a mixed team. Severely mixed up.

Alright, I'm a cultured woman, okay? And occasionally I like to visit monuments of character and enlightenment. Y'know, the kind of places where you see life as it is, you sit back and draw in the fruitful essence of our society's sophistication -and besides which I'd run out of clean underwear.

I'm talking about where the whole thing started, at Roachie's launderette. I have slightly mixed feelings for this dear place. I don't know what it is, maybe its the leaky machines that salivate all over the floor like a rabid mutt, the old fat slob slouched in the corner hackin' his lungs up from smokin' too many Coffins, or the advanced culture of cockroaches that inhabit this joint. In spite of it's disease ridden aspects, I love this place. Its just about the only place I can go where I'm not gonna have some sleazy corporate breathin' down the back of my neck or some Carrien beastie chewin' my butt off -I can relax in this joint.

I'd been stretched out in Roachies for about an hour and a half watchin' my grubby lace going around and preparing some ugly 12.7mm cocktails in my Blitzer for the next op.This tends to keep the punters outta my face a little.Anyway, the doors burst open and in dives Elmoe, an insane mixture of vibrant red hair and state-of-the-art Silverback. I'll explain this now -Elmoe is just a mite over the top. He's cute but completely hyperactive. Just watching him is tiring. Elmoe's just turned eighteen, and is still slightly naive, but I like him 'cos he's sweet and totally enthusiastic about everything. Elmoe's trained as a Human Scout, he's good at Martial Arts and, thanks to that Silverback, he's fast as hell.

"Cheronna! Cheronna! I got us a BPN! A white! We got an assignment! We got..."

"Hold it, Elmoe! Would you just hush for a moment. What are you talking about?"

"Okay, okay, I was kinda shufflin' around the Crib, y'know, and there was this cool suit struttin' about lookin' for Ops so I got us this great White BPN!"

"Wait... what's this guy's name?"

"Don't worry about nothin', Cheronna, this guy says he's gonna take us all the way to the Big Time, an'..."

"What's his name, Elmoe?"

"Crazy Herman, why are you so bothered?"

"Aw jeez, Elmoe, you moron! Are you crazy?"

"Naw, he's crazy. He got us this great BPN! Why are you so upset?"

Now Elmoe's lookin' at me with those big, sorry, blue eyes like a naughty puppy and I wanna beat the utter crap outta him but I know he's just a stupid kid who doesn't know any better. You see, he's fresh, Elmoe's only SCL 10 and he's never heard of that old sleaze, 'Crazy Herman'. Sheesh.

Crazy Herman is a kinda 'alternative' corporate. He's old and sneaky. Fat too. He's balding in an ugly, loud suit, with CRED symbols woven into the fabric, and cheap shoes. He's on peak viewin' time ranting' and raving' about super missions, mega-success and his get-rich-quick BPNs, I mean, if you could see this cocky asshole at work, you wouldn't believe that anybody would hire him as a financier.He is universally hated, by corporates and SLA Ops alike. Crazy Herman is wholly despised -but the sneaky old sonovabitch has one nasty thing in his favour, he's street smart.

Crazy Herman knows he's an asshole and that only the truly desperate are gonna hire him, so what he does when he's not bugging the mince outta you on the TV screen is cruise round the BPN halls and bars, like Slayer's Crib and The Pit lookin' for young, impressionable kids - like Elmoe here- and offers them fast fame and fortune, just as long as they sign the forms in the same haste.

"Elmoe, listen to me, Crazy Herman didn't get you to fill out a Squad Release Form, did he?"

"Yeah, sure, I thought I'd save you guys the hassle, and besides which, you know Moger can barely write his own name."

See what I mean. That's it, we're sworn to complete this BPN. I dread to think what this stupid moron, Elmoe, has got us into. Herman's BPNs are usually about as crazy as he is. Oh well, I thought, I guess this is punishment for takin' time off to go to a stinking launderette in Downtown. Still, it was nothing compared to the thumpin' poor Elmoe was gonna get off the Droolin' Duo -Moger and McClusky- our resident Stormer and Frother. These two have been pumping UV for the last six months and believe me, they go psycho if so much as the rain touches them.

"Look Elmoe, honey, keep an eye on my clothes, alright? I gotta check this out and call the boys."

"S'cool. Here's the BPN code."

It hadn't been a completely rotten day, at least the public Vid-Phone still worked at the back of Roachies, although it was right next to Mr Fat Slob who kept farting like a Whoopee Cushion. The smell was so bad, I was all set to let him sip my first 12.7mm cocktail but, fortunately for him, I got through to the Department of Investigation sharpish.

"Hello, Department of Investigation, BPN code and squad name?

"Yeah, WI/55308/S, Green Bag."

"Please hold for printout."

Here goes nothing, I thought. I was smart not to get optimistic, this was a bad one. Eastside, Lower Downtown, that's Cannibal Sector One territory -Digger's turf- real bad, especially on an Investigation BPN. We were to check out and 'correct' two subversives operating in that sector. Not much to go on, really. Internal reports had speculated one Ex-War Criminal and one Serial Killer, working together and giving the proles some sleepless nights, 38 confirmed kills. This was gonna be a toughie. I re-inserted my Finance Card and dialled McClusky.

"Hello, McClusky? Cheronna here, we've got a 'white'."

"Yeah? Mental! Hey, Moger, rack up, we're on a hit! Fill me in Cheronna."

"Don't get cheerful, crusty face, Elmoe picked it up..."

"Yeah, so what?"

"...off Crazy Herman."

"Why that stupid, wet sonovabitch!. I'm gonna take my Power Claymore and ram it up his..."

Click... sigh. Elmoe bounded to my side like an excited puppy.

"Well, Cheronna, is it great or what? I bet the boys liked it, huh?"

"Oh... yeah.. sure."


NO CHANGE
NO spitting
10
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KEVLAR
HOOVER 2000 XX
ATOM TAM
I ♥ town traffic
this TV Dont Work.
1993 Paul Sigerson

On your screen...

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GORE

DEATH 'TIL DAWN

classified adverts

Situations Vacant

Full time Secretarial Assistant required for Department of Communications. Previous experience essential in all aspects of administration, particularly with the use of computers. **Ref. No. COM456290**

Full time laboratory assistant required for Nuke Tendon laboratories. No experience necessary. Training will be given. **Ref. No. NT67834801**

Part time assistant required for Department of Mineralogy. No experience necessary as full training will be given. Possibility of leading to a full time position. **Ref. No. MI9625203**

Position available in the Department of Requisitions. Previous administrative experience essential. **Ref. No. RE07134560**

Factory workers required for new facility on Artery. Packers, Shop Stewards, Floor Managers, Foremen and Labourers are required. **Ref. No. ART3018–147–8**

Stock controllers required for manufacturing plant on Hades. Previous experience essential. Top rates paid. **Ref. No. HSC360320**

Full and part time cleaners required for large educational facility in Meny. No experience necessary. **Ref. No. MC1456035**

For all of the situations vacant, civilians and employees interested must contact the Department of Employment, Headquarters, Mort. Contact Ms. Sally Contrall. Basic requirements for all positions are an SCL of 11 or higher and a full education certificate, not necessarily to University level.

OPERATIVES! – Down on your luck and the BPNs not flowing as usual? Take a temporary full time position with the Department of Expedition and go places you've never been before!! Guaranteed income for a minimum period of three weeks! Good rates paid, as well as all expenses. Contact the Department of Expedition directly quoting **Ref. NO. DE43514–13**

CALLING ALL OPERATIVES! – CRAZY HERMAN IS LOOKING FOR YOU! Do YOU need a corporate to sort out all that messy paperwork? Are YOU constantly on low–paying BPNs? Are YOU low on ammunition and not able to pull sufficient income for your requirements? Do those Blue BPNs just bore YOU to death? Have YOU no excitement in your life and need a combat financier with a few contacts? If the answer is yes to all or most of these questions, then Crazy Herman is the man for YOU! He will attain top priority BPNs, make sure Third Eye catch YOU on camera and make YOU some money whilst taking only the smallest percentage for himself because he does it all for YOU!!

CRAZY HERMAN IS THE MAN TO BE WITH!!! Contact Craaaaazzzzzy Herman on **37–101–0047–3479.** I'm Craaazzzy!!

OPERATIVES!! Do you need a full time position with the company instead of working for poorly paying BPNs? Do you need a fulfilling job that will last? Full time permanent positions are available with the Shiver Unit Organisation as firefighters, basic units, ambulancemen, etc. Contact Commander Cradle or his assistant on **37–101–0025–7692.**

Combat financier, J. Harwood, is available from February for a new squad as his present one has changed department. Contacts are his speciality as are media operations. Squads no bigger than 6 operatives, phone Mr. Harwood on **37–834–0502–3859.**

The Department of Pharmacology are looking for COMBAT OPERATIVES as test subjects for a wonderful new development in combat aid. Operatives who have never used pharmaceuticals need not apply. Good rates paid as well as a maximum insurance premium. Contact the Department of Pharmacology direct on **37–101–0002–4974.**

Miscellaneous

Dial–An–Alien – For Shaktar introductions and Wraith relationships or just someone for friendship? Contact Sh'krl on **37–667–0013–8206.**

The Ebon Introduction Agency – For discerning male and female Ebons. If you are intelligent, articulate and well educated, then we are the introduction agency for you. We are very selective, we operate internationally and our service is very different. Call us and find out more on **37–145–0045–0369.**

Marion, 23, a female Human is hungry for a fresh new man to brighten up her days. Smokers and drinkers acceptable. No Brain Wasters please. Contact her on **37–667–0072–4274.**

R. Pearson is an experienced and professionally qualified counsellor. If you have any emotional or mental health problems and you would find confidence by talking about them, then call him on **37–834–0093–3957.** Available 24 hours a day.

FREE GIFT when you send for our bumper catalogue of adult toys, stimulants, educational videos, exotic and revealing lingerie and other adult products. Private and discreet mail order for all races, Humans, Shaktars, Ebons and Wraiths. Send a stamped addressed envelope and only 2₵ P&P NOW to SENSUAL ELEMENTS, 4563 Corinne Walkway, Upper Downtown, Mort or call us on **37–667–0059–4852.**

Lonely female Ebon looking for exciting male for friendship and romantic nights. Non–smoker essential, must like animals as I keep three DAFs. Contact Frail on **37–145–0938–4839.**

Education

GOOD EXAM RESULTS WILL GET YOU PLACES! Whatever your ambitions, if you receive SUERs (SLA University Examination Results), they will be recognised in the World of Progress as a quality standard not to be smirked at. If you didn't attend a University when you left school and now you have a full time job, think about home study and night school for self–improvement, or to UP those grades! Courses include: VISCOS operation – Business Administration – Killan – Wraith – Shaktarian – Pistol or Rifle Use (which can be incorporated into general combat training) – Driving – SLA Law – Mathematics – and many more. If you are interested in receiving a free brochure on the many courses available, send a stamped addressed envelope to Meny University, Home Study and Night School Department, **Box. No. 34935, Meny, Mort.**

"With age comes knowledge, or so we are told –I am a firm believer in that. There is no substitute for experience. It would seem that some do not share this view and throw young minds into a dangerous world where nobody cares about brilliant insight unless it makes money. The children I see in the Phantom Pregnancy labs have the potential to do great things but –and I cannot emphasise this enough– they lack the vision of their elders. Only one hundred years ago the youngest member of my staff was thirty seven years old and now, I believe, the youngest technician is a mere eighteen years young. What sort of impression is this evil world going to have on their views and opinions? What will this do to the workforce as a whole? If the average age for a nervous breakdown is fourteen, what hope have these people of surviving in this world of backstabbing sharks called corporate climbers? I may dress like one of these corporate lackeys but I can shoot as straight as the next man. My BPN filecase is open for inspection by anyone. I have done my time. I know the world on both sides of the fence. My advice to you all as you sit there clutching feverishly at your newly won degrees is this: Forget about the outside world for another four years, go back inside those university doors and study. Learn. Forewarned is forearmed. Now you know what to expect. I would like to close this speech by congratulating you on your graduation. Biogenetics is not one of the easiest subjects to study, let alone graduate with an honours degree in. I admire your perseverance and diligence, your patience and your intelligence. Thank you."

Dr. Ernest Strand, Meny, 900 SD.

what's new

CONTRACT CIRCUIT TALK

What's in and out for Contract Killers in 901 SD.

IN	OUT
Nuke Tendon Implants	Steroids
BLA046M Blitzer	GA47
DNA Hallmarks/Lumo™	Tattoos/Make–up
Angel faced psychopath	Gruff war veteran
Sigerson Airware™	Fitzsimmons™ Cowboy Boots
Alice™	Beat™
Ill–Logic	Mooey
Pacifier Baton	SLA blade
FEN AR	GA Finisher
LAD	Staying dead
DIG™ Denims	Leviathan Leather Co.™

IT'S AN EDUCATION!

by Jacqueline Bass

The Media today comes in a multitude of formats, from television, Multimedia, magazines and newspapers to the vast billboards which are constantly with us on Mort.

The Meny University on Mort are now training Media Operatives, or 'action journalists'. These courageous individuals are given training in journalism and cinematography, besides the basic operative training package. They are taught how to use their camera to get the best action shots and the most effective angles on murders, assassinations, firefights, etc. They are also given training in the art of journalism, which encompasses interviewing techniques, public speaking, writing reports and generally being able to promote the squad that they are assigned to.

Third Eye have publicly supported this project as more and more of their journalists have been assigned to SLA operative squads to personally record their work, so that the operatives can get on with their jobs.

Most media operatives are recruited from the civilian ranks, as their streetwise knowledge is of great benefit to those working in the field –although Third Eye are now taking in interested parties from Orange Crush and training them under supervision in Mort Central, the centre of the action.

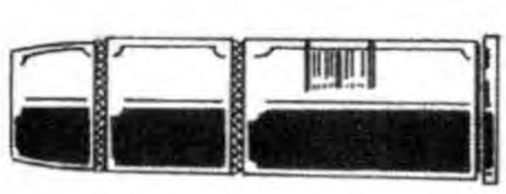
Third Eye have also injected capital into the development of a range of 'survival cameras', which are tough enough to survive being shot at, thrown out of buildings from several floors up, etc. The standard camera, aptly named the 'Ronker–Roller', will soon be available as the norm to media operatives on Mort. It is specially designed to be able to withstand combat, weather and rough handling. It has attachments and enhancements specifically for the use of a trained camera operator and comes in bright, luminous colours so that operatives on the field can easily distinguish their media operative from any other civilians or rival operatives.

FROTHERS GALORE!

At the recent Highland Frother Convention on Mort last month, there was a new competition to keep the raving madmen happy. Colour clashing has always been a favourite with the crusty lunatics, so when the drug Lumo™ was recently introduced by the Department of Pharmacology, the organisers of the event were quick to add a new sport for the Frothers. Not only are they all wearing bright, luminous hair, but they are now sporting scathingly fluorescent skin too! The most popular colour combination proved to be electric blue skin with red, yellow and dark blue hair. The winner, Laichlan McCurry, received a free month's supply of Lumo™.

Hotline

With the ever increasing use of powered armour by rival companies, right down to the smallest Soft Company, the need to incapacitate heavily armoured rivals as quickly as possible has become of the utmost importance. FEN give you the ideal 10mm round to do this with. The 10mm 'Hotline' is available for any 10mm pistol. This low velocity slug will deliver a 10,000 volt shock to the target which is enough to 'freeze–up' servo–mechanisms, power dampers, exchangers and any other electronics in all but the largest of armour



classes. The Hotline has been designed not to kill its target. With a muzzle velocity of just under 220m/second, the chance of penetrating armour is minimal. The Hotline charge will stun a suit of armour for two minutes. A percentage of the charge will carry through to the wearer causing them to be paralysed for about 30 seconds.

FEN Warning: 10mm Hotline should be used as a single load and not part of a box magazine clip, as premature detonation may occur.

words of PROGRESS

"I like to play out all the possibilities. This is why I have provided such a diverse environment for you to live in. I would like to think that I have provided something for everyone. Those that are unhappy with what they have are not looking hard enough. Set goals you think are too high to attain and see how far you get. Having something that makes you feel good, having something that you thought you would never be able to have makes you feel as if you have truly accomplished something. Always strive for excellence and you will be rewarded. I always reward the loyal. Remember SLA wins. Do not be a loser."

Mr. Slayer, SCL 1, © SLA Industries, 900 SD.

GA 9442 Browbeater

The GA 9442 is the main weapon used by Shiver Unit troops, and is mainly used as a riot control weapon. The Browbeater uses a similar propulsion system (gauss; electromagnetic propulsion) to the Vibro Disc. The ammunition differs from most, as it is designed not to kill, but rather to disperse crowds. The ammunition for the Browbeater is a small nickel ferrite ball bearing about 3mm in diameter coated in a substance known as memory plastic. This substance maintains its shape until it strikes, when the structure of the plastic changes transforms into a different shape. When these ball are fired from the Browbeater, they are only 5mm in diameter. When they strike the target, they expand to 25mm in diameter impacting with the force of a golf ball at full speed. The damage done by the Browbeater is not intended to be lethal, but there have been occasional deaths due to head injuries sustained.

Quote of the week

"For what its worth, the World of Progress is like a shower. It's always at a constant flow, but never of the same stuff, like the water in a shower. There's always the same amount but its constantly going down the plughole with new stuff coming out of the nozzle. So we're like the water, the shower is the World of the Progress and the plughole is... is –well, no theory is perfect."

Steven Argot, age 34 Human, Unemployed plumber and part–time philosopher.

THE END IS NIGH

LA

BEAT THE SYSTEM

SCAN IMAGE



1234567 812335

The DNA Hallmark has been around for some time, available to any and all willing to pay and undergo Karma's surgery, but the fear of pain and 'the knife' has put many off the operations. All this changed with Dr. Strand's 900th celebration revelations including, amongst other things, the painless, risk–free Hallmark installation process. Many people claimed the Hallmark was the least important of the many revelations, with the Vevaphon and LAD both standing foremost, but in the world of fashion the Hallmark is liable to have more impact than any wondrous combat engine might.

We talked to operatives and employees alike to determine the latest on this for our discerning, fashion–hungry readers. The first port of call was, obviously, New Paris where we spoke with fashion guru Antoine Cholo at length but, unfortunately, we could not reveal any of the conversation as he was on a week's exclusivity with Third Eye. He did, however, give us the names and addresses of prominent Hallmarked operatives and Contract Killers. Here are extracts from some of them who we managed to get hold of:

"My hair has been genetically altered to this magenta. I think that hair colours will be the most popular genetic alteration although anti–gerasones, when available without departmental authorisation, will be the most desired. After all, who wants to die?"

Suzi, Style consultant for Karma.

Note: Anti–gerasones are the licensed anti–ageing alterations available at the moment only by request and personal review. The likelihood of yourself or myself ever being allowed to have the operation is very slim indeed.

"The Trouble with Hallmarking is that fashions change on such a regular basis that what is a popular design now is liable to be obsolete in next to no time. If you can't afford to get the Hallmark changed or removed then your children, if you are ever blessed with them, stand a chance of inheriting last decade's fashion.

"The nightmare scenario is anti–gerasones: I for one can see the whole thing blowing up in their faces. After all, who doesn't want to live forever?

Marcella Cleveland, Channel Sixty fashion consultant.

a modern mythical creature

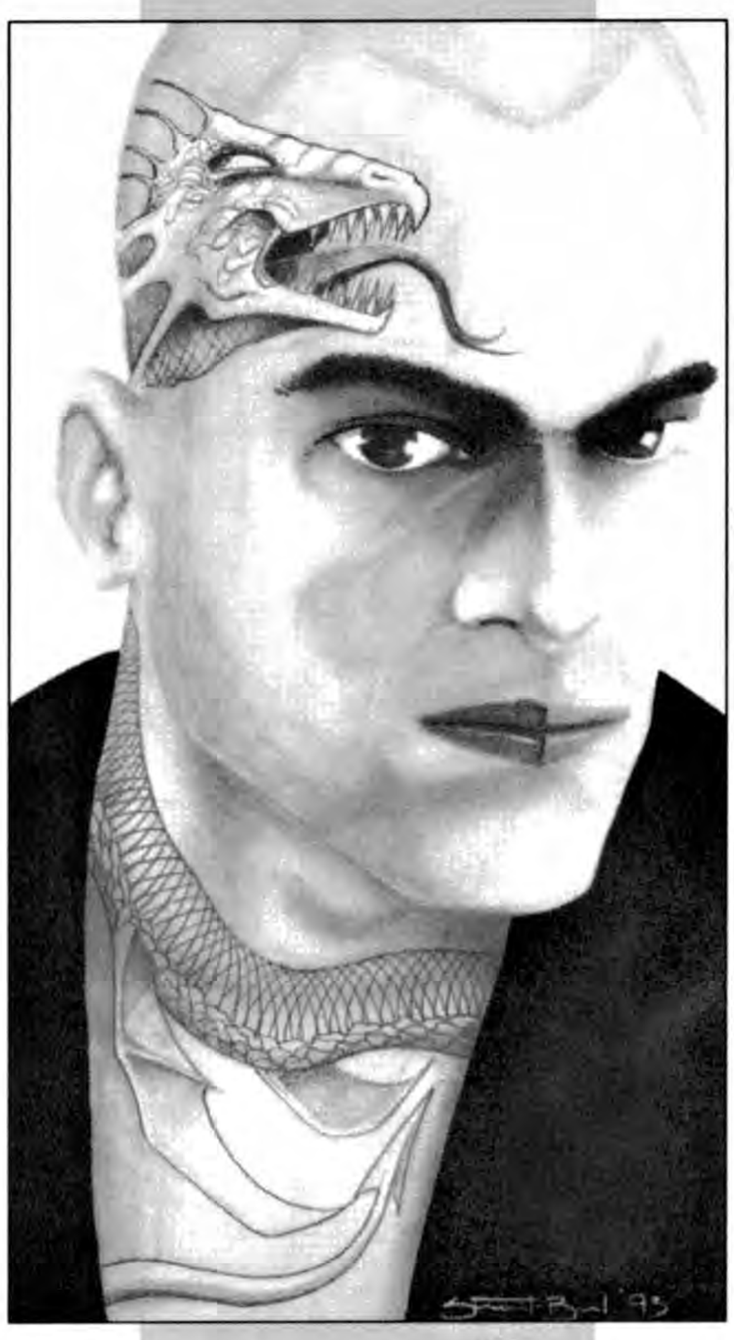
This year, several memorable figures have jumped into the public eye and demanded to be noticed. One of these is Mike Justin, with his inimitable fighting style (although many have tried...) and the obvious enthusiasm he has for his work. The famous dragon motif cutting a swathe across his toned neck, contrasting colours striking a dangerous marriage of sharp green and blood red, slashing into his skin in a nonchalant manner. I am the only person to have caught up with him on terms other than his own. I cornered him with a slug deck in one hand and a camera in the other, him being armed only with weapons.

"The dragon is a very primal creature, I would say. It represents all that I wish to embody: speed, agility, style. Style is the one I would say mostly. If you are going to have a DNA tattoo (hallmark –Ed.), then I can think of none better than a dragon. If anyone copies mine, however, I would like to stress that my lawyer is on a productivity bonus, like the guy who represented Spectre..."

We would like to remind the public of Spectre's lawsuit against a young boy that backfired when the boy's mother counteracted the charges with a paternity suit proving that the child had every right to wear Spectre's symbol as he inherited his genetic code. End result: Spectre paying a very large settlement to the boy's mother (Nice one –Ed). We asked Mike Justin his opinion on the Spectre case:

"That was very much pride before a fall. Remember that his career was dying already at that point and everything conspired against him. In his position, I too would have taken my own life. His tattoo was the old painful sort, as well. I have a lot of respect for anyone willing to go through that for vanity. Beauty was a pain."

The latest big thing from Karma is the revival of the old favourite: the DNA Hallmark.



the face of death

I looked at M. Cholo's list for my next port of call and restrained the immediate reflexive fear response: I would be seeing Reaper. The widow maker, the reaper of souls, the ferryman. This is the man who once killed a journalist for laughing at the suggestion that Reaper was not actually the grim reaper but a person in make–up.

"My DNA Hallmark is well–known. I have a human face added over my normal skull face. I find it makes me look more human and less like the traditional image of myself. Someone once suggested that the human face was the real one and that my skull was the pretend one. He has passed over to the other side with bit coins in his eyes... I mourn the passing of gold coins."

Whatever you say, sir. I made my excuses and left.

corporate image

Antoine Cholo's name was made by selling printer's original relief plates and SLA chose to focus on one of these plate sales as a cultural promotion. The subject of the plate had everyone saying "Who's that girl?" for weeks. That girl was, and is, Cherry Hinton a.k.a. Cerise. We caught up with her in New Paris without the razmatazz normally associated with her and her squad; GBH. Her recent years in cloak division have tempered her, channeling her youthful exuberance into a calm, collected exterior –or so we hope.





"DNA Hallmarks? Was this your idea or your editor's? I'll tell you all you need to know about myself and the hallmarking programme: I was aged sixteen when my parents proved their loyalty to SLA Industries in the most direct manner –with their lives. I was going through the formative years of my adult life. I entered the Hallmarking programme with newly inherited wealth and freedom and decided to undergo the genetic surgery required to change my hair colour to this and to engineer my facial make–up. You want waterproof mascara? Try knife–proof. If I have an accident and am put in for regrowth surgery, I come out without a single one of my black hairs out of place. That is what mattered to me at that age. I have grown up and would probably do things differently now. That is why I wear sunglasses indoors. Interview terminated."

Try as I might, I could not interrupt her monologue. I noticed as she stood up that her Arducci suit was tailored on the right thigh for the new BLA Derringer. Needless to say I let her go without further ado.

smooth operator

DNA Hallmarks are not only for cosmetic purposes. SLA have been known to have operatives hallmarked in unusual ways. Skrinn had white fur that changed to purple when she arrived on Mort. As a scout and infiltration operative, low I–R image was an advantage (or so our technical editor says...) but she had to apply the TrackopticS blackout make–up to pass unseen. Skrinn applied to TrackopticS to obtain the rights to have her fur and skin DNA Hallmarked with their popular I–R opaque toner. The response was excellent, with Skrinn getting a lifetime sponsorship from the scout specialist firm.

"Yeah, TrackopticS are the best. That's why I approached them. I believe in their products and am glad to be associated with such cool dudes. Their visual stuff is the best. Their kit is serious. You probably know that my skin is pigmented genetically with their stuff. I'm a big fan. Thanks, guys."

Skrinn is famous for not being seen and has had a hand in at least six assassinations in the last year. The Hallmarking process can make a killer distinctive and more successful. We are greatful to Karma and Dark Lament for developing their respective Hallmarks and changing the face and body of fashion.

Andi Peirsen



FOR APPROVAL.
WILL THIS DO, JOHN?

Press Release: to Third Eye from Body Art.

An Operative guide to DNA Hallmarking from Karma

Step by step DNA Hallmarking as a fashion accessory

New name, old product –does anybody remember about 200 years ago when DNA Tattoos where all the rage? Well, they're back. Brought to you by Karma is a new and far less painful product that never fades or gets damaged and is implanted in the form of one painless injection (just for all you Trypanophobics out there). 200 years ago it was considered 'hard' to get one, but this time it's not the painful gene–splicing it used to be. Now the fashion conscious can be decorated with anything they like –from a love heart on their butt to head to toe tiger stripe –or even a new permanent hair colour. It's so easy it's beyond belief! All over the World of Progress, on just about every SLA world, 'Body Art' shops have sprung up, offering the Hallmark as the newest and latest thing in fashion.

How do I go about getting one? I hear you ask. Firstly, don't get a Hallmark unless you really want to look at it for the rest of your life. If you are sure, get yourself down to the local Body Art shop. Your next step is to choose a Hallmark. Every shop has about 17,000 different designs on offer, so there should be no problem there –but if you are really that picky then there's an in house artist who will help you create your own design on the spot. Of course this costs a little extra. So now you have your design, and you're ready to rock and roll. Back in the dark ages they would grow you a piece of bio–skin/hair, cut out your own skin and slap the new bit on. Sounds bad I know –it looked even worse. Well, out of the dark ages and into the future. The most painful thing now is the skin scrape we take to obtain a sample of your DNA. This is taken from the hand or upper arm, and four days later you'll get a call or a postcard from our people to say that your Hallmark is ready and you can go and collect it. Off you trot down to the Body Art shop where you get the last chance to 'chicken out'. Unfortunately, you still have to pay the full price at this stage, Hallmark or no Hallmark. A slight jab on the arm and 20 hours later you are marked for life with your choice of design.*

If you change your mind later on, don't worry –there's still hope. You can get a Hallmark that will match your skin colour to cover the offending area. So there you have it. Scrape, stab, hey presto. That tattoo you've always wanted. No pain, no fuss, leave the inks to us. Get on down to your local Hallmarker and get that tribal insignia you've always wanted scything across your back.

We augment the natural pigments in your body to produce some of the best tones, colours and shades ever seen (we even managed to structure the codes so the thing is in the right place!). So come on down and have a look. Although not cheap, DNA Hallmarks are an investment for life.

An average sized Hallmark (60mm x 60mm) will cost 80₵.

The standard cost for a hair Hallmark is 75₵.

For bigger hallmarks, add 4.5₵ per 100 square millimetres.

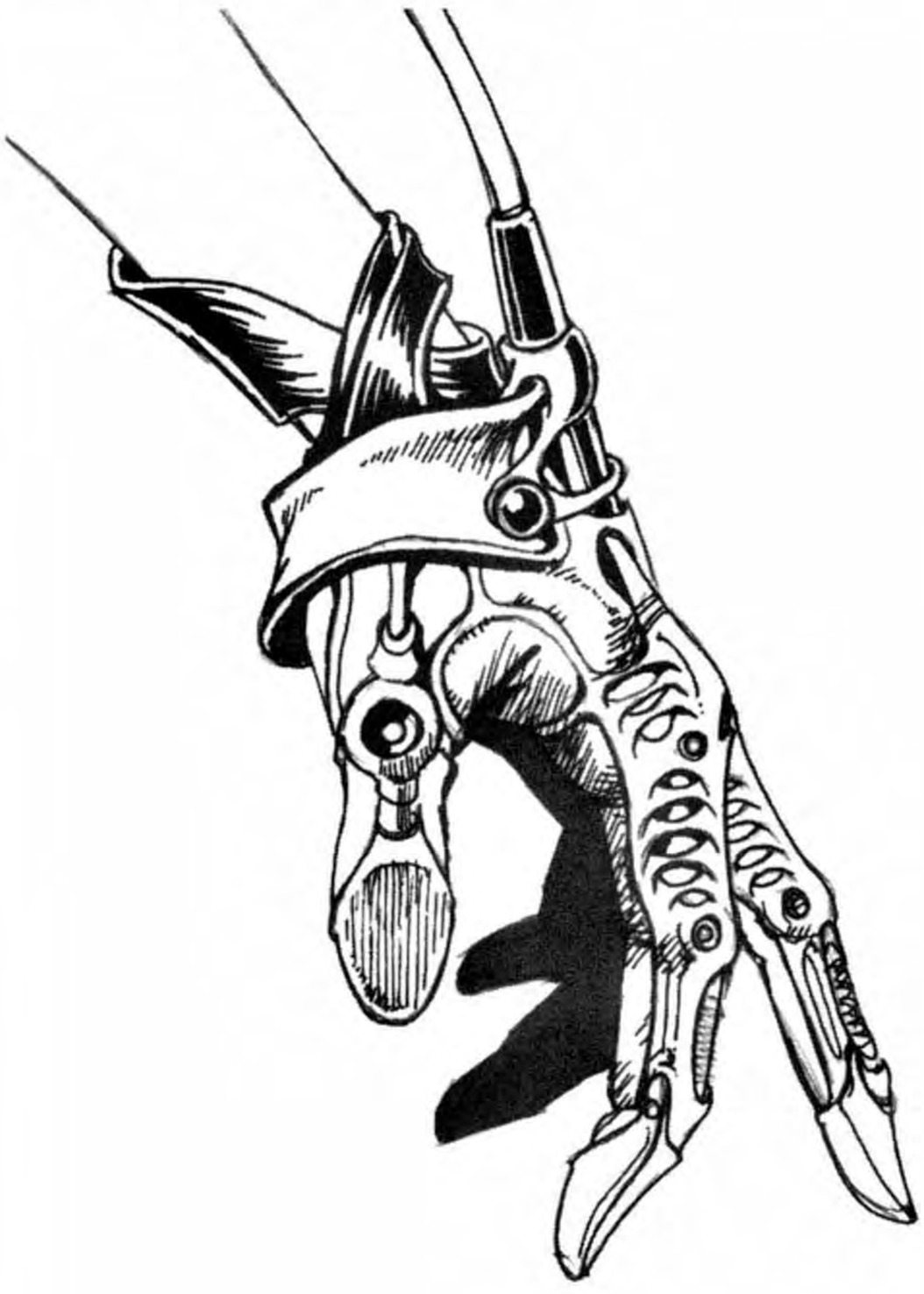
But who can put a price on fashion?

Please note there is a 50% chance of your children inheriting your Hallmark, so think carefully.

The minimum age for Hallmarking is 16 for humans. Details on application for other races.

ITB Jolt Glove

What happens if one too powerful punch lays out your target on a permanent basis? You get no BPN payment and lose a point of your hard–won SCL into the bargain. So how's about this. Get your man, woman, alien, whatever, laid out instantly at a touch, with the latest from ITB. The Jolt Glove delivers a 10,000 volt shock to any target, fed directly from the fusion power supply of your armour or a lightweight charge pack that can easily be clipped to a belt. Only the lightest touch is required to activate one of the dozens of sensors on the glove that will deliver the charge to its target, paralysing both armour and wearer. The glove has an on/off switch situated in the centre of the palm which is activated when the fist is clenched. Due to the large amounts of energy used for each delivery, the power pack is densely primed to allow for ten full charges. If an armour power link is used (supplied FREE of charge) the drain is, on average, 15 minutes off the user life per delivery.



CIRCUIT PARTY LINE

Want to hire a Contract Killer for your kid's party? At affordable rates, its your child's dream come true –and for a small fee extra, your hired Contract Killer will eradicate neighbours, pets and unwelcome relatives with famous 'death strike' blows and weapons as yet seen only on t.v.!

CALL NOW! Third Eye/Contract Circuit on 37–101–005–8348 24 hours a day. WE CARE FOR YOUR KIDS.

TOP NOTCH

"Hi, I'm Top Notch, I'm new on the contract circuit. I've been trained in Death Squad and have undertaken two Black ops (Thresher Installation, 'Road Block' Cognate). If something needs shooting, I'm your gal. Trust me, I'll get 'em anyway you want, long or short range, neat or messy, smilin' or screamin', the choice is yours. I got a wide selection in your price range. Hire me, I'm fab!"

From the 'gal' herself.

Call Mort, Uptown, Cheen Walk
TEL 37-408-029-8459, FAX 5686




SPOOK
Protect your assets with Spook.
A new generation of coats. Available Now

Monsters & Angels

Isabelle Cullen reaches out to the angelic armed response partners, Geist and Phantom, and asks why the eyes of the industry have turned to 'Symbiote'.

Bad start. I've got an interview with Geist and Phantom at 9.00am. They'll probably just be up and not in the mood for personal questions and serious talking. Sigh, I'm almost at the 'Gates of Heaven', a classy corporate bar in the heart of Uptown Mort and the rain is coming down in buckets. I'm soaked, despite the shelter of taxi roofs and my confidence is low. I reach the Gates of Heaven and look in through the cloudy window. In the depths of the plush and inviting expanse, I can see the media's latest adoptions, Geist and Phantom. Despite their alleged synchronicity in action, this social scenario shatters the dreamy illusion and creates a newer and sweeter one. Geist sits nervously, like a schoolboy waiting for reprieve or punishment, and not knowing which is to be granted. He's sipping a tall glass of cola which, despite the visual enhancement of the DeathSuit, still looks too big for him. Phantom, on the other hand, fiddles carelessly with a Rollers™ deluxe sugar dispenser, her playful antics drain the shiny, corporate display of its sophistication.

The scene is breathtaking. I enter and approach their table. Geist sees me first and scrambles for a polite smile while Phantom continues to collect more sugar, oblivious until a poke in the ribs from Geist shakes her up. Even the initial greetings are diverse. I receive a "Good morning, Mrs. Cullen" from Geist and a simple, girlish "Hi" from Phantom. Geist offers to take my damp raincoat and as he leaves the table I begin the interview with Phantom, whose interest is now lost in the sugar dispenser.

What is 'Symbiote'?

Phantom: "You mean our intentions as an operative squad? Well, we're aiming to halt the Skin Trade epidemic that's all over Mort just now. Cloak Division have been hunting for operatives to take the position we're in now. Geist and I aren't goodie two shoes, but we're not in it for the public recognition either –despite the fact we got it. It is hard to stress this and still have credibility. It seems that operatives can't do something for the good of the society we were raised in without getting slated as 'media sycophants'."

At this point, Geist creeps back to the table, seeing that Phantom is stating her 'strong beliefs'. A pattern is forming at this point, generally unseen by the rest of the World of Progress. I see that Geist and Phantom are real people, with all the pros and cons which that entails. The Symbiote has suffered much scrutiny and controversy even in its first month of operation. For a start, this blending of Human (Phantom) and Ebon (Geist), male and female has invited much attention from Karma and Dark Lament.

Geist: "Karma and Dark Lament have very different philosophies and obviously they target very different markets. Humans can't use Dark Lament produced Ebb equipment and Ebons can't have Karma–manufactured implants because it depletes Ebb. That's life, and over 900 years of SLA Industries, a real animosity has grown between the two factions due to this. Everybody knows where the line is drawn, and we came along and crossed it."

Phantom: "Geist and I are very close, we do everything together. In this respect we're new –and the media love the unity aspect between us, but Karma and Dark Lament think we're bad for business."

Phantom's suspicions are right, too. The Symbiote controversy has come to the attention of many sub–companies –and corporate challenges have grown in SLA Industries thanks to our little media darlings. The World of Progress watches Geist and Phantom become channels for hardware advancements, as Karma and Dark Lament try to outdo each other with equipment for the young team.

Geist: "This has been going on from the start. We're always in front of the camera, so Karma dress Phantom up to the minute and then Dark Lament have to do the same to me. We just seem to be a useful way of channelling their mutual aggression through what we wear and use."

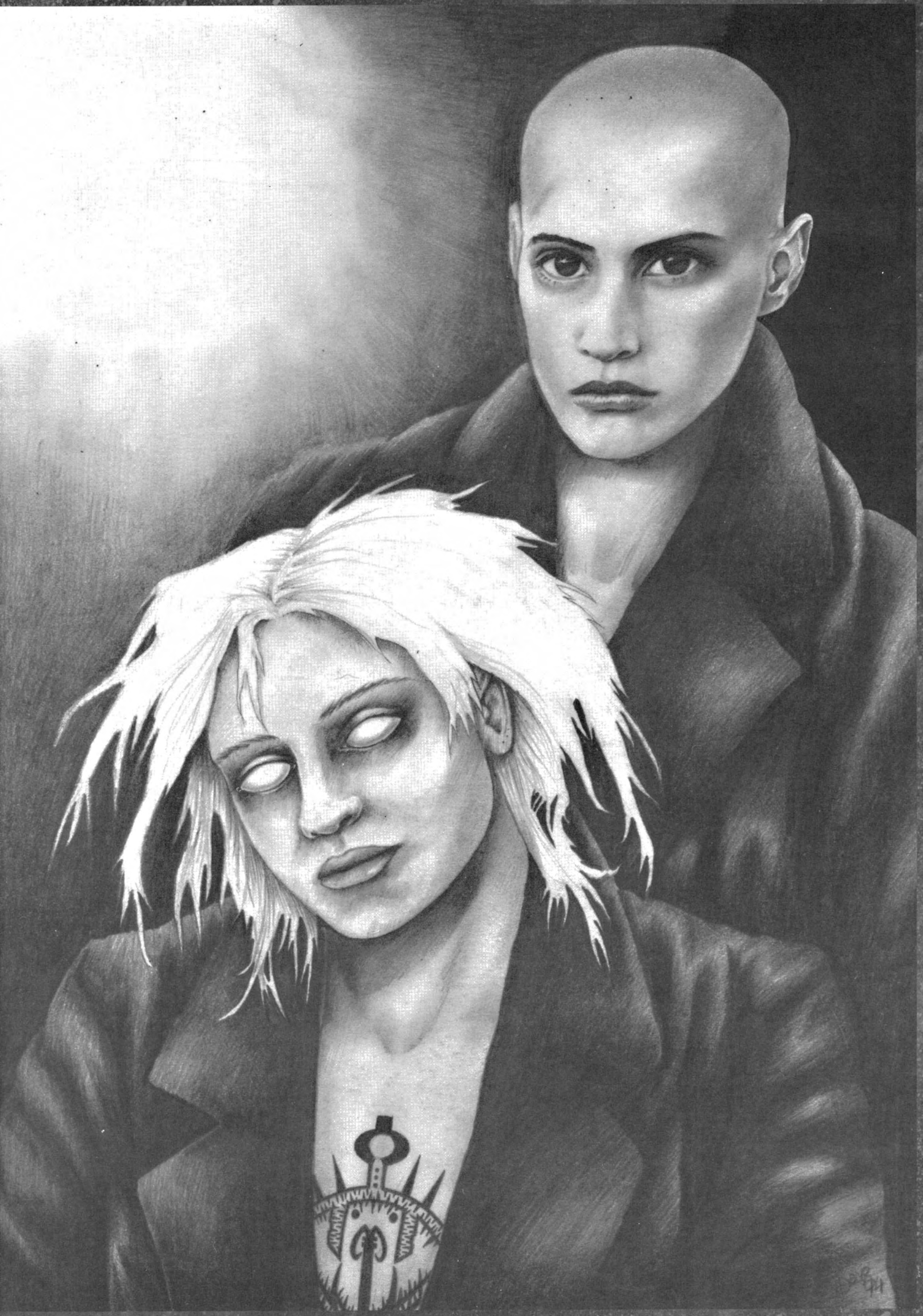
The question is how far this will go before something big happens to Symbiote? The obvious 'fly in the ointment' occurs when discussing sexual relationships. The romantic interest within Symbiote has appealed greatly to magazines like 'Uptown Woman' and 'Sweet 16'. Geist and Phantom are both attractive young people. They look good together despite their differences.

Are you an item? (Geist and Phantom look towards each other and grin.)

Geist: "Shall you or shall I?"

Phantom: "This is my turn. Magazines are always phoning up our agent and giving him hassle over it (bless his little heart). No, Geist and I aren't dating, although sex is about the only thing we don't do together. We've only really known each other properly for two or three months and I think we're together through sheer coincidence. We were both trained in Meny for the Kick Murder Package and we were the only two in our year to get moved up to operative status before we completed our training. We first met in the BPN hall, applying for our first Blues. I recognised his face from my days in Krosstown Traffic and we got talking about the gang times and how much more dangerous life had become for the younger generation. By the time our names got called, we decided to go in as a team. That's how things got started."

Geist: "We did a Street Maintenance BPN for just over a week. In that time, we had a few close run–ins with 'Slap and Tickle' and 'Puppy Talk'. They were going for our old gang territory at Heartland. We didn't like this, so much so that we decided we would devote our service to the eradication of the Skin Trade. We spent a month learning how to fight





as a team, discovering each other's strengths and weaknesses and advancing our capabilities."

(Phantom giggles at some rude connotation in Geist's speech.)

Geist: "Phantom..."

Phantom: "Sorry, dear. He's actually quite right. It took us a month at Geist's apartment to learn each other's moves, how to take out various opponents using advanced teamwork. That's the key to our success, our teamwork. That's why we're called Symbiote, we rely totally on each other."

Phantom and Geist sit with the closeness of a loving couple but they seem deceptively businesslike.

Geist: "We made a semi–decision early on that we would stay single, mainly because if we did become an item, it could be detrimental to our operation. But I can't imagine anyone else I'd rather be with right now."

Phantom blushes and hides her face in Geist's chest, baring the back of her bald head.

Why the hair loss?

Phantom: "Oh, right. (Phantom regains her composure.) Two reasons. I used to have my hair down to my waist and wore long, flowing clothes which made the K.T.ers call me 'Phantom'. They claimed I looked 'dark and mysterious', so I shaved my head to shun the label. The other reason is so I can disguise myself quickly with Karma wigs and stuff."

Symbiote have found that public recognition poses a major problem to their work. The public of Mort love them. Their youthful looks sell, but more importantly (especially to Geist and Phantom) the public want them because they are successfully infiltrating the Skin Trade. The setback is that Symbiote relies heavily on undercover work.

Geist: "You can't fault the press for advertising our faces. The public want to know that someone is trying to stop what's threatening its children. Fortunately, both Phantom and I studied forgery and disguise during our training at Meny. For most of our work, we don our old 'colours' and disguise ourselves as gang members. We know the henchmen and what they're looking for –we simply present ourselves and let them lead us to their warehouses."

Phantom: "Yeah, then it's time for the SilverBack."

When Symbiote began to make a name for themselves, Power Projects approached Phantom as a sponsor. In return, Phantom was the first to receive their latest breakthrough, the SilverBack mobile suit.

Phantom: "I absolutely adore this suit. It is just so fast, for sheer speed it knocks the pants off everything else. It's invaluable to our operations. Geist had Dark Lament teach him how to interdermalise his DeathSuit, which really helps in deep cover work."

To look at, Geist and Phantom are just kids, both are just eighteen yet neither of them are wet behind the ears.

Geist: "Before we reached Meny, Phantom and I had spent our entire lives in Downtown. We were in a variety of orphanages until we reached Krosstown Traffic. I went there when I was 15, and Phantom joined about six months later."

Geist has had a strange and decadent past, which has put an adult's head on a young man's shoulders. I asked him how much he has changed since his induction. He seems embarrassed by the question.

Geist: "Oh... I think I've changed a great deal since my induction, and since I started getting involved with the media. Then there was the trouble with 'Servitude' magazine, and their interest in my relationship with Swan (Geist's 26 year old ex.). The magazine loved my tattoo, my ten year age gap between Swan and –of course– the shark skin gloves.

"During my induction I was put under the training of Mute (Ebon, SCL 4A) and during my time on the street we chanced a Black Op and succeeded. I was asked to do a Jade by the Internals but the Department of Ebb stopped me for some reason. It was fairly rough going at the time, but things have eased up since I started with Symbiote."

Phantom: "Yeah."

Phantom smiles.

Phantom is the more forward one. She is emotional, like Geist, but in a headstrong manner but she allows fleeting glances of a softer core. Geist is shy and endearing, but it is his serious attitude that partners Phantom's youthful excitement perfectly.

At the end of our interview, I feel like they are my own children. It is something that Geist and Phantom have about them, I guess –and it is just that 'something' that is the key to Symbiote's success.

Isabelle Cullen



Phantom & Geist

"Symbiote"

901SD

RIOT GIRLS

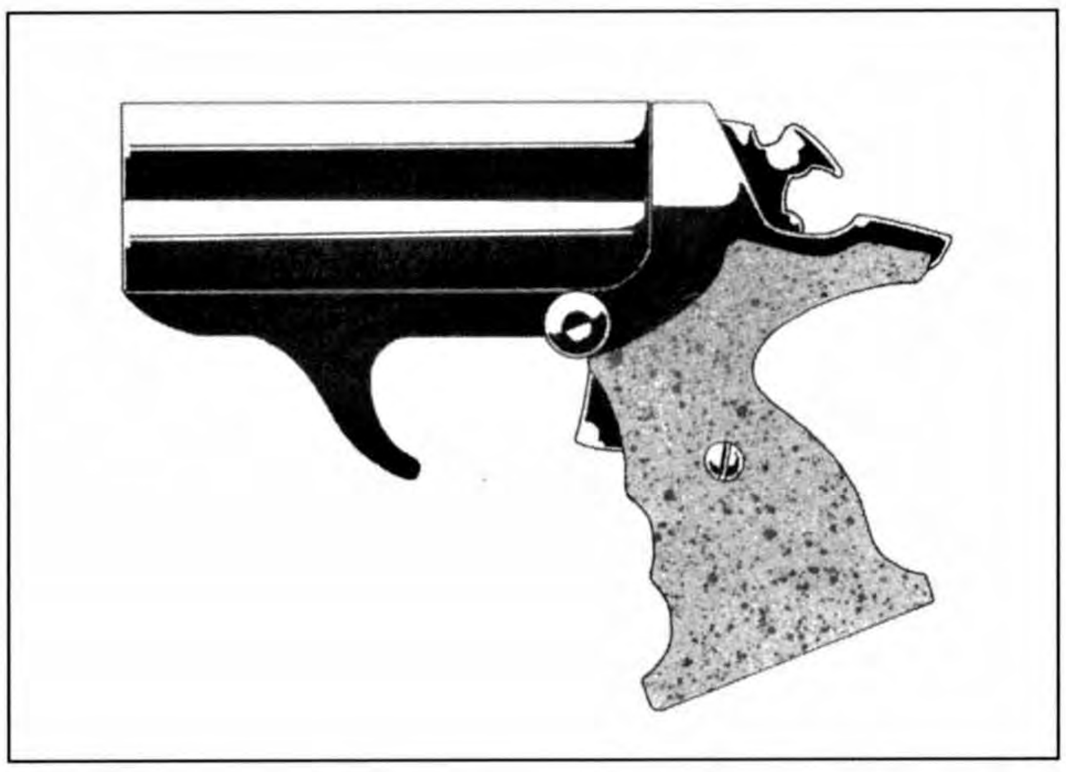
re: BLA Derringer

Jan. 14th 900 SD

Dear Customer,

In a world of ever increasing violence it is always reassuring to have the proper tools needed to survive. Here at BLA we specialise in constructing the finest weapons and accessories for any situation. To date the BLA046M 'Blitzer' stands unsurpassed as the most refined handgun ever manufactured. Now with the advent of the new century and the release of new designs by other companies, it is time for Berenyi Light Arms to offer you its own visions of the future.

The first offering from our design workshop is the BLA Derringer.

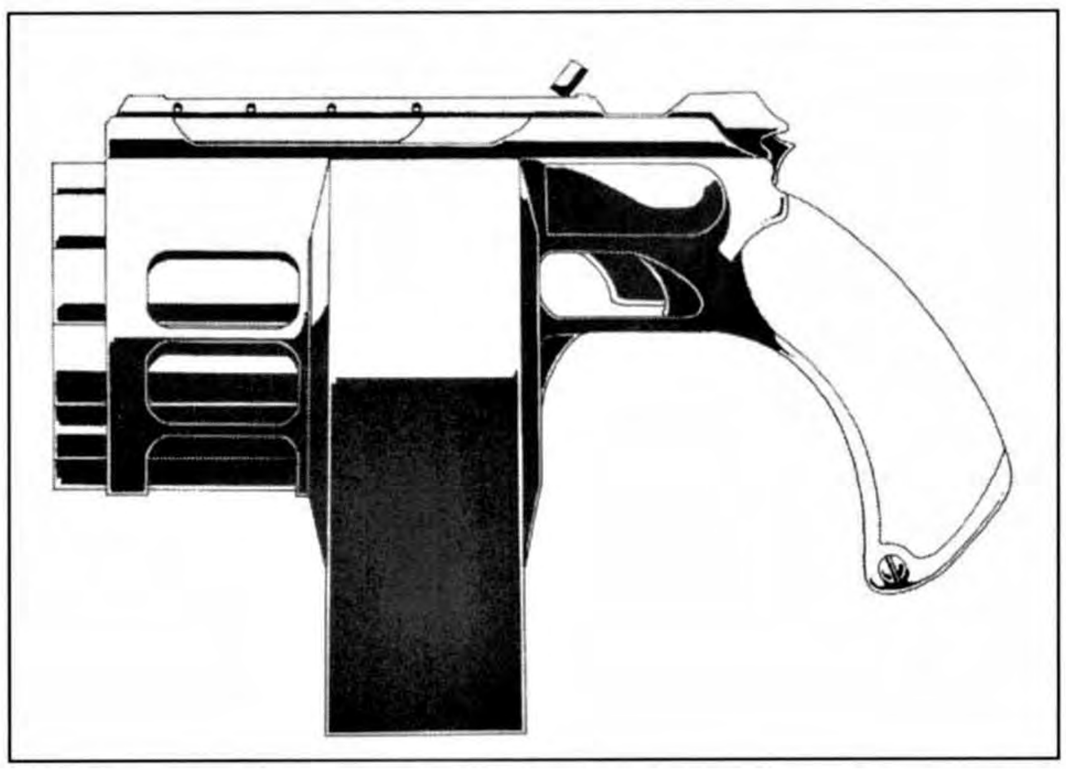


BLA446M 12.7mm Derringer

The Derringer is the smallest handgun in production at the present time. The Derringer follows all the strict construction guidelines that BLA previously set on the 046M revolver, so quality is assured. The Derringer is a breach loaded, twin barrelled pistol that chambers two 12.7mm rounds of any type, although HESH tends to be rather heavy for such a compact pistol. This does not mean it is unable to fire them. The Derringer has been designed with reinforced chambers and a single or double hammer fall to alow the firing of one or both of the rounds with a single trigger action.

BLA646M Buzzsaw

With the introduction of more and more semi and fully automatic weapons into an already flooded market, a new approach was called for. At BLA we believe in giving a unique service –in that all of our designs come from a fresh perspective and carry a certain amount of individuality, which you –the customer– will appreciate. We have, with the 646 Buzzsaw, attempted to give you the power of an assault rifle with the control and operational features of an





"Do you want to know exactly what I think about all these Macho–Shit Muscle–Bound men that call themselves Hard?

I've got this to say: You ain't gonna look so tuff lookin' down ten barrels of me Buzzsaw, Fag!"

Rippy, Brain Waster

SMG. The BLA646M Buzzsaw is the first attempt by ourselves to move into this market. With top designers such as Fraser Garet, formally with FEN on their Power Reaper development team, you can rest assured that the Buzzsaw is not to be taken to lightly by its competitors and should be considered as a viable, if not desirable, weapon for operative use. The Buzzsaw is a light, compact, high rate fully automatic SMG. This is possible through two factors having been resolved by BLA:

Ammunition design –To reduce recoil and to save space on magazine storage, BLA released (under special license from SLA) the 9mm BLA round. The 9mm being only slightly smaller than the standard 10mm auto round means it still has a very powerful penetration (62kg/square cm at a velocity of 373m/s). The magazine size can also be increased slightly to accommodate larger amounts of ammunition.

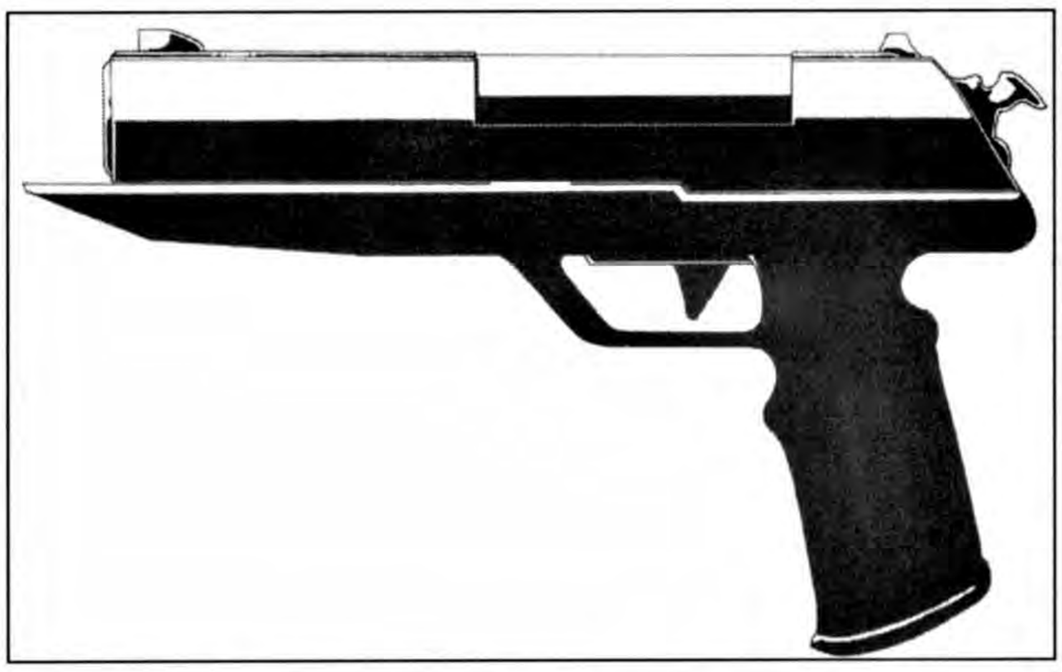
Forging techniques –The Buzzsaw is constructed from a solid frame, comprising the main body, barrel and casing, with minimal additional moving parts and mechanics. This makes the 646 one of –if not the– easiest weapons to maintain. Hard forge modifications to the casing allow the barrel to cool rapidly after firing, thereby avoiding damage through heat expansion during firing. With this problem resolved, a problem that plagues almost all other fully automatic weapons, the Buzzsaw is a piece of weaponry that has an extremely long life span with minimal maintenance needed, apart from regular cleaning as with all weapons.

The Buzzsaw is what BLA envisage for the future of SMGs and we hope that you share the vision of our designers.

BLA710M 'Snubber'

The most popular production pistol of the last century was without a doubt the FEN 603. BLA now offers an alternative to the benchmark. The BLA Snubber is lighter, smaller, easier to maintain and to fire –and is cheaper than the 603. It also negates some of the problems that the 603 created by carrying such a heavy round as 10mm. Two of the major difficulties with 10mm are:

One –Its inability to wound targets. More often than not the target would die from tissue damage or bleeding, depending, of course, on where they were shot. Torso hits could be considered kills 9 times out of 10. Leg and arm hits resulted in a great deal of bleeding and, more often than not, death. Head hits are always a sure kill. This left you, the operative, with a dead suspect and no way of questioning them.

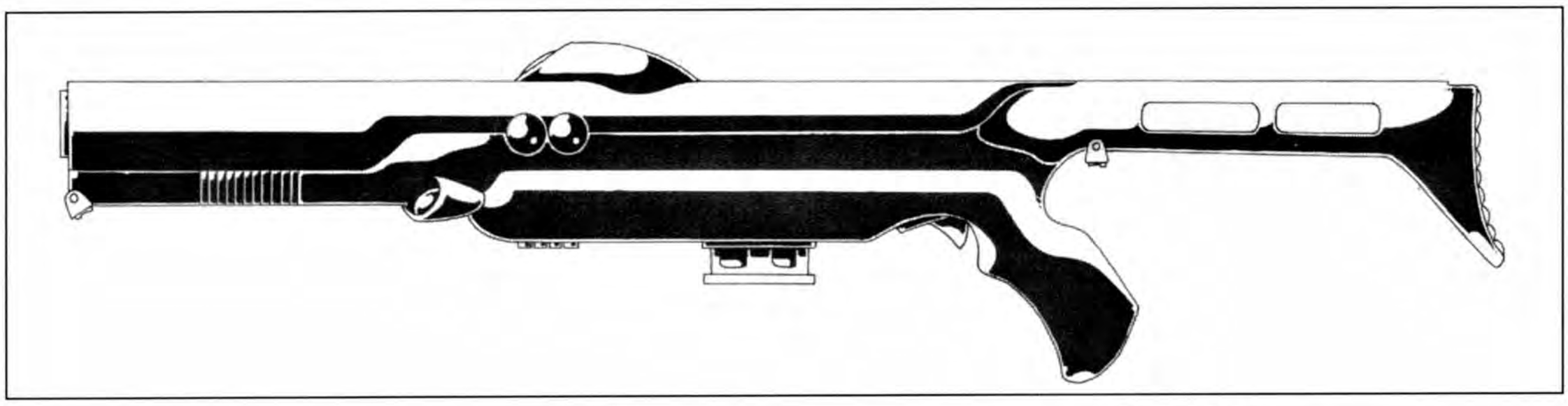


Two –The recoil is not unmanageable but certainly uncomfortable when the 603 is used in prolonged firefights. With the slightly lighter round the recoil is reduced sufficiently to make the Snubber almost pleasurable to fire.

FEN 93 GAG

The FEN 30–30 True Shot has been the single best selling sniper rifle for two centuries. Now is the time for change, to bring forward new designs and ideas. For operatives that prefer a more compact form of armament but still like the power of a sniper rifle FEN have introduced the FEN 93 GAG.

Although the GAG has all the markings of an assault rifle, it has been constructed to conform to most of the specifications of the 30–30. Carrying a 12mm round, the GAG still maintains the penetration of a good sniper round. With the FEN 93 coming close to the operating parameters for an assault rifle, it can, unlike the 30–30, be switched from single shot to a semi–automatic rate. A box magazine of ten rounds is also another advantage over the



"Power may come in all shapes and sizes but I think the best one is gun–shaped. There's nothing quite like having that kind of power: Squeeze, Bang, Dead. Instant Godship. People take more notice of you if you got a gun. Especially if it's pointing at their balls."

Tracy McGiver, Human





"You know the old saying 'it's not size that matters but what you...' Yeah, Yeah, Yeah. Well, as far as guns go, it's true. I don't really care what kind of gun the enemy has: If you shoot them in the right place, they'll go down.

Pistol, Rifle, Long, Short, who gives..?

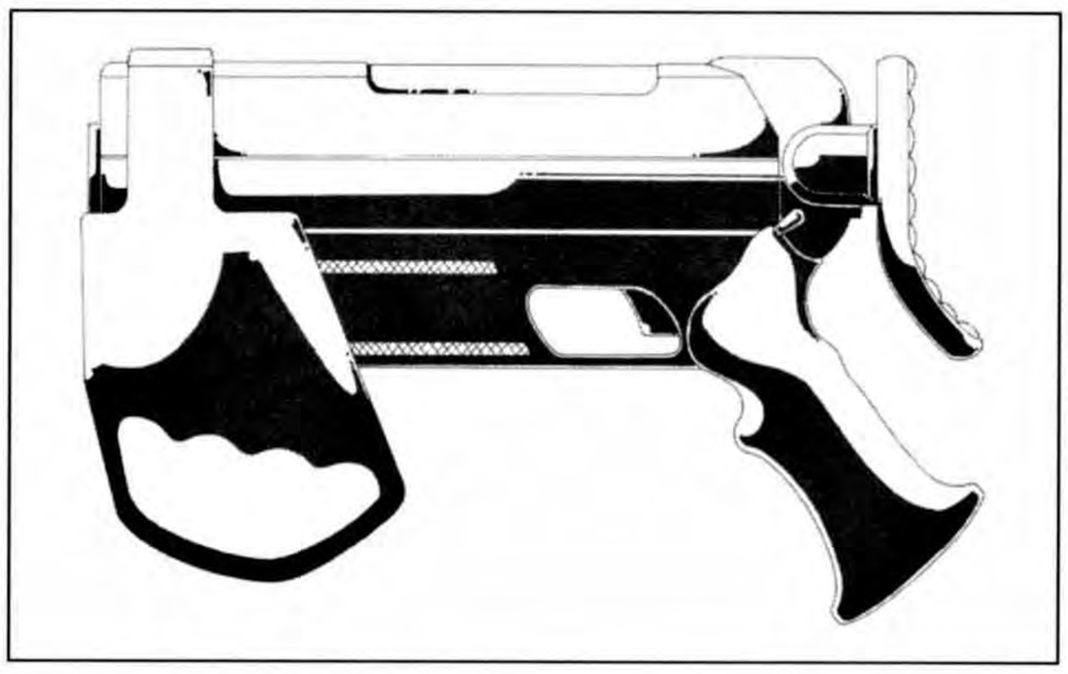
If it fires bullets, it'll do for me. If somebody tries to tell you any different, then they've been reading Freud, if you know what I mean. It's all 'my gun's bigger than yours, mine makes more noise than yours.' What a load of chauvinist bull."

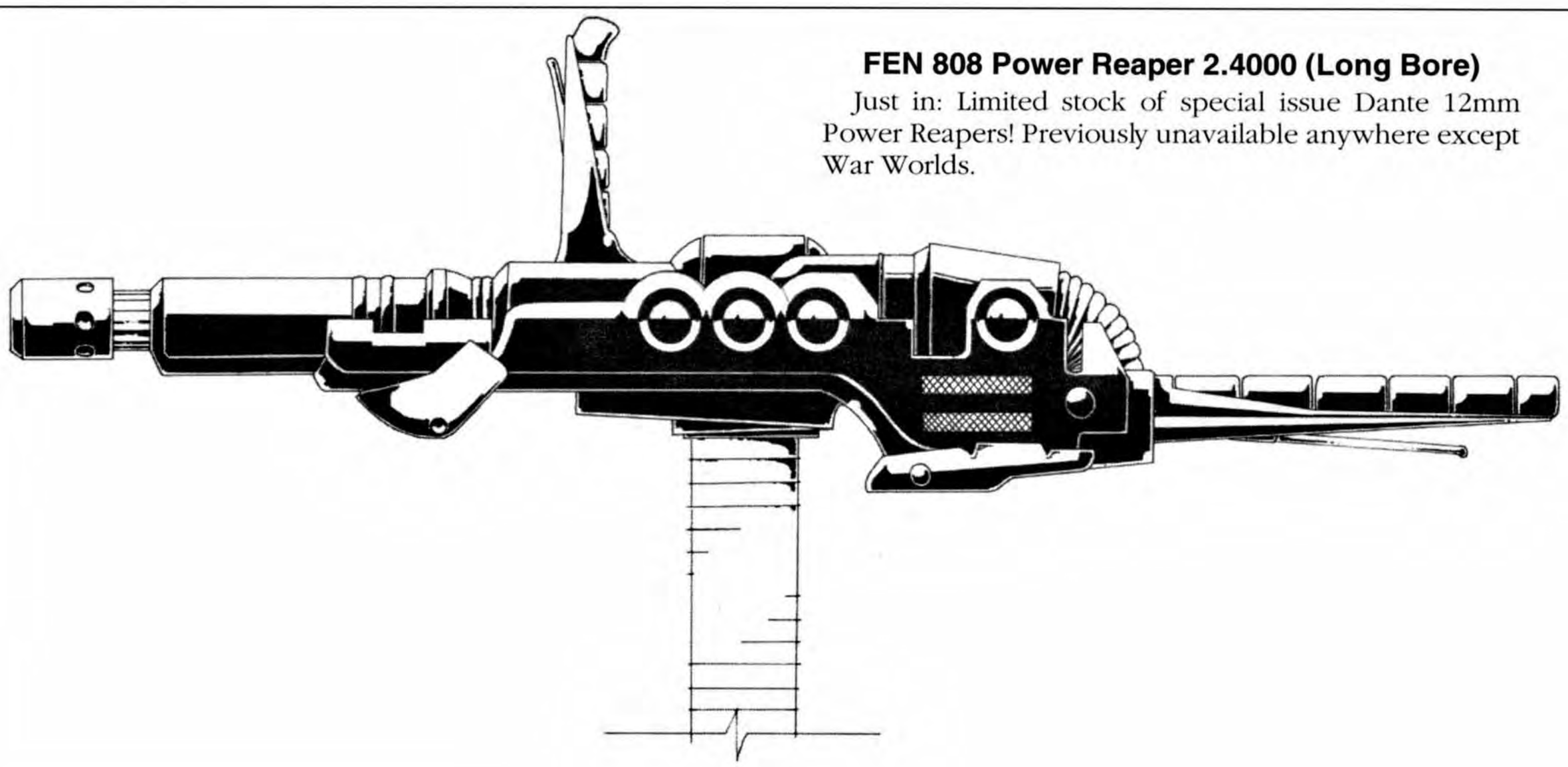
Scratch 'Water Pistol Queen' Donavin, Human

True Shot. The GAG is considerably smaller than the 30–30, as the barrel runs almost the total length of the rifle. It comes equipped with a gauss ammunition feed system that takes the round from the magazine and sends it to the firing chamber. The rifle has the ability to chamber and fire two rounds in 0.03 seconds with one trigger action. Following similar construction lines to all other FEN hardware, the 93 GAG has a full ceramic case, barrel and moulded grip. The GAG comes ready to fit silencer, flash suppressor, sights and recoil baffling.

FEN 091 Farjacket 17mm Pump Pistol

The need for a compact pistol with the knock–out punch of an assault rifle has been the concern of FEN's deign team for some time now. The Farjacket is the first design from FEN that fits this role. The Farjacket is devastatingly more damaging than the legendary 'Blitzer'. The 17mm shell guarantees large amounts of tissue damage no matter what type of round is used. Full ceramic case and inner frame with poly–alloy internals make the Farjacket's weight enough to negate the more uncomfortable aspects of the recoil of the 17mm round. The pistol has a built–in 5 round chamber. The FEN Farjacket comes ready to fit laser painting, recoil baffling, silencer and flash suppressor.





FEN 808 Power Reaper 2.4000 (Long Bore)

Just in: Limited stock of special issue Dante 12mm Power Reapers! Previously unavailable anywhere except War Worlds.



GROOVE TOWN

JOK WEAR

Jok wear is a wholly owned subsiduary of SLA Industries

downtown rising

Insight into the trials and tribulations of civilian existence by Sarah Pressman.

©900SD, Third Eye News Journal.

"What, get rid of Downtown? Are you kidding? Damn near 90% of my BPNs start and end there. See, if it weren't for Downtown in all its sleazy glory, there'd be a lot of operatives on Mort lookin' for jobs, I can tell ya."

Boris (21), Female Human Operative, SCL 9A

"Man, who needs The Pit when you've got Downtown? It's got everythin'. You name it, it's probably here, under some tarpaulin in the Black Market. Sure, it's pretty dangerous at night, but so is Uptown! You ever bumped shoulders with a drunk and disorderly Brain Waster? For the public's benefit, my ass."

Wire (19), Male Krosstown Traffic Gang Member

"SLA Operatives are always going on about how rough the Downtown nightlife is, well, I've got news for you. It's always night time in Downtown, all the way down to its bloody core. 24 hours a day, it's rife with crime, poverty and murder. You just wouldn't believe how bad it really is."

John Haven (20) SLA Shiver

Come rain, hail or storm, the unstable mass of Downtown has stood steadfastly for 600 years of SLA Industries, blind to change and clutching to the poor and helpless inhabitants of Mort like a mother to a stillborn child. The majority of its population lie dormant, held tight within the compressed apartments and hovels that are racked neatly along the Downtown gangplanks and walkways.

It is an intertwining labyrinth of urban chaos, stretching tunnels and passageways so complex that you had to have spent your entire natural born life there just to keep your head above it.

When Victor Bromson (Universal Times) called Downtown 'a claustrophobic shadow of progress', he wasn't lying. The lower sectors of Downtown have more dark shadows and corners than a Necanthrope's persona, and the alarming thing is that this urban sprawl is still expanding, pushing scarily close to the nightmarish Cannibal Sectors.

Downtown is a rudimentary shelter for all of Mort's civilian masses –and all that they fear. Many operatives would find this universally hostile environment unbearable. The common foe has many guises, it can walk on four legs or two, and it is usually on your doorstep. When the people of Downtown watch Slaughterhouse Six and GoreZone, they're watching their own homes on screen. The merciless conflict of progress is not a pot of plastique over the rainbow, it is the here and now for the helpless civilian.

SLA TV, to the Downtown civilian is not just entertainment, it is a survival guide. Through watching the forthcoming events and bulletins, the average joe can spot the approaching violence a mile off, no rangefinders needed and when you've discovered that you're walkway is set to be a GoreZone within one hour, it is best to lock up tight or get out fast until the televised anarchy has subsided.

"Yeah, our walkway was billed for a GoreZone last week. Jeez, it was bad. The Shivers came round three hours before the damn thing started, I mean, what's a poor guy like me gonna do for three hours 'cept run for cover? I had to crash out at my brother–in–law's 'til it was over. Christ, the thing musta' lasted for five hours and I hate the sonovabitch."

Al Petron (39), Unemployed Civilian

The infamous (although very popular) GoreZones are as frequent in Downtown as cold showers. The GoreZone network takes its cameras mainly down into the depths of Lower Downtown in the basin of Central Mort. With the permission of SLA authorities, the GoreZone team quietly creep down into the darkest regions of Downtown and open specially chosen vents to disused service hatches. Within these dark and unchartered territories lie the resting inhabitants of Cannibal Sectors 1–5. From behind locked hatches creep Carriens, Sewer Pigs, urban waste mutants, Cognates and worse which are then herded to the surface above. Operatives, Contract Killers, Shock Armour and Necanthropes alike arm up for their ghastly approach, then the chaos ensues...

"Wow, like the last GoreZone was great man, y'know the 'Jedlay Walk massacre'? Yeah, they were pourin' outta that tube, man, they were tearin' each other apart all the way up. The Red Death Cognate were wastin' loads of Carrien before they got jumped by Sour Blood and Ultra Violet. It was excellent, there were bullets and blades everywhere. I don't think they got all the Red Death dudes though, 'cause the cameras caught Vigadeath boltin' back into the sewers. He took out that Contract Killer, 'Blue Light', on the way down. I always said he was ripe for the chop. Oh yeah, there were a couple of Props there, too. Jedlay Walk really needed some hot protection against all that shit, man, so they hired out Red Harvest and Bane Root. They survived too, I think that Bane Root guy musta wasted more beasties than the damn SLA Ops did. Just proves you can't beat good old fashioned 'streetwise'."

Dan Girl (17) Krosstown Traffic Gang Member

The GoreZone Network has one of the highest viewing figures on Mort and in the entire World of Progress. You can't beat the Downtown lunatic for a laugh, it would seem. The fans and avid TV viewers love the GoreZone –just as long as their walkway is not scheduled to be next week's set.

"GoreZone?! Don't talk to me about the GoreZone! Those crazy bastards trashed my apartment. Do you know what it's like to watch your



1993 Pol Sigerson.



home get destroyed by Jeff Moreau and The Stain having a head butting contest in your living room?"

Anonymous GoreZone Prize Winner

GoreZone take full responsibility for the re–sealing of these open vents. After each event, the GoreZone team will trek back into service tunnels and shut the hatches, until another time.

Operatives have to have a special invite to the GoreZone. This is difficult as the GoreZone only really accepts media icons that the SLA public will recognise, like Contract Killers with big name sponsors. However, the payment for these special GoreZone guests are very favourable indeed.

Spoilt For Choice

The inhabitants of Downtown witness unspeakable acts and atrocities daily and from such experiences grow wild and frightening imaginations. The Downtown families automatically think the worst when the children are late home. Any number of things could have happened to them, they are the common prey for the various deadly factions of urban society. They can be attacked and robbed –after all, everybody in Downtown is flat broke and there is always a percentage that will thieve simply in order to survive. Some of the teenagers get lost and fall foul of hungry Carriens and bloodthirsty serial killers. Others simply stray away from the drudgery of family life. They are hypnotised by the brighter lights of the city streets. Some join gangs and wear 'the colours' with porcelain pride. There are others who go one step further and get mislead and brainwashed by the ripe offers of DarkNight and the Soft Companies, hoping for a better life than that which they had. Many youths choose to sell themselves, physically, to the lonely shadows that walk silently amongst the walkways in search of good times. Vile hobos and respectable businessmen and women alike will buy the services of these desperate unfortunates for the night, or for ever, no questions asked.

There is a new business in the sleazy alleys and ghettos that has no consideration for those whose hearts it might break or whose pleasures it will satiate –it will gladly steal any pretty young girl or boy. All the infamous 'Skin Trade' cares about is the money and goods that are exchanged for their sex slaves.

"Oh, it breaks my heart when this happens. It doesn't bear thinking about at my age. I keep asking myself why? They're just children, lost children. Don't the SLA authorities realise what is happening, the evil that is growing in our homes, the filth?

Mr. and Mrs. Vaugh lost their little girl Suzy five days ago... my god, she was only eleven! It is sick, how men and women, grown adults, can take responsibility for stealing and corrupting the bodies of these poor young children.

Those perverted monsters have shattered the lives of the Vaugh family. They have no knowledge of what's happening to their little daughter, whether she's alive or... who can tell? Damn them all!"

Margaret Austin (50), Retired Librarian

YOU HAVE BEEN VISITED BY:

SKIN TRADE

FOR ALL YOUR PERSONNEL NEEDS



The city walls are smothered with posters of missing people, issued by worried love ones who know, deep down, that they're prayers will never be answered. Countless civilians simply disappear every day and night, eaten, killed and stolen. Both Monarch Law Enforcement and SLA Shiver Unit authorities are snowed under by the pleas of the common people –but in most cases they are outmanned and outgunned by the perpetrators. Up against the likes of the Skin Trade, police organisations are at a near standstill, with virtually no leads with which to track the cruel slave traders or their hide outs. They simply can't find them. All the evidence that has been obtained on the matter is a collection of 'calling cards' specifying that the skin trade has stolen yet another victim. These cards vary from sector to sector, indicating that numerous skin trade groups are operating the length and breadth of Downtown, seemingly without any threat of suppression or exposure.

"These poor people just don't understand. When someone goes missing and one of these cards is left in their place, it means they're gone –an' no amount of prayin' or police hounding is gonna bring them back. They're gone for good and no one knows seems to know where."

Monarch Chief Harold Brannigan (26 years service)

To date, there are three Skin Trade organisations known to be operating in Downtown; Slap and Tickle, Puppy Talk and Delicacy, which is believed to be the biggest.

Delicacy lives by the standard philosophy of all industry; profit. Obviously, therefore, the more merchandise they acquire, the better for them. Quantity is everything to Delicacy and as long as there's a market, they're not caring who they steal. On average, Delicacy henchmen kidnap around 50 to 70 youngsters per day from reliable venues –'clutch points', as they are known. Although these numbers may seem staggering, the victims are stolen from a wide variety of clutch points, ranging from sleeping suburbs to dirty Black Market corners. Few Skin Trade organisations operate with such boldness, and it is believed that SLA Industries has gathered some reliable data on 'Delicacy' from opposing Skin Traders who are losing business due to Delicacy's phenomenal expansion. All events and

circumstances relating to the Skin Trade are now being placed under the scrutiny of SLA Internal Affairs.

The Delicacy henchmen are specially picked to operate in the dependable clutch–points. Most are very handsome and are stacked with cash in order to bribe their victims. All are trained in seduction. Delicacy henchmen can be either male or female and they always have at least 2000ū in cash or drugs on them. Typically they skulk around street corners, nightclubs, arcades and brothels, particularly around the 'Downtown Beacon'. Henchmen rarely work from the same clutch point twice in a row. Once they have a potential 'pull', Skin Trade trucks are waiting on stand–by for that all–important pick up.

When the unsuspecting victims arrive at the trucks, they are immediately tranquillised with knock out drugs (usually Bio–block), then hung like butcher meat from steel bars that stretch the length of the vehicle. This method of racking the victims saves space for more cargo. Once the bars cannot hold any more, the henchmen lay the victims out flat on wheeled palettes for easy dispersal.

Once full, the trucks speed back to the ever shifting 'Meat Markets', secret warehouses that move around Lower Downtown, selling their human goods to those with money and appetites. When the trucks arrive at the 'Meat Markets', the victims are carried out on palettes into holding pens for inspection and auction. Before viewing, they are injected with diluted Personal Interest to make them 'aroused' but not completely 'blissed', then they are stripped naked. The holding pens are similar to that for holding farm animals. The floor is covered with biogenetic straw and fenced with steel gates. The captives are also monitored by henchmen equipped with cattle prods, in case victims with a strong constitution resist the effect of the watered down Personal Interest. Until the captives are sold to the buyers, they are stored like animals in terrible conditions. In the 'Meat Markets', it is usually bitterly cold or unpleasantly hot, depending on the present warehouse's position in relation to the heating vents. The pens are slopped out (usually by the captives) once a day and the victims themselves are hosed down with tepid water.

Delicacy are making serious money. They have to be if they can afford to hire out Props like 'Pigman' annually for security. Word on the street is that Delicacy has reached Soft Company status and is receiving backing from Dark-Night, including weapons and other hardware.

Despite generous bids from rival industries in the World of Progress, Delicacy remains on its own two feet, and is as business–like as the next organisation. It is the first to cut out the dead wood in order to prosper. Unless it has selling potential, it is of little value and this includes the merchandise. Unless a buyer purchases a victim within one week, he or she is disposed of by Pigman or dumped in the sewers.

There are some Skin Traders, however, who employ a completely different approach, aiming for the top percentage of the market. It has been rumoured that 'Puppy Talk' often sells extremely young boys and girls to corporates for high costs. Cloak Division has already started on an objective to wipe out any Skin Trade sales inside the SLA perimeter and has commissioned operative squads to thoroughly investigate Lower Downtown and halt the Skin Trade Empire for good.



PROPS FOR HIRE



"Two weeks ago, me and a friend had to go to the 'Depth Charge' to hire out a Prop for Krosstown Traffic. The Black Knives cognate –y'know, Mr. Boo Hoo, Chopping Block and all that bunch had moved into our sector, right next to Heartland. We didn't need to watch the horror channel with that shit going down next door. To make matters worse, the Red Death Troupe have just got themselves together again after that GoreZone at Jedlay Walk, so they're goin' for the Black Knives. Vigadeath says he's gonna chain Mr. Boo Hoo, on account of his bein' a sick bastard and they were usin' our turf for a stabbin' match. We didn't like this much so Hurrel sends us out with a stack of UNIs and tells us to go an' get some decent Props. My mate, Berry, says we oughta hire out Bane Root –but he's as crazy as the serial killers. Sure he's good but he only works for U.V. drugs. Besides, once he wasted the psychos, I figured he might make us next for his 'vertebrae' collection. Nah, we just decided to get some guys with good guns and that was it. After all, we didn't want another 'Jedlay Walk' disaster, did we? Anyway, it took ages gettin' there, I mean, it's like way down where all that bad shit happened in 300 SD. We couldn't even get past the gates, y'know, for the security. Anyway, after another hour of pushy Props makin' offers, we finally walked out with Red Harvest and Spooky. I wanted Chillie Willie but he was way out of our price range."

Boxy (17), Krosstown Traffic Gang Member

In the face of the bloodcurdlingly horrific and the just plain weird, SLA Industries and its brood of operatives have a lot to answer for. The people of Downtown depend upon the industrial empire for protection, though it seems that no one will protect them from the nightmares that Progress has created. City walls of Lower Downtown are plastered in missing posters, all young and innocent. Tense parents and eager t.v. viewers alike dream that 'heaven' will send SLA operatives to bring their children home and destroy the darkness that surrounds them. Unfortunately, man and woman–power alike is spread so thin in

these massive sectors that the responsibility is left in the ill–equipped hands of SLA funded Shivers and freelance Monarch Law Enforcers.

In spite of corporate lawmen dealing with the worst of the problems at hand, the masses need more than promises to protect them, and hardware and the experience with which to use it always comes in useful against the night horrors of the Cannibal Sectors and sewers. Money can pay for the tranquillity Downtown people deserve. It is common for civilian society (especially gangs and emerging Soft Companies) to hire Props (hired muscle), like Red Harvest, Evil E and Spooky for protection against Carriens, marauding gangs, hunting killers and sometimes even SLA operatives.

"Don't listen to these other Props. They're overpriced and inexperienced, besides, they like to rip off kids like you. I know the ropes better than these bums – sure, they've got the hardware but they ain't got the brains to use 'em. See this badge here? Two years service on Dante and SLA wasn't giving these things away, neither. That means you can rely on me to get the job done and cheaply, too. See the poster? It says 250ū, now you ain't gonna get a better deal in the Depth charge, how about it?"

Red Harvest,

bartering for trade.

Props are always eager for work, even when they've got a job, Props are forever on the search for more money. The majority of the Props available will get the job done, to specification, although there are a few 'rip–off merchants'. Street gangsters who look for younger customers who they can swindle for every penny they've got and work little, if at all, in return and disappearing without trace when things get rough. Sometimes serial killers disguise themselves as Props in order to lure victims and guide them into target rich environments. The Prop is a loner, often a purist –and most importantly a businessman. To the Prop money is everything –if you ever do a freebie, nobody is your friend. Trust nobody, anybody you talk to just an associate, a customer or an informant, nothing more. Props live by a strict code of business and survival ethics. They never work for or help SLA Industries, they never work for free, they never show their true identity to anyone and they never let their heart rule their head.

"Hey, kids, yeah, come over here. You trying to make a commission with 'ol Red Harvest? You didn't go for the Dante service badge, did ya? Yeah? Bummer... hey, I've got an idea, right, I tell you what (excuse me a second)... Harvest, will you please shut the fuck up! Now as I was sayin', why don't we cut the price down and you hire me and my 10mm rifle out for 12 hours, say for 100ū?

Deal? Yeah."

Spooky (Prop) retaliates.

There is always a need for Props in Downtown but there is not always the cash to hire any great quantity so it is common for Props to outbid, and sometimes fight, each other for one job. It takes time to learn who are the best Props in the Depth Charge and separate the professionals from the amateurs. There are wads to choose





from and, like SLA operatives, every Prop is different.

The Props have easy access to the Black Market since they have cornered a vital section of Lower Downtown which puts them in a safe distance from SLA Industries Shiver Patrols; the 'Depth Charge'.

The Depth Charge is a subway area that was shutdown after the Fall of 300 when Salvation tower sank into the subterranean levels of Central Outskirts, crushing and disabling underground levels, subways and fibre–optic power cables. the 'Depth Charge' is so called by Downtowners because during the disaster, this territory got lucky and survived, retaining a free fusion power source and became a haven for the Props. Back in 300 SD. Particle ejectors and plasma firearms were still in issue on Mort, and these ancient weapons were popular with the Props.

The Depth Charge had an endless power supply, with which the Props could charge their particle cannons at no cost, undetected in the depths of Mort, hence the now familiar name.

Today, the Depth Charge is still in operation. Props still reside in and hire out from this stretch. However, it no longer serves the same great purpose that it once did, since energy weapons were phased out about a century later and SLA discovered that Props were feeding off the hidden power supply, free of 'charge' (pardon the pun) and cut them off. Nonetheless, there are a great many Props in the Depth Charge, all armed and well trained so SLA Industries leaves them to their own devices. This is not, however, an act of cowardice or kindliness on the part of SLA Industries', there are several substantial reasons why SLA does not forcibly disband the Depth Charge.

Despite a few controversial incidents, Props pose little threat to SLA Industries in any way –although SLA will pay highly for the arrests of freelancers. The Props make good media sales and the public love them. Their self–righteous determination on Slaughterhouse Six, GoreZone and the like is too popular to interfere with. Props save SLA Industries time and money. Why send out SLA operatives to exterminate Carriens who are too close to civilian territories, or fresh serial killers attacking gangs when the gangs will pay the Props to do it for them. Besides, as far as SLA is concerned, the Props are so permanently twitchy that they'd probably kill each other before dealing any serious damage to society –although there have been a few cases.

"Hey, Spooky! This Dante badge is for real, bitch!"

Red Harvest (Prop) protects his pride.

Every so often, the heat really rises in Downtown ghettos, the crime wave grows and gangs fight to kill. When things get this heavy, it calls for heavy response and protection so gang bosses spend their last UNIs in hard times to hire out serious Props who cost the earth.

Props like Mr. Jealousy, Chillie Willie, Bane Root and Sonny Boy are renowned throughout Downtown for their age, reputation and public stature. High prices rest on their heads, permanently, though finding them after a 'hit' is difficult in the extreme and chancing entry into the Depth Charge is a risk not many are willing to take.

Most of these old Props have an almost 'Hallowe'en Jack' type philosophy on business, i.e. they barely ever speak, they get the job done and show no mercy. Customers know what to expect from these individuals so any discussions are brief and one–sided. Through so many years of hunting and killing, they have collected serious amounts of company hardware (as well as a few lethal ranks of psychosis) so they can afford to charge the full rate and tend to kick up major fuss if they don't receive the full financial requirements. Most of the major league Props are only hired out for assassinations, they are usually ex–SLA Industries and DarkNight, so they're fully trained and guaranteed to complete any requirements which gangs and organisations put in front of them.

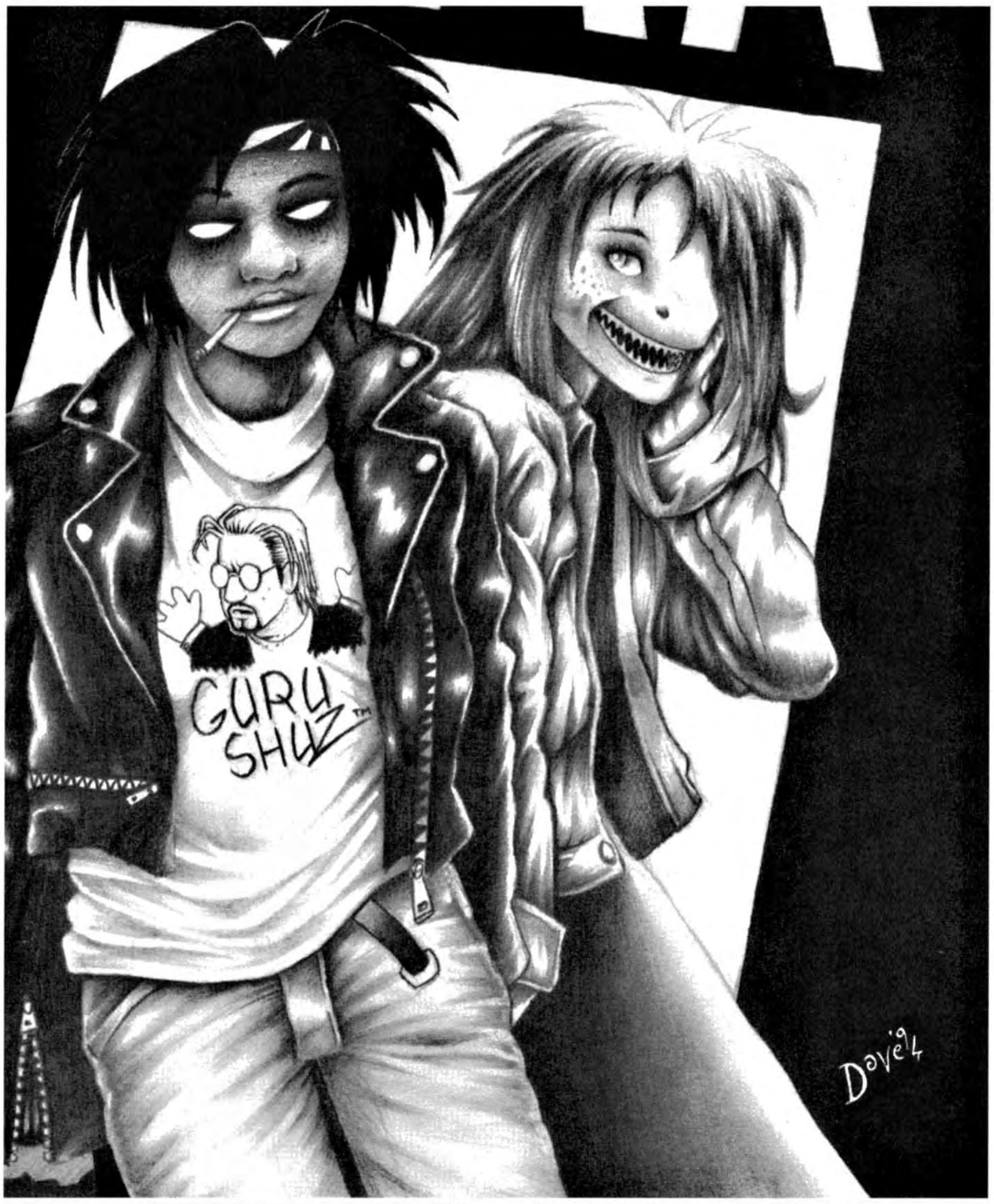
"Man, the journey home was worse, all Red Harvest and Spooky did was bitch at each other all the way to Heartland. Hurrel says that all the Props are like that nowadays 'cause there's too many of them and not enough cash. Bummer, eh? Anyway, by the time we got back, the two Cognates had already started tearin' into each other. It was terrible, man. That stupid chick, Gun, tried to jump in on the Red Death Troupe's side but Dan Girl managed to pull her out before they wasted her. I thought that big black dude in the Red Death Troupe, whatsisname, Shape, or something was really gonna take her out. I don't know why Hurrel doesn't sort that stupid girlie out. Right, so there's blood, blades an' bullets all over the place. It's kinda unfair that the Black Knives are beatin' up the Red Death Troupe 'cause there's like more of them, but it works out alright cause the Prop dudes start with the Black Knives. Vigadeath and 'The Mask' started arguin' with each other over whose gonna kill Mr. Boo Hoo. The Mask, y'see is an ob... ob... obsessive and he only really goes for people with icy blue eyes, weird huh? An guess what, Boo Hoos got 'em. Eventually Vigadeath wasted Mr. Boo Hoo with his big mean chain, god, I thought he was never gonna give up on that guy. Meanwhile, 'The Mask' started on our dudes, so we all dived for our rooms and locked up real tight. Then the SLA Shivers arrived and everyone dived back into the sewers. I think the Red Death Troupe won 'cause the Shivers had to move lots an' lots of Black Knife corpses. Jeez, what a mess, the blood stained the ground for a week, man... still, it was good for a laugh."

Boxy (17), Krosstown Traffic Gang Member

Talent Scouts

"It's kinda difficult to guess what SLA's lookin' for when it hires startin' ops. At the moment they're workin' they're way through the Downtown gangs cause the 'innocent' look is in right now. Besides, there's all that shit with the Skin Trade going down, so no angel faced kid wants to be out on the street. Still, SLA always trains kids to be mean –and they are. If you were a pretty young SLA op, male or female, you can guarantee you'd be packing a MAC knife. Personally, I think SLA's fightin back at the Skin Trade. I mean, Delicacy are gonna get a shock if they pull in some sweet young kid that turns out to be a knife–wielding martial–arts maniac. Hah! Yeah, the talent scouts have just pulled in some K.T.er called 'Phantom' –she's kinda like that cute Ebon boy, 'Geist' or somethin', only she ain't Ebon. Phantom's a stunning girl and she's got some neat tricks up her sleeve –real original. Y'see, that's what SLA are lookin' for –individuality, a look that's new and 'in'. If you've got that, the media swamp you, they'll adopt you."

Amber (Operative) SCL 6





Having that vital edge that sets you apart from normal society and finds you a position in SLA Industries isn't easy. The requirements and qualifications needed by SLA vary from applicant to applicant and you only know what SLA is looking for once you're there, even then sometimes you're not sure what you did or didn't have that got you the position. One thing is for sure, SLA Industries know potential when they see it and won't settle for anything less than the best. But, exactly what is the best and how do you find it in a sprawling mass like Mort?

"SLA Industries teaches you empathy and perception when you're a Talent Scout. You should instinctively 'know' operative material when you see it. There are specifications set, apart from the general age bracket. The image is the first thing to search for, the way your target looks and the way they move. You put a box round 'em, like a t.v. set, and if that looks right then you move in on them. Whether you flutter cash, eyelids or anything else, you've got to watch their reaction, analyse the way they think. If the shoe fits, then you never stop 'til they're wearin' an operative's badge."

Karen Crest (23) Talent Scout SCL 6B

Twenty–four hours a day, SLA Industries' Talent scouts search high and low for that next media sensation, menacing Contract Killer or ingenious

Karen Crest

investigator. The question remains, in such an expansive area, where does the Talent Scout start in the face of Downtown's entirety?

"You ask any Talent Scout where to look for a 'would be' operative and I'll bet they say Gang Territory like Heartland for K.T. ers (Krosstown Traffic) or The Strip for the Johannes. This is where the talent lies, these kids have spent their lives out on the streets of Lower Downtown and they know the turf like the backs of their hands. They have vision. With just a little re–education, they can make great operatives and useful informants. These kids have options and opinions, attitudes that can be used constructively to halt the Skin Trade and eradicate other urban threats to SLA Industries.

"The youths of Downtown have never had it easy. Once they join SLA Industries, they don't expect things to get any easier, the only difference being that now they have a career. You'd be surprised at how brave even the starting ops can be."

Harold Grestan (29) Talent Scout SCL 5B



"Some kids are pretty shy, you know. I've always found that teenagers with exceptional talents are generally fairly modest, and some are embarrassed or even frightened by their capabilities–especially young feral Ebons. Then there are those who have potential but crack up during interviews and can barely fill out an application form or a C.V. The purpose of a talent scout is to catch the gifted individual in an informal setting.

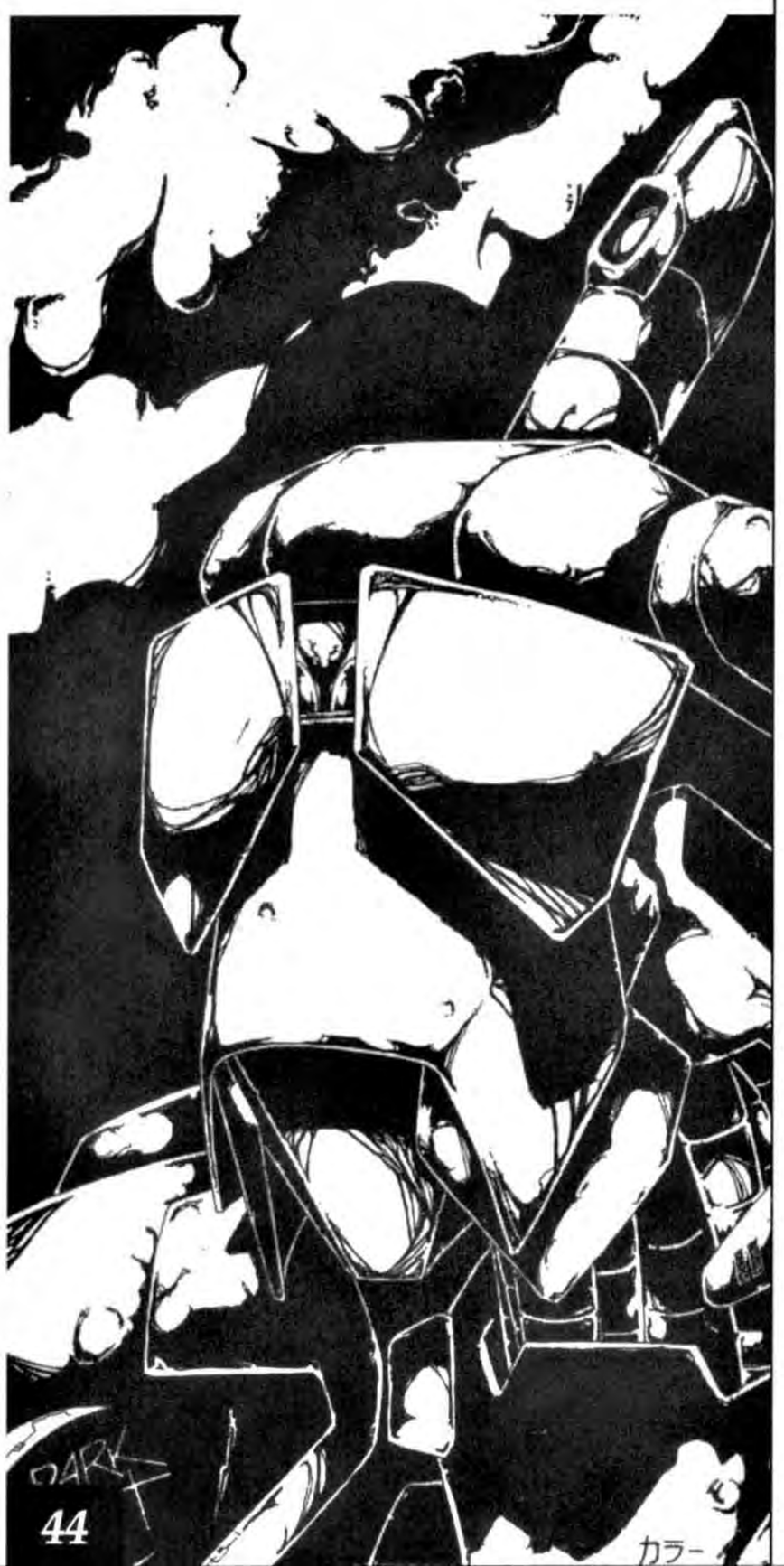
Kim Stefan (27) Talent Scout SCL 5A, Skyhog Surveillance



soft companies

"When you join SLA Industries, you're going to face more Soft Companies than DarkNight or Thresher. Believe me, there's no avoiding it. There are hundreds of Soft Companies operating around Mort alone. They've become the vermin infesting the world of SLA Industries and they're a lot more hassle than Carriens. On the other hand, Soft Companies have their uses... well, at least to operatives who want to make it with the media. The public loves to see an operative squad annihilate a Soft Company in one single, bloodthirsty encounter. Sometimes, this is like the 'last scene' after an epic track and chase around Mort, gathering clues for the high action finale that makes the sales. Whatever the style of encounter or the result, Soft Company footage brings in good money. Still, it's a harrowing thought that someday one of these small organisations might make it to Suppressor Power status and challenge SLA Industries, like DarkNight and Thresher."

Wolfgang Waldo (SCL 6A) Wraith Raider, Contract Killer



As the rival opposition grows within the heart of SLA society, two forces attempt to push SLA Industries into a corner using a variety of means and corrupt plans. The ploys used by DarkNight are as shady as their name would suggest and their schemes are silent, subtle and deadly. They are truly the hidden enemy and are as much of an enigma as SLA's own Internal Affairs. At the opposite end of the scale, Thresher's methods and motives are blunt and bloodthirsty, taking on SLA Industries' toughest muscles by the use of state–of–the–art Powersuits, combat and tactics. With Vida at Thresher's disposal, they stay alive regardless of their losses. It is the key to their survival and their substantial successes.

But each time SLA Industries is pushed, it pushes back harder. It studies the opponent, discovers its weakness and then pounces. When major forces clash in such a way, sparks and splinters fly off and regroup. Such shards of subversion and disobedience are the dangerous haven for the restless and ambitious, and are the basis of the multitude of Soft Companies.

The effect of a single Soft Company against SLA Industries is pathetic in the face of such an Industrial Giant. Most Soft Companies are outmanned and outgunned, having on average only 20 to 100 members. The vast majority of these small organisations are short–lived, for as soon as they are exposed they are hunted down by SLA operatives and exterminated. With such high odds against them, their bravery is admirable. But what possesses paltry rival companies that comprise only 20 or more rebels to lock swords with a mega–corporation like SLA Industries, that spans entire Merchant Solar Systems?

The combined subversion and rebellion of countless minuscule, minor rivals is the reason. They are like a pack of hyaenas attempting to take down a lion by snapping at its ankles. With one swipe of SLA Industries' mighty paw, it destroys several hundred Soft Companies outright but it is nonetheless aware that one day it may be dragged down by the corporate pestilence that gnaws at SLA Industries' power and patience.

"Oh, yeah, like ha ha. Soft Companies, they're crap, right? Wrong. Sure, they're not as well trained or equipped as we are but there are just so many of them! Man, we were chasing



them through Nokman's Walk, y'know, wasting them good and givin' them a good run for their money, right? Bad move, they just whipped round an alley into the darkness and before we knew it, blam! I'd just lost four of my squad. One was a real good friend of mine, a Shaktar called R'kn'nh who was too good to go out like that... a sneaky ambush, I shoulda known. Watch for these Soft Companies, man, they're weak but wily. " They ain't got much, but what they have got they use well."

Thomas Halin (SCL 9A), Human Operative, speaking on the aftermath of the Dalini Brothers' early demise at the hands of the Soft Company known as 'Mouse Trap'.

The Soft Company scene is a boon for the SLA media, but at a high cost to SLA itself. The public holds no sympathy for the small rivals, thanks to propaganda spread by Third Eye. Every time a growing Soft Company makes a successful hit on SLA Industries, the people who suffer are the civilian population as SLA brutally scours Downtown in search of Soft Company members. Homes are wrecked and the inhabitants beaten, while SLA makes sure the Soft Company gets the blame. The public see the pain and suffering that rival subversion causes and are in uproar. SLA Industries is then overcome with prejudiced public pressure for the immediate eradication of the Soft Company concerned (or implicated). When SLA Industries can so easily turn the public against a rival, it can afford to send the pick of its Contract Killers to destroy them and big names mean big sales; everybody's happy.


Brian Bendis
fire
Fire
Fingers
SPIDER
TKRC
fire



Except the rival, who becomes more embittered –and so the struggle goes on. Some Soft Companies fight for the sake of the masses, who unknowingly suffer the bulk of SLA propaganda and adverse publicity. Most, however, are self–seeking entrepreneurs, mad with ambition and the lust for challenge. They follow the successful trails of the long lasting Soft Companies and learn from the mistakes of those who stumbled on the path.

The usual Soft Company policy is to attack civilians first, as bait, then ambush the first SLA forces to arrive on the scene of the crime. These are usually Shiver Units, whom the Soft Company can handle adequately. Once the rival has laid waste to the last Shiver, they salvage what they can then swiftly retreat to the depths of Downtown, to the Black Market. This is the standard means of fundraising for a typical Soft Company.

Most Soft Companies buy guns, armour and equipment from DarkNight agents operating in the furthest end of the Black Market stalls under a thick tarpaulin. Some Soft Companies obtain the weapons and equipment for their own personal use, others buy a surplus amount to resell. The extra stock is stripped and converted to make the Soft Company's own 'Cheap Franchise'. This means of rough trade works well for the truly desperate Downtowners who live a little too close to the edge. The problem being that the majority will still buy from DarkNight, suspecting the Soft Company of foul play. For this reason, a large percentage of Soft Companies will deal in the large variety of designer DarkNIght drugs. It is then up to the minor rival to 'up or down' the original price. Very few Soft Company members will actually try or use the merchandise.

"Use the drugs, kid? what! Are you crazy? These babies are so hot, I'd be as well shooting up molten metal."

Anonymous Soft Company agent leaving the Black Market

In a cruel and merciless environment like Mort, everything has a mortality value. Every face in the media has a short period of life in which to cram a few moments of fame.

They say that serial killers aren't worth their salt until they have taken their fourteenth victim. The Soft Company scene is no different to that of the serial killers in many respects. They will appear and disappear, rise and fall in the eyes of the media. However, the Soft Company's rocky path to success and survival is not quite as straightforward as theirs. There are tangled internal politics to negotiate. As an organisation, it must respect certain aspects of the public's moral code or it will be regarded as a Cognate, but if it stays too business–like in its approach the various corporate and investigation departments will easily hunt them down. What the Soft Company must achieve in order to survive is a social and tactical compromise that incorporates a mix of the actions and ideas of preceding successful Soft Companies and some originality.Only a small percentage of the multitudes of minor rival organisations last any longer than a few months. Those who died got sloppy, paying too much attention to their own initial successes and selfish desires. Inexperience, overriding ambition and all–consuming greed was their downfall.

In the history of the World of Progress, an intelligent few have risen from the depths of the backstabbing world of the small time freelancers. A brief selection whose foresight and extensive preparation led them to rise in the estimation of all Soft Companies. Names such as the R.I.P. Bunnies, the hardware specialists; Fire, the shock terrorists and Truth, Life and Vision, the psycho–missionaries.



S·I·L·V·E·R B·A·C·K

Power Projects 112 SilverBack Armour

"SilverBack; mammal, canine. Found in rural areas of New Paris. 40cm in length from head to tail. 10cm to shoulder. Fine, white fur with a glossy sheen. Normal diet comprises of small rodents and insects. Fierce, territorial animals. Nocturnal feeders. Forages in packs of three to six. Will attack almost anything that intrudes upon its domain."

"New Parisian Nightlife", Pulse Publications, New Paris 899 SD.

The current trend is for thicker, stronger armour with a great deal of added extras, such as anti–dazzle, internal air supply, special optics and so on. The Power Projects' 'SilverBack' changes all that. Being small, compact, extremely fast and offering protection which other armour types in its class lack. The SilverBack is the way forward.

Although there will always be a need for larger, more powerful armour types, the smaller, more nimble suit design has gained in popularity, and the accumulation of three years' research and development has brought you the SilverBack, with its state–of–the–art gyroscopic stabilisers, new low mass alloys, aerodynamics found normally on the Kilcopter, full on board computer assisted navigation (ground/airborne) and management systems.

The SilverBack originally started life as a high–gravity–world suit but the direction of the research quickly moved on to that of a first strike urban pacification unit. A role that the SilverBack is perfect for.

The Exo–Skeleton is an 'Over Burn™' model of the Mk 12 Exo–Base chassis. The PP 112 is powered so that the SilverBack operates at a constant 165% of its normal power output, giving you –the wearer– an outstanding amount of speed and manoeuvrability. The polycarbonate alloys used in the armour are extremely light, durable and impact resistant. This gives an exceptional weight saving on the finished suit.

The armour is fashioned from a base shell of 'Crackshot' ceramic under which are alternating layers of polycarbonate alloy and pockets of teflon resin. These are designed to slow the velocity of projectiles rapidly, minimising the collateral damage to the armour (10mm Auto(pistol)), 420m/s to 0.4m/s), and reducing the projectiles' momentum before penetrating the inner skin of the armour. The most revolutionary aspect of the PP 112 is the innovative 'Fusion–Turbine'.

The flight system on the SilverBack is Power Projects newest step forward in the ongoing redesign of the PP Armour range. The F–T not only gives you added speed but also opens up a new dimension of street tactics, movement and fighting styles. The sky is now yours. The light armour class is no longer the poor man's protection but is something to be feared by every enemy of SLA that dares to show its face on the streets of Mort. Power Projects gave one of the first SilverBacks to come off the production line to 'Phantom', a Kick Murder graduate who has just completed a rather strenuous training program. This is what she had to say about the SilverBack:

"When the dude from PP came to me and asked 'Hey, want to try out this new armour class?' What could I say but 'Gimme, gimme, gimme!' Then I saw it. I wasn't too impressed at first. It was a lot smaller than I thought it would be, but I've got an open mind about these things (I have to, working with the guy I do) so I slipped into it. All the HUD stuff came up in front of me. That was all I needed to see. I was hooked. The SilverBack is one mean sonovabitch. Fast? It's faster than a bloody gauss train. I never thought something could move that way. The jet pack turbine thing is out of this world. I mean you can actually fly, for gods' sake! I took it out for a test run in Downtown and scared the life out of about 20 people as I leapt from building to walkway and back. Serious amounts of fun can be had with one of these. It's a bit freaky at first, getting used to the speed, the flying stuff and everything. Controlling the suit takes a bit of skill, but within about ten hours, I had the thing more or less under control. So –hats off to Power Projects. First class. Well, that's what I think anyway. Buy one!"

Phantom, Human, Mort, 900 SD.

Fusion–Turbine (aviation system)

The F–T system on the SilverBack allows you the freedom of the skies. Being able to travel at speeds of up to 30km/h at a ceiling of 70m in 5 second bursts with a cool–down period of 10 seconds between each burst. It is possible to 'jump' for longer periods at a time but this can lead to damage to the Fusion–Turbines. The F–T also enables you to leap sizable distances (30m) in whichever direction you choose. The speeds involved mean that collisions will inevitably occur. This is offset by the on–board management systems which will warn the user of impending impacts, in the form of scrolling messages across the HUD, and in cases where the collision is likely to be a potentially damaging one, the suit will take evasive manoeuvres to avoid it, i.e. if striking a walkway is unavoidable then the SilverBack's navigation system will compensate by throwing the armour's turbines into reverse to lessen the impact.

HUD (Heads Up Display)

The SilverBack's helmet design is a collaboration between Power Projects and FEN's Hardware studios, and includes software produced by FEN specifically for the SilverBack. The interior of the helmet has a very similar design to that of the FEN scout helmet and puts a massive amount of information at the user's disposal. The reality overlay system that FEN developed for the scout helmet has been completely overhauled to incorporate all the new functions. These include a battery of proximity sensors that will alert the user to any form of impending collision, a full nava–map set–up and a communication system that has, as well as the three standard ground channels, SKAF and Kilcopter bands.

Armour features

The need for the SilverBack to be able to climb with ease was also taken into consideration while it was being designed. For this purpose the 112 model has high adhesion grips built into the foot shock absorbers. There are also small reflex activated knee, elbow and hand spikes similar to the crampons used by mountaineers, to allow for the scaling or gripping of vertical surfaces.



GREEN BAG SHUFFLE
part two

"C'mon Elmoe, get up, you're bleeding on my carpet, woah, shh... I'm through. Hello, operator? Yeah, I'm trying to get through to D.H. Spencer... eh, Westside Sector... no, I don't know which walkway. Awww, jeez, look, try Red Whale Publication, I think he works there. Yeah, its in the SLA directory, its not likely to be a Soft Company, numb nuts! (sigh) Thank you... God, Elmoe, can you believe thi... hello, Spencer? Yeah, how's it going, you fat git! Cool, right, I need to ask you a favour, sweetie. I need some info on the latest 'Eastside Chops', naw–I tried Jay already. You don't know anything? Know anyone who does?, there's 50¢ for sweet talkin' Great, man, what's his name–Jackal?, right I'll just take some notes... okay, Ebon, SCL 7A, Kick Murder, White DeathSuit. Cheers Spence. What? Nah, I'm washing my hair, man. Oh yeah, tell Red I want my Tee Gee shirt back, the creep. See ya!" Click.

It was about 5.30pm by the time I'd raked through all my contacts, trying to get anything on these two psychos on Eastside. Unlike a lot of 'honourable' operative squads, I don't like a lot of messy enquiries and crappy research. The Green Bag Squad does not stride laudably through cheesy investigations, we shuffle. Me and the boys just sit on our behinds, phone our sleazy but nonetheless reliable contacts and track the sucker down. Everyone knows 'The Green Bag Shuffle'. We forget the 'scene of the crime' and all that banal stuff and head straight out to the bad guy's hideout. Once I'm through with the 'raking', the boys come in with the heavy stuff. They share a brain cell for most things, but when it comes down to gratuitous violence they are true scholars.

When I got back into my living room, Moger and McClusky had finished the consignment of 'Sit Still' beers and had moved on to chewing the furniture. Elmoe was sitting by the window nursing a thick lip kindly donated by McClusky, being the charitable Frother he is.

" um...gulp.Okay, Cheronna, what've we got?" McClusky said, raising his head from a recently vacated fish tank.

"Well, we... "

"Yeah, what's the score, boss?" Moger butted in.

" If you sit down and shut up, I'll tell you. Okay, I'll be straight, it ain't a lot. It seems that the crazy twins have been doing a good job at killing and coverin' their track. We're not the first squad to take the BPN. The last squad got wasted in Cannibal Sector One, forensics said it was this pair that got 'em."

"So, how are we gonna get 'em, boss?"

"Hush up, Moger! There's been some Ebon guy called 'Jackal' that's been operating' 'solo' out on that Sector. He could be on a Grey BPN or something, anyways, Spencer said that this guy might know something. What's the time?"

"Fithe Thirthy Sith, Theronna."

Cheers, Elmoe. I'll give him a call, see if we can arrange as meet."

I heard of this guy Jackal before. From what I've been told, he's about as nutso as the ones we're after. Jackal always works solo, he may be a sociopath but he does a damn good job on the Eastside. He's been on the Gore-Zone swinging' Ice Blades at the Carriens. I've seen him in action. Jackal is real good at killing but he's more like a Brain Waster than an Ebon so his own kind don't like him.

You get that sometimes, loner Ebons that grow up so mean that they can put Brain Wasters to shame, especially if they've been born and raised on Hades, the Industrial World. Its close to Static but not close enough to have an effect on its filthy surface.

"Hello, operator. Put me through to Jackal, SCL 7A, Kick Murder, Uptown."

"Please hold."

"If you're not business, get lost. If you are, leave your name and number after the tone."

"Hello, Jackal. My name's Cheronna, Green Bag Squad, I hear your working solo on the Eastside. I need some info, meet me at The Pit, tonight between 7 and 8pm. I'll pay. Bye."

Okay, so he's snotty and arrogant. I've dealt with worse. It was better to see this guy alone or else McClusky was gonna get twitchy at his attitude and get us all barred. To booze is to live so I told the boys to meet me at The PIt at 9pm and we'd start gettin' busy.

Come 7.55pm, there was still no sign of Jackal. I was all set to ditch the whole BPN, take the cut and down a 'Slosh' but then this white apparition comes meandering through the crowd towards me. Its Jackal.

"Hello, I take it you're... "

"Jackal. Let's not take too long, shall we? I'm meeting a woman in a few minutes."

I hate him, I despise him. I want to rip out his frontal lobes and stick them where the rain don't fall but I need this info bad. Jackal knows it and he's going to milk it for all it's worth, I can see it in those sinister black eyes of his. Jackal doesn't need the money, he's loaded, he's just enjoyin' the power trip –the ol' Ebon over Human syndrome. Cocky sonovabitch.

"Okay, Jackal, there's two psychopaths causing havoc in... "

"There's a great deal more than two in the Eastside, don't you know anything? How much Sweet Talk money have you got?"

" ...100¢ for the basics."

"You're looking for an Ex–War Criminal and Serial Killer, correct? The Dante veteran is known as Tremor Travis, he's lethal with automatic weaponry but average hand–to–hand. That's why he's made a deal with Bloody Valentine. She's a Martial Arts expert, of Orienta decent and also the owner of a particularly nasty set of custom vibro claws."

"What's the deal?"

"Tremor Travis want's to clean out a supposedly 'subversive area' called 'Windfalls Walk'. He hasn't got the time or ammo to annihilate the entire walkway, so he made a deal with Bloody Valentine –blades are cost effective, you know. She needs effectual medical drugs such as 'Kick Start Solo' that only Travis can supply. He has contacts in the Black Market too, so heavy duty equipment is always at his disposal.

"How do you know so much when its not your BPN?"

"I already bribed the locals in UNI's for the info so that 'squad' who took the BPN could pay me it back in Creds. I have already had my financier deduct the finalised amount from your savings. Good Evening."

"Oh sorry, Mr Jackal, there's just one more thing I wanted to ask you!"

"Yes... "

"I was wondering if you could explain the local gossip about you, a candid photographer, a can of Slosh and a Low Wave's assets?...


SONNY BOY

KARMA DLUGS

Alice™:

Powerful hallucinogenic which places the subject in a surreal fantasy world of their own imagination. The recorded effects of this drug have been wide and varied. It would appear to have set effects on certain individuals. Those that have a registered psychosis or phobia would appear to be trapped for hours in what they would claim to be their personal illusory hell. Those of a more stable disposition have reported idyllic flights of fantasy lasting for the same period of time as the other test subject's nightmares.



Drum™:

Drum induces complete calm on the user. It also gradually slips them into a complete catatonic state. When consciousness has returned (in about two to four hours), the subject will feel as though they had just had a full night of restful sleep. During this trance all they hear is the beat of their own heart and all they see are calming colours. Ebons use Drum quite often as the rest induced whilst on Drum is truly relaxing. So much so that in some cases of addiction the subject has never fully woken up and always looks and acts as if they have just got out of bed.



Flip™:

Designed as an anti–depressant, Flip gives a feeling of calm and composure which is unrivaled by any other pharmaceutical of its type on the market today. Even the mighty pleasure drug Beat cannot match the blissfulness experienced when under the influence of Flip.



Lumo™:

Lumo is a powerful pigmentation solution that alters the coloration of the user's skin to the chosen colour. There is a wide palette to choose from, including bright primaries, light pastels and various shades in between. Lumo is always very popular at parties and when out clubbing –contests between users are common to see who can come up with the best mix of colours. Colour variations are easily achieved by mixing together different types of the drug. Lumo is taken by injection.



Slosh™:

This fizzy white liquid is on sale in a few operative bars on Mort. It has all the 'fun' effects of alcohol without the hangovers and vomiting that are normally associated with being drunk. It comes in 500ml cans and tastes like very sweet apple pie. A rather intoxicating brew, two cans should have anybody flat on their back.



Blaze UV™:

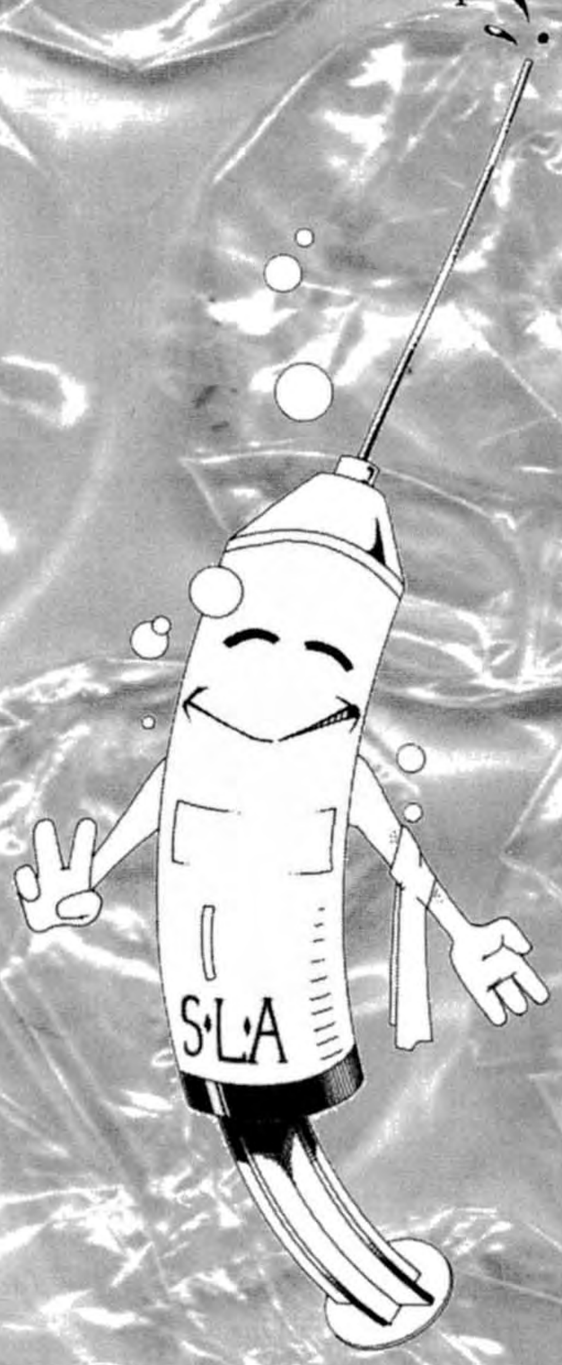
The complete integration of combat drugs into operative society has lead to an alarming rise in the rate of serous drug addiction cases handled by the Department of Pharmacology each year. The introduction of 'quick burn' drug types should help with the problem. Blaze UV™ is the first of many to hit the market. It still contains all the desired effects off UV™, but the effects do not last as long. This was accomplished by introducing powerful adrenalin stimulants into the drug, acting like a natural version of Flush –unlike UV itself, where the drug remained in the blood stream for hours, leading to addiction.



Bass™:

This is a highly advanced stimulant that affects the users physical potential. The chemical make–up of the drug affects the muscle bundles, allowing the user to push their strength to the limit by sending accelerated signals to the muscles. This in turn forces the muscles to work with much more speed than is normally possible, imparting increased psychical prowess to the user for a short period.





Kick Start +

First new development since the standard issue Kick Start. Kick Start + is a strong tissue reconstructor that rapidly re-grows flesh, muscle and also speeds up the knitting of damaged bone structure like standard Kick Start. The differences between the two are not instantly recognisable. Kick Start + is in fact a stronger solution of normal Kick start that has been spliced with Flush to reduce the chance of addiction.

Kick Start `Solo'

With the ever increasing number of operatives that `go it alone';i.e. start their carrier within SLA as solo employees attached to neither squad nor department, the need for drugs to match this new lifestyle becomes more and more important. Kick Start 'Solo` should be the chosen pharmaceutical product of the 900's for all operatives, not just the loners. With very careful splicing, `Solo' has properties that can be found in Beat, Pain Away and even UV. The first true `Jack of all trades' of the drug world.

Karma™ KS

The development labs of Nuke Tendon™ came up with their own version of Kick Start due to the increasing number of clients that wanted something that was designed specially to aid them and their biogenetic implants. Karma™ KS is the answer to that demand. The properties of the drug are almost identical to that of standard Kick Start but with a few added compounds to help the healing abilities of biogenetic flesh and bone. Karma™ KS acts as normal Kick Start when taken, with no detrimental effects to those without implants -but those with Nuke Tendon implants will receive added benefits from it. This includes Stormers whose entire genetic make-up is Nuke Tendon™ (Phantom Pregnancy™ gen labs) based.

Chain™

Chain™ has been developed as an antidote to the tissue rejection which sometimes occurs with the LAD process. The properties of Chain™ are simple; it reduces the chances of tissue rejection and stabilises the mind, making it easier for the subject to deal with the trauma inherently involved in the resurrection process. The only problem being that the nature of the drug leads to the need for a constant intake on a daily basis, or suffer the extremely rapid withdrawal symptoms.

"Kick Start has been, for more years than I care to mention, responsible for saving thousands of SLA Employees lives'. It is time to move on, to offer something more than just a quick jab with a needle.

The Soul Institute of Pharmacology gives you a choice."

Dr. Susan Hannon (Spirit) Dept. Pharmacology, Mort 900 SD.

Kick Start™: Kick Start +, Kick Start 'Solo` , Karma KS.



DARK BREED

ALLEY

"If we close our eyes, the monsters won't go away. Parents daren't banish the sense of fear from their children's minds. There is no barrier between fiction and reality on Mort, nothing to separate the nightmares we dream from the ones that inhabit the world in which we live. We are raised in a society that stages daily atrocities and presses the horrors of reality into our working hours and sometimes beyond. Sometimes we are so blinded by its proximity that it is not apparent to us, raised in its presence, that close to our homes, our work, our families, is a world once like ours but now bathed in darkness. It is something we don't like to think about. In the Cannibal Sectors the population is growing –and in the rotten festering alleys and under oily skies a dark breed give birth to a litter of unknown atrocities... "

Summarised report on Cannibal Sectors 1–5 by Commander Cradle (Shiver Unit Control)



No matter how vivid my descriptions of the things I've seen in these places are, they still do not come close to the reality. People just don't seem to realise how large and dangerous the Cannibal Sectors are. Did you know that Cannibal Sector One is actually bigger than Mort Central? You look at the poor Shiver Units who have to guard and protect the public from the millions of sub–species out there with nothing more than Blocker Body Armour and a Gauss Gun ...and you feel like weeping. Someday, the SLA Perimeter is just going to crack and then the outpouring of everything that's been there all this time is going to run riot in the heart of Mort. Now that's scary – you have to realise that it's not just Carriens and pigs in Cannibal Sectors. There are things in there that even SLA Industries doesn't know about. I've found Dogeybone Armour on these dead streets, ripped to shreds, with no trace of blood –licked clean. Explain that. Are you trying to tell me that Carriens and savages with clubs did that? No, I didn't think so. Why do you think ops hate sewer clean–up? It's because half the time during the BPN, they get washed out into Cannibal Sectors. All the sewers lead to them to dump refuse and waste.

The pigs grow big and bad, thanks to the industrial waste they're feeding on. Every time a sow gives birth, the offspring are more mutated than the last generation, so the breed just gets more horrific. Some of them don't even look like pigs any more.

To digress for the moment –have you ever smelt a street or passage that the Dept. of Sanitation have forgotten to clean for a week? It's pretty bad, right? All that waste lets off quite a stench, maybe some vermin died amongst the bins: we all know the smell of decaying flesh by now, right? That's what makes it almost unbearable after just one week.

Now, just try and imagine a massive city that hadn't been cleaned properly in over 500 years. The reek is like an ocean, it absolutely stifles your breathing. SLA Industries installed massive fans on the other side of the Perimeter walls to blow the nauseating odours back over, but sometimes the fans break down –and you don't want to be around when they do. Even with the fans, the air is still revolting. If you tried to bribe one of the wall sentries for double his annual wages to take off his helmet and breathe in, chances are he wouldn't do it.

I remember one time on the East wall of the Perimeters, one of the enormous fans broke down and along with the terrible air came this huge, insane Mutant Carrien. That thing must have been 20 foot tall –no exaggeration. It came scrambling up to the wall and started to climb up the fan towards us. The face, if you could call it that, was ancient and contorted with agony that must have lasted for decades. We were tearing into it with everything, but nothing was working. I've never heard such noises, before or since. It was almost on top of us when the wall groaned and the monstrous fan creaked once more into life. The mutant screeched horribly as the spinning rotor blades dragged it into the fans. Oh, man, it was just like a sea of blood, black and stinking, had came gushing and spraying from that fan. The wall looked like it had been painted for metres by this poor creature's blood. We were no better –our entire helmets, torsos and arms were caked with fluid. And what was worse, the blood smelt like the air, rancid and primordial. Head Office didn't believe us when we showed them the mess of the fan. They wanted us to clean and unclog the machinery –but after what we had seen nobody would go down there. Eventually, we simply left the rain to wash the fan clean. The pigs and scavengers that massed to feed on the remains looked like they were paying their last respects to the Messiah.

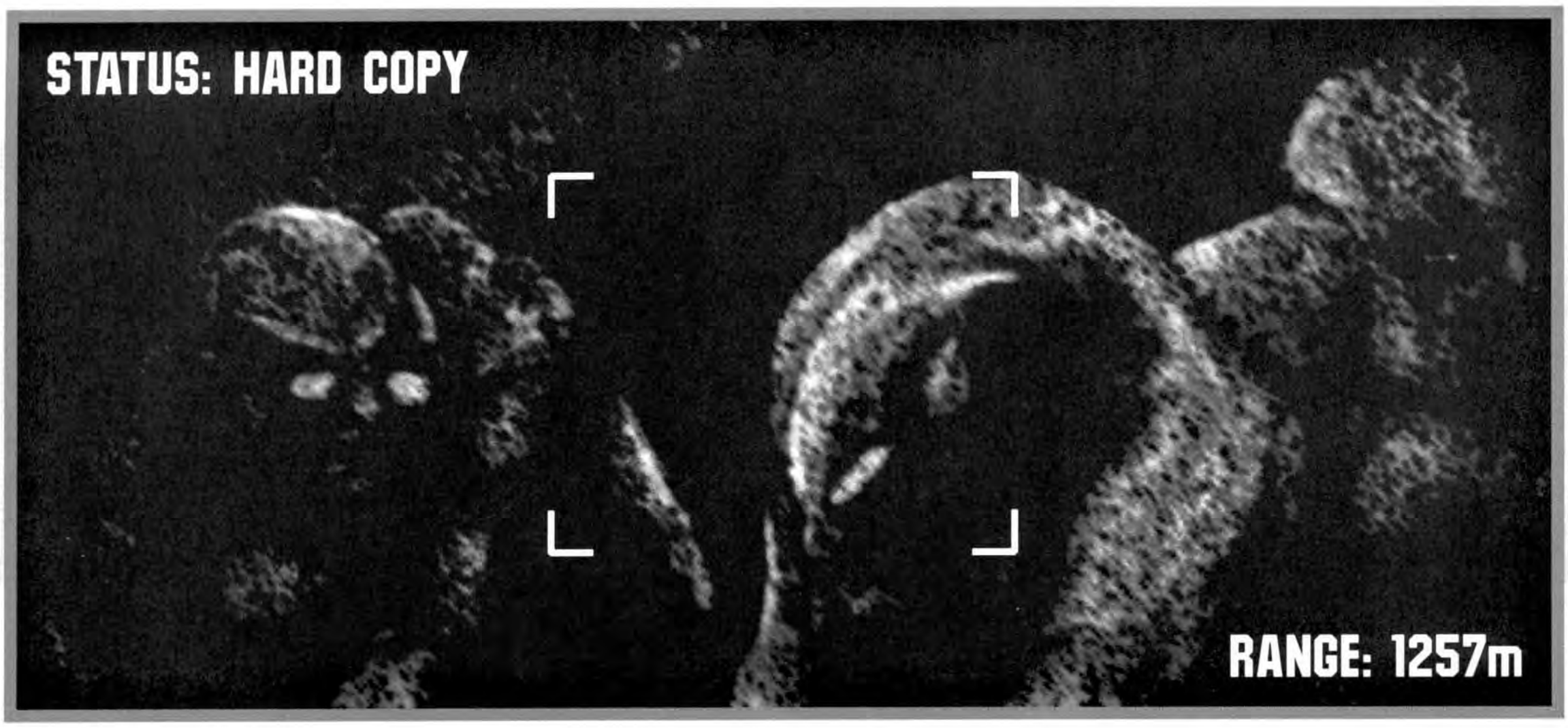
Then of course there's the flies –insects that can grow to equal the span of your hand. They're unpleasantly temperamental creatures that don't like getting swatted, they can get really nasty if you try it. Don't ever fall asleep when they're about since they've developed quite a taste for blood –if they can get through your armour. There was this couple I met once when I was working as a Patrol Officer in my earlier years, they were in some kind of hurry –as if something was up. They said that they were new in this side of Downtown. They thought that it was better to go home before they got even more drenched on the way. They turned and pointed to a vast brownish–black cloud looming over Cannibal Sector One. They thought it was a storm cloud. It wasn't, it was actually the massive cloud of flies that constantly hangs over the pit on the other side of the wall. They were too young a couple to move into such a foul area and I didn't have the heart to tell them that this cloud would always be with them.

We can keep the more credulous of the urban ghouls at bay, but there is always a factor of intelligence in even the most primitive of societies. The Cognates use the Cannibal Sectors as a 'safe haven', but when night falls the serial killer teams leave through the sewers undetected. The Cognates almost never remain in the ruins at night –even they know the danger it harbours. These foul cities are rife with diseases and waste products that you don't want to mess with. During daylight hours, Cognates hide and rest in deep service hatches well away from carnivorous pigs, Man–chines and Carriens who will eat and kill anything with fresh flesh.

The Department of Sanitation have lost hundreds of sewer workers who have walked unsuspectingly into the midst of a sleeping Cognate. It is common practise for Serial Killers to take turns standing guard while the other rest.

The Cognates are starting to get wise to the constant GoreZones happening around them, and some of the smarter ones have used the open service hatches and vents to their advantage. The Serial Killers wait until the huge variety of grim monsters scrabble to the surface and face the onslaught of death, and when the Contract Killers have left and the last drops


DAV:93



of blood have been washed to the lowest levels of Upper Downtown the Cognates creep up into the densely populated civilian areas. For the Shivers, the GoreZones are more trouble than they are worth, simply because the news teams don't seal the hatches effectively and as a result all manner of nasties get loose, sometimes getting as far in as Suburbia –and even Uptown on occasion.

In recent years, the Cannibal Sectors have plagued Mort with two new aspects of nightmare. The ghastly toxic wastes that gather in pools around the ancient cities haven't only spread mutation throughout the ravenous sewer pig population, but also within the cannibalistic humans that inhabit these dreadful places. The urban waste causes the victim to lose a certain amount of dexterity in their limbs and various major muscle groups but gain some power due to having somewhat more resilience than normal humans. The sector mutants have even been known to withstand small amounts from 10mm rifles and pistols.

Their lust for blood and flesh has become an insatiable desire, causing the unfortunates to go to fearless lengths in order to kill and eat. Humans who have undergone such physical alterations lose their mind completely, becoming animalistic and attacking anything carrying flesh, living or dead. Usually, these physical deviants are truly repulsive. Their skin hangs in loose and crumpled folds, their heads are bloated and sunken into unnaturally thick necks. The sector mutant's vile flesh is constantly seeping diseased body secretions from their fat and bloated torsos balanced nervously on sinewy, thin legs.

Despite their somewhat fragile appearance, these hideous creatures are still lethal in close quarters. They are slow but they possess an unearthly strength. If you are cut or bitten by the teeth or claws of one of these mutants, it is essential that you seek medical attention instantly, as their disease is highly contagious.

Another recent breed of social miscreant plagues Mort, but is of a completely different nature and purpose. The Ex–War Criminal fights, slaughters and maims on behalf of a SLA Industries that is alien to all but himself. He lives a lie that he knows only as purest truth and he will kill in cold blood to uphold it.

Fortunately, the misunderstood and unpredictable Ex–War Criminals are few in numbers. The name is city slang for War World veterans, Company Militia who have been 'honourably discharged', they have completed their service on places such as Dante and Cross. After a decade on the chaotic War Worlds, they can return to civilisation on Mort and retire peacefully.

If only that were true. On places like Dante the death, the slaughter and the heavy shelling never ends. The Company Militia fights for SLA Industries all the hours of the day and night, day after day, week after week, year after year. There is no rest for the Militia, no kind words of comfort from loved ones, only the brutal intent of the rivals who are killing his friends around him. He shows no feeling or compassion, for he knows he will never receive it in return.

The only comforts the Company Militia have is the knowledge that he is fighting for his company and feeding his family back home, even though his average life expectancy is 28 hours. All he has is the urge to kill anything he sees and to slowly watch his sanity and values seep away, drained by the never ending conflict.

When the veterans finally return home to Mort, the battle does not end. The Ex–War Criminals feel the necessity to continue fighting for the honour of SLA Industries and destroy the rivals that threaten it.

In the ideal world, these characters would be a godsend to SLA because of their unfaltering loyalty and superior knowledge of warfare but they are not –they are a hazard to the public. The average Ex–War Criminal's philosophy is tragic and twisted due to the great stress and trauma experienced on War Worlds, and the horror they have witnessed and been party to. To the Ex–War Criminal everybody is the enemy and the subversives must be wiped from the surface of Mort if the World of Progress is to be pure once more.

The War World veterans live a lie, a snarled dream of freedom and progress but their motive is to cut out the dead wood so that the shoots of tomorrow can grow up in a righteous and fertile society. Now they're back, they wish to wipe the slate clean by killing everything in their path. On their hit list are Carriens, Man–chines, DarkNight scum, civilians (blind and mislead proles, beyond saving), Shiver Units (fools who cannot understand their greater purpose), SLA Operatives (traitors working undercover for DarkNight and Thresher), Thresher (cowards in feeble Powersuits), News reporters (subversives spreading lies), the ground (littered with mines), loud noises (infantry shelling), domestic pets (spreading infection and disease), soft toys (bombs in disguise) and basically everything that the Ex–War Criminal sees.

The Ex–War Criminal is easily recognisable in any environment as their armour and equipment is Company Militia issue, ranging from Body Armour upgrades to full assault Power Armours, armed with the standard War World sub–machine gun, the FEN 'WarMonger'. In most cases typical armament carried by the Ex–War Criminal is more powerful than that of the SLA operatives. The armour is tougher, the guns more deadly –they have to be since they are designed to survive the wars of Dante and Cross.

C. L ANGLEY

PLANNING DEPT.

SQUAD

PEN

HONOUR

DAVE '94

Armour styles vary widely, designs differ in age and purpose. Some date from as far back as two centuries. Ex–War Criminals dressed in such ancient suits have either salvaged them from long lost silos or have been awarded them for honour in battle. Hence, Dante veterans are often garbed in dated Battle Suits like the 'Mastiff', the 'Widow Kiss' or worse, the MkIII 'Sinner' suit, the last and undoubtedly the most deadly production made by Killa Chassis before they turned traitor to SLA Industries in 408 SD.

The reward offered for the retrieval of such historical hardware legends are phenomenal, Power Projects are on a constant search for these myths of bygone wars, antiques of lost battles.

In the lower sectors of Downtown, below the Caladin Bridges, the people of the Newtown Walkways see the infamous Battle Suits as demons, ghosts and other mystic creatures. To the frightened civilians of Newtown, such characters are seen as evil spirits, beyond the stage of man-made mortality.

When I first began street work as a Shiver, I worked as a 'sleeper'. You join a squad of eight men, take an APC with enough supplies to last six months and live in this environment, travelling and working your way through Downtown for six months.

We got sent to Newtown –on arrival it was upsetting being so close to Cannibal Sector 4, the social and economical state of this area had reached the pits of depression. It was filthy and reeked of bloated sewers.

Along the walls of the disintegrating city slums were insane etchings, symbols of protection keeping out 'malevolent spirits', despite the absurdity of the people's ramblings there seemed to be some handicapped logic in what they were saying.

The people said that in the legends, the forefathers of Dante and Cross had sold their souls to the ancient armours that had encased and protected them for so many decades –and within this terrible union they would last beyond their own death. Like heroes from a fabled tale, the fearless men and women had faced terrors beyond comprehension to please the suit –and with this bravery and honour behind them the ghosts of war would return to these filthy slums, to purge their streets and walkways.

They say that in the ninth century of the standard date, the soldiers of the dead would finally come home for hope of honour, progress, purity, the world of Slayer and the sweet smell of apple pie that had led them away to war all these centuries ago.

A few decades ago, SLA Industries were still rewarding the Dante Veterans' Rewards of Excellence (RoE), letting them keep their loyal and weather beaten equipment in memory of brave deeds. Since the rise in numbers of the nightmarish War Criminals, SLA Industries has stopped the RoE in the aim of preventing any more armed Ex–War Criminals becoming part of society of the World of Progress –but somehow the War Criminal population continues to rise, as if an ancient army of fanatics is growing in the depths of the Cannibal Sectors.

SLA Industries has good reason to up the price on the Extermination Warrants –the operatives hunting the maniacs need all the initiative they can get. All Militia going to Dante are kitted out with the best Heavy Armour composites, the most superior of FEN sub–machine guns –and in addition to all this, every soldier has Nuke Tendon Implants to push them to the limit of their species' capabilities. It seems no wonder that the Ex–War Criminal is insane for in the course of their life they have been bullied into a set train of thought. They are taught to be more than what they are, and that they will live and die for the company.

Internal Affairs have studied the manoeuvres of the Ex–War Criminals and urge young and inexperienced operatives to avoid them, as there can be no comparison between a fully trained soldier with years of experience and an SCL3 operative.

With such alarming facts surrounding the Ex–War Criminals, you may think that they would rule like supreme hunters within the shattered domain of the Cannibal Sectors –but for all their dark nature there is always a deeper blackness. If it was not for their psychotic outlook, two demigods would walk hand in hand through the realms of ruins, and they are neither mutant nor War Criminal. Two horrors that clutch the frightened heart of Mort itself. Hallowe'en Jack, the god amongst gods of serial killers –and Digger, the old man of Downtown, the first Man–chine. He that has stalked the darkest regions of Mort for as long as SLA has ruled the World of Progress.

They are those who are forever banished to the furthest areas of our minds. They are fear personified. They are the Dark Breed.



"Welcome home, kid, that's what they tell me, fukkinassholes don't know that Steel Wings are attackin' our children an' rapin' our street with mad cries an' false promises as if all I want is a feelin' of pride, damn kids ain't got no respect fur anyone or anything, I gotta teach the scum an' shit that I didn't do what I did fur nothin', I'll feed their foul mouths with lead no one else tells the truth, anyways so here I am doin' my job an' what do I get, resistance, why can't the filth understand the will a' God, huh? I want what's mine an' that's my right as a citizen an' operative of Mort, the right to enforce the will a' God on the scum that feeds off the holy empire, I git so damn mad when all a' worked for has gone to waste an' the enemy has stolen the smiles from our pretty, little children who now got glass in their eyes an' knives in their hearts, they're litterin' the streets, no one's cleanin' away the bad times, does no one else see the fall of our empire and the blasphemy that's takin place, that's corruptin' our women and our poor babies, they're growin' up sick n' twisted, I gotta cut up an' out the shit and let the society of God flourish again, I'm gonna shoot down all the crap that's stinkin' out our lives an' washin' up on the doorsteps of the loyal an' the brave, am gonna tear the world down an' free it from the treacherous pestilence..."

Recorded by Ex–Shiver Logan's Headset Comm as 'Tremor Travis' mangled his body and continued to ramble on for a further two hours before he faded back into Cannibal Sector One.



KARMA fashion

an insight into the new

Animattire™ is what everyone will be wearing. Why? Animattire™ is cleaner, fresher and longer lasting that any synthetic material yet available. It will look good no matter what punishment you put it through. The living tissue is designed to be completely grime resistant, waterproof and, as with all living things, self–healing. Amongst the more popular designs are the range of jackets, from biker style living leathers to full length heavy trench coats that are bound to be extremely sought after. To assure the quality of workmanship on our products, Karma has gathered some of the finest designers to contribute to the collection, like Siobhan Lambert –producer of some of the finest lingerie for all the major shows from Mort to New Paris, has designed the living lingerie line. Her co–designer Anne Hayes has also made a stunning impact on the fashion scene with her daring collection of beautifully revealing evening attire. Some of the up–and–coming designers from the various fashion schools have made a brilliant start to their career, creating some truly original pieces. One that we are sure will sell extremely well is the living body suit, an all–in–one figure hugging layer of perfectly fitting flesh of any colour that will never lose its shape.



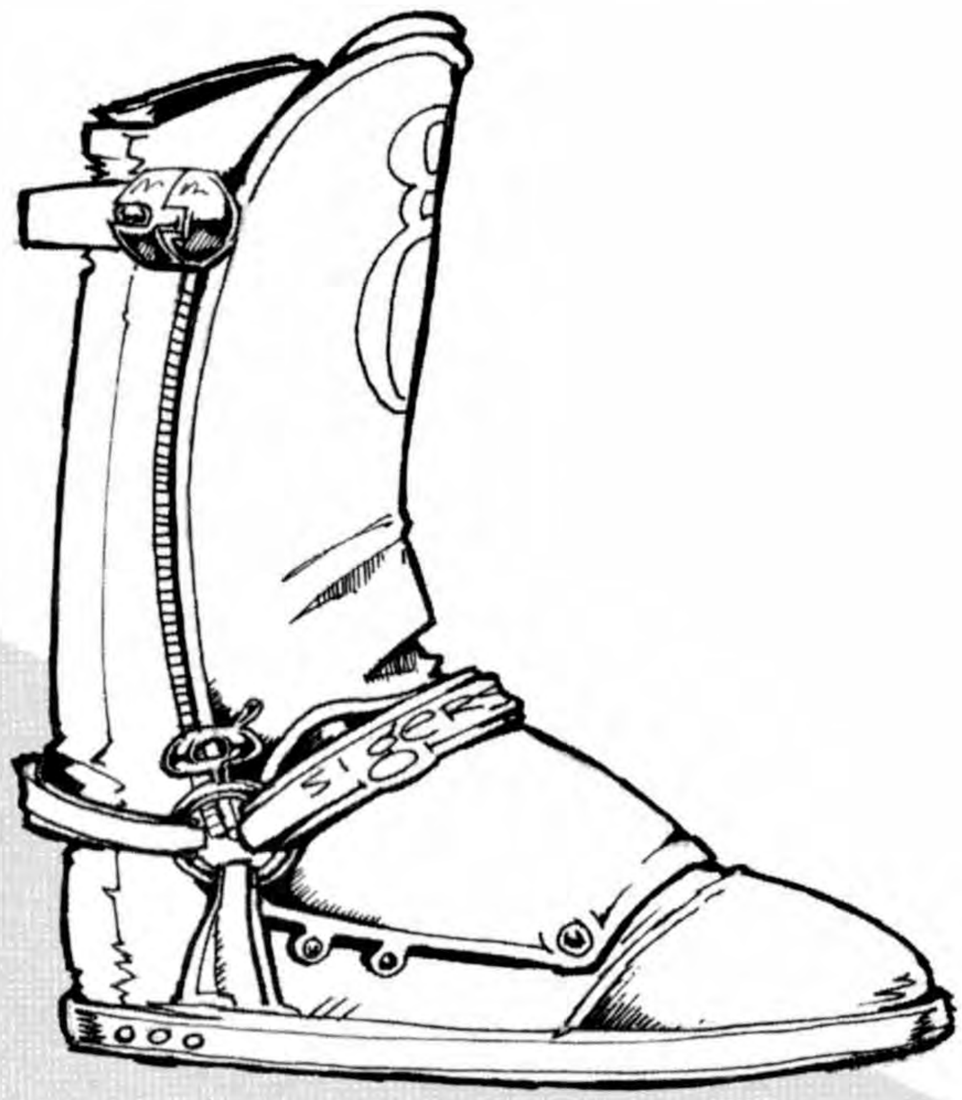
Solutionwear™

Fashions may come and go but Karma is always here. Now it would seem that Karma has decided to make fashion stay as well. The new range of bio-genetic clothes and accessories that Karma launched this year, under the company name of Solutionwear™, took the would–be heart of the fashion industry, New Paris, completely by surprise, knocking top designers off their respective high horses. The main attraction of the Karma collection is the fact that it is actually alive. Other advantages are that it will never get dirty, is incredibly difficult to crease and emits a pleasant odour to your specification. So just what does Solutionwear™ have to offer? Animattire. This is the brain child of William Kennedy, a former laboratory technician that turned his more artistic skills into a Karma sub–company. Here's the official Karma line.

For the more practically minded, there is a whole range of WorkWear™ available. These designs are constructed for durability more than anything else. On all of the designs the tough outer skin, similar to hardened leather, is grown to be waterproof, oil resistant and fire proof. This range tends to lend itself more to the industrial side of the various design studios, resulting in a rugged, outdoor look. As with all good designs, this industrial feel gives the range a street credibility for the less main stream dressers. A popular garment in these circles has always been dungarees worn at least two sizes too big. This trend continues, with the Enterprise™ line by the fashion god, Cranrecy. As a complete contrast to this line, Cranrecy has also released a line of living accessories to compliment and enhance his new designs. These take on a fun look which, although in stark contrast to the Enterprise™ line, seem to match it perfectly. The most popular accessory proved to be a bright red biogenetic fez. The other WorkWear™ line is one directed at operatives. This consists of combat–orientated gear such as battle trousers, webbing, flight jackets, pilot suits and much more. There is something to please everyone here.







Sigerson have always been at the forefront of the footwear fashion scene and continue their unsurpassed track record of quality footwear with the new PolAir© Training gear. This represents a new direction for Sigerson with the release of T–shirts, shorts, cycling shorts, running suits and much more for the sports and leisure market, as well as their usual quality footwear. First in this range is the new PolAir© sprint shoe. This, you may think, has very little to do with the biogenetic design studios but it does –the new PolAir has a living sole which heals and grows as the boot wears down, giving the shoe a life expectancy 20 times that of any other trainer on the market. Also available with biogenetic sole is the PolAir© Kicker. This is the first mass production training shoe to be completely designed by hand –no computer aided design appears on this product. This makes the Kicker a very desirable fashion accessory, as normally hand designed shoes are the exclusive property of the rich.



BAROQUE CHIC

Valerie Dysan

The Mort 900 SD Fashion Convention opened in Baroque last week and I was there to catch a piece of the action. I spoke to some of last year's favourite designers and asked for the public's opinion on the latest releases.

One of the most exciting and innovative new designs must have been the skin overlays from Nuke Tendon™. These accessories have been designed for those who want to show off their implants to the max! The 'rubber look' skin overlays proved to be the preferred choice, available in a variety of colours and shades and going hand in hand with the new bondage gear from Slide On, Slide In™ Inc. Also proving popular were the new ranges from Sigerson Airware™, including the PolAir™ Training Accessories range, some of which have already been spotted on well known faces in the Contract Circuit (See 'What's In and Out for Contract Killers in 900 SD').

It was a pleasure to see last year's best–loved modelling agency, Inspirit, still supporting the designers and the show after their disaster last year when they lost a lot of their most successful models in a gauss train accident. There was a plethora of fresh young faces gracing the catwalks, and two of the most outstanding were the twins Martin and Loretta Kidman, who stunned us all with their natural brash attitudes in their first breathtaking performance of the season.

I asked Malet Truessant, manager of Inspirit, about his stepping into the limelight once more.

"For the first three months after the accident we had severe cashflow problems, as most of our regular models had been badly injured or killed outright in the accident. We held auditions all over Mort about four months after the accident. We were fortunate enough to discover many beautiful and highly individual young people just out of college in Meny, including Ebons, whereas previously all our models were Humans from Baroque. We have never used Ebon models before, but we have just opened new training facilities and we hope to go on to introduce other races. This new company direction has made me realise just how narrow minded I have been in the past. I openly admit my former racism, but I have learned to look to other races and find beauty there."

Apart from the usual designers and clients seen around Baroque, there was a brand new sub–division set up by Karma™ to cater for clothes and accessories –Solutionwear™. This new sub–company has been based around a new range of clothing, called Animattire™, designed by the Karma™ research technician William Kennedy, brother of Angelica Kennedy –one of the heads of the LAD facility. He collaborated with Siobhan Lambert, one of Mort's most illustrious fashion and textile designers, to produce this delicate range of stylish essentials –which are a must for all men and women dedicated to Karma™ products. We asked Lisa, female Human, SCL 7B, what she thought of her new 'living lingerie' after the show.

"My first reaction was one of pleasant surprise when I found that they do not get dirty –or at least they clean themselves. This would be a great advantage to operatives assigned to long survival expeditions on Dante where they cannot take as much care as usual over personal hygiene. Speaking personally, they felt quite strange at first but I soon got used to them. I have been wearing the same bra and knickers for the past week and they still feel as fresh as they did when I put them on. An added advantage with the underwear is that it constantly secretes a pleasant odour, which is really nice. You can even choose what kind of smell you want! I think they're great –after all, who likes washing underwear?"

Well, there you have it, folks. A satisfied customer, one of many at the recent preview, so check out the new ranges and ask yourself why you should bother to clean your clothes when they can now do it themselves!



ACME
DELUXE
INTERIOR
™
SLA!!!!
©
ANGEL
HEART

YEAR

900

You gave me results and I rewarded you.
For hopes, I gave you dreams.
For war, I gave you battle.
For dreams, I gave you hope.
For honour, I gave you justice.
For money, I gave you purpose.
For blood, I gave you life.
For knowledge, I took it from you.
I will give you everything you want...
...for blind loyalty.

Mr. Slayer, Expo 900

doppelganger instutute

"One company that is going to make a serious impact on the biogenetics industry is the new Doppelganger Institute. They are the future."

Dr. Ernest Strand on 'Eye is for Insight'. ©899, Third Eye News.

Biotechnology is the buzzword of the new century, with Karma displaying their wares like proud parents: Life as a commodity. The latest advance comes from the Doppelganger think–tank, but more on that later. Who are Doppelganger? Where did they come from? We asked Dr. Marcus Delani, the man who started it all.

Marcus Delani: "Well, I was working for Phantom Pregnancy as a research corporate, in charge of funding and specialised research for the Stormer enhancement labs. That was where I came across the works and ideas of Dr. Edward Coxborough, the geneticist who isolated the rejuvenation gene. His work struck me as that of a progressive lateral thinker, specialised to such a degree that no problem was insurmountable to him within his tight field. I also read the early works of Dr. Carter, the great military geneticist of 900 years ago, and was impressed by that one man's determination to succeed, but not by his ultimate folly. These writers were instrumental in the development of my way of thinking and led me to start my life's work in the confidence that I would be no worse thought of if I failed. My concepts and ideas would at least outlive me, as did those before me.

"My idea came to be known as the Vevaphon and won me the Strand Prize for technical advances."

Life Wise: "Was it easy to start Doppelganger?"

MD: "Honestly, no. I had to prepare financial projections based on both success and failure without knowing if I could succeed. I had to convince the top people at Karma that not only was this a good idea, but that their Stormer enhancement labs could survive happily without me. No matter what, I was out of a job if I failed –I had proved my job was unnecessary. Also Karma employed people that would have been of better use on my project –and I took pains to point this out to them."

LW: "You deliberately put people's jobs at risk for your own ends?"

MD: "Let's just say they took a risk with me. I proposed hiring them in my new department. I headhunted the best and told their bosses how to survive without them. Of course, if I failed to start up, they would all be out of a job due to my restructuring proposals. I took a big risk."

This enigmatic man is sitting in front of me, talking like an old confidante. He warms up as the interview gets under way, elucidating the finer points of his career with a flair not glimpsed in the press shots. His confidence and self–assuredness has been misconstrued as arrogance by his adversaries and many influential people were very much against this young –maybe too young– man's ideas, damning them as impractical or impossible.

One does not make friends easily in the business of making life, and enemies are easier to nurture than biogenetic creations.

MD: "I always saw possibilities for taking biogenetics one step further: Truly creating, instead of engineering what is already available. The new Stormers –the Stormer variants– are all well and good but I see no real advances there. The Vevaphon is truly new."

LW: "Whose idea was the Vevaphon?"

MD: "Toni's. Ha, ha."

His laugh seems genuine, not at all contrived.

MD: "Seriously, it was my idea, although I will admit to being influenced by several luminaries of biogenetics– but the basic concept was mine. All the DNA creation and control gene development was my own work –with the help of my lab workers of course– while I had other labs working on parts like the osmotic nourishing paste, cell catalysts, cell networks etc. The brain was the hardest part to replicate and I am grateful to Jean Summers for her breakthrough in intercerebral processes that allowed me to spread the brain cells throughout the body, combining normal cells with brain tissue, with no resultant lack of sentience."

LW: "Aah –I've been waiting for this one. Where exactly do you stand on the subject of souls, and theology in general."

MD: "I don't. We hired an expert to take that problem off my hands. I can't discuss it for copyright purposes. Sorry. Please refrain from following that line of questioning."

VEVAPHON

the new design from the doppelganger institute

QUOTE: pol...poly...polym...orf...ploypart...pollyparrot...polymorph...gen...geny...genetic...boy...bio...biogen...biogenetic. Biogenetic polymorph.

INSIGHT: Streams of information flood you like a tidal wave of words. Uncontrolled chaotic messages burn into you. Your senses can take no more of this intangible torrent of data as you feel every part of you crave for attention. You want to scream. There's not enough free movement left in you to utter a whimper. Like a ray of the brightest, warmest sunshine, a spark of reason fills you. The primal reason for your existence. Progress.

Order returns to your abused senses. Wet. Warm. Weightless? No. Floating in liquid. Visions, sight, red. Beyond the haze you see the technicians. The people that created you. The first moments of consciousness bring your world out of the protection of the Bio–womb™ that has been everything to you for so long. Fearfully, you float to the top of the tank and reach upwards. Breaking the surface of the water, air caresses your hand. As you slowly emerge, new feelings engulf you. Pores open and close all over your body –inhaling, breathing, living. The technicians run to your aid and guide you out of the tank. Looking down at your body, you see that you look like the humans around you. Almost. You feel yourself being pulled to the ground. Dropping to your knees you feel your body being dragged to the floor. A technician helps you to your feet explaining that 'gravity reacts more to your body than that of any other creature because of the lack of stability in your cell structure'. Muscle groups form throughout your body as billions of cells buckle, spasm and bundle to create solid flesh, allowing you to stand again, making you look more like the technicians around you. More human. You have more stability now. You take your first few steps. Walking is not easy, having to actively control your feet, taking the strain up your legs through your back. You try making yourself a framework to support the muscles. You create a skeleton, albeit on the outside of your body, as a hard shell. 'Vevaphon' is what they call you. A biogenetic creation. The DNA codes that belong to you are not a manipulation, an alteration or a redesign of any part of nature. They are created for you by genetic scientists. Another Vevaphon slides from a tank next to yours. The technicians run to its assistance. The instability you felt, you can now see –as if the Vevaphon was melting. It soon finds its feet, as you did a moment ago. Literally. Although you are unsure of the true purpose of your existence, a haphazard guess would be that you are to be an assassin of some description. A killing machine? Perhaps, but you realise you have the intelligence to be almost anything you want. Your possibilities are practically endless. With the wonder of your new home fading, you concentrate on your body, reforming your outer skin to take on the shape of clothes like the ones the Doppleganger technicians are wearing. This is more difficult, as the shape of the clothes is constantly changing with the movement of the owner, and is difficult to concentrate on in order to copy. A rough facsimile takes shape over your body. The colours are easy. Your cells react to tiny signals, mimicking the blues and whites of Doppleganger technicians. Now you are attempting to form facial features. Your cells have a difficult job trying to group in the proper areas. Matching skin tone is even more difficult. Nearly human now, although their hair is almost impossible for your cells to copy, leaving strands that form in bundles and blend to your scalp. Nearly human. Almost perfect.

BACKGROUND: The Vevaphon, or 'Vev' for short, is the first creation to step forward from the Doppleganger Institute. A biogenetic polymorph, able to take on different shapes and forms through the manipulation of individual cells in their body by the million. The Vevaphon was designed purely from raw biogenetic material –unlike Stormers which are, amongst others, based on Intruder's DNA codes. The Vevaphon has what could be called a perfect cell structure, even if it is a little unstable. Each cell cluster is almost an organism in its own right, with a network of nerve cells which act as a brain membrane. This membrane holds all the reasoning and motor action of a normal brain. The surface area is the only difference. This membranous memory is present in all areas of the body, controlling the bodily functions throughout, and not just from one 'control centre' in the head.

The Vevaphon, however, is not a group of single cell creatures, but one creature whose cell structure is not set permanently and can flow without disrupting the tissues. The Vevaphon must eat, sleep, breathe and carry out all the other functions of a living being. The Vevaphon's internal organs are subject to the same genetic make–up as its brain and can, like the brain, be moved around the body to various, or a single, location within the body. Breathing can be achieved by absorbing air through pores in the skin or by a larger single aperture such as a mouth or nose. Nutrients are absorbed in a similar manner. The food that the Vevaphon eats is a development of Doppleganger, a paste that provides all the necessary nutrients that are required to sustain life. It is possible for a Vevaphon to eat ordinary food, but to receive the equivalent nutrition value they would need to consume at least





double that of a human being, such is the vast amount of energy utilised by the Vevaphon in simply staying alive.

This flexibility of cell structure gives the Vevaphon some interesting abilities. one of which is its ability to move through small spaces like ventilation shafts and pipes, although nothing as small as a keyhole. Other abilities include its being able to harden its skin to a bone like substance acting as a kind of armour. This is not always necessary as, due to its loose cell structure, large amounts of kinetic energy tend to push the cells away from the target area at an abnormally accelerated rate, leading to a reduction in tissue damage. The fast manoeuvring of organs can also reduce damage. The blood of a Vevaphon is the one thing they have least control over, as it must be kept flowing –but they can control the blood flow to a wound.

The production of Vevaphons is a long process, with almost twice the gestation period of a normal Stormer. This is mainly due to the fact that there are no base DNA codes to follow. This can also lead to a certain amount of disorientation on the part of the Vevaphon, as it has no real personality at birth. It can change its form and structure, giving it a slight identity problem –whereas a Stormer is a Stormer and will never change. It is no surprise that they don't know who they are. This soon passes, allowing the Vevaphon to take whatever form they are comfortable with. All Vevaphons take a humanoid shape as it is easier to manipulate and control. It is also the first and only form 'programmed' into the Vevaphon as it is growing. The Vevaphon is a new and untested step in biogenetic science and could be the way forward. Only time and their progress reports will tell.

APPEARANCE: Although almost entirely human in appearance, the Vevaphon cannot master the form completely. Small discrepancies are always noticeable, for example, if the Vevaphon is duplicating clothes, they will join to the actual body of the Vevaphon at certain points. The hair is also difficult for the Vevaphon to mimic and looks almost plastic in appearance as it does not move as fluidly as real hair and joins the scalp too thickly. If close attention is not paid to fine detail such as this, a Vevaphon can only pass for a human in crowds, dimly lit areas or at a distance of over 30m.

INTERACTION:

Vevaphons on;

Humans: "Perfection of form and movement but lacking the versatility we possess."

Ebons: "The powers of these creatures are a mystery to me. I have no wish to learn the secrets that they hold so dear."

Brain Wasters: "I cannot understand why this race bothers to exist. They are totally self–destructive. Violence breeds violence. By the looks of things, a lot of inbreeding does as well."

Shaktars: "You can teach a monkey to write so you can teach reptiles to use guns."

Frothers: "Complete lack of control –perhaps due to drugs, lack of intelligence, or more believably, their inability to raise themselves above the rank of savage."

Stormers: "A blend of pure strain warriors who are single minded, unstoppable, brave soldiers of SLA Industries. We have an unbreakable bond. The bond of biogenetics."

Wraith Raider: "Self centred, opinionated beasts that have only just managed to scrape themselves up a few notches on the food chain so that they are no longer classed as animals."

Chagrins: "They are the masters of power. Rage personified."

Xenos: "The Xeno is the pinnacle of Stormer technology. They have unique abilities that set them above others of their kind."

Base Skills: Detect (CONC) Rank 1, SLA Info (KNOW) Rank 1, Unarmed Combat (STR) Rank 1, Blade 1–H (STR) Rank 1, Stealth (DEX) Rank 2, Sleight (DEX) Rank 2.



CHAGRIN

STORMER VARIANT 714

QUOTE: "I don't have the brain of a 313, but I can break both your arms and twist them round your neck. Want to see?"

Crush, 714 Chagrin, Mort 901 SD.

INSIGHT: Like your brother the 313, you were created by Karma. The red haze and the blurred figures outside the tank were your first memory. The tank was your first home.

When you step free, the last of the tubes fall from your body. The blurred figures are now clear to you. The humans that brought about your existence. The bio–engineers. Other Stormers further down the line of tanks emerge from their genetic slumber and, like you, are washed down. They are 313s. You look at your body, the DNA code on your arm, '714'. You are different, bigger, stronger. You have a purpose; 'destroy any threat to your creator and protector; SLA Industries'. Your body is broad and heavily built. You look down and see the tusks that protrude from your lower jaw. These formidable weapons can only add to your intimidating appearance. Everyone around you looks smaller, weaker –Human and Stormer alike. The technicians scuttling around you could be killed with one well placed blow to the head. You have the skill and strength to do it.

BACKGROUND: For 900 years, there has been only one mass produced, fully integrated Stormer; the 313. The main reason for this was the total success of the 313, which met its design specifications to the letter. There was no need for change. Also, running only one class of Stormer gave the bio–engineers plenty of time to perfect the growth and DNA manipulation processes involved in the Stormer's creation. Now with the introduction of the 714, it would seem that Karma have opened the floodgates, letting their technicians and development teams work at their full potential on production model designs rather than basic testing work which they had been doing up until now. Armed with this new–found freedom, design specifications and prototypes came flooding out from Karma's design studios. The first of these to be approved by Dr. Stern was the Chagrin Stormer. Although the 714 would appear to be lacking slightly in one or two areas, most notably speed/reaction time and intellect, this is more than balanced by its exceptional strength. The 714 is very much combat orientated but still maintains enough reasoning capabilities to make it suitable for the role of an operative. Most of the design features of the 714 are physical –large build, powerful teeth and claws and a very menacing appearance. An unfortunate trait of the 714 is that it is very quick tempered and highly aggressive. In general it is not a very sociable creature, preferring the company of other Stormers to that of any other race. If no Stormers or other genetic creations are around, a Chagrin will seek out the nearest being with Karma implants for companionship –the more implants the better.

APPEARANCE: The Chagrin is a massively built Stormer. The true giants of their race stand up to 2.80m tall. These far–from–gentle giant's muscles look like colossal bundles of thick black rope which flex and tense all over their bodies. The most striking feature of the Chagrin, apart from its imposing size, are its two huge tusks which protrude like great ivory cargo hooks from the lower jaw of the beast's head and which are used to impale their victims. To complement these tusks, the Chagrin's mouth is crammed with immense razor sharp teeth. With claws equally as sharp on their hulking great hands, the Chagrin is at its most deadly when fighting hand to hand.

The Chagrin is designed to be the optimum combat efficient, self supporting, SLA soldier. This is a role that they fulfil perfectly. These unquestionably loyal killing machines are the perfect breed.

INTERACTION: 714s on;

Humans: "Small. Easy to kill. Most alright."

Frother: "Harder to kill than other humans. Take two hits."

Ebon: "Talk too much."

Brian Waster: "Not like. Nasty. Try to hurt people. I hurt them good."

Shaktars: "Fight good. I fight better."

Wraith Raider: "Fast. Not strong. I am strong."

Vevaphon: "Like silly putty you can get at 'Joke and Tickle' shops."

Xeno: "How come their skin changes colour like that?"

Stormers: "They were first. I respect my elders."

Base Skills: Unarmed Combat (STR) Rank 3, Intimidate (DIA) Rank 2, Evaluate Opponent (KNOW) Rank 1.



XENO

STORMER VARIANT 711

QUOTE: "I don't blend in here."

Che'nera, Xeno, "The Pit", Mort 901 SD.

INSIGHT: You were born in the same way as a Stormer. As you slide from the tank of red fluid, you turn your head from left to right. You see the tank behind you, still half full of liquid. You see in front of you, in the same glance, two humans washing you down with hoses. Looking down at your body, you see your flesh is unmoving, unyielding. Watching the water spray off your chest you rush pigment to it, changing your upper torso to a light aquamarine colour, copying the water. More pigment travels to the rest of your body changing the colour again –this time to black. The humans smile. 313s climb from their tanks. They are larger, stronger. For the first time since you left the tank, you flex your muscles to what seems to be their limit. Your muscle fibres knit and bundle. You do not have the strength of the 313 but you feel you are more than a match for their speed. The bar code on your arm reads '711'. New! Your height and build is not like other Stormers, more like the humans –the larger, faster humans. Technicians clean out the skin pockets on your body. No need for armour or clothes. Good. Clothes hide your changing skin and armour slows you down. You see your reflection: tall, lithe and muscular, but the shape of your head is different, more bulky, to contain your seven eyes. Your vision shifts from left to right, over one shoulder then the other without having to turn your head. Xeno. You are not called "Stormer", but you are one –and you will never forget that the 313 and 714 are your biogenetic brothers.

BACKGROUND: The Stormers 313 and 714 are the muscle, the strong arm of SLA Industries, but Karma wanted more from their designers. The Xeno (Ze–no) is the first successful attempt at such diversification. A fresh approach was needed. Something that would not rely on strength, but rather speed and intelligence. To give the Xeno its speed and agility, the size had to be reduced –as the bulk of a Stormer did not allow for enough freedom of movement. The next search was for something that would place the Xeno in a different role to that of other Stormers. The answer to this came from the Zoology department. Dr. Maxon Hagen, attached to Phantom Pregnancy as a genetics consultant, spent two months at the Zoology department studying natural defence mechanisms of a wide number of animal species. The outcome of this research was the decision of Dr. Hagen to have a chameleon–like skin developed for the Xeno. In Dr Hagen's own words, "If the enemy can't see you, they can't kill you."

This chameleon skin would push the bio–engineers and designers of Karma to their limits. Nothing this complex had been attempted before. The main problem was the hard armour–like skin that was already part of the Xeno, which would not take well to being altered to accommodate the tissue necessary for pigmentation. The combined efforts of Dr. Hagen and the project leader, Dr. Ethan Coen, found an answer to the problem. The scientists took genetic samples from the armoured skin and combined sections of the chameleon skin DNA with it. When this compound stabilised, a combination skin was produced, and this new DNA was then integrated into the Xeno's own code. The new hybrid tissue type still held the defensive properties of the tough armoured skin and had the chameleon abilities of the other skin. The next part of the Xeno's new genetic make–up to be developed was its optics. The 313 and 714 had standard forward orientated vision, whereas the Xeno was given a multi–optic set–up. Seven eyes were considered to be the optimum, giving the 711 a 270 degree field of vision. The Xeno's next improvement was its mental capacity, which was an expansion of the standard 313 memory. The 711 had now fulfilled all of its design specifications, surpassing the 313 in speed and intellect. The Xeno may consider itself the pinnacle of Karma technology, but it will never forget that without the Malice it would never had existed. The last thing that was added to the Xeno, almost as an afterthought, were the 'skin pockets'. These areas of the Xeno's body were created to enable the Xeno to carry equipment and negate the need for clothing. There are ten such pockets on the 711: two on each thigh (160mm x 210mm), two on the lower leg (120mm x 300mm), two on the chest (120mm x 120mm), two on the abdomina (150mm x 180mm), and one on each upper arm (110mm x 230mm).

APPEARANCE: The Xeno is a Stormer whose build and abilities could be described as uncharacteristic

of the breed. The Xeno stands as tall as the tallest human, but their build is quite different. The muscle structure looks as if it has been twisted and distorted to some alien interpretation of the human physique. The skin of the Xeno is a tough leathery substance with intertwining muscle bundles criss–crossing its body. The colour of the skin is naturally a pale, sandy brown but changes at the will of the Xeno to whatever it desires. The colour of the skin sometimes depicts the mood of the Xeno, so its skin reflects its emotions.

The head of the Xeno is its most unusual feature, with an almost rectangular mouth set low in a strong jaw and filled with sharp, wedge shaped teeth. Above this are its eyes, elongated and bulging but unmoving and lacking in eyelids and tear ducts, cross hatched like those of some giant insect.

INTERACTION:

Xenos on;

Humans: "They created me. What more can I say?"

Frothers: "Single minded. Unbalanced. I tend to steer clear of them and their drugs."

Ebons: "The mind of the Ebon is a powerful thing but they lack physical stature."

Brain Waster: "Very brutish. Having Ebon powers makes them untrustworthy."

Shaktars: "The Shaktars have the right idea. Fast and deadly."

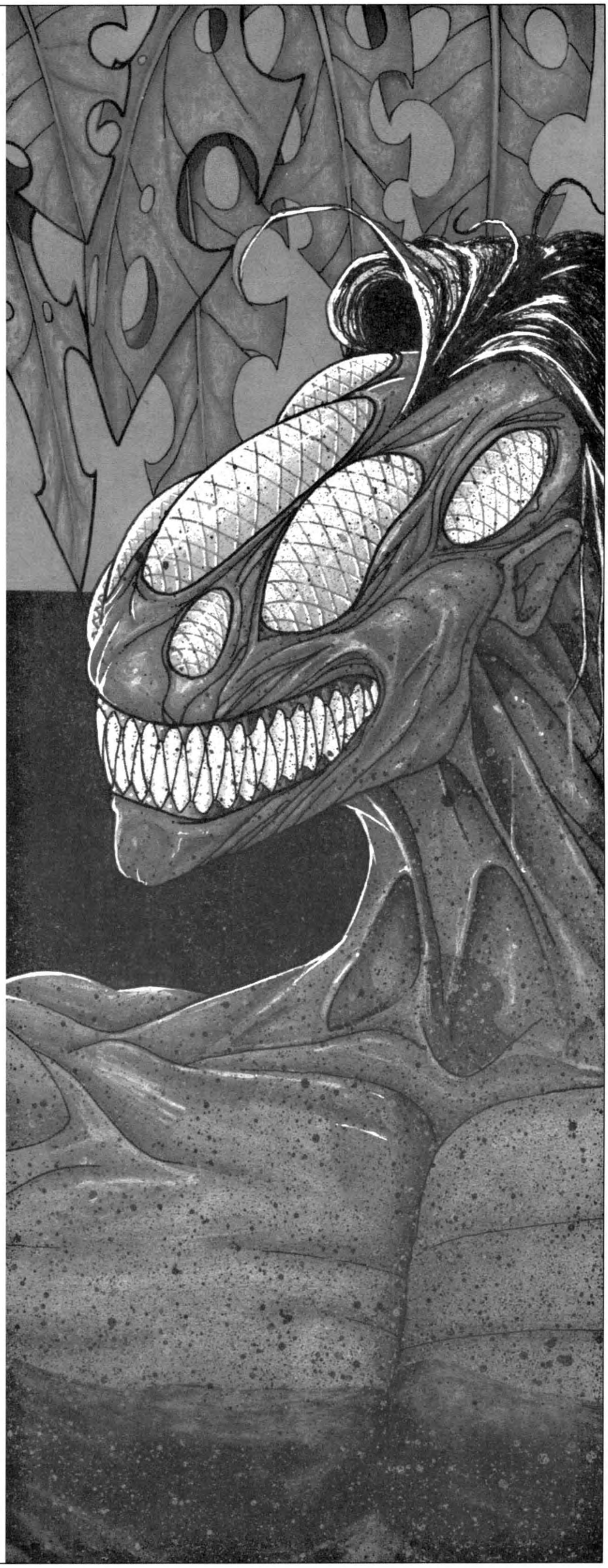
Wraith Raiders: "The Wraith Raiders are good at what they do. I respect them for their speed and cunning."

Vevaphons: "The manipulative control my biogenetic cousins possess is true perfection."

Stormers: "Although they have the power and some of my intelligence they are not assassins. They are soldiers. Very good soldiers."

Chagrins: "What they lack in intellect is more than compensated for by their strength. If they can't talk their way out of a situation, they can always tear their opponent limb from limb."

Base skills: Unarmed Combat (STR) Rank 2, SLA Info (KNOW) Rank 1, Sneak (DEX) Rank 1, Hide (DEX) Rank 2, Climb (PHYS) Rank 1.



LOW–WAVE

STORMER VARIANT 114

Biogenetic Species Integration Program
Project: Stormer 'Low Wave'
Project Enquiries: Prof. Judy B. Deakins (Karma Archives)
Low Wave Project Report
To: Dr. Ernest Strand
From: J.B. Deakins, Professor of Biogenetics, Karma Archives
Subject: Update and supplement records on 114 Low Wave Stormer
Low Wave: Genetic Structure Condensing Code:

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0127392296492767l167
9121520511414SRED994
0012364778624BLUE794
0623479928367941011l
0121314151716lll2001
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UPGRADES/DESIGN MODIFICATIONS

Due to the increasing workload being placed on the 114, it has been necessary to carry out the following changes:

One: The strength of the 114 has been increased by 20%. New Brace Tendons were rejected as an upgrade idea. New DNA code contains information for increased muscle growth and associated structure growth.

Two: Vision has been enhanced to give the Low Wave near 'night vision' to increase the number of possible working environments.

Three: Removal of vocal chords. Not considered necessary for normal working environment. This also frees space on DNA structure code for future modifications.

Four: Improvement of hearing to filter out factory noise and other potentially damaging sounds.

Five: Hibernation program installation. When Low Wave is not active, the 114 will slow heart and respiratory rate to conserve energy and to reduce wear and tear on the body itself.

Six: Pain threshold was increased by down–grading nervous system. Low Wave will register damage rather than feel pain.

HISTORY

104 SD., saw a large decline in the production of the 313 Stormer class. This was due to the inactivity of all but the smallest of SLA's rivals. This lull in conflict gave Karma a chance to re–evaluate the technology they had worked so hard to perfect in the 313. For the first time, Karma set to work on a new Stormer. This Stormer was to be used as a factory worker, as a more efficient load mover and labourer, the tasks which heavy machinery once carried out. The Stormer would be easier to control than an industrial lifter and would have about four times the life expectancy. The 114 was to be the perfect labourer. The Low Wave, so named because of the extremely low IQ, went into full production one year later and has since then performed without any major problems. The 114 has incredible strength and is completely controllable by the operators. These massive creatures have been integrated into every industrial sector.

OTHER SPECIFICATIONS

The rest of the Low Wave's statistics have been part of their DNA code since 105 SD. These include skin colour (grey), DNA hallmark numbered bar codes on back (1m high), brain re–location to chest cavity to decrease damage probability, short term programmable memory (voice activated), standard bio–management program, primal dietary system and movement inhibitors. No combat abilities of any kind were introduced. Tests have been carried out on Dante using reprogrammed Low Waves. These Stormers are being used as front line assault troops. Full evaluation is not available at this time.

ADDITIONAL

Two points that are new to the Low Wave file. One is its nickname, 'Doglie', derived from 'dogsbody' –'Doglie' being a corruption of the word. The second and most important is the report from Artery of Low Wave I.A.S. (Independent Actions). Four Low Waves were found to have moved to a disused level of a processing plant and had set up a habitation area for themselves. The four 114s have now been re–captured and are undergoing investigative surgery by a Stigmartyr agent on Artery at the moment.

"The way forward for all of mankind is to adapt to their environment? Bullshit. Adapt the environment to suit mankind. That is why we produce Stormers. Perfect grunts to push around and do all the crap jobs that we don't want to do. The human race has got the edge over everybody else. If you need something new, Phantom Pregnancy will grow it for you. No more of this weak Ebon manipulation. Those freaks have had it their own way for long enough. No more 'wait and see' or 'bad vibes'. It is our business to create bad vibes. If the Ebons don't like it, they can get off my world and go home to their beloved Static. Leave the human race to rule the World of Progress the way we should have from the start –alone."

Dr. Maxon Hagen, Private interview © SIC News, 899 SD.


KARMA

DOMINO DOG

"The Domino Dog is the perfect biogenetic nightmare. They can kill anything you program them to. Very useful for killing... Carriens. I do have a personal interest in the 23, as it was my consultancy team that carried out the research for the DNA Altered Canines (DACs), and used the results in the creation of the Domino. They are pure–bred killers. Hunters of the highest order. I had the honour of being present at the birth of the first 23. As it came stalking out of the tank, I remember it snarled at us and tensed, ready to attack. The technicians –even Dr. Toyama herself– feared what they had created. I myself felt nothing but pride, having taken the human race one more step towards total control."

Maxon Hagen speaking about the Domino Dog, ©Third Eye News, 900 SD.

Domino Project 23 – Urban Pacification Program, Lower Downtown – Cannibal Sectors (1–5)

Assignment: Karma (Phantom Pregnancy Inc.) Biogenetic Development

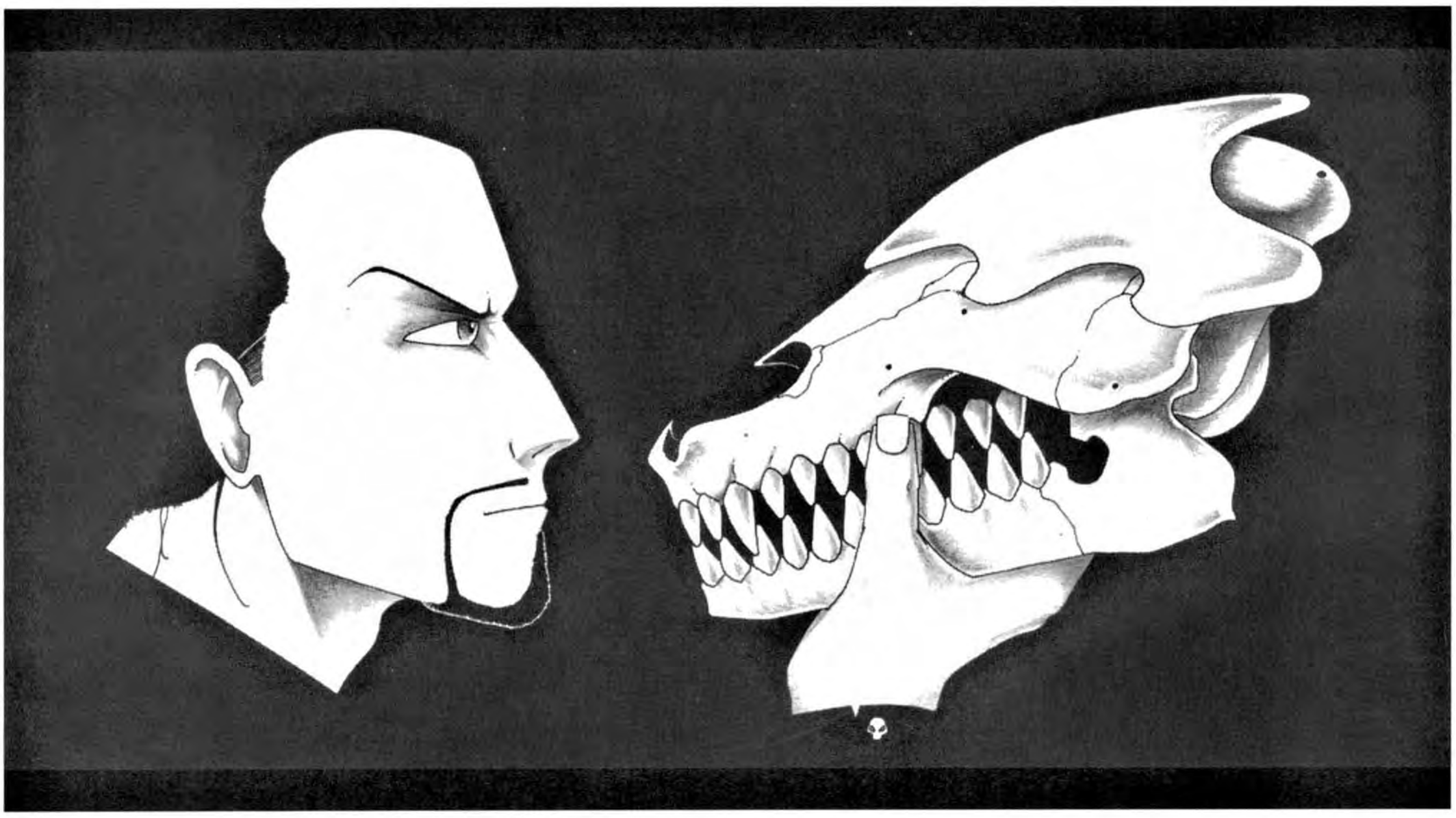
Project Developer: Dr. Taro Toyama (Acting Head, Phantom Pregnancy Inc.)

Project Code: 23

Project Assessment: Dr. Taro Toyama

The initial brief for the Urban Pacification work was not entirely satisfactory. The working parameters of the brief were too constrictive and did not allow my engineers to work to their full potential. The second brief was, on the other hand, completely satisfactory.

The Urban Pacification Program brief initially called for a bipedal creation of some sort. This was changed in favour of a more agile quadruped such as a canine or feline. The need for the beast not to be encumbered by armour did pose certain problems, but with the assistance of Dr. Maxon Hagen from the Xeno project, natural kinetic absorption armour appeared on the final design. The arming of the 711 was achieved using enhanced DAC bone structure. The use of this did, however, mean that canine DNA had to be used in the rest of the development. This meant a slight loss in overall performance but implants were added to stabilize the imbalance. It was difficult to decide on the final size of the creature. To make the 'Domino' equivalent in size to a DAC wuld mean it would be cheap and practical to produce –but it would not have the required appearance. Giving the 23 a Stormer's comparative size would make it impractical, especially in Cannibal Sectors where the need to move quickly over wide and varied terrain types would be hindered by size and weight. The final model was large enough to maintain a certain intimidation factor whilst being small enough to traverse the terrain types it would encounter. Pour plates: An additional feature was the secretion glands on the Domino's body which allows it to coat its itself in a grease–like substance. This makes it difficult for Carrien assailants to keep hold of the Domino, and to bite or claw it is nearly impossible. It can also aid the Domino in entering enclosed areas, allowing its body to slide through cramped spaces. This fluid also contains small amounts of the Domino's blood. This gives off a scent strong enough for Carriens to follow







–to their death. This is accomplished by having the chitinous (armoured) skin layer (under which is the Domino's own skin) excrete the substance, allowing the Domino's skin to breathe as normal without interference from the armoured skin. Given the areas where the Dominos would operate, it was decided that normal vision was inadequate, to the point of being totally useless. Instead of optics, sonar (120 degree forward orientated) and infra–red sensory organs were introduced. Enhanced sense of smell was also incorporated. The Domino has three olfactory organs: one in the head (its actual 'nose') and two on the neck, one either side, behind the armour plates. Taste was also enhanced to such a degree that a domino can differentiate between the blood types of different species: i.e. Carrien, Ebon, Human, Shaktar and so on.

Overall specifications are as follows:
Height (to shoulder): 1.0m
Width (across shoulder): 0.8m
Length (nose to hind quarters): 1.9m
Length (nose to tail): 2.6m

With all the physical features set, the actual programming of the brain –which would be the greatest task– could commence. Initial programming consisted of primal inserts, bio–management programming and preservation diagnostics, after which the Dominos were programmed with their own set of commands and functions, which are an advanced version of the 'Hunter/Seeker' program. I modified the H/S to allow the Domino to recognise all manner of friend and enemy –from civilian child to Necanthrope and Carrien to DarkNight operatives. The real beauty of this H/S modification is that the 23 has a fully ordered memory, which means that everything the Domino encounters will be remembered and stored for future reference. Starting problems with the thought capacity of the Domino were overcome by giving over a portion of its memory to fragmental storage, thereby doubling its memory. The Domino has had a very successful test run and is now ready to go into full production.

Assessment: Dr. Taro Toyama
Department: Phantom Pregnancy Inc.
Date: 4/2/901 SD.
To: Head Office

Domino Dog Performance Record:
Dr. Taro Toyama

Four Dominos were placed in Cannibal Sector One for a one day trial. The initial hunts were very successful. The dogs tend to hunt in a straight line when starting their attack, the lead dog striking first. The other three continue on their attack path to the next target where the new lead dog attacks. By this time, the first lead dog has completed its kill and returns to the end of the line. This process continues until all valid targets have been eliminated. The dogs then feed. The digestive system allows for a very varied diet. The dogs will feed like this three or four times in every 24 hours due to their high metabolisms. This keeps them hunting for longer and means they require very little rest –on average 3 hours out of every 24. A Domino attack on between 5 and 10 Carrien, from start to finish, takes on average 45 seconds. Wounds heal at double the normal rate and their natural armour is quite enough for the dog's protection. Night fighting proves to be no problem for the dogs due to their tracking and sensory organs. Weapon systems are exceptional. All systems exceed design expectations. At the end of the field test the body count speaks for itself; 36 Carriens, 1 Mutant Carrien and 2 DarkNight operatives, one of which was heavily armoured.

All four dogs returned unharmed or fully healed at the end of the trial.

Report: Dr. Taro Toyama
Date: 6/2/901 SD.
To: Head Office



Phantom Pregnancy

An in–depth look at Phantom Pregnancy inc., creators of the Stormer.

Just over 900 years ago, Karma created the first of the Stormers. The 313 'Malice' has been a very successful product, but 900 years of service is quite a long time. Now Karma has introduced two new designs to take the pressure off the 313 line. One is automatically identifiable as a Stormer, but the other takes the technology of biogenetic engineering in a fresh direction –and in doing so creates something a little harder to categorize.

Phantom Pregnancy: "The New Way of Life"

Phantom Pregnancy have been the flagship division of Karma for nearly nine hundred years. For many centuries they have let the phenomenal success of the 313 carry them along, in the hope that any change in this perfection would not be called for.

Stormers were then and are now the muscle of SLA Industries. They are the backbone that supports the rest of the company. Without them, the World of Progress would be a very different place today.

Unfortunately, times, people and needs change and evolve –as should Phantom Pregnancy. More will be asked of the bio–engineers as survival of the company becomes increasingly more important. The stiff competition from other divisions, especially Nuke Tendon, should give Phantom Pregnancy the kick they need. They have begun to realise that the time for change is now, although it would be unfair to say that Phantom Pregnancy have been completely resting on their laurels –the Vevaphon is truly a work of inspired genius that the company's founders would be proud of. The assistance Phantom Pregnancy gave the Doppleganger Institute during the Vevaphon's development was invaluable.

Dealing with new technology is usually difficult, but Phantom Pregnancy's staff seem to have embraced the new ideas with a passion unseen since the time of Angel and Taarnish. Now with their sights hopefully set in the future, Phantom Pregnancy should continue to further new developments –perhaps taking Artery's lead and developing new products to fill gaps in the labour market. Whatever the outcome and the direction, Phantom Pregnancy can be expected to still be a viable force in the genetic market–place 900 years from now.

"Phantom Pregnancy, a brief outlook." by A. Kramer, Corporate Sector, Mort Central, 900 SD.

The Stormer (Artery's Children)

The first mass produced Stormers climbed out their tanks 864 years ago in the Malice Tower on Artery. Since then, little has changed of the Stormer. Every breed has the same base DNA code which is then modified to produce whatever variant is required.

The first Stormer, Angel, was not created purely by science –Senti gave her help with her 'Deathwake' device. The workforce of Phantom Pregnancy was not happy with this or with the takeover of the Stormer project by Karma: The scientists did not appreciate their work being pushed aside for the 'hocus pocus of any Ebon witch'. But now they had the Stormer. Centuries of test–bed research and DNA manipulation later, the small inconvenience of the Deathwake could be forgotten; the gen–techs had their baby.





Who's Who at... Phantom Pregnancy

Do Stormers scare you? After having these monstrous individuals roaming around our street for 900 years, have Stormers lost their intimidation factor? Phantom Pregnancy have been growing Stormers for 900 years and it would seem that they have no intention of stopping. So –what drives the men and women of Karma to, some say, tamper with nature in such a way? Is it the possibility of playing god? We take a look at the structure of Phantom Pregnancy and at the faces behind this leviathan of a company.

Phantom Pregnancy is the largest sub–division of any department within SLA Industries. The industrial plants of Phantom Pregnancy are scattered throughout the World of Progress. Even on the Pleasure World of Arkadia there is a Stormer production plant, although there are rumours abound about the growing (no pun intended) trend in biogenetic sex toys that can be purchased there.

Stormers. We've all seen them; big, aggressive –all teeth, claws and guns. Its difficult to believe that they came from that most angelic of people, Intruder. Still, it takes all sorts to make a world, or break it if you happen to be one of the 1. 8 billion Stormers serving on the various War Worlds right now.

So you know the name, you've seen the products. What about the people behind it all? All those elusive faces that make, on average, 10,000 times as much as you or I do each year. Today, with thanks to Karma, we get to know this biogenetic elite a little better.

Ernest Strand

We start our tour of Phantom Pregnancy personnel with the man at the top: Dr. Ernest Strand, born Ernest William Strand on February the 12th, 722 SD. to Scott and Susan Strand. Dr. Strand started his life as the son of a middle class family on Mort. His father was a lecturer at the Science and Technology University in Meny and his mother a restaurant owner, also in Meny. Ernest Strand had, in his words,



'an adequate childhood'. As a boy Strand was educated in Meny, which gave him the initial boost to a higher social status, and also a wide opportunity for educational advancement. To the surprise and dismay of his parents, who were expecting him to follow an academic career, Ernest signed up with a SLA Industries' Investigation programme which he passed with full honours.

The next eight years of his life were spent on Mort on the BPN circuit until, at the age of 25, he took up a full time position with the Department of Biogenetics, Karma. His superior intellect soon brought him to the attention of his superiors and this gave him his first opportunity to gain favour and promotion within Karma. His first promotion within the department was to technician status. He almost lost this post when allegations of an affair with the wife of a Karma official were raised, but Strand had these dismissed as envious slander created by those who didn't appreciate his quick rise in station. Apart from this one incident, Ernest Strand had an unblemished career as a technician.

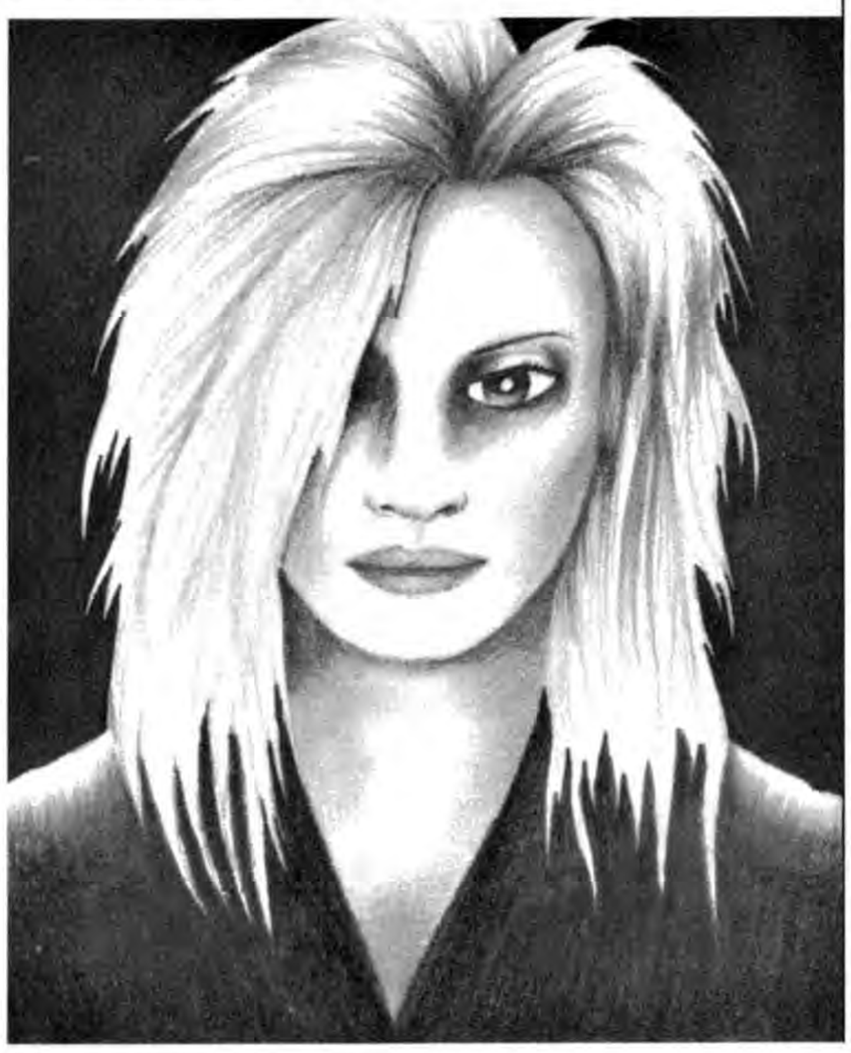
After serving 10 years as a biogenetic engineer, and having taken the opportunity to gain a doctorate in biogenetics in his spare moments, the now Dr. Strand had worked his way up to a consultancy position, dealing mainly with 313 Stormers. It was at this stage in his life that Dr. Strand, now 38 years old, thought that he had reached the pinnacle of his career and settled down, marrying a technician from one of the development teams. Two years after his marriage the department head of Karma, Professor David Braiden, died in an industrial accident. This left the position of Head of Biogenetics open –as it is the norm for a department head to choose and groom their successor before their retirement.

All division heads and consultants were called to Mr. Slayer's office to hear what was to be done. Slayer's decision was to let each individual candidate state their case personally. After six hours of waiting, Dr. Strand stepped into Slayer's office and stepped out ten minutes later the new department head. Since no other candidate dared go against the word of Mr. Slayer, Dr. Strand was unopposed. From the start of his career, Dr. Strand was plagued with accusations of all description, from the maltreatment of his wife to the murder of corporate executives. The only accusation which caused the good doctor any major trouble occurred three years after his promotion. His wife had died in a car accident, leaving Strand an empty man, and newspapers printed a story claiming that Dr. Strand had arranged his wife's death, thereby freeing him to marry again without the mess of a public divorce. The person that he was supposedly to marry, Hail Perry, a laboratory assistant working for Phantom Pregnancy, was hounded by the press so much that she committed suicide one week after the story broke. Dr. Strand himself issued a BPN to find out where the rumours had arisen from. In the end it was found that Ms. Perry had started them herself, in order to make some quick cash.

This was only one example of the many 'inside stories' that have plagued Dr. Strand's career. Dr. Strand has never married again, but the numerous paternity suits issued against him are a constant thorn in his side.

These rumours have not affected his work in the least. Dr. Strand is indeed a genius. His development work on 313 Stormers has not been equalled since the days of the first Stormers, and his writings are extensive. These works include numerous technical manuals, which have given thousands of bio–engineers a guiding light to follow in the field of biogenetic creation. There are also a few, unfortunately now out of print, books that deal with the psychological effect of stress in the workforce, from labourers to corporates. These books have been in constant use by the work force of Karma to help them cope with the pressure, and also in the Department of Psychology and Psychoses as standard teaching material for its students. One volume in particular is considered to be the benchmark in its field; 'Soul Demons', a guide to the the psychoses of the subconscious, which completely changed the way psychologists viewed the entire psychoanalytic profession.

Dr. Strand takes a great interest in the BPN circuit, as he still feels more affinity towards the operatives of SLA Industries than to those in the Corporate Sector. He has helped many operatives with their careers, and his most recent protege has been the aptly named Phantom. Although Dr. Strand claims that he does it because he knows what its like trying to get started on that long ladder of success, the allegations of 'bastard children' keep crawling out of the woodwork –but are soon laid to rest, often along with their writers.



Dr. Ernest W. Strand, SCL 2F.9, has been the Controller of Karma for the last 140 years. If he were a Shaktar, then his reign would probably be unstoppable –but a human? This extended life span –extended by Karma– has been the subject of many debates on the 'abuse' of Karma technology, mainly referring to the use of the prohibited drug BS/8974/A, still in its experimental stages after 90 years of research. This anti–gerasone (anti–ageing) drug coupled with endless Nuke Tendon implants and Karma replacement organs has already given Dr. Strand almost three times the average life span. It is rumoured that BS/8974/A has extremely detrimental effects on both the body and the brain, but these rumours, if true, have not seemed to affect Dr. Strand in any way. It is also whispered that in the later half of 894 SD., Dr. Strand had a Stormer heart replace his own. Whether true or not, we can expect to see a lot more Dr. Strand. So much for the theory that only Necanthropes live forever.

Iesha Collins

The next member of Phantom Pregnancy is Dr. Iesha Collins, SCL 2D.4. Although her celebrity status is not quite in the same league as that of Dr. Strand, she has nonetheless had a glittering career with Karma. Born in Mort Central 42 years ago, Dr. Collins was the only child of two Phantom Pregnancy technicians and she followed in their footsteps, as was to be expected. After graduating from Meny, Iesha returned to Mort Central and began working on the 313 Stormer program, which was her life's ambition. In 880 SD., Dr. Collins took over control of the 313 project from Professor Nikihel Ckroczie on his retirement, when she was only 25, and since then she has continued producing work of the highest standard. The most notable of her achievements came in 882–883 SD. When working closely with Dr. Ernest Strand, the DNA condensing gene was created, allowing Stormer gene codes to be compressed by 75%, thereby reducing the cost of growing a Stormer by a similar percentage. During her time as Project Head for the 313, Dr. Collins has had an exemplary and untarnished career with only a short break of two months in the summer of 883 SD., when she took a forced leave of absence due to stress. That behind her, Dr. Iesha Collins returned to her position, where she has been ever since. She too has been taking an interest recently in young up and coming operatives, though her support has come more in the form of financial help, and her most recent investment has also been in the aforementioned Phantom. The trend of giving aid to starting operatives could become very popular in the light of Dr. Collins and Dr. Strand's continuing examples.

Judy Brock Deakins

Next on our list is Judy Brock Deakins, the youngest official in Phantom Pregnancy. At the age of fourteen Judy became the youngest person



ever to receive a degree in biogenetics. At fifteen, she had passed the entrance exam for the University of Biogenetic Implementation. On entering this prestigious seat of learning, she concentrated on biogenetic history, gaining her degree six months later. It was at this point, just before her seventeenth birthday, that Dr. Ernest Strand's eye fell on her during a lecture, where he was astounded by her intimate knowledge of the Stormer. Judy soon found herself whisked away to the Phantom Pregnancy facility in Mort Central where she was to continue her studies in biogenetic history, concentrating on the Low Wave. By 897 SD., Deakins, now a professor, had been placed in control of all Karma archives and two

years later she had gained control of the redevelopment of the Low Wave Stormer. Now 26, Judy Deakins holds an SCL 2F for archive material and a 3D.6 operational Security Clearance Level. She is the youngest ever project leader –and some say the most intelligent. She is also an extremely close friend of Dr. Strand, having had an almost father/daughter relationship with him since she was eighteen. This has led to suspicions about how Ms. Deakins qualified for her promotions so early on, but anybody that has read her list of achievements will soon learn otherwise.

James Frederick Gray

Dr. James Frederick Gray, SCL 2D, began his career in a very similar manner to that of Dr. Strand –as an operative. His operative employment did not last the 10 years of Dr. Strands, but it was an eventful one to say the least. Dr. James F. Gray, Medical Officer, signed on with the Nitro Legion's 21st MASH unit and within two weeks found himself on Dante –a terrifying experience for one of any age, never mind a tender 21 year old. Dr. Gray survived his ordeal and returned to Mort, heading straight for Phantom Pregnancy after falling in love with the ideas behind the Stormers that he had seen on Dante. He wished to spend time developing the breed, so he put countless requests to Dr. Strand asking to be given the chance to head his own design group. Finally, after six years, Dr. Strand granted Dr. Gray his own project. Five years after that, his project was given unlimited financial backing by Karma. The project that Dr. Gray had been constantly on about was the Chagrin Stormer, an idea he had started to develop all those years ago on Dante. Dr. Gray has been plagued with health problems for some years, but with the aid of Karma technology, Dr. Gray survived to complete his initial project, which had been his ambition for sixteen years. Now with this ambition fulfilled, Dr. Gray is at present at a loose end as far as work goes. With any luck, the esteemed Dr. Gray should be back to work soon.

Ethan Coen

Our next member of the Phantom Pregnancy top team was born the son of an Arkadian bar/restaurant owner. Dr. Ethan Coen lived the first 18 years



of his life on Arkadia, working from the age of 14 in various establishments owned by his father. At 18, Ethan found employment as a laboratory assistant on board the Shaktar Ion transport 'Shnkl'sh' (Sinkleash). After a full year's journeying on Shnkl'sh, Coen found himself on Mort and out of a job. Turning to what he knew best, Coen started working in the operative bars in Central Mort whilst working his way through an open study course in biogenetics. Although this was not what Ethan Coen had predicted to be his future, he found himself more and more enamoured by biogenetics. Two years passed, in which Ethan Coen became Dr. Ethan Coen. Still SCL 11, Dr. Coen applied to and was accepted by Karma, working on synthetic drug production projects. Six years later he moved to a biogenetics laboratory on Artery, where he was part of the 330 Gator production team. The position only lasted for six months, ending when Dr. Coen was attacked and almost killed by one of the Gators outside the laboratory where he worked. Unable to receive biogenetic implants to help heal his wounds due to a rather unfortunate allergy to any biogenetic material, Dr. Coen still walks with a limp –and is somewhat of an anomaly considering his position today. After the attack on Artery, Dr. Coen moved back to Mort working for one of Dr. Strand's project teams. The next eight years of Dr. Coen's career were spent quietly working on various small projects –though in Dr. Coen's own words:

"The small things in life are just as important as the large. What use is the gun without the bullets?"

In the winter of 896 SD., as you will probably already know, on the day after the 'Karma Congressional Ball' Dr. Coen was asked in person by Dr. Ernest Strand to head a new project. A new project that was to have the same financial backing as the Chagrin project, and was along the same lines. Dr. Coen was understandably honoured but was also amused by this promotion. Overnight, his SCL shot from 4A. 9 to 3C. Now Dr. Coen is working away secluded in his office, as the impediment he acquired from the Gator on Artery still makes him very wary of Stormers. An odd phobia for a Phantom Pregnancy executive.

Taro Toyama

To look at Dr. Taro Toyama, SCL 2E, you may think that she would be more suited to gracing the catwalks of Orienta's fashion houses than the walkways of a Phantom Pregnancy laboratory. At 26 years of age, Dr. Toyama



is a rather striking individual –with long black hair, lithe figure, slender face and large, almost black, eyes. Dr. Toyama came from Orienta four years ago and began working on a high SCL project under the supervision of Dr. Strand. The exact nature of the project is still under wraps. Dr. Toyama is a very private person, so much so that she has placed an SCL lock–out on all her files. This makes it very difficult to obtain so much as her shoe size for research material. It would seem that Dr. Taro Toyama is intent on remaining the femme fatale. In her words; "No comment."

Maxon Hagen

Dr. Maxon Hagen has had, to say the least, a chequered career. His

anti–Ebon standpoint has caused him drops in SCL on more than one occasion. This does not, however, reflect on his performance as a first class consultant for Karma –a job that he has held since the age of 24. Dr. Hagen is head consultant on no fewer than three individual projects; Project 23 with Dr. Taro Toyama, Project 711 with Dr. Ethan Coen and the Doppleganger Institute's single project, the Vevaphon. Dr. Maxon Hagen keeps himself busy. What of the man behind the scientist? We had an opportunity to speak briefly with Dr. Hagen and we took this chance to ask about his personal life and his past:

"I was born in 866 SD. My mother was a hardware consultant for FEN, my father was a test tube. So, as you can see, I had an automatic leg up the genetic ladder as far as parents go. It would have been better if I could have been grown in a tank. I hated my mother."

When asked about his childhood, Dr. Hagen seemed to be more open.

"I had a good childhood. I never bothered too much with the other brats, though. They were all a bit too childish for my liking. The orphanage was always full of delinquents, but the worst were the feral Ebon children. They were the bed wetters, the cry babies. It amused me to see so much mental scarring in four year olds. My education was spent, more or less, in the biology laboratories of my school testing my own neuro–toxins on the classroom rats."

What interested me was the way in which Dr. Hagen skipped over the death of his mother. Backtracking a little, I questioned him.

"My mother was a stupid woman. I didn't see much of her. She was constantly working. I thought the 14 year old baby sitter was my mother. One night, coming home from work, my mother was brutally attacked by a DarkNight hit squad. They beat and abused her for two days until she died. Best thing DarkNight ever did."

Moving on from this line of questions, we talked about his work.

"Biogenetics is my life. It is life. It has always intrigued me intensely. The first time I saw a Stormer I was so impressed that I knew then I had to get into the biogenetic design studios.



I found out that the best way to do this is to become a consultant. That way, you can flip from project to project and see everything that is going on. Apart from that, it gets you away from the bed wetters. There aren't that many of them where I work. In fact, I don't think there's one. That's the way I like it."

I tackled Dr. Hagen on his slightly biased views on Ebons and Brain Wasters. A mistake I will not repeat.

"I'm not a racist, I'm a realist. Anybody that puts their trust in someone that has a 'deep understanding of the universe' has, in my opinion, and if I may use a crude term, their heads planted up their collective arses. The Ebon race has some very strange ideas of what's wrong and what's right. These 'mystic' powers they use, they don't understand them in the least. They admit it themselves; 'We don't fully understand.' Bullshit! They haven't got the first clue. Training them is like giving a brat a hand grenade and showing it how to pull out the pin. The trouble they cause is incredible. They don't care whose privacy they invade with their mind powers, snooping into people's brains –it's unnatural. They're freaks of nature allowed to breed. In my opinion, they should be left to rot on their home world with their glyphs."

Strong words from a very opinionated man. What drives his words home, and gives them an added intensity is his appearance; his sharp features, his black hair, his dark beard and his piercing green eyes are unnerving. What was clear from the interview was that Dr. Hagen is a man who does not wish to revisit his past. What dark secrets might we find? Until the SCL lock–out is lifted, we will just have to wait and see.

Gareth Miles

Dr. Gareth Miles, SCL 3B.7, looks like a grandfather but has the attitude of a drill sergeant in the Militia. At 60 years old, Dr. Miles has been with Karma for 40 years and is a close friend to Dr. Strand. After his graduation Dr. Miles launched his career from Artery, where his family had lived for generations. From day one, his life pursuit was maintaining the 313 Stormer design, something he considers a personal quest. As young designers like Dr. Taro Toyama flood Phantom Pregnancy with ideas, project leaders like Dr. Miles fight to keep the 313 in production. In his earlier years, Dr. Miles worked as a bio–technician for Phantom Pregnancy until he took over the production and development of the 313 in 882 SD. Although many consider his position a 'dead end job', Dr. Miles enjoys his work so much that he has requested anti–gerasone treatment, so he can remain with his beloved 313s forever.

According to some, this has become almost an actual obsession with Dr. Miles. For instance, two years ago, Dr. Miles ordered all Phantom Pregnancy installations to make core copies of DNA construction blueprints of the 313 and place them in airtight containers to be buried deep under the production plants on each world, to preserve the 313 for prosperity. These small eccentricities cannot distract us from the fact that Dr. Miles is still a very gifted scientist who still spends as much time in the design laboratories as he does in his office, working to continue the 313's production for as long as possible.

Anna Strand

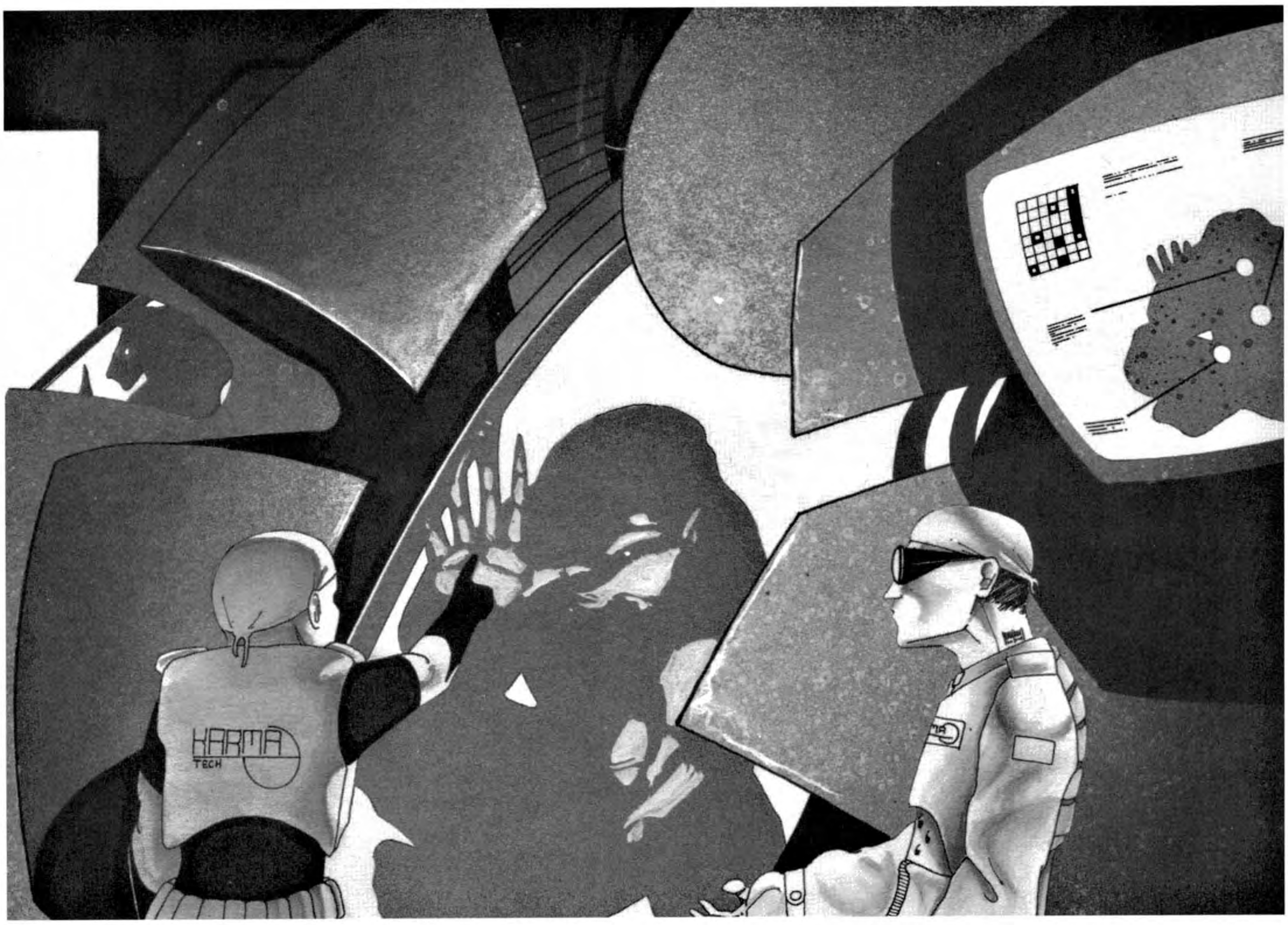
The name Strand is one that crops up throughout the biogenetic department. Some of these people are directly related to the great Dr. Ernest Strand and others have taken his

name as a mark of respect. One that is a relation, although not by blood, is Anna Strand. Dr. Anna Strand, SCL 3D.4, is an orphan who was adopted by Dr. Ernest Strand at the age of four. Anna considers him to be her father, never having known her own. The influence of Dr. Strand, as Anna herself has testified, led to her decision to become a Karma employee. Never expecting an easy time of it because of her ties to Dr. Strand, Dr. Anna Strand was bullied by both her college mates and then her work colleagues at Phantom Pregnancy. The latter almost wrecked her career before it got started, as stories of sexual favours for promotions and claims that she was actually the legitimate offspring of Dr. Ernest Strand were hurled at her throughout the first two years of her employment. Now into her third year with Phantom Pregnancy, Dr. Anna Strand has made one of the quickest rises within the company, making it to a consultancy position on the 114 project, a post she defends with all the strength and tenacity of her adoptive–father. Although Dr. Anna Strand is a very private person, the public addresses she has made have been likened to those of the original Dr. Ernest Strand. Her friends and enemies alike believe that one day she will step into the illustrious shoes of her adoptive father. If she succeeds she is liable to make a lot more enemies than friends because of her ties with Dr. Strand –and she will be the first woman to head Karma.

Leo Black

The last Phantom Pregnancy executive is Dr. Leo Black. Starting life as the youngest member of a Downtown family of seven, Leo Black had a hard childhood, coming from a poor family. The most he could hope for was perhaps that one day his father could get him a job at the sewage plant where he worked. Leo didn't see this as a viable future and even at an early age of eight was looking for an escape from the inevitable. Part of this came when Leo took up the saxophone at school. This proved to be where his talents lay –that and chemistry. After four years of playing, Leo found himself a night job after school at the 'Super Snail', a famous Downtown jazz club. Here, he would play to crowds of up to 150 people a night for 50ū plus whatever he could make in tips. For the next five years, Leo was a regular player at the Super Snail. At the age of 17, he had saved enough money to put himself through college. His parents had mixed feelings about his decision, his mother was overjoyed at the prospect and his father was angered by Leo's decision not to follow in his footsteps. This family rift still exists today. His father has not spoken to him since the day that Leo left college, some 20 years ago. Leo's college life was a hard one. Being a 'poor boy', Leo did not fit in with the rest of the middle and upper–class pupils of his year and he found it very difficult to make friends. With practically no social life, Leo devoted all his time to study, something he had neglected in the earlier years due to his music. Four years of hard study later Leo Black had graduated from Meny with the full honours of the academy, a qualification only acquired by the gifted or dedicated. On leaving, Dr. Black was offered his pick of jobs within Karma. He automatically took up a consultancy post with Phantom Pregnancy being of the mind that designers may come and go, but whoever they are they will always need consultants. Dr. Black is a very popular man having a very 'up'





attitude about everything. He keeps his staff happy and is never out of the laboratories. It is rumoured that late at night, it is possible to hear Dr. Black's saxophone echo through the corridors of the 714 facility. Its nice to see that some people never forget their roots.

Structural Breakdown

These individuals are the backbone of Phantom Pregnancy. Without them, there wouldn't be a Phantom Pregnancy as we know it. So, how do these people fit into the structure of the sub–company? Who's in charge of what? Here's the breakdown:

Main production: Stormer and Variants

Production facilities on Mort (on–line): 175

Workforce (Mort only): 250,000

Annual turnover: 389,000,000 billion credits

The command structure within Phantom Pregnancy is kept simple so as to keep inter–project arguments and chain–of–command disputes to a minimum. Dr. Ernest Strand is overall project leader for the entire Phantom Pregnancy organisation. His direct subordinates are five project leaders and four consultants. These project leaders are in charge of five project organisers each. These delegate between project leaders and the general staff of each project. Dr. Strand controls the bulk of the semi or unskilled work force. Project consultants are answerable only to Dr. Strand but have no say in the day to day running of individual projects. Each of one of the five project leaders takes it in turn to be division head for one month. During this time they control the financial and logistical administration for the whole of Phantom Pregnancy, unless vetoed by Dr. Ernest Strand. Each month at the end of a division head's term, a meeting is held of all the leaders, consultants and project organisers for full reports on each individual project and a summary of the progress of Phantom Pregnancy as a whole. This final report is then submitted for approval by Dr. Strand.

Production Control

Each project leader has complete access to and control over approximately 35 individual facilities. These range from administration buildings and warehouses, to full biogenetic research and production plants – these being where the project leaders spend the largest percentage of their time. The workforce that each leader can utilise is normally set at 500 employees per facility, with Dr. Strand controlling the main industrial workforce. This workforce also includes personal protection for the project leader. Although 'Dark Finders' are preferred, it is not unheard of for leaders such as Dr. Taro Toyama to hire squads of operatives as bodyguards. 'Die Cult' have been Dr. Toyama's personal guard for the last 12 months. Any other personnel, either specialised or unskilled can be contracted at a moment's notice, from off world if necessary.

There you have it; Phantom Pregnancy. No longer the shadowy creature shop of SLA Industries but the producer of the protectors of the World of Progress.

Daniel Ford,

Third Eye Publications.

STORMER CONFIGURATION

The Stormer breed has, for a long time, been unable to advance physically after leaving the protection of th[illegible] Bio–Womb™s. Their inability to have Nuke Tendon implants has left them with a severe lack of development potential –other than, of course, for Phantom Pregnancy to design and grow a new breed. This, although possible, is an extremely expensive and inefficient way of developing the Stormers.

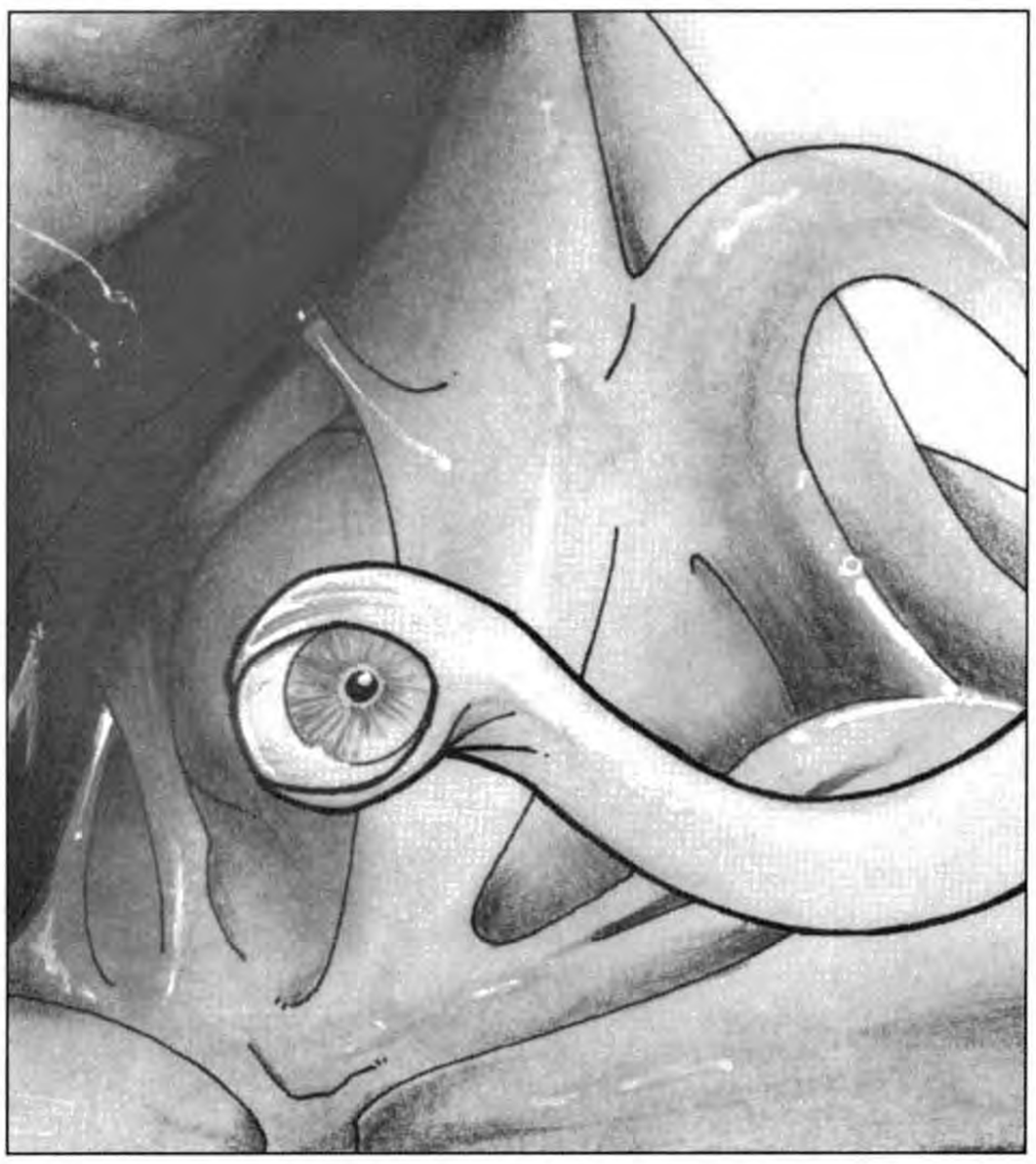
The most important factor that tends to be overlooked is that the Stormer is not a mindless drone. It is a living being with free will and, as such, should be allowed to make decisions about its appearance and the utilisation of its abilities.

Nuke Tendon™ have now developed special implants that Stormers can purchase. These will give the Stormer breed the cutting edge once again in combat.

ASSERTION TENDONS™

These are massive bundles of biogenetic muscle that have been grown to incorporate accelerated DNA match cells so that the Stormer's own genes do not overrun the new implant and destroy it. The size of an Assertion Tendon compared to a normal Shock Tendon is massive. The amount of biogenetic material involved in the creation of one set of these implants is almost enough to make two sets of normal tendons for a human. Implanted using the same techniques, the Stormer tendons are a combination of Shock and Brace Tendons, giving the advantages of both types. The grafting happens at an accelerated rate, avoiding the need for Sinewfication™.

Cost: 2400₵





SURVEYOR™ TRANSITION OPTICS

It is difficult to maintain an edge over some of the more readily available growing technologies, but it is not impossible. There is almost always a biogenetic answer to an electronic question. The AV stalk is one such item that has successful made the transition from electronics to biogenetics. The Surveyor is basically a third eye that is grafted onto the Stormer's head to give it greater visual perception of its surroundings. The implant consists of a long biogenetic muscle bundle with an optical system running down the centre to the eye at the front. This is grafted onto the Stormer's neck. When in use, the Stormer can manipulate the muscle stalk like a small arm to look around corners, etc. The Stormer's brain was designed to take a great deal of sensory disorganisation, so it is quite capable of using the Surveyor to its full potential. This includes such tasks as looking behind itself with one optical area while looking forward with the other with no sensory degradation or confusion taking place. When not in use, the eye coils up on the back of the neck.

Cost: 260₵

LASH™ VERTEBRAE ELONGATION

Similar problems occur with this implant as with the Quad–limb. With the extremely strong spinal column muscle and bone structure the implantation of a tail is easy. The control of it is not. The Stormer's brain is designed to co–ordinate the motor action for four limbs, two arms, two legs. Adding a tail taxes the Stormers reasoning capacity. The tail itself is designed to be strong but flexible. Normal length is about 2m ending in a bony curved tip which is chiselled along one edge making it razor sharp. The tail is

fully prehensile, so the blade–like bone can be used as a slashing weapon.

Cost: 450₵

MAUL™ CLAW AND TEETH ENHANCERS

The Stormer is already gifted with very tough, sharp teeth and claws. The durability of these is derived from the simplicity of the gene codes used in their structure. These same gene codes can be manipulated by giving the Stormer DNA accelerators to increase the cell growth in them to produce razor sharp talons and fangs. This is the simplest of the Stormer design improvements. It comes in the form of a single injection which changes the DNA codes in six hours.

Cost: 175₵





QUAD–LIMB DOMINION™

The massive frame of a Stormer's body is the ideal building foundation for additional limbs. With their extremely wide shoulder muscles and bone structure, the implantation of extra appendages is easy, although the control of them is not. Like all brains, the Stormer's is designed to co–ordinate the motor action for four limbs –two arms and two legs. Adding an additional set of arms with full sentient control handled by the Stormer puts a great deal of control pressure on the Stormer's mind. This is overcome by letting the original arms have primary signal co–ordination with the brain and the sibling pair secondary access to the motor action signals. This means that the implant arms will mimic, slightly, the original set unless a conscious thought is made to direct them otherwise.

Cost: 1800₵



ARTERY

A LIVING WORLD

Artery. An aptly named planet, which is responsible for the production of more biogenetic beings than any other, including Mort. Known as the 'Karma Home World', Artery stands alone as a living monument to the creative power of biogenetics. It is one of the greatest threats to the enemies of SLA Industries, being the home of the 'Stormer' series, some of the most formidable soldiers to grace a battlefield since the Conflict Wars.

ARTERY:

"Artery, home to six million people, the jewel in the biogenetic crown. From space Artery looks like a huge, muddy spot with thick dirty grey cloud formations that slowly ooze around its surface"

Ben Fisher, Third Eye News, 'A Guide to the Universe', 889 SD.

Artery started its life as a Natural World, with lush green forests, and clear unpolluted oceans –but this changed when the first ion–drive ship found its way into its orbit. With nearly 750,000 people arriving on the first and only colonial ship, the settlers had very little trouble settling in, and the expansion of their territory was aided by the lack of native predatory animals. The majority of the indigenous animal life was predominantly vegetarian, preferring the taste of the plants in the lush woods and deep jungles to colonist's flesh, and so with nothing to impede their progress the settlers succeeded in destroying 1, 700,000 square kilometres of woodland within the first six months of their new life.

25 years after Artery was colonised, its natural eco–system began to break down. This process was accelerated by the advent of the Conflict Wars, which almost destroyed Artery, as it was one of the main worlds to be utilised as a battlefield. Ravaged by man and man's wars, the Artery that once existed was no more. After the Conflict Wars, the people of Artery found themselves in a disastrous situation –out of a total population of 7,800,000, only 15,000 remained, scattered sparsely over the planet's surface. As the few survivors attempted to scrape together what was left, 250,000 SLA troops landed on Artery claiming it for SLA Industries. The survivors welcomed these new arrivals, seeing them as protectors. The might of SLA Industries was beginning to show the full extent of its powers to the Known Universe, including Artery.

The planet was found by SLA to be rich in mineral wealth, as yet untapped by the settlers, and the population of Artery provided an already skilled built in work force, being composed of three generations of colonists, including trained technicians, mechanics, industrial engineers etc. On the basis of this, SLA decided to set up Artery as an Industrial World. It was to be the main manufacturing base of the new Stormer. In four short years, what had been a dead world was given new life by SLA, albeit artificial.

ARTERY TODAY

The industrial growth of Artery was carefully planned to bleed the planet's resources slowly, allowing more and more manufacturing units to be built instead of quickly taking what was there then moving on. All complexes on Artery are designed in such a way as to tap and slowly extract any and all resources from an area. When one resource begins to run out, the facility undergoes a slow process of change as it switches from one resource to another for its production capabilities.

When an industrial plant can no longer gain sustenance from the available resources, it is common practice to dismantle it and reuse the various sections to expand existing plants in nearby areas, instead of the plant shutting down and a new one being constructed elsewhere. What is left in its place is an industrial wasteland, strewn with chemical and mechanical refuse. These areas are known as 'void belts', expanses of land normally between 10 and 50 square kilometres that are completely uninhabitable and unreclaimable. Anybody foolish enough to wander into these areas is almost certainly fated to die, either from the effects of the waste or from the occasional mutated life–form which these void belts have created. Most of what was left of Artery's indigenous life has fallen prey to this type of enforced 'evolution'.

Artery's industrial areas now span some 60% of the total land mass of the planet and 20% of the oceanic basin. Most of the planet's surface is constantly ravaged by horrific storms, of a magnitude seen nowhere else in the World of Progress. These huge electrical storms flare up without warning, especially over the industrial sectors. The largest electrical storm in the history of Artery's industrial period is still raging today over 'Angel', the first and the largest single industrial complex on Artery. The storm, measuring 150km in diameter, settled above the Angel site 20 years ago and has stayed there ever since, even through the dry season, attracted to and fed by the plant's electrical discharge.

The Angel complex was constructed 896 years ago as the first Stormer production plant. Since then Angel has grown immensely –from its initial blueprint measurements of 600 square kilometres to a staggering 30, 000 square kilometres. This includes dormitory areas for the factory workers and various other staff. On the outskirts of Angel are the shuttle pads, for the movement of personnel and supplies to and from the various other factories on Artery. These also serve as landing areas for space–faring craft like small ion–drive freighters and the large passenger–carrying shuttles of foldships. Hundreds of gauss rail links criss–cross these landing pads. The rail system allows travel to nearly all areas of Angel, from the outer perimeter of the landing areas to the heart of the plant itself. The problems of having so many trains are obvious; jams, signal failures and delays are a constant

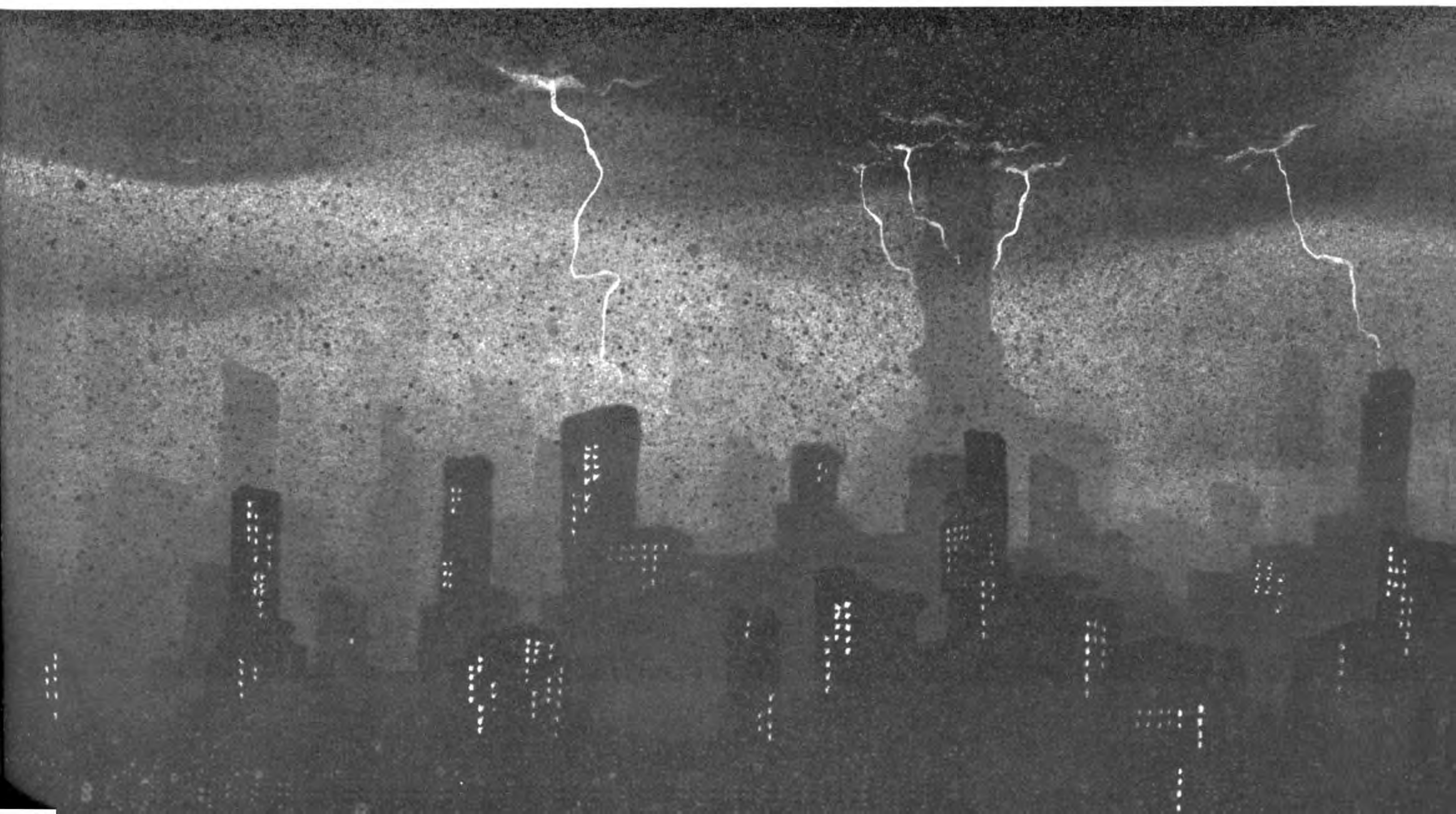


THE BIRTH OF A DEAD WORLD

travelling nightmare with daily delays of up to four hours during peak travelling times (every morning and mid evening). To travel from the landing bay to the centre of Angel takes, on average, one and a half hours –not bad considering that the journey should take 10–15 minutes. The trains are almost always extremely crowded and it is normally standing room only. The smell on the trains is terrible: stale air, dirt, oil, chemicals from the industrial plant coupled with inadequate ventilation leaves many passengers new to Artery almost physically sick after every journey. Outside the air is even worse than that inside the trains. The rain traps a great deal of chemicals from the various production plants, which tend to react nastily with each other, producing a horrific stench that is more than a little harmful if inhaled without the use of a filter mask. This problem, being a planet–wide one, means that nobody ventures outside without a filter mask. These masks, however, do not prevent all the detrimental effects of this corrosive air supply, and respiratory diseases are common amongst the residents of Artery.

On arrival Angel does not look that bad, as the gauss stations are relatively new and the air filtration system works in the outskirts. The areas surrounding the gauss stations are residential zones for the factory workers. The homes are tall prefabricated blocks, each comprising of between 10 and 30 levels. Each level has four internal blocks with walkways surrounding each one. Each block contains four apartment accommodation units with basic amenities –living/ bedroom area, kitchen area and bathroom. The people that occupy these living quarters are all employed by Karma, or are the children of Karma employees. The workers are instantly recognisable by their mode of dress. Layers of thick padded clothes are worn under large long overcoats with heavy, industrial work boots. They are usually shaven headed for convenience; and grubby, as hygiene is not of primary importance to the workforce, having little time to do anything but work and sleep. Physically, most of the population look the same; strong, tall and muscular, as it is Karma policy to supply most of its workers with Nuke Tendon Implants to improve their work rate. Anywhere on Artery can be reached underground, and it is possible for employees to live there all their lives only seeing the outside world through gauss train windows.

There are two main ways to travel on Artery, one being the gauss trains mentioned above and the second being on foot in the 'Theseus Chain', a network of highway–like, interconnecting subterranean tunnels that stretch across Artery and even through its oceans. Unless a very good Mapslug™ is purchased, getting lost in the tunnels can be a daily occurrence. The tunnels are supposedly for pedestrian use only, but this does not deter skateboarders, roller-skaters and the occasional motorcyclist from using parts of the tunnels for amusement. This is especially true of the younger inhabitants that have nothing better to do but hang out with friends in the 'tubes'. This has led to



the formation of thousands of individual gangs that roam the tunnels in search of victims –usually rival gang members, but random muggings and sexual offenses are common. Even though the majority of these gang members are in their mid–teens, some of the gangs have their roots firmly in the past. 'The Tribe' are the oldest gang in Angel, having survived for 138 years. Children of the original members of The Tribe join through a sense of loyalty to their parent's and grandparent's past. The Tribe has controlled most of the urban territory around Angel since it was first formed. Having nearly 1200 members in total, its nearest rival in numbers are 'The Chancellors', a skateboard gang that has tried and failed many times over the past ten years to capture The Tribe's territory. The days of the gangs are now numbered, as down in the dirt and scum of the Theseus Chain the Shiver Units are becoming more and more hostile, to the point of shooting gang members on sight.

The Shiver Units on Artery can be a little extreme, and due to the harsh environment and the pressure of working in such a labour intensive world, many find it hard to cope. They turn to drugs, crime and violence –anything to break the monotony of their life on Artery. This has had a rather worrying effect on the Shiver forces here as a whole. To see an Artery Shiver is a fearful sight indeed, clad in riot style black Blocker Body Armour, armed with Pacifier Batons and the special issue AA4 Support Revolver (exclusively produced for Artery). A special 11. 5mm (short) rifle round is used in this weapon, very effectively. The old saying 'violence breeds violence' is especially true here. The more violent the population get, the more extreme the Shivers become in their methods. Allegations of corruption within the Shiver ranks are widespread, but usually cannot be proved. On Artery the Shivers write the law as they go along. They are an evil and twisted mockery of Cradle's finest.

To avoid the gangs and the Shivers some brave the outside world. This holds, like the tunnels, many hazards –and being struck by lightning is only one of them. On Artery's surface the rain is very similar to a shower of mud. It is acidic, polluted with chemicals from the various industrial sectors, bitterly cold and seemingly never–ending. It lashes incessantly against the buildings of Angel, slowly eating its way through everything. Even the structures, which are coated to prevent corrosion, show the results of centuries of constant erosion. The nightmarish melee of Angel's architecture is apparent at a glance –the melting pot of centuries of functional architecture and industrial skyscrapers grate on the eyes like a raped War World. Your gaze is drawn to 'Faust's Tower', a fusion plant close to the centre of Angel, which stands like a twisted skeletal finger pointing upwards into the eye of the storm raging above. All around the cramped walkways the rain swirls in tiny tidal waves, mingling and and twisting like demented souls between the towers and blocks. No amount of good navigation or nava–maps will help you here. Your only option is to go with the flow of the crowds that wash like rain down streets of almost alien construction. If luck prevails, when you visit Artery it will be summer. This is the only time the rain stops, giving way to baking hot days that dehydrate Artery, turning it into a dust bowl. These abhorrently hot periods are a result of Artery's elliptical orbit around its sun. For 125 days of the year Artery sweats. During the remaining 520 days it slowly cools –until mid–winter, when constant darkness engulfs the planet for four months of bitter cold and constant violent storms. The gravity on Artery, due to its size – 143,000km in diameter – is slightly greater than that of Mort but personnel usually adjust successfully in about six months.



The Angel complex is the strongest site on Artery. The original plant (built in the summer of 004 SD.), is situated at the centre of Angel and was named, like the city that surrounds it, after the very first Stormer created. The first obstacle that confronts anybody attempting to enter the Angel industrial centre is the 'Chattering Wall', so called because of the hundreds of gun emplacements scattered along the structure. It stands 15m tall and is just as thick. This gargantuan construction has a network of tunnels, gauss train links and barracks running through it and under it for the

forces that man the wall. In total, at any one time, there are 55,000 troops stationed along the wall. These are all taken from the workforce of Angel. Each person must do at least two years service on the wall, most returning to their original jobs after that time but some staying on, preferring the military life to that of a factory worker. At present, 2500 of the serving 55,000 are permanently stationed in the wall. These make up the core of the command structure for the forces.

This number also incorporates the personal guard of the wall commander. At present, this elite unit consists of 200 troops. The commander of the wall, one General Trest Cullen, is answerable only to one other on Artery –the director, General G. A. Romaens, MA. Dr. Romaens is the controller of all of Artery's production plants, overseeing all biogenetic production from his offices in the centre of the original Angel complex. In the wall there are a set of heavily fortified gates, which are the only way in or out unless travelling by air or rail. Even then, in the tunnels of the gauss rail system there are huge blast doors in every tunnel that can be sealed at a moment's notice. Once inside the perimeter wall the scene changes to an alarming vista, looking more like hell erupting out of the earth, rather than the celestial vision its name would suggest. Kilometres of pipeline, from the diameter of a beer can to that of huge oil drums, flow, twist and weave their way along the ground like lengths of intestines, pumping all manner of foul fluids to and from the various industrial sites.

The factory buildings are deep rusty brown in colour and their exteriors have very little structural differences; flat, huge slabs of concrete slot together to form the walls and roofs of the factories. The only visible sign of life in these expressionless constructions comes from the windows near the top –long, thin lines of light which encircle the buildings, emitting a faint yellow glow. The doors to these work stations are tall and broad with roller shutters that occasionally rattle open, flooding the otherwise dim outside world with a brief stream of light. The panorama inside one of



these industrial strongholds seems like a huge labyrinthine mass of endless walkways which weave round huge vats of chemicals. Hissing spurts of gaseous clouds spume from hairline cracks in pipes above you, which gives you the impression that you are gazing down a foggy alleyway into a hideous nightclub of chaotic design. Figures mill about the walkways like ants, many of them unmistakable as Low Wave Stormers slowly going about their pre–programmed tasks. The others, Karma technicians, Low Wave handlers and the occasional Shiver for security, move with greater speed and more purpose.

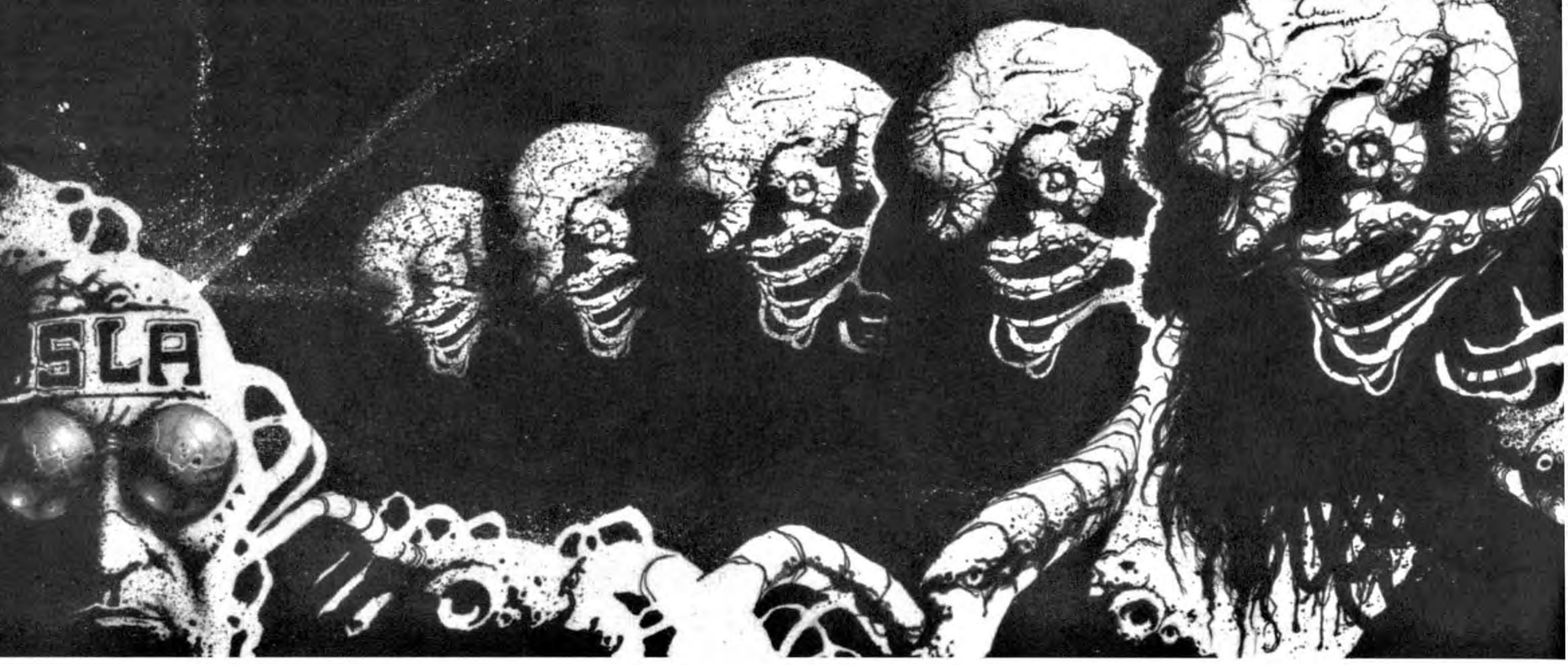
Beyond these buildings that crowd the inner perimeter is a technophobic nightmare, as the pipelines from the work stations flow together in a sea of steel snakes towards the stacks of refining plants. These giant processing stations stand 20 storeys high, and some say just as deep. The 'Angel's Claws', as these structures have come to be known because of their tall slender construction, house gigantic filtration plants. Nearly all of the interior of these buildings is taken up with bulky filter beds that run from the top of the structure to the second level. The ground and first level contain operating and pumping equipment that regulate the flow of 9,000, 000 litres of chemicals a second through the filter towers.

"I was there in '74 when one of these mothers cracked. Billions of litres spewing out on level 17 in tower seven, what a nightmare. Hell on earth. Well, it was once the lightning struck and set the whole tower ablaze. For six days it burnt. 2000 people died. My two boys were killed fighting the fire. That's why I'm here walking the wall. "

Joe Sancher, Wall Guard, Artery 888 SD.

Beyond the Angel's Claws are the oldest regions of Angel. The buildings here have stood for more than 400 years, and still bear the Neo–Gothic architectural feel of that time. Once these would have housed the staff of Angel, but as the complex grew these frighteningly enchanting constructions were taken over, reconditioned and restructured to suit the new needs of the ever expanding Angel organisation. Now these buildings house the administrative nerve centre of the whole of Artery, keeping tight financial and logistical control of every aspect of life from wages for employees to interstellar transportation to and from Artery. The buildings themselves look fragile, as if one gust of wind could send their spires crashing down. In reality, each of the ten enormous SLA bureaucratic churches is capable of withstanding a direct fusion blast of a 10kt magnitude. Such was the foresight, or rather apprehension, of the architectural designers. They foresaw





that one day the destruction of the Conflict Wars could return.

Walking amongst these buildings can be a hazardous occupation without the correct zone passes, as the security guards that patrol this area operate with an almost fanatical zeal, believing themselves to be the only thing that stands between Angel and the evil heretic operatives of Dark-Night and Thresher. There is also a very strong Stormer presence here, but these Stormers are not standard 313, 711 or 714. These custom designed Artery security Stormers are classified as the 330 Gator. They are small (1.5m tall), stockily built creatures with stubby muscular arms, legs and tail. Their jaws are designed to lock after biting, and not to release their grip until their prey is dead. This has lead to the occasional accident involving unfortunate workers with non–existant or forgotten passes.

Nearing the heart of the Angel complex, some 100km from the outskirts of the city, the mood of this ancient place changes to one of gloom and despair. The macabre silence that falls is terrifying after the deafening drone of the rest of the plant. Again, the architectural style tells the age of this sector. Now even closer to the core of Angel, the eye of the electrical storm high above pulses like the heartbeat of a slumbering beast. Lightning strikes crackle and fork down the buildings like neon blue blood coursing through invisible veins, and the buildings take on an almost organic appearance, as if in some way mimicking the creatures born within their walls. Here normal laws of physics seem to matter no more, as structure after structure defies both gravitational and engineering laws. All around buildings close in, in an attempt to engulf passers–by. The lightning casts thousands of flickering shadows across this living landscape, playing tricks with the senses. Shadows move as if alive, perhaps explaining the constant stream of reports from the obviously overworked staff of the ghosts that apparently plague this sector. Ebons who have ventured this far into Angel quickly turn back, telling of the great pain and anguish surrounding the area, and centring on The Malice Tower. This tower is the very nucleus of Angel and it is the oldest free–standing structure on Artery, having been constructed 896 years ago. It is also the single biggest production plant of Stormers on the whole of Artery. Standing 1005 metres tall, the Malice Tower is visible from almost anywhere in Angel.

Malice Tower was constructed to be the showpiece for all future Karma Biogenetic production facilities. When it was constructed it did just what is was designed to do. The huge demonic needle, whose erection broke every rule nature had written, gave the worlds governed by SLA a sense of pride and struck fear into the hearts of its enemies. Now Artery, mainly Angel and specifically Malice Tower, acts not only as a deterrent to the enemies of SLA, but also to the entire Ebon race, who see it as an abomination. The interior of the Malice Tower is identical to most Stormer production facilities, mainly because they are all based on Malice Tower. Almost every level of this malevolent monolith is filled with the production equipment necessary to create and nurture Stormers. Each of these levels contains two rows of huge oval tanks. These are the artificial wombs where the Stormers gestate during their first year of life. These incubation rooms are dimly lit by the red glow from the tanks and foul smelling due to the vast amount of chemicals used, chemicals which flow down to the sub–levels of the tower and out towards the refining plants through seeping, intertwining black piping.

At full capacity, Malice tower gives birth to some 1,500 Stormers a day, 5% of Artery's total output. Not all of these end up as free–thinking beings –a large percentage go to various War Worlds and another 30% are 114 Low Waves for use on the multitude of Industrial Worlds or 330's for use as guards on Artery. Only 20% of these Stormers; 313, 714 and 711, are ever granted full reasoning capacities. At the top of Malice Tower is the home and workplace of Director General G. A. Romaens. He can survey all he commands from the insulated comfort of his rather precarious penthouse suite. He rules a planet that nature has abandoned, having been pushed out by SLA Industries.

Director General Romaens took over the control of the Angel facility 15 years ago. Formerly a DNA expert from 'Ross', one of the smaller plants 2000 km north of Angel, Romaens life revolved around Artery. Born the son of a Karma technician in 863 SD., Romaens knew from an early age that one day he would follow in his father's footsteps. Little did he know

CALAHARVEY 2500

"It was about six when we got the call from the tower. It wasn't too clear. As I remember, there was one mother of a storm that night. Nothing new. Anyway, this call had somethin' to do with techies being eaten or something. The guy was a bit hysterical. Me an' four of the team went down, batons an' all, to see what all the shouting was about. Now, it was the funniest thing I ever did see. Four Gators had got themselves a couple of techies outside without their pass cards. One of them had the sense not to move. All he had was two Gators locked on his legs. The other one wasn't so bright. He'd made a run for the ladder onto one of the roofs and was hanging from one of the rungs with half a leg left and the other two Gators at the bottom of this ladder finishing their meal of technical legs, raw. It took us four minutes, there or less, to beat the Gators off the guy on the ground. The other one, well, he wasn't so lucky 'cause when we was dealing with the smart guy, he had dropped off the ladder and got made into dessert for the Gators. And the moral of this story is: Don't leave home without your pass card, you might not get back. Not in one piece, anyway."

Artery Shiver Lt. Royal, SCL 7B.



that one day he would control his home world. Although not a great technician, Romaens major asset was his charisma. He could charm anybody round to his way of thinking and often did. Many believe that this is the only reason he came to be what he is today. Romaens has governed for more than 15 years and no one can find fault or flaw in his work. In fact, compared to his predecessor, James F. Hagen, a self–satisfying, arrogant, power–hungry bigot, Romaens is a godsend to the people of Artery. Physically, Romaens looks like most others on Artery, sporting a couple of obvious sets of Nuke Tendon Implants, tall (2.00 m), long black hair going slightly grey at the edges usually kept in a ponytail, strong facial features, piercing green eyes and a low smooth voice that has a soothing effect on most people, putting them instantly at ease. The Director General makes all visitors to Artery welcome and is always happy to arrange tours, talks and accommodation for those staying more than a day. Artery itself does not boast hotels as such, but has thousands of bars, big and small, most of which can offer some form of accommodation. The bars have a wide and varied clientele, but most are usually frequented by the lower class workers. There are one or two bars which are specifically for the higher classes, but these are normally private clubs or cost a great deal to enter. Artery's best hotel is not actually on Artery, it is several kilometres above the planet's surface: 'Skin One' was originally built to be the first state–of–the–art orbiting defence system for Artery .

The initial plans called for twenty of these orbiting defence platforms, with S1 being the master fire control station for all of them. The twenty satellites were built as planned and went on line in 106 SD. Four hours later all but S1 had been destroyed, as S1's defence system failed to recognise the satellites as friends and attacked the other stations. Retaliation was useless as all fire control orders had to be processed through S1.

Skin One was shut down, stripped of all armament and left to hang for two years until it was re–opened as a halfway point for shuttles from foldships en–route to Artery. Skin One is now a small town in its own right with hotels, bars, shops, housing and, the source of its prosperity, a zero–G drug production facility. The permanent population of S1 is only about 150, which includes workers for the various amenities and the drug production plant. Law enforcement comes in the shape of ten Shivers from Artery, who do month–long shifts on S1. The station, when full, can sustain 400 people. On average there are about 250 on board at any one time.

The only other permanent orbiting bodies of Artery are its two moons. These are barren satellites that have only enough staff posted on them to maintain a communication network with Artery and Skin One –as Artery, with its constant electromagnetic storms, finds it difficult to maintain independent communications.

"Imagine space as a flat sheet of paper. When you fold a ship, you can feel across the area of paper, if you hit a bump, its a world. Artery is a muddy black dent in the paper. We use it as a sort of landmark, a marker post on the way home to Mort or on the way out to Static. You don't want to fold too close as the suffering you can feel from Artery is terrible and it can bounce you off course by light years. "

Trueford, Ebon Navigator, Foldship 'Stasis', 900 SD.

The term *Soft Company* is one that I do not view as completely true. In the main, these *Soft Companies* do real, lasting damage to our beloved *SLA Industries:* Not so soft.

***DarkNight,* perhaps the largest of these companies, has been active for centuries, biting at the heels of of *SLA Industries*; Their terrorist activities, in some areas, bordering on all–out war. So if *DarkNight* is the big bad wolf, what about the cubs –the thousands of groups that appear everywhere, most initially funded by *DarkNight?* Some of these have as few as five members, others have thousands. 'Why' is another very good question. Why must thousands –*SLA Industries* operatives and *Soft Company* members alike– die when the small ill–equipped *Soft Companies* must know they stand no chance at all of overthrowing the mighty *SLA Industries?* Well, Hope, faith and stupidity are three possibilities that spring to mind. For all the futility of their struggle, this does not make them powerless. The *Soft Companies* have had their fair share of success, with bombings, theft and –the old favourite– assassinations: No fewer than 12,375 *SLA Industries* operatives fell, last year, to the assassins' bullets. On the other side of the coin, 147 *Soft Companies* –a total of 36,191 people– were either killed or apprehended by *SLA Industries* in the last year.**

But they keep on blowing–up power stations, production plants and public personalities. You would think, by now, that *some* of them would get the message but as long as they don't, there's always going to be something to watch on T.V.

Long live the *Soft Companies... NOT!*

Martin Stevenson, SIC News



GREEN BAG SHUFFLE

part three

Jackal, bless his little heart, was a loud mouthed, conceited, egotistical sad–case, but he wasn't lying. He'd really done his homework, it's been known for serial killers and Ex–War Criminals to team up and swallow their pride in hard times. Chances are, once the objectives have been accomplished, the two parties would waste each other. City weirdos start clubbing together for all manner of reasons. This time, it was hand–to–hand tactics in exchange for drugs. It made sense –time to call the boys.

My brainless but nonetheless eager associates were ready and waiting at the neck of EastSide Downtown at ***. McClusky and Moger had just shot up a couple of UV and were set to take the whole world apart before the night was out. Elmoe wasn't saying much, I guessed he was still pretty sore from the sound beating he'd got from McClusky that afternoon. I'd slipped out of my fave jumpsuit and into a suit of HARD Armour. I wasn't taking any chances with these two crazies. Bloody Valentine was nasty enough with those claws, but my worrying guess was that Travis was still in possession of a FEN 'Warmonger'. These rifles are Dante Militia issue, used for taking down Thresher Powersuits. They're absolutely lethal. It was gonna be a long cold night on the Eastside.

"Okay boys, listen up. Tonight we're lookin' for big bucks going under the names of Tremor Travis and Bloody Valentine. McClusky, Moger, I want you guys to take Tremor Travis, he's an Ex–Dante Veteran gone AWOL. He's nuts but experienced so work as a team, alright? No heroics, use ranged attacks –y'know, guns? You got that McClusky? Elmoe, you're on Bloody Valentine. She's handy in close quarters so use that SilverBack to slice her up good. I'll be behind you guys with a Vid–Cam, make it look good, right? We gotta make up for pulling a BPN from Crazy Herman. Besides, it's easy cash from Third Eye, they're interested in Bloody Valentine. You hear that Elmoe?"

"Say, boss, why aintcha gettin' busy like us? You scared?" drooled Moger, waving a KPS Mangler in my face (a mere back–up weapon, how macho).

"Because, my drooling disciple, if things start getting tricky. I feed them a sneaky 12.7mm Blitzer round in the face when they're not lookin', see?" I said, my BLA beauty in his face.

Moger grinned, revealing a grizzly array of Karma fangs.

"Smart thinkin', boss!"

"Let's go, space cakes."

By 10.00pm, we were in the heart of Eastside, the rain was pelting' down on our sorry heads. We bribed a few hobo's (well, actually Moger did, with a FEN Power Reaper) but to no avail. It seemed that our two fiendish friends were spending the night in front of TV with hot cocoa. What a bummer.

"It's still early hours, Cheronna. The town doesn't usually come alive for these types until about 2.00am. Best to keep movin'." McClusky mumbled, the UV had almost made his jaw seized up with the adrenalin rush.

"Sure, I guess."

I was in a sulk, a complete downer. Windfall's Walk's an ugly place and the downpour of rain made it worse. Everything was normal, no trouble, no street punks, not even a stiff to go on. It was beginning to look like Tremor Travis and Bloody Valentine had given us the slip.

However, I had obviously overrated their intelligence, as a ragged body came crashing out the window of a nearby apartment. Bloody Valentine was getting 'busy'. We were still on the case. But then just as my hopes were raised...

'Budda! Budda! Budda!' Moger's Power Reaper annihilated the last of the body's remains.

"Moger, you stupid dope! Are you intentionally trying to blow our cover?"

"Sorry boss, I thought it was... armed and dangerous?"

"You great lump. Elmoe?"

"I'm on it." Elmoe was off like a shot, there might still be hope. I knew Elmoe was competent as a knife–merchant, but Bloody Valentine had been around for a while. She'd reached her fourteenth kill two months ago and she'd killed a fair number since then. I hoped Elmoe wasn't next, the SilverBack was fast, but not that tough.

"C'mon, you guys! Don't just stand and stare! Get in there and gun Travis, go!" I was really losing the rag by this time. I patched through to Elmoe.

"Elmoe, you there?"

"Yeah, she's out of the building, back entrance, using the fire escapes. No sign of Travis. Move the guys out, we're in pursuit."

Bugger, I was gonna have to run.

"Boys, move out. Back entrance, follow Elmoe." I panted, sprinting down the alleyway. Moger was still firing, he'd gone into a frenzy. Not good. Moger was gonna blow our cover and Valentine and Travis knew the area like the back of their bloodied hands. They were always gonna know we were coming', thanks to the drooling moron. Drugs and Stormers don't mix.

Anyway, things start gettin' confusing. I'm getting headset messages from all angles, Moger's rattlin' off 10mm like a Kilcopter, my Vid–Cam is shaking about 'cause I'm running, but finally I reach the main wall of Cannibal Sector One. Blood is trickling down the wall. For a brief moment, I thought it was Elmoe's. I've never climbed a wall that fast since I was in training. Fortunately, it was some Shiver Wall Sentries who had been on guard. Their bodies were in the same sorry state as the guy we left on the walkway. These dudes were chopped like mincemeat, Bloody Valentine and Elmoe were in Cannibal Sector One –somewhere.

"Cheronna?"

"Elmoe? Talk to me."

"We got 'em. I tracked her to the old Veevo Casino Halls, 42nd Street. Watch out –the roof's blown out. I saw Travis briefly so he may have taken cover in the ruins. Keep the camera rollin'."

"Sure, boys? I'm on the wall, go ahead and we're back in formation. Same plan as before, alright?"

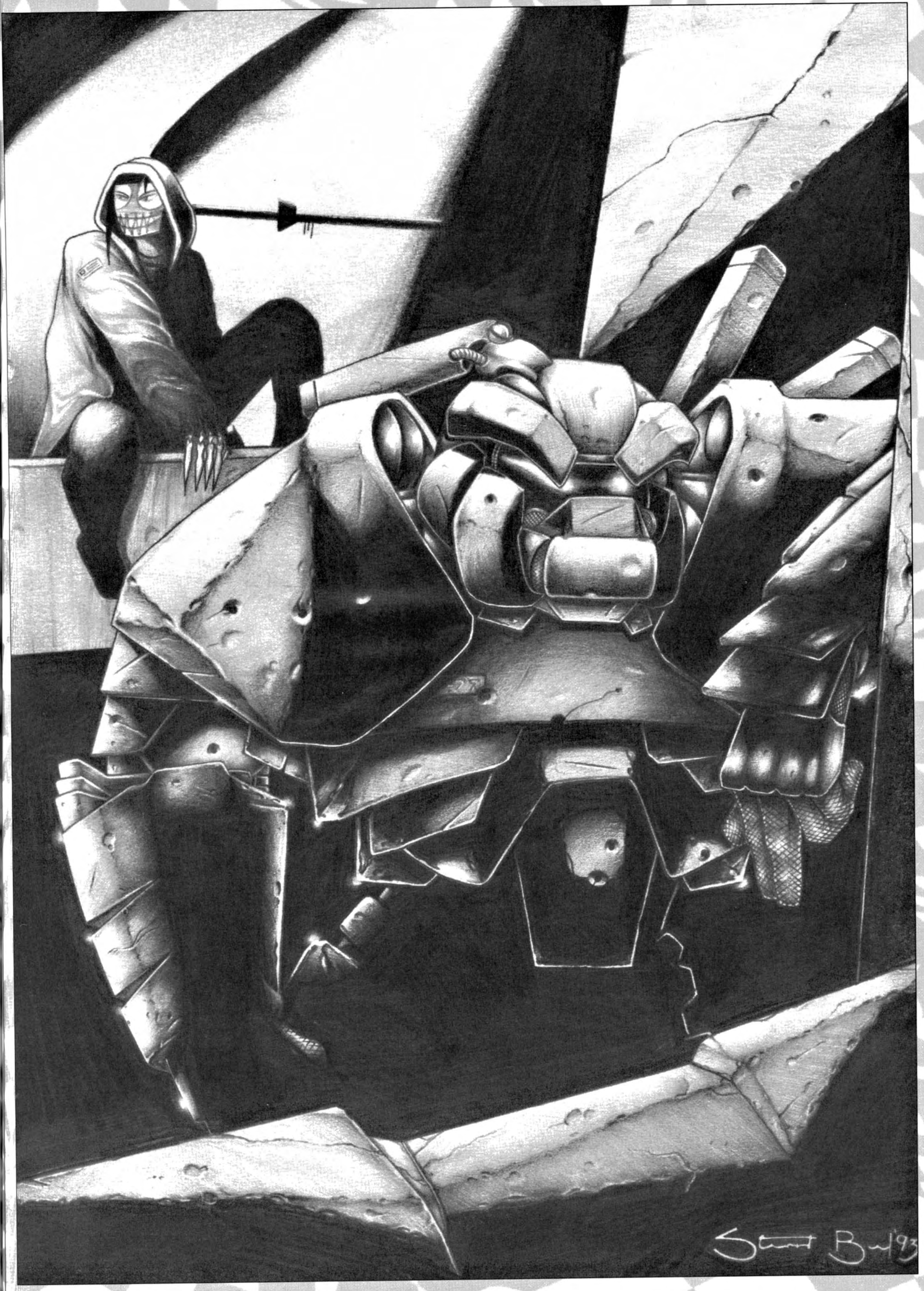
"McClusky here. We're over the wall and advancing."

I could see them. Moger was calm again, but how long would that last? I followed them down, and Jeez! the stink. I thought Roachies was bad when the fans broke down, but nothing compared to this stifling hole. I could hardly see for the flies. Yuk.

Veevos was a ruin. It had barely four walls and the whole place was littered with rotting bones and Carrien dung. Bad omen or what?

"Move in boys, I'll cover you." I muttered. Even I wasn't convinced by my own feeble assurances.

As we entered, the floors creaked like they were made of balsa wood. The rain poured in from the sky ceiling,


Sam B '93

noisily hitting the rotting debris.

The Mort sky was ugly and still grey even at this late hour, obscured only by numerous iron bars from wall to wall (Erected by nasties to stop the SKA airborne Shivers gettin' in. This place was big enough to bring the bikes through).

"Elmoe?" I whispered nervously into the headset.

"Back wall." A quiet voice replied.

I could barely see him in the darkness, just the faintest flicker of silverback, then I noticed the numerous yellow eyes appearing from a hole in the floor. The sneaky bastards had led us straight into a Carrien pit.

Moger roared and let rip with the Power Reaper, scattering shells in all directions. The Carrien's screeches were only challenged by the ominous groaning as the building started to give way from the intense damage of the Power Reaper.

"Moger, stop firing, you dumb shit! The building can't handle the firepower!" I yelled. Then McClusky was a spray of red, his headless body crumpled on the floor. In the heat of the moment, our guard had went down while Bloody Valentine swung from the iron bars like a monkey, swooping down under cover of the racket, and removing McClusky's head like she was playing golf.

"Shit!" was the general consensus of opinion (or would have been if we had time to take one). Bloody Valentine was gone again, somewhere in the darkness. The Carriens were wasted, and bits of them littered the casino floor.

"Sneaky little... neat distraction. Move to close combat weapons, another burst like that and this whole place is gonna topple like a house of cards. Do it, Moger!"

Moger drew a Chainaxe, grudgingly.

"Good. Elmoe? Any sign of Travis?"



Elmoe shook his head as a huge shadow rose behind him.

"He's behind you!" Travis bellowed, cracking a Mutilator Fist over Elmoe's head, instantly felling him. Moger began to charge but, being a heavy sod, the floor gave way and he fell out of sight.

"Is this the best you can do? What has become of our fair Mort? It's crawling with subversive sc... "

Travis' victory speech was cut short by a fast, deadly and quite disconcertingly psychotic Elmoe. That smack on the head had driven Elmoe berserk. He's a mellow, sweet kid normally and seein' him tear Travis apart was frightening. It was brutal. I've watched Man–chines dissect living victims, Carriens eat screaming captives and worse, but this took the biscuit.

I left the camera running as Elmoe continued to scream and slice Travis. I was transfixed, not noticing Bloody Valentine's silent approach until her claws were under my throat.

"Well, dearest. That just leaves you and I. Travis or no Travis, I leave here with the drugs. Travis was an insane fool, anyway." She spoke with a calm and tender voice.

"You talk too much, honey." I hit her in the face with my elbow. Valentine fell back, her mask damp with her own blood. I was there as she hit the floor. When Valentine opened her eyes, I was standing on her Razor Claws pointing a Blitzer in her face.

"Don't get up, sweetcheeks. I'm packing HESH rounds and Nuke Tendon Implants. Either way, no amount of Kick Start Solo's gonna bring you back so just relax, babe."

Behind me, Elmoe delivered the final blow that laid Tremor Travis to rest. He was a real mess.

Moger began to clamber from the hole, drooling and panting heavily, the goon was still nuts on Ultra Violence. An evil grin spread across Bloody Valentine's face.

"Hey, you big, ugly mother'. Why don't you mosey over here so I can stick my claws up your slack ass!" she yelled slanderously.

"No! Moger!" I screamed.

Strangely enough, Moger (with all his good nature) took offense by Valentine's sweet comments and began to spray the room with 10mm in a stinking rage. It was an excuse, and it didn't take much of one, to fire that damn gun of his. Well, Green Bag luck ran true once more and walls came tumbling down around us. Whether it was my frail female frame or the unlucky direction of the falling rubble, I was buried and blacked out. When I finally came to, Elmoe and Moger were dragging their sorry selves from the wreckage. We were all absolutely filthy, battered and bruised. Bloody Valentine was gone, Travis' body was exposed. Obviously, Valentine had arisen from the rubble first, dug up the veteran's body and taken the drugs to heal herself. Regardless, she'd escaped.

When the Shivers arrived ten minutes later, reports had explained that only fifteen percent of Windfall's Walk had been massacred by the gruesome twosome. Not bad, eh?

Anyway, although Bloody Valentine was still at large, we had nonetheless accomplished our BPN. Windfall's Walk was a 'safe house'. We'd killed the infamous Tremor Travis and filmed some rather nifty footage of the action.

So what is the moral of this story? Em, right, don't take stupid BPNs from Crazy Herman, watch out for crazy SilverBack dudes and dribbling Stormers... and... hire Green Bag 'cos we're great!

Was that alright?

FIGHT WITH A FEN

LIFE AFTER DEATH

"The way I see it, if you die and you don't have the common sense to have money in an LAD account, you deserve not to come back. I got the break, and I'm still here. Let me tell you something. Most people think, yeah, ok –I'm born, I live, I die. The end. No fool really gives it much thought until it's too late. That night, just before that little asshole tried to give me a third nostril, I thought the same way. Now I know better. The bullet passed through my skull like a red hot poker. You ain't likely to forget something like that. The moment before it all went black I wanted life more than anything else in this god–forsaken world. You don't really know what your missing until it's being taken away from you, and life is too big a thing to play around with. When I came back I thought I'd been through hell. LAD. What beautiful letters to see after your own death. So my advice is, don't be an asshole –open an account. Live on after you get your ticket punched and kill the son of a bitch that did it to you. It doesn't cost the earth to live forever, or at least until the next little shit tries it on. I'm ready this time –and you can be too. I'm gonna nail the swine this time. I hope you're reading this, Icon. You're dead."

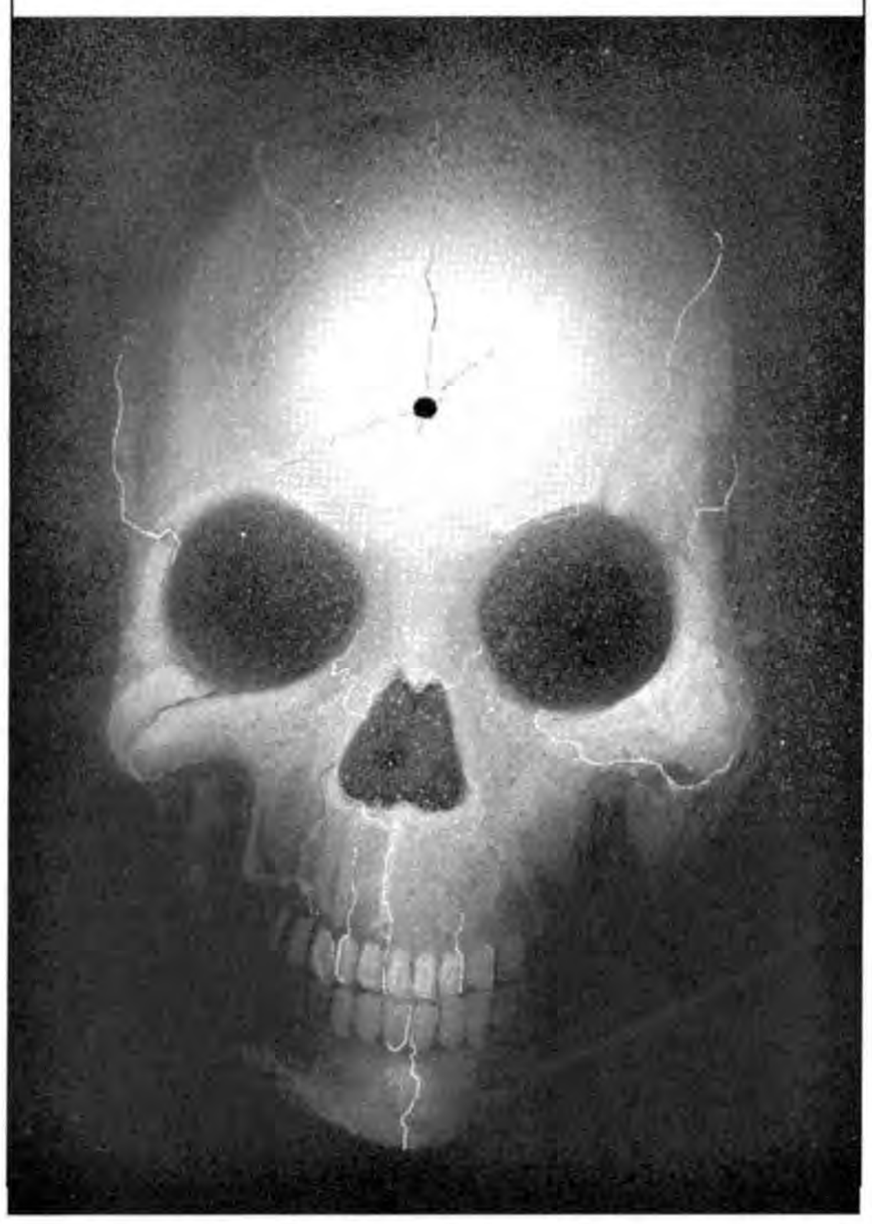
Delia the Destroyer (Deceased) 900 SD.

Delia was shot dead outside The Pit in the early hours of the morning by a then unknown teenage assailant who escaped without detection. A nation of t.v. viewers mourned her passing. One of the best loved Contract Killers of the year, always ready to please, dubbed the 'The Cool Killer' by most of the public and liked by everybody. Delia had no enemies within SLA Industries. Delia had enjoyed one of the most stable Contract careers in recent years. She had it all: The fame, the fortune, the ten year sponsorship deal with DIG™, all taken from her in one cruel twist of fate at the hands of one who is believed to be an obsessed 'fan'. The end of one of the most promising careers ever seen on the Circuit. The public outcry for the capture of the cowardly individual was astounding. Messages of sympathy and demands for justice flooded in by their thousands. Mort was, unbelievably, united in its sorrow. Delia, in her moment of death had done what no living being could hope to achieve in a lifetime –brought creed, colour and race together. For a while, anyway.

'Delia the Destroyer, 876 SD to 899 SD.' That's what the tombstone should have read. But Delia, Contract Killer, has risen like a phoenix, back and out for blood.

As the rest of Mort stood back in shocked silence, the main building of one of the Karma research labs was ablaze with activity. Not with the normal everyday comings and goings, but with one of the most amazing developments to come from SLA Industries to date. Even as Delia's grasp on life slipped from her she was being rushed to this mysterious building to undergo what could only be described as a miracle of modern science. Little, if anything, is known about exactly what went on behind the doors of the facility, but one thing that we all can be sure of is that those three letters –LAD– are going to be with us, changing the way we view our lives and our deaths, for a long time indeed.

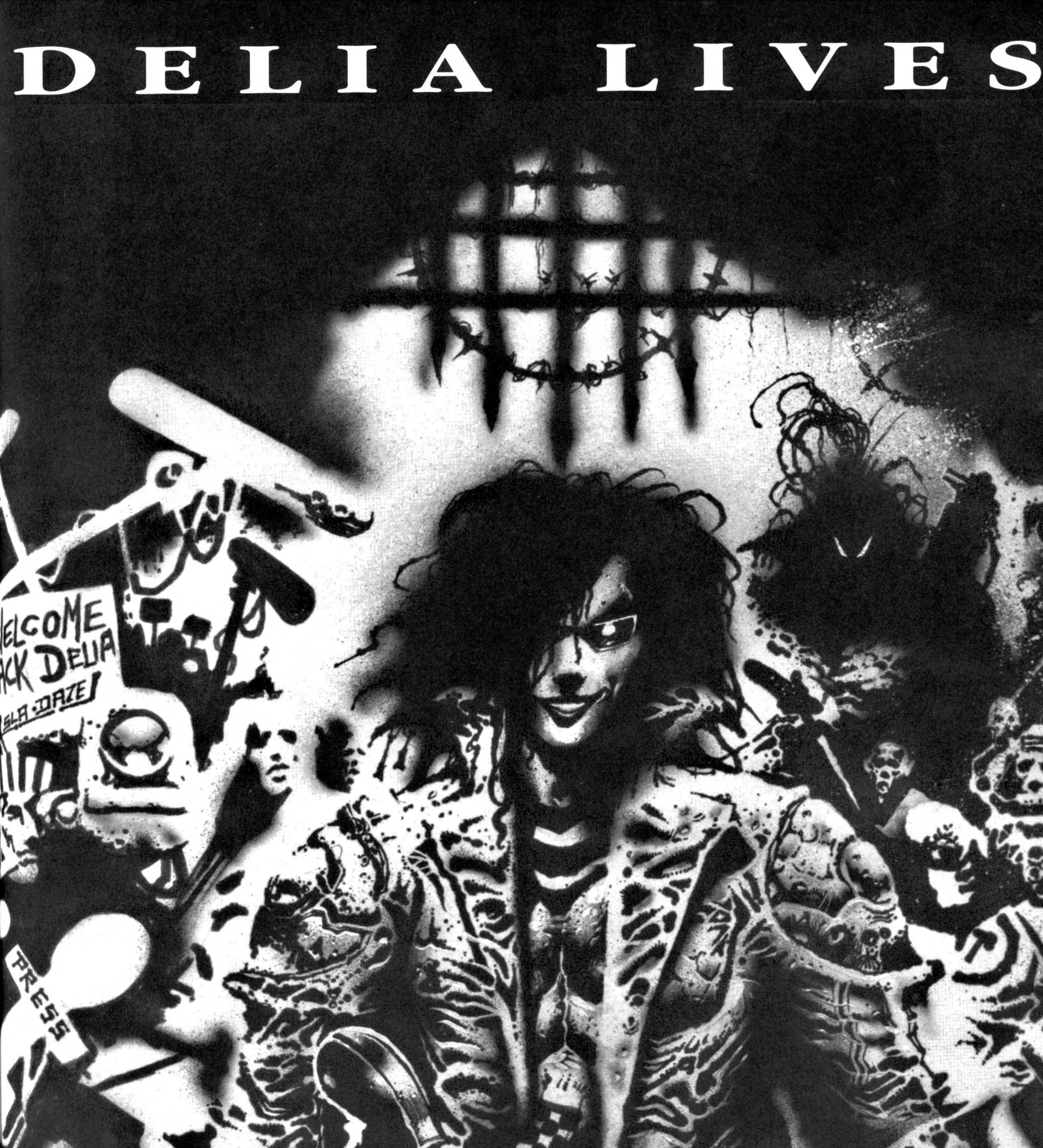
That was seven days ago. Delia the Destroyer has returned to us. Living? Dead? Undead? We talked to Dr Fiona Grant about the new LAD facility in Central about, amongst other things, the astounding resurrection of our beloved Delia:



"Delia is the mascot for this new division of Karma. She has been the first on Mort to receive this new treatment, and I use the word 'treatment' in the loosest possible terms. LAD is a whole new ball game as far as biogenetics is concerned. The process is carried out, in its entirety, at one of the many new LAD facilities that have recently opened around Mort. These will give any operative the opportunity to survive death, as Delia has done. Something that has been possible only in the wildest dreams of mankind since the dawn of time. Only the Ebon race has been able to live to an unnatural age. Until now that is. The best way to show you how the LAD process works is to briefly talk about our first client, Delia.

Delia was one of 200 Contract Killers to be given one of our 'Pacer' implants. This small, undetectable organism monitors the cardiovascular and respiratory rates of the subject. At the moment of death, a small tracer is activated, the signal of which is picked up at one of the monitoring centres. Once received, a medically equipped Kilcopter is dispatched to retrieve the patient. The crew of the Kilcopter have four minutes to reach the client. After this the lack of oxygen to the brain causes damage too extreme to be rectified. On retrieval, the patient is flown to an LAD facility to be resurrected. The operations that are performed are usually straightforward genetic replacements. The actual drugs used are the true success story. I can not go into detail about these pharmaceuticals at the moment, as the nature of the SCL is rather delicate. Delia was the first of our test subjects to get the opportunity to use this unique service. Luckily, when the tracer went off there was an LAD copter nearby. Within three minutes Delia was on an operating table and all set for revival. The assassin's bullet had not penetrated her frontal lobe to a sufficient depth to damage the brain. Instead, it was designed to fragment and introduce a deadly neurotoxin into the body, killing the target almost instantly –as if a bullet in the brain was not enough. This did pose a rather tangled problem for the surgeons at the LAD facility. The toxin had destroyed a large percentage of Delia's central nervous system. Stabilising drugs were administered as the surgeons started to work on stripping the body of any area where the neurotoxin had wasted the nervous system to unsalvagable degrees. As luck would have it, the neurotoxin was de-

DELIA LIVES



signed to kill the brain last, so as to inflict as much pain on the victim as possible. Delia was practically stripped to the bone and rebuilt. Sinew shock and brace tendons replaced all but the smallest of her muscles, leaving Delia with inhuman strength and dexterity. In total, from pick up time until the surgeons finally stepped away from the operating table sixteen hours had passed, 48 litres of blood and drugs had been used along with nearly 10,000₵ worth of Nuke Tendon implants and Delia was resting quietly in her room unaware of the events that had returned her to the land of the living. The cost of this may seem high, but Delia could afford it. The package that Delia opted for has been dubbed 'The Works'. Along with all the muscle implants, Delia received other pieces of biogenetic implantation, including a new skin and numerous choice cosmetic changes such as hair, nails, skin tone and texture. There is no need to be restricted by what the body looked like in life –it is possible to choose what the appearance of the operative will be after death. This is all taken care of by our staff and is carried out with complete discretion and in total confidentiality. Of course, all this depends on how much money is actually in the client's account."

LAD (Life After Death)

"Four minutes isn't that long, you know. We got this 'blip' from Cannibal Sector One, right down next to Salvation Tower. Her body was there all right, but so was Digger, big bad ass that he is. Never seen anything like it. We had two SKA flying support for us. They kept the big guy occupied while we went in for the op. That was where I got this. Overnight, my entire head of hair went white. It could have been the size of Digger, or maybe the amount of 10mm that was flying about, but was more likely the combination of the two. Anyway, we dragged this poor dead girl into the Evac copter, hit Mach 1 before we had cleared Salvation. We got her hooked up and stable before we reached Karma. That's when I looked at my watch. Thirty seconds to spare. I've had closer shaves on saving a stiff, time wise, but none as scary as Digger."

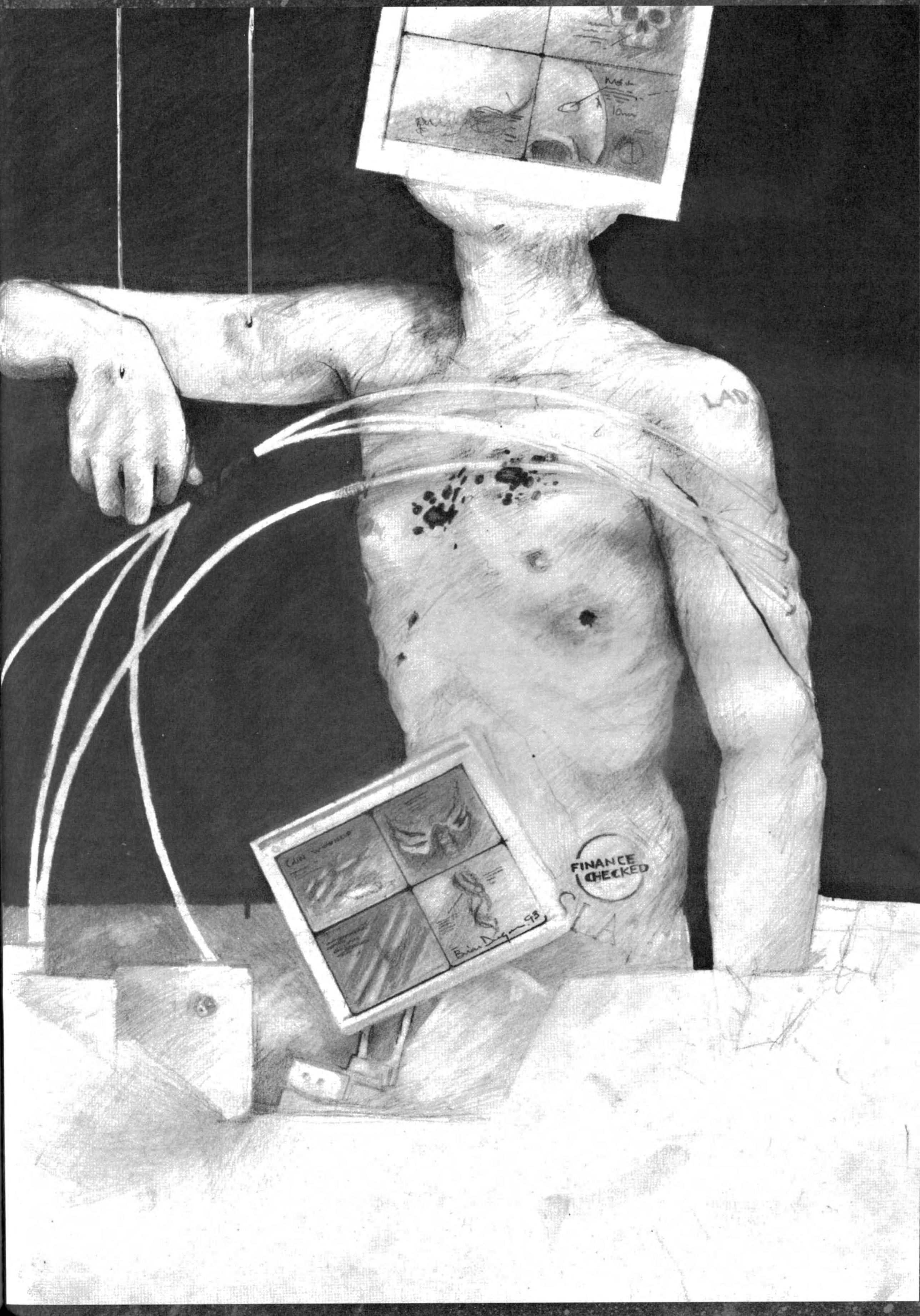
A. Moreau, LAD retrieval officer, Mort 889 SD.

The idea of living forever is one that many entertain, but is one which very few, outside the Ebon races, attain. That is unless an investment in Life After Death is made. The LAD process was developed on Dante to extend the combat efficiency of the military forces stationed there. These first stumbling steps into the 'Longevity Chain' were not entirely successful. In fact in some cases they were downright disastrous.

The Longevity Chain

The first steps made into the principles of LAD took place 96 years ago on Dante. The first recorded incident of someone actually being brought back to life was in a field medical unit on a front line near one of Dante's polar caps. The unit in question had come under heavy artillery attack that day and found themselves in the nasty predicament of being unable to retreat. The MASH unit had no option but to dig in and hold on until relief arrived. During the bombardment the commander of the unit died whilst being treated for shrapnel wounds in one of the medical vehicles. Instantly, efforts were made to revive him. Placed on a life support system, the medical staff went to work, frantically rebuilding the commander's body before the lack of oxygen to the brain caused irreversible damage. Being a combat unit, the medical facility had a great deal of Karma biogenetic replacements and implants to hand. Quickly connecting new heart and lungs to lessen the chances of brain damage, the surgeons went about the enormous task of rebuilding the body of their commander. The surgery, which involved replacing or repairing the various parts of the body which had been damaged, took a gruelling fourteen hours. During this time the medical staff were under constant bombardment from Thresher artillery. Eventually –three days later– the reinforcements arrived, driving off the Thresher forces. On their arrival, they were astonished to




FINANCE
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LAD

find the dead commander very much alive and well and in full control of the situation. Word of this miracle surgery soon passed round other medical units and installations on Dante. More and more surgeons attempted to replicate the techniques of the first group. Some met with great success, but in most cases where the patient survived they were reduced to a drooling zombie.

Slayer soon heard of these new advances, and was intrigued. Investigators were sent to Karma to look into the possibility of making the technique a viable, preferably profitable, venture. Karma recalled the medical staff from Dante that had performed the first operation –along with their commander, the first recipient of this new found surgical ingenuity.

Karma development engineers, along with the medical staff from the Dante unit, went to work on this new project, 'Longevity Chain', the original name for what was to become LAD.

Meanwhile, Dante's surgical units continued in their haphazard reanimation of dead personnel with the same mixed bag of success and failure.

Karma found that the initial groundwork for project 'Longevity Chain' was surprisingly easy. Slayer made available a great deal of restricted information, hitherto unseen by anyone other than Slayer himself. This information told of century old plans for just such a project and how over the centuries people willing to 'donate' their bodies towards such experiments in the future had been cryogenically frozen at the time of their deaths, to be revived and experimented upon at a later date. So Karma, now armed with the basic knowledge of LAD and a very large supply of test subjects, not to mention a practically limitless budget, set to this arduous task.

Karma established a whole new department to deal with the project. This division was renamed LAD (Life After Death), replacing the initial project name. This sub–department remained invisible to both public and operatives for the first 94 years of its life. It was not until just before final set–ups were being made that anybody outside Karma new of its existence. This was perhaps one of the best kept secrets in the history of SLA Industries.

"900 SD, Mort. Every operative today awoke to find one of these had been popped through their letter box. 'New from Karma, LAD, Life After Death.' Initial reports would indicate that this is the big secret Karma has been keeping under wraps for the last century. The response to this offer of eternal life has been massive. Karma's phone and fax lines have been flooded with enquiries. Karma have really outdone themselves this time. First Stormers then the implants, the replacement surgery, and now this. What more is there for Karma to do? What can other companies do to counter this? We spoke earlier to Dr. Susan Hannon (Spirit), head of research and development for Dark Lament, Karma's main rival. Her statement was brief but to the point –and I quote; "Dark Lament and Karma both offer lifetime guarantees with their products, but I have yet to see a 'Shock Tendon' as old as the Preceptor." So there you have it Ladies and Gentlemen –your decision. You choose between Biogenetics or Science Friction. The ebb and flow of big business –competition and profit. More later, Isabelle Cullen, Third Eye News, Central."

Third Eye News, 'Early Morning News', Mort 900 SD.

Life After Death

The actual methods used in the processes of LAD are as manifold as the injuries that cause death. They have to be. From simple bullets through the heart to having the body ripped to shreds by an explosion, LAD has to be able to augment and often improve what is left. In some cases, the surgery can alter the subject so drastically that they become almost unrecognizable as living people, whilst in others no one would know they were standing next to a corpse if it were not for the fact that it states LAD on their SCL card. This is not due to any haphazardness on the part of the LAD surgeons but depends on three factors. One: How the death of the person came about; Two: How they want to look after death; And three: Money.

Paying for Eternity

"The cost for LAD and its many variations is not a cheap business but then again, it is extremely difficult to put a price on life."

Dr. Catherine Millar, Karma, Mort 900 SD.

LAD comes in many shapes and forms from the actual LAD process of being returned to a functioning state after one's death to 'assurance lockers' where replacement limbs and organs can be placed 'on ice' for later use. LAD is an expensive way of hanging onto life. The cost of such a service can be anything up to and above 5,000₢. The basic cost can be much less.

LAD is a pay–in–advance system, where the person places as much as they can afford in an account with Karma, adding to it when they can, saving for that day when they die.

Starting an LAD account with Karma could not be simpler. After contacting the LAD division, the operative will automatically have their account opened for them by Karma, for which the minimum start up is 1₢. This entitles the owner of the account to an LAD card and to have a 'pacer' implant to monitor heart and respiratory rates. This implant is placed next to the heart, where it attaches to the ribcage. Here it will stay, monitoring the subject, feeding off of the bone and fatty tissues around the heart and lung area. When the host's body dies, i.e. heart and respiratory rate drop to zero, the implant breaks a tiny canister inside itself. This container has a powerful transmitter built into it, with a 4 minute power supply. This then transmits to the closest LAD pick–up station. These stations are dotted around Mort from Central to Cannibal Sector One and constantly scan for 'pacer' signals. When one is detected, its whereabouts are relayed to the nearest LAD facility, which then immediately dispatches specially converted and disarmed Kilcopters, which are refurbished with medical equipment, to the position of the newly dead operative. The medical staff on the Kilcopter have four minutes to reach the operative. They put them on life–support quickly, before the lack of oxygen to the brain causes irreversible damage. If they successfully stabilize the patient, they then rush to the nearest LAD laboratory where the subject may be healed and returned to life. En–route to the LAD facility, all information held by Karma on the patient (such as credit rating with LAD, implants they may have, etc) is checked by on–board computers and is then relayed to the awaiting surgical unit at the LAD facility.

On arrival at the LAD laboratory, the patient is transferred to the operating theatre where the surgeons go to work repairing or rebuilding the body of the victim.

"...eh, where am I?"

"LAD rehabilitation centre."

"Oh great, you guys got me in time."

"Yes."

"I can't feel my legs."

"Ah, yes, well you see, you did suffer a great deal of damage in the explosion. On arrival at Life After Death, it was found that you had insufficient funds in your account for a full conversion and until funds are made available to us, a new pair will not be forthcoming."

"Give me back my legs, you bastards! Give me back my legs!"

"There is no need for this outburst sir. As soon as your account is in credit, you may have your legs –or perhaps we could negotiate a loan?"

"Where do I sign?"

LAD ACCOUNTS

How well clients are looked after by the staff of the LAD facilities is entirely dependant on how much money they place in their LAD account before their death.

The 1₵ account guarantees Kilcopter evacuation on death and medical treatment being carried out on the Kilcopter. This treatment will stabilize the patient until they can be 'patched up' at an LAD facility. Further treatment, including vital organ replacement, will be executed to make sure the patient does not die again –but no replacement surgery or enhancements will be given.

To receive further medical assistance, It is necessary for an operative to have larger amounts of money in their account. LAD work on six levels treatment. The first is an opening 1₵ account, the second is 1000₵, the third is 2000₵ and so on up to 5000₵. Each level has its own benefits which increase with the amount of credit placed in the account by the operative.

1000₵ to 1999₵: At this level of investment the operative is entitled to all the standard benefits of LAD given on the initial opening of an account, with the added bonus of replacement biogenetic organs or limbs for those lost through accident or injury. These are not superior enhancements and will give the operative no augmented abilities, but are designed to last for the rest of the operative's 'life' as an LAD subject. This option does not include a new skin, which must be bought separately.

2000₵ to 2999₵: As savings grow in the account, further bonuses are given –and now the operative can expect a great deal of care and attention to be taken over their 'resurrection', as well as he or she receiving, if necessary, top quality replacement limbs and organs. The operative will also qualify for a new skin to conceal their surgery, if they so wish. This package also includes hair and nails. No enhancements are given with this level of investment, but the body is surgically prepared to receive a wide range of future implants.

3000₵ to 3999₵: With further investments made, the operative can look forward to the more advanced forms of LAD surgery. Along with all the bonuses of the previous investment levels, the operative will also receive full body augmentation implants which comes in the form of a complete set of Sinewshock/brace and Shock/Brace Tendons.

4000₵ to 4999₵: Full body conversion is the pinnacle of LAD's biogenetic surgical expertise. The body from the neck down is completely rebuilt using the best biogenetic flesh, muscle, bone, etc. This conversion replaces all the major and minor muscle groups of the body with Sinewshock/brace and Shock/Brace Tendon muscle bundles which gives the user the equivalent of two full sets of the implants. All internal organs are also replaced. Skin is not automatically available with this package but can be bought at a later date. New perfect 20/20 eyes and facial reconstruction however, do come as standard.

5000₵ and above: Account holders with 5000₵ or above in their account have a certain degree of say in how they look after receiving the full body conversion. As before, but this time with skin, hair, nails, etc., the operative can arrange, before their death, how they will look after. These 'personal touches' are discussed with LAD surgeons and placed on the operative's records. Conversions can be of a purely physical nature from a zombie look–a–like, or slightly more subtle –such as a new permanent hair colour and stunning good looks.

Assurance Lockers

The Assurance Locker Scheme is not so drastic in its measures as LAD itself but is still controlled by the LAD division of Karma.

To purchase space in an assurance locker costs 25₵. This 'locker' is then available for the operative to place purchased Karma products in cold storage for use when needed. For example, an operative loses a leg in the course of completing a BPN. Instead of having to wait for tissue typing and so on, the leg they have in their assurance locker can be used right away. Organs and replacement limbs must be bought at full price before storage. If an operative has both LAD accounts and an assurance locker, the contents of the locker may be used to lessen the costs of the LAD operation.

Third Eye.

For all your media needs: from News to cameras...

Stealth and detection. These are the key to any successful operation. Softly–softly always wins. The increasing need for bugs, tracers, jamming equipment, etc has prompted Third Eye to produce a full range of surveillance equipment. Using the most sophisticated technology available, Third Eye have entered the commercial market place in earnest –releasing some of the sleekest audio–visual hardware ever seen.

Alongside this, Third Eye are planning to exploit the new direction in the media, with the first fully trained media operatives graduating from the various universities on Mort and the prestigious "L'Art Ouvert" university on New Paris. They have launched a full range of media–aid equipment to assist these new personnel and to enhance the capabilities of existing Third Eye staff.A full product list follows:

Third Eye Sterling Vidi–cam™

Third Eye UPLink™

Third Eye Ronker–Roller™

Third Eye Vidi–cam™ (Dante)

THIRD EYE VISION

Third Eye have been described by many as the 'eyes of the universe'. This is a reputation they hope to maintain. The camera never lies, but Third Eye cameras tend to lie, cheat and steal. To maintain and continue the excellent standard of Third Eye reporting, the 'Vision' range has been created. These four standard model Vidi–Cam recorders are the best in audio–visual recording equipment, whether you require the durability of a field recorder or state of the art editorial facilities.

Third Eye UPlink™

The first of the 'Vision' range is the UPlink™, which includes all the standard features expected of a professional news camera.

These include: Tri–lens visuals, auto–track/focus, anti–dazzle, low–light operational facility, 500w spot lamp, moulded camera grip, anti–jog (prevents loss of recording capabilities whilst camera is in motion), full colour playback, stereo sound recording, auto–stop, twin deck recording, deck–to–deck recording, long play facility (double time recording gives 0.001% picture & sound degradation), deck–to–deck continuous recording, remote control with 20x20cm (unfolded) colour gel monitor with a range of 100m, waterproof. Comes in black or grey with a power cell life of 2000 hours, 400km independant transmission range, full one month service warranty, takes normal data slugs (not supplied). The power supply for the remote control lasts 500 hours.

Dimensions (camera): 190mm x 55mm x 111mm.

Remote control: 105mm x 16mm x 68mm.

Weight: 0.3kg.

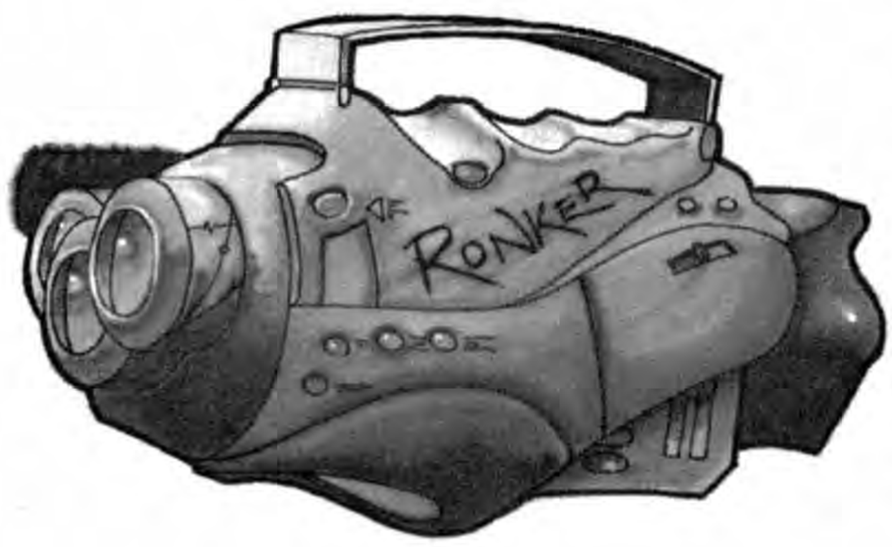
Cost: 60₢.

Third Eye Ronker Roller™

The next Vidi–Cam in the range is the Ronker Roller™. Although the Ronker looks like a 'fun' camera, it is one of the most robust models available today.

Features include: Tri–lens visuals, auto–track/focus, anti–dazzle, low–light operational facility, 500w spot lamp, moulded camera grip, anti–jog (prevents loss of recording capabilities whilst camera is in motion), full colour playback, stereo sound recording, auto–stop, twin deck recording, deck–to–deck recording, long play facility (double recording time gives 0.001% picture & sound degradation), deck–to–deck continuous recording, waterproof, comes in day–glo green, yellow or pink with contrasting trim, power cell life of 2000 hours, 400km independant transmission range, full one month service warranty, impact resistant case with P.V. of 13 and I.D. of 15, takes normal data slugs (not supplied). The power supply for the remote control lasts 500 hours.

Dimensions (camera): 210mm x 65mm x 130mm.



Weight: 0.35kg.

Cost: 85₢.

Third Eye Vidi-Cam™ (Dante)

Specially imported for use in the roughest areas of Mort, the Dante Vidi–Cam is ideal for media operatives who are always in the midst of the action.

Facilities include: Tri–lens visuals, auto–track/focus, anti–dazzle, low–light operational facility, 500w spot lamp, moulded camera grip, anti–jog (prevents loss of recording capabilities whilst camera is in motion), full colour playback, stereo sound recording, auto–stop, twin deck recording, deck–to–deck recording, long play facility (double recording time 0.001% picture & sound degradation), deck–to–deck continuous recording, I.R. recording ability, remote control with 20x20cm (unfolded) colour gel monitor with a range of 100m, waterproof, comes in black or grey, power cell life of 5000 hours, 400km independant transmission range, full one month service warranty, impact resistent case with P.V. of 14 and I.D. of 15, takes normal data slugs (not supplied). The power supply for the remote control lasts 500 hours.

Dimensions (camera): 190mm x 55mm x 111mm.

Remote control: 105mm x 16mm x 68mm.

Weight: 0.5kg.

Cost: 120₢.

Third Eye Sterling Vidi-Cam™

The Sterling was designed to be everything that a media operative could possibly need, whether out in the field or reviewing material in the office.

Features include: Tri–lens visuals, auto–track/focus, anti–dazzle, low–light operational facility, 500w spot lamp, moulded camera grip, anti–jog (prevents loss of recording capabilities whilst camera is in motion), full colour playback, stereo sound recording, auto–stop, twin deck recording, deck–to–deck recording, long play facility (double recording time 0.001% picture & sound degradation), deck–to–deck continuous recording, remote control with 20x20cm (unfolded) colour gel

monitor with a range of 100m, waterproof, comes in black or grey, power cell life of 2000 hours, 400km independant transmission range, full one month service warranty, I.R. recording capability, on–board oyster with full editorial programming linked to a detachable 20 x 20cm gel screen (full colour), takes normal data slugs (not supplied). The power supply for the remote control lasts 500 hours.

Dimensions (camera without monitor): 230mm x 68mm x 75mm.

Remote control: 105mm x 16mm x 68mm.

Weight: 0.4kg.

Cost: 235₵.

Third Eye Umbilical Transmission Link/Scissor Link

"Control, I need a direct patch to the Network, now."

"Come on Isabelle, you know I can't do that."

"Control, If I don't get that link, I'll lose this story."

"What is it?"

"I got a major gang war erupting around me. This is real death gore stuff."

"Do you want a patch through to SIC? They'll pick it up."

"No! I need that link Control, now, damn you."

"No need for that tone, Isabelle."

"Fuck you, Control, patch me into the circuit or I'll have your balls on a skewer."

"Bye, Isabelle. I'm snipping you off the circuit for one hour, to give you time to calm down."

"Don't you dare, Control, Control? Control... "

"Only joking, the boss man says if it ain't good, it's both our necks. You're live round Mort in ten seconds –get filming."

"Thanks, Control, you're a little sweetie. "

"You owe me a drink... four, three, two, one. You're live... "

"This is Isabelle Cullen reporting to you, live and direct from Sector 7 of Lower Downtown town. It's hell on earth down here as the Kiestas make another attempt to grab some turf. The Shivers... "

Excerpt from conversation between Controller Allan Loose and his reporter, Isabelle Cullen.
© Third Eye News, Mort 901 SD.

All Third Eye Media Operatives have a direct link to one of the thousands of controllers that monitor the transmissions of the reporters all over Mort. When a media operative purchases a Vidi–Cam, it is fitted with two pieces of hardware. The first is the Third Eye umbilical. This provides a direct audio–visual link with a Third Eye controller, who watches all transmissions from the individual's camera. These controllers assist the media operative in their job, giving them any information that they require in the course of their investigations –like geographical layouts, information on gangs, rival companies, etc. Controllers have huge company and civilian databases to refer to, and this, coupled with their knowledge of SLA Industries makes these individuals essential to the success of a media operative. The controllers also have total editorial control over what their reporters broadcast and record. Having stringent guidelines on whats good or bad for SLA, the controllers are usually correct about what operatives and the public should or should not see. Sometimes a reporter will try and overide the decision of their controller to get a piece of footage broadcast. This is when the controller uses the scissor link. This effectively cuts the reporter off, stopping the broadcasting and recording capabilities of their camera.

Controllers and their reporters seldom, if ever, meet. A reporter is lucky if they find out the name of their controller. Most only ever know them as the voice at the other end of a com–link named 'Control'. The organisation of these sometimes strange double acts has led to the development of a 'reporter language'. This consists of an extensive range of abbreviations and slang words created by the reporters and controllers.

Some terms used by controllers and reporters:

Black blip – Sound with no picture transmission

Bleeding Eye – Damaged Vidi–Cam

Boss man – Term used by a controller to fool the reporter into believing that the controller was not responsible for dropping a story or taking a reporter off the air, e.g. "the boss man says drop it"

Chain – Signal transmitted from Vidi–Cam

Circuit – Third Eye Television News Network

Clicker – Controller

Clippy – Controller (insult)

Crazy wave – Atmospheric interference

Eye – Reporter

Grid – Location

Lippy – Picture with no sound

Locker – Head controller

Lock–out – High SCL information. Access denied

Nub – Not fit for broadcast

Pitch – Drop a story or line of investigation

Sky–cam – Reporter, injured or dead

Snipping – Activation of the scissor links on a Vidi–Cam

Snuger – Reporter (insult)

Sheak – Run

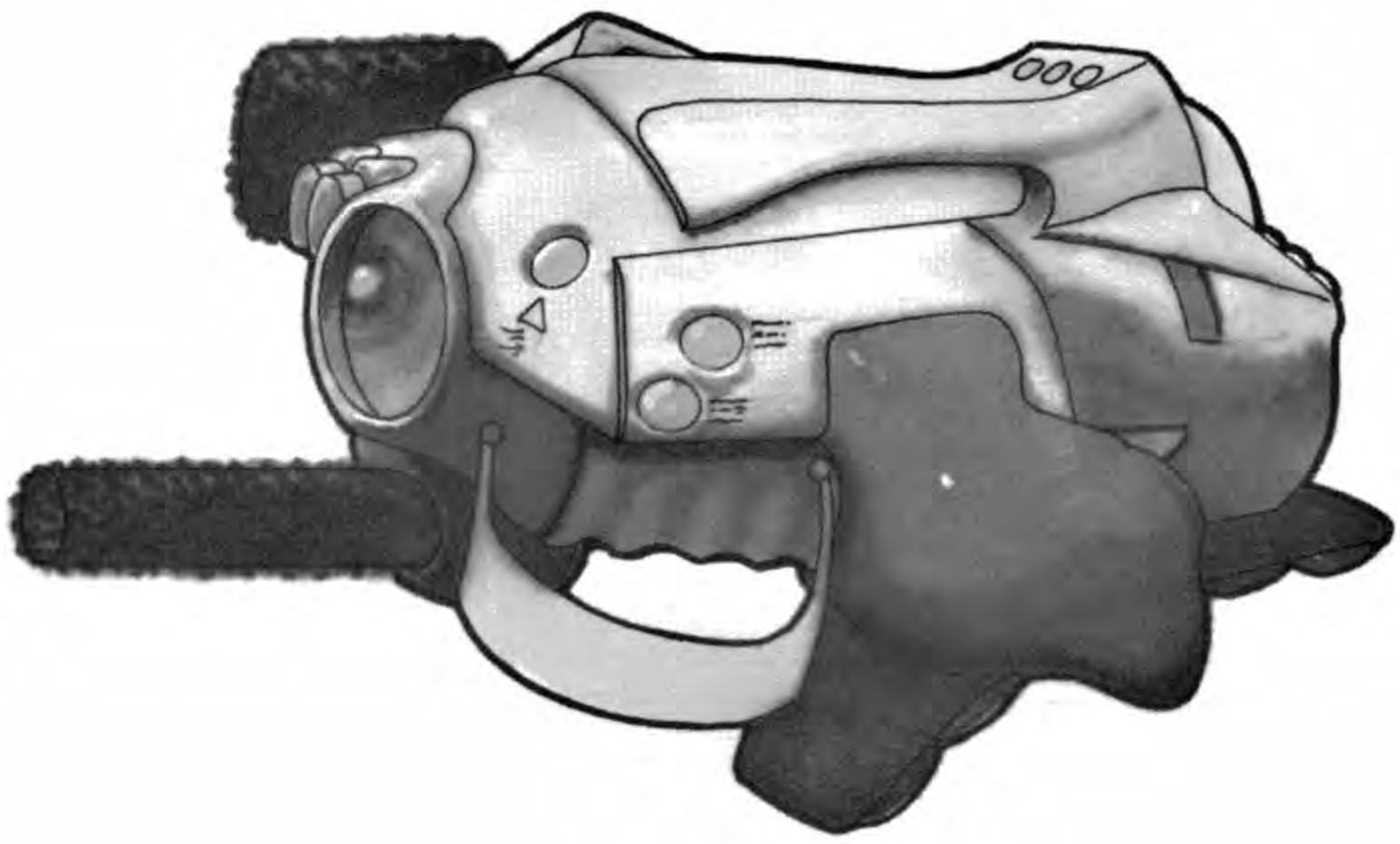
Spear/Spearing – Stealing (usually a story)

Tom – Rival reporter (as in Peeping Tom)

Trof – I'm having a break (reporter)

Weld – Crossed signals causing interference

Wine 'n' Dine – I'm going for lunch (controller)



NUKE TENDON

"Nuke Tendon: Perhaps not the largest division of Karma, but out of the innumerable sub–divisions, departments and companies, it is the most well known. Nuke Tendon, now in its 850th year, has become a household name amongst the operatives and employees of SLA Industries, giving fast reliable service to generation after generation. There has always been a massive demand for Nuke Tendon implants and enhancements and the biogenetic engineering is carried out here to such high specifications that every Nuke Tendon implant is given a lifetime guarantee. These wonders of biogenetic engineering are truly remarkable. The benefits they bestow upon the owner outweigh the cost ten–fold."

Dr. Ernest Strand, Public address, Mort Central, 900 SD, ©Third Eye News.

"Surgery, in any shape or form, is a time consuming and difficult business. The body is a very delicate piece of machinery and a multitude of things can go wrong with even the simplest operation. This is why at Nuke Tendon all our surgeons are trained to the highest possible standards and the greatest care is taken at every stage of any implant or enhancement surgery.

"From hair to hearts, Karma cares."

Nuke Tendon™ catalogue, © Karma™ 900 SD.

A Brief History

Nuke Tendon was set up to deal with a growing public and, in this case, an operative demand. The need for faster, stronger operatives presented a problem to SLA Industries. With such an overwhelming demand for this type of employee, Karma could not produce enough Stormers to meet the increasing needs of the company (See 'The Stormer Configuration'). Something that was easier and faster than the creation of new Stormers was required. Nuke Tendon was set up to fill this obvious gap in what would become a very lucrative market. The initial test runs of the implants were successful and full production began soon after. The impact of releasing such products onto what was already a very well established market was phenomenal. Sales rocketed. In the first month, Nuke Tendon had made Karma an incredible 3.4 million credit profit.

The Humane Element

The only aspect of the, what was then, new technology that Karma had any worries about was the 'dehumanisation' of the operative who received the implants. This was expected, as a similar process involving cybernetics –a passing fashion on Mort– left the subjects with mild personality disorders that stemmed from the replacement of their own limbs with artificial counterparts. Karma braced itself for the barrage of operatives suffering from the various psychoses associated with replacement surgery. The onslaught never came and, out of all the operatives that had received implants, only a handful (0.05%) had any problems at all with the surgery, and most of these were of a physical nature, tissue rejection etc. It would seem that Karma had succeeded where cybernetics had failed, in augmenting the body without unhinging the mind.

"They buy what we tell them they need." Dr.E Strand, Karma Head Office, Mort. (Not for publication)

"Good afternoon, Mr. Stone. Please have a seat."

"Thanks."

"Now, according to our files, you have applied for a full set of Shock Tendons. Is that correct?"

"Yeah. I need some more speed. I'm going off–world and I thought I'd buy myself an edge, y'know. I looked at your catalogue and made my mind up there and then. I had to get some of these implants. It's just what I need."

"Yes, quite. What I'm going to do now is talk you through the surgical procedure with the help of these photographs, so you can see what you are paying for. OK?"

"Yup. No problem."

"Now, first of all, the skin from these areas is removed. Here, here, here and here. Unfortunately, we cannot put your old skin back on. This is what your skin looks like when it has been removed from your body."

"Oh!"

"The first area that we work upon is the back. I always start with the larger muscle groups. The trapezius, here, the large triangular muscle across the shoulder is sectioned, like so, to enable the implants to be inserted. Next is the rhomboideus minor and rhomboideus major. Any questions?"

"Is this done all over my body?"

"Yes."

"Oh! What's that?"

"A leg."

"A leg?"

"Yes. A leg. Look: Tibia, Extensor longus digitorum, Tibialis anticus, Annular ligament..."

"But..."

"It's been stripped for implant."

"Eh..."

"Now, this is the abdominal section before implantation."

"Oh my god. I think I've changed my mind. I don't really need Shock Tendons. I'll just buy some new armour, you know. Hey, how tough can Dante be?"

"Mr. Stone, you do realise that the average life expectancy on Dante is 28 hours?"

"What?!"

"They didn't tell you when you signed up?"

"No."

"Well, now you know. 28 hours. I don't think you have seen this photo –have you?"

"Who the hell is that?"

"Sour Blood, Dark Finder Contract Killer. Surely you've seen him on TeeVee?"

"Yeh, but I didn't think that he had..."

"Why, Mr Blood is one of our regular clients. In fact, he's due in for his next set of implants sometime today."

"God, this guy is as hard as nails."

"Thanks to Nuke Tendon, Mr Stone. Shall we continue?"

"Well, OK."

"This is the finished back and shoulders. The Shock Tendons are the black areas."

"Black. Is that the only colour they come in?"

"Oh no, Mr. Stone. You can have them any colour you want. If we overlay a skin onto that, we normally match the implant to the original muscle colour."

"Great. What are the white areas?"

"Brace Tendons. This client opted for Shock and Brace at the same time, two birds with one stone."

"How much are the Brace?"

"1750₵ a set. If you take both, there is a 10% discount on the total cost. That saves you 375₵."

"I think I would like to reconsider my position. Can I have another look at the catalogue please?"

"Feel free. Take as much time as you need."

"Right. I'll take both. Debit my account and where do I sign?"

"Here, Mr Stone, next to the 'Release from accidental death' section. Thank you. Now I will bid you good–day and I'll see you bright and early tomorrow morning on the operating table."

Recorded consultation, Nuke Tendon™ Division, Karma™, 900SD.

KARMA CATALOGUE

Karma™ Catalogue 899–900 SD

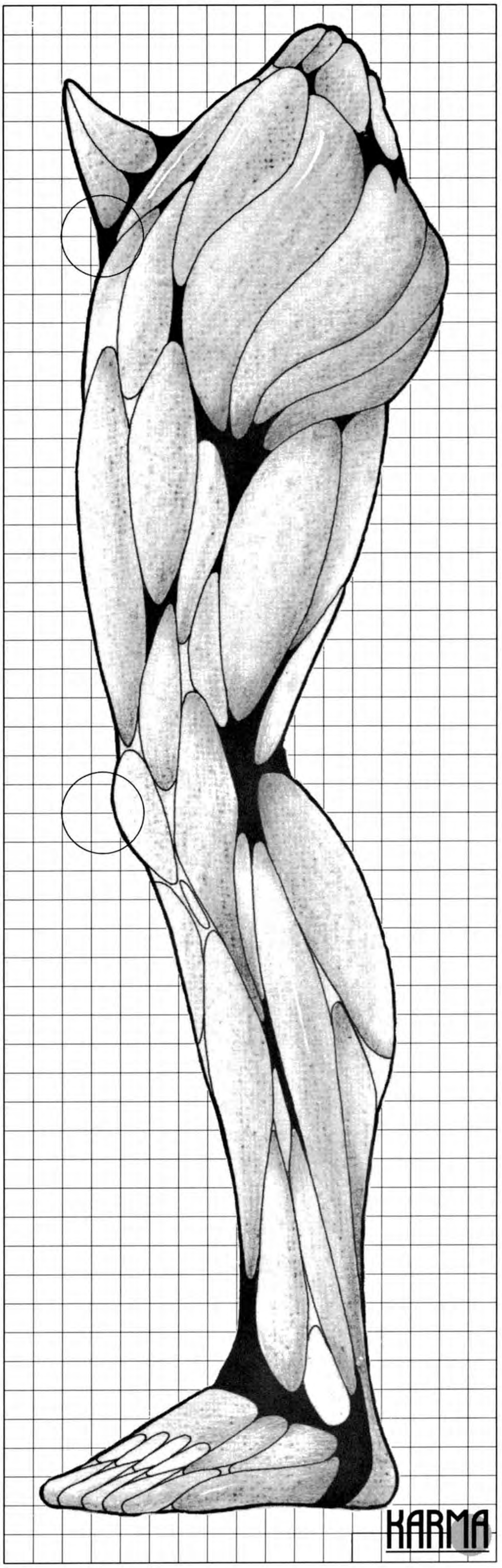
Nuke Tendon & Phantom Pregnancy, © Karma, 900 SD.

Nuke Tendon™ Implants & Enhancements

In the high–pressure World of Progress, that 'something extra' is always an advantage. Nuke Tendon can offer you just that. The advancements in biogenetic replacement surgery give you the opportunity to have more than you could possibly hope for; speed, strength, stamina. The things that count –the things that keep you alive. Nuke Tendon will push these to the limit and beyond. The myth of the super–being made flesh.

At Nuke Tendon, we guarantee 100% customer satisfaction. There is something for everyone at Nuke Tendon. From our range of implants, you can be assured that there is an enhancement for you at a price that you can afford. (Credit terms available.)

We guarantee all of our products against tissue rejection, as all implants are grown from DNA samples taken from you.



Any individual that has a known allergy to raw biogenetic material applies for implant surgery at their own risk.

SHOCK TENDONS™

Shock Tendons were initially designed by Dr. Fraser Young some 840 years ago. Although the purpose of the Shock Tendon has not changed over the years, the design has. The design has been constantly updated to make sure that the model you receive is of the highest quality and the latest design. The full augmentation of the body is a completely pain free process, being performed under full anaesthesia. The operation takes ten hours, after which you can expect to be back on your feet and fully functional within two days. The benefits of your new implants will be instantly recognisable to you. The first shock to you is bound to be the weight of the implants. The tendons replace an amount of tissue equal to that which has been removed, although it is the actual strength of the genetic material used that gives the increased potential in your reflexes. The next thing that will become apparent to you will be the marked increase in your agility and reflexes. The Shock Tendons™ will give you a greatly increased reaction time and movement speed when taken in conjunction with Sinewshock.

Cost: 2000₵ (including insurance)

BRACE TENDONS™

Developed alongside the Shock Tendon™, the Brace is the quickest and easiest way of increasing your strength with the minimum amount of hassle. The long hours spent in the gym working out to push your body to its limit, the pain involved, the steroids –Nuke Tendon have replaced all this with one painless operation, giving you the opportunity to take your body to new heights of physical fitness. The operation takes fourteen hours and follows all the procedures standard in any Nuke Tendon surgery. You can expect to be back on your feet within two days.

Cost: 1750₵ (including insurance).

SINEWFICATION™

If the idea of having biogenetic implants does not appeal to you, or a rare medical condition makes permanent implants an impossibility for you, then Sinewfication is the ideal way to increase your physique, strength and dexterity.

SINEWSHOCK™

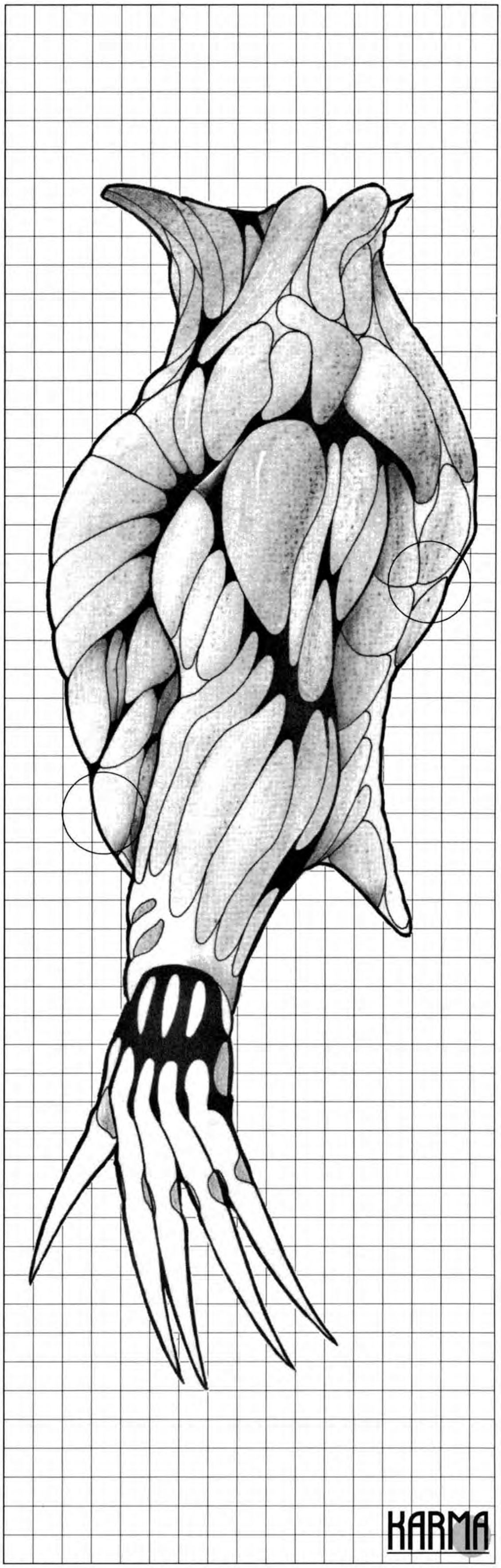
These small biogenetic implants are of a similar design to that of their permanent counterpart, inasmuch as where Shock Implants™ replace, Sinewshock™ augment. Sinewshock™ are 'muscle trainers' which actually exercise specific groups to gradually strengthen and tone the muscles up to the limit of the implant –at which time the implants break off and are absorbed by the body as proteins. This process does not require any form of additional exercise, as the muscle building is achieved through normal everyday movement such as walking.

Cost: 900₵ per set

SINEWBRACE™

The Sinewbrace tendons are attached to all the major muscle groups of the body and act in a similar way to Sinewshock –by strengthening the muscle to the limit of the implant's abilities before being absorbed by the body. The Sinewbrace is ideal for those who value physical strength above everything else. The ability to be stronger than your enemies gives unmeasurable advantages in all manner of situations.

Cost: 800₵ per set



KARMA SHARPS™ (Skeletal Enhancement)

"I didn't know those fuckers had claws!"

"They don't."

"What?"

"It's Karma stuff. They buy them. Now come on, let's get outside and out of the way of the Glyph Pillars so that you can heal those slashes."

"Sodding Frothers. Think they own the place."

"Shut up."

Two Brain Wasters having a conversation after a slight incident on 'The Pit' dance floor with some members of a Frother clan, Mort Central 900 SD.

The processes behind skeletal enhancement are more time consuming than anything else. The enhancement is constructed by taking a bone graft from the subject, then growing sufficient amounts of bone from this sample to graft claws and similar onto the existing bones of the subject. This requires delicate surgery to allow the bone implants to protrude from the user's body –especially when they are receiving claw implants.

SKELETAL ENHANCEMENT: CLAWS

Claw implantation surgery is the most common form of skeletal enhancement purchased by operatives. The claws are grafted onto, and replace some of, the bone of the last joint on the finger. The claws also replace the nails of the fingers. The graft is 40mm long from the base of the finger to the tip of the claw. The claw is razor sharp on the underside to allow for effective slashing in a close combat situation.

Cost: 100₵ per hand (5 claws)

SKELETAL ENHANCEMENT: TEETH

The grafting of large canines into the mouth is not as popular as other enhancements. The appearance of the implant is usually the main reason for purchase. The teeth replace the two upper canines in the mouth. The surgery is quite extensive, with the reconstruction of the upper and lower jaw and face needed to accommodate the implant. The teeth are surrounded by small muscle bundles which allow them to retract up inside the jaw for concealment. To bring the teeth out from the mouth cavity, a simple opening of the mouth fully will trigger the muscle and push the teeth out. The quicker the mouth is opened, the quicker the teeth will spring out. Closing the mouth will retract the teeth. The teeth, fully extended, are 30mm long.

Cost: 125₵ per set (2 teeth)

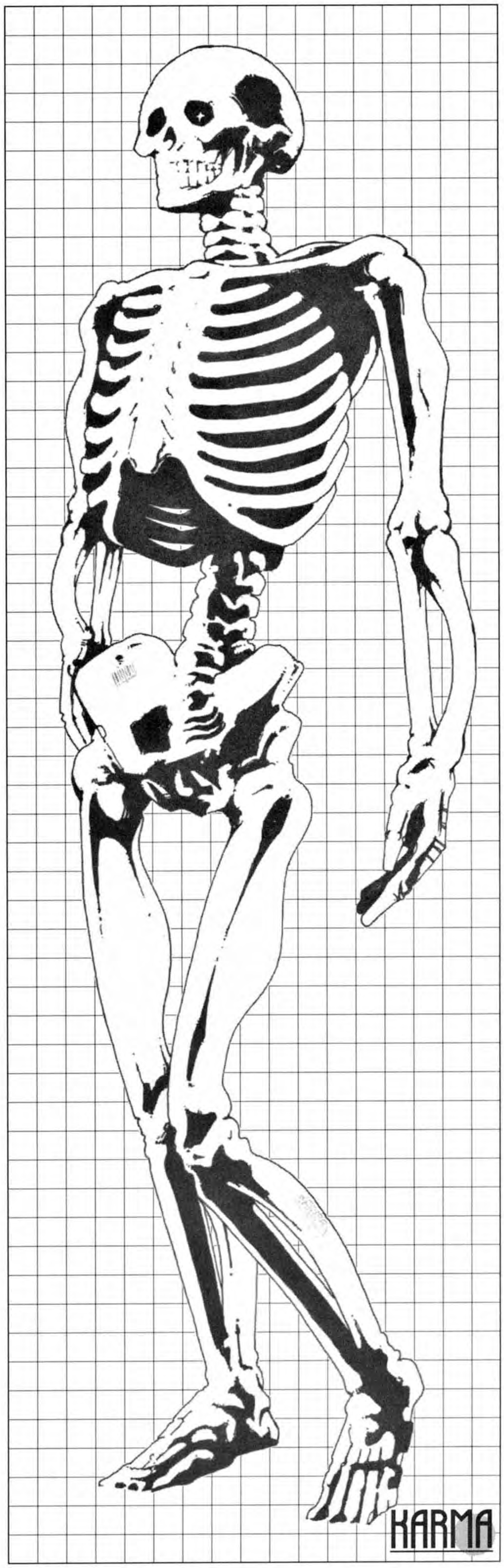
SKELETAL ENHANCEMENTS: ELBOW/KNEE IMPLANTS

These are the largest implants grafted to the skeleton. The enhancements are long curved pieces of bone grown to a point with a sharp outer edge. The bone is 150mm long from tip to base. The 'blades' are constructed to allow them to rest against the upper arm or thigh depending on the type of implant. To use the elbow and knee implants, an understanding of Martial Arts of some type is preferable due to the specialised nature of the positioning of the enhancements. This is especially true of the elbow blades.

Cost: 150₵ per implant (1 knee or elbow)

ADVANCED SKELETAL ENHANCEMENT: QUILLS

This is the latest advancement in this area. The 'quills' can be grafted on to either forearm and lie backwards up the arm towards the elbow until activated –at which point they spring forward at a 70 degree angle to the forearm. The quills (120mm tip to base) are flexible and are razor



sharp down the length of their outer edge. There are 40 quills implanted and attached to each arm. Due to the nature of the quills, they tend to fall out or become lodged in what they strike, but replacement is an easy task which can be performed by anybody with a basic medical knowledge.

Cost: 200₵ per arm (Replacement quills cost 1₵ each)

SKELETAL ENHANCEMENT: RETRACTION

The skeletal enhancements, with the exception of teeth, are all static implants. This does lead to some encumbrance and manipulation problems. The retraction process creates a slot inside the body for the muscle to connect to, which in turn connects to the bone implant. With small, controlled muscle movements, these pull the implant inside the slot and conceal it almost completely from view. The tip of the implant will always protrude. It takes 0.2 seconds to extend a retracted claw or blade and 0.4 seconds to retract it again.

Cost: Add 70₵ per implant if retraction is required.

Advanced Skeletal Enhancement: Shell™ Augmentation

The stresses and strains placed on the body on a day–to–day basis cause cumulative damage to the skeleton and surrounding tissues. The process of Shell enhancement gives the skeleton, including the skull, a far superior toughness and strength to anything that occurs naturally. This is the most time–consuming form of surgery that can be performed, but obviously this is dependent on whether or not the buyer wants a full skeletal replacement or just a skull. One of the other advantages of the Shell Augmentation is that it allows for a greater number of implants to be fitted, as the new skeleton can carry a greatly increased stress load.

Cost: Head 540₵, Torso 1200₵, Arms 300₵, Legs 425₵.
Special Price for all of the above: 1650₵.

REPLACEMENT LIMBS AND ORGANS

"Spore–Tech™ Hearts: Beating for you."
"Hennson Organs™: Originals."
"Flex©: Feel better with Flex©"
"Clicker™: Livers that can drink you under the table."
"Breathe easy with Karma™"
"Stop the rot, replace the lot with Cut N' Tuck™"
"Do better with Di–San™"
"Spore–Tech™: The company that grows with you."
"Oyanas™ Optics: See the Light."
"Driver™ Limbs 'N' Ligaments: For the terminally short of cash."
"Winners are with Royal™."

Spore–Tech™

No need for costly DNA matching. At Spore–Tech™, all our organs have destabilised DNA chains which modify after surgery to match your DNA code. This means no more waiting about hooked up to a clumsy life support machine. You'll be in and out of our theatre within six hours (depending on the number of replacements). Multiple replacements can take up to nine hours. Spore–Tech™ is a member of the Racial Equality Program.

Hennson Organs™

With Hennson, you can be assured of top quality in all our hearts. All replacements are automatically given a lifetime guarantee, the best value DNA structures and the strongest muscle tissue. Make Hennson your first choice. DNA matching while–u–wait. Hennson Organs™ is a member of the Racial Equality Program.

Clicker™

FACT: More people die from liver disorders than car crashes.

FACT: The producers of alcoholic beverages make stronger wines, beers and spirits without caring what the long term effects are on your body.

FACT: Clicker™ produce the strongest livers in the universe. Stronger than any alcohol.

FACT: You'd be stupid not to buy Clicker™.

Clicker is a member of the Racial Equality Program.

One name. One product. The only choice.

Oyanas™

The sole producer of fine genetic eyes for ten years, top quality DNA codes used in all our products. For perfect 20/20 vision or I.R. traceable optical enhancement or just something to please the eye. Oyanas™ is a member of the Racial Equality Program.

Di–San™

Replacement. Where to go? What to buy? Come to Di–San™ and have a look at our new showroom. We have everything you could possibly need, all under the the one roof. Fill your assurance locker with Di–San™. Di–San™ is a member of the Racial Equality Program. DNA sample required.

Cut 'N' Tuck™

Unbeatable prices on all limbs and organs. Cut 'N' Tuck™ is a member of the Racial Equality Program.

Driver Limbs 'N' Ligaments™

For those who won't or can't pay for designer names, just pay for the product and not the label attached. Driver is not a member of the Racial Equality Program, and costs will vary from race to race. All prices shown are for Humans.

Royal™

Purveyor of the finest replacement limbs and organs. All our products are supplied with a full life time guarantee. Royal™ is a member of the Racial Equality Program.

Creeper™

Sole producer of the finest quality skin in the World of Progress. No matter what race you are a member of, we have just the skin for you in any colour you please. Creeper™ is a member of the Racial Equality Program. Price is for full body.

Extra Limbs

The frame of a human body is not the ideal base for additional arms. With the extreme manipulation of the shoulder muscles and bone structure, the implantation of the extra appendages becomes easy, though controlling them is not. Like all brains, the human's is designed to co–ordinate the motor action for four limbs: two arms and two legs. Adding an additional set of arms with full sentient control handled by the human puts a great deal of pressure on the mind. This is overcome by letting the original arms have primary signal co–ordination with the brain and the sibling pair secondary access to the motor action signals. This means that the implant arms will mimic, slightly, the original set unless a conscious thought is made to direct them otherwise.

Cost: 1500₵ per limb



DNA Altered Canine (DAC)

DNA Altered Feline (DAF)

For the operative that has everything: The perfect pet. The DAC and DAF genetic pets. From the small terrier DAC to the incredible white 'Polo' tiger DAF that dwarfs any Mort feline in existence, these genetically produced animals are trained to suit anybody –from house pet to guard dog. Phantom Pregnancy have brought forward the DAC and DAF projects five years to release them as part of the 900th anniversary of SLA Industries. These genetic creations are enhanced versions of ordinary domestic and wild animals. The changes made to the animals can be very subtle or extravagant in the extreme, depending on what is required. Each is a perfect specimen of their species (dependent on alterations) and is in perfect health. The DAC and DAF are usually bought as fully developed adults –although pups, cubs and kittens are available. These can grow at the normal rate for their species, or can stay cute and cuddly for ever. All altered species are sterile –as all breeding programs are carried out by Phantom Pregnancy to avoid mutations and cross breeding. Variations in colour and coat pattern are made by Phantom Pregnancy –so even though two animals could be identical in their general physical appearance, their markings would make them unique.

Each animal has an identification bar code on the inner ear. This acts as a reference for Phantom Pregnancy to allow them to change the characteristics of the animal quickly. By scanning the bar code, an exact DNA record can be located easily instead of having to take tissue samples. The bar code also identifies the owner. Name, address and contact number are encoded into the bar code. The cost of these prestigious pets varies, depending on the size, type and style requested. Costs range from 250₢ for a small DAC to 1000₢ for the 'Polo' feline and similar.

Racial Equality Program

Part II(c)/1: The use of replacement limbs and organs for the purpose of advancement of an individual should be carried out without bias toward any race. This is to be agreed upon by the member of the said race and the organisation/company. A fair price should be set and agreed upon. This price will not fluctuate in any way regardless of the race or size of the recipient.

Sour Blood Dark Finder





game SYSTEM

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New Character Classes

CHARACTERISTICS	STR	DEX	DIA	CONC	CHA	COOL
714 Chagrin	5–20	5–12	1–5	2–7	1–3	5–15

	MIN	AVE	MAX
Height:	2.00m	2.50m	2.80m
Weight:	98kg	124kg	168kg

Movement:	NORMAL	HALF	NO
	34+3/STR	x3	x5
WALK:	1		
RUN:	2		
SPRINT:	3.5		

See Page 74

CHARACTERISTICS	STR	DEX	DIA	CONC	CHA	COOL
711 Xeno	5–13	5–15	5–10	5–9	5–7	5–12

	MIN	AVE	MAX
Height:	1.80m	1.95m	2.10m
Weight	84kg	98gkg	125kg

Movement:	NORMAL	HALF	NO
	22+2/str	x2	x4
WALK:	2		
RUN:	4		
SPRINT:	6		

See Page 76

Game Use: Xeno armoured skin: Each location on the Xeno's body has a P.V. of 7. The Xeno's actual skin is its armour, the I.D. of which is the hit points for the location. Both damage and armour damage is dealt to the Xeno's hit points. All Hit Points are doubled.

Xeno's chameleon skin: The Xeno's skin gives it the ability to blend into its surroundings. The skin is only effective when there is enough background structures for the Xeno to copy. (GMD): i.e. buildings. To camouflage itself the Xeno must not be moving in any way. The longer the Xeno remains still, the better the chameleon skin will operate.

Phases motionless	Minus to Detect roll
5	KNOW/4 rnd down
10	KNOW/4 rnd up
15	KNOW/3 rnd down
20	KNOW/3 rnd up
25	KNOW/2 rnd down
30	KNOW/2 rnd up
35 and above	KNOW

Vevaphon

STR	5–10
DEX	5–10
DIA	5–10
CONC	5–10
CHA	5–10
COOL	5–10

Walk:	1
Run:	2
Sprint:	4

	MIN	AVE	MAX
Height:	1.55m	1.80m	1.95m
Weight:	61kg	70kg	79.5kg

	Movement	Half	No
Encumbrance:	17+2/STR	x2	x3

See Page 70

Vevaphon Abilities:

Metamorphosing:

The ability of the Vevaphon to change its shape and form gives it a great deal more freedom of movement than any other race. There are only a few restrictions on this ability. The Vevaphon cannot:

1) Split its mass into two or more parts. If this happens, the smaller portion of the Vevaphon will die.
2) Move through an aperture of less than 25cm in diameter.
3) Metamorphose size 15% either up or down from its original size.
4) Duplicate identities of individuals. (May copy a generic race type as long as size restrictions allow)
5) Cannot metamorphose with other Vevaphons due to different DNA structures.

Vevaphons cannot receive biogenetic implants, replacement limbs, organs, DNA hallmarks or LAD.

Statistic Alterations:

The Vevaphon is able to manipulate its body to increase the strength in and change the purpose of its various muscle groups to suit differing tasks –changing the tissue to compensate for the various pressures, stresses and forces based on the body during physical exertion.

Game Use: The Vevaphon can transfer points from its DEX to STR stat and vice versa. It requires two actions to transfer a point from one stat to the other. There must be at least one point remaining in either stat or the Vevaphon will be unable to transfer points back and will never be able to move physically, in any way, again. A Vevaphon can move points onto a stat to make the total higher than the racial maximum. To move a stat also requires a CONC roll of 18 or higher, or else not all the cells responded and the stat points remain where they were. This will require two actions. Being able to increase stats like this, the Vevaphon can have skills that are STR and DEX related, higher than their current stat but must increase that stat to the desired level before using the higher ranks of a particular skill. Similarly, if PHYS is lowered to create armour, use the new PHYS rating as a maximum rank using skills.

Armour:

Although it is possible for the Vevaphon to wear ordinary armour, this defeats the purpose of the Vevaphon's metamorphosing ability. For this, the Vevaphon can harden its outer skin, in effect creating its own armour.

Game Use: The Vevaphon creates armour by moving points of PHYS to create a P.V. for its outer skin. This is achieved by spending PHYS at a rate of one point per +2 P.V. This requires two full actions to accomplish and a CONC roll of 22 or higher. Weapon damage, when the Vevaphon uses its armour, does its full points value (See: Taking Damage). The armour lasts for the Vevaphon's CONC in rounds after which the P.V. returns to being PHYS.

Natural Weapons:

The Vevaphon has the ability to create blunt and blade weapons by shifting cells to form the weapon required by ossification, creating weapons similar in effect to knives, hammers, swords, baseball bats etc. A Vevaphon can also create a friction glove by oscillating the molecules of the hand to create a vibro weapon.

Game Use: A weapon can be created from any point on a Vevaphon's body, usually the hand and arm but the head, knee or foot can also be used. To create a weapon, the Vevaphon must first shift hit points from any location of the weapon. This is equal to the damage of the weapon. (1 Hit Point = 1 point of damage). It requires one phase to move one hit point. There must be at least one hit point remaining in every location or that location is lost. Recalculate hits if this happens by splitting the excess hit points equally throughout the remaining locations with any fractions added to the torso. For example, if a Vevaphon moves all of its hit points from one of its arms (HP=8) to its torso (HP=16) for the use of a weapon, the new total for the torso would be (8+16=24). The arm would no longer exist so the hit points would be split up as follows: 8/5 = 1.6 so 1 hit point would go to each location with the torso also receiving an extra 3 points, permanently. For every hit point used, a CONC roll of 18 or higher must be made. To add a penetration value to the weapon (starting PEN 0), PHYS can be used at a rate of two PHYS per +1 PEN. This also requires a CONC roll of 12 or higher per two points of PHYS. Vibro weapons are created in much the same way but require an additional CONC roll each phase (17+) or the oscillation of the cells will break down. Vibro blades have a starting PEN of 2.

Taking Damage:

The cells of a Vevaphon are not as densely spaced as in other beings, though they are more massive. This means that when an impact occurs on a Vevaphon's body, the cells move apart much faster allowing the Vevaphon to take less damage from impacts.

Game Use: All 'kinetic' damage; bullets, blades, clubs, unarmed combat attacks etc., do half damage (round down) to a Vevaphon. It is possible to do zero damage. The exception to this is in any attacks involving the use of Ebb such as Blast, Telekinesis, Red Thermal (Not Blue) and Gore Cannon. These attacks are not completely, if at all, bound to kinetic energy and as such do full damage to Vevaphons. If the Vevaphon has created an armoured skin (See: Armour) then damage is taken normally as the impact is fully absorbed by the Vevaphon and not halved as normal because the cells are resisting the kinetic energy used against them, not moving apart to let the blow through as they normally do. If a body segment is destroyed (arm, leg, head, etc.), the membraneous brain and organs in this portion are also destroyed. Subtract one from each of the Vevaphon's six main stats (STR, DEX, DIA, CONC, CHA and COOL) then recalculate PHYS and KNOW. These can all be regenerated. When a Vevaphon has regrown a limb, return all stats to normal except DIA, CONC, and KNOW. This represents the loss of the memory stored in that portion of the brain.

Healing/Reconstruction:

The Vevaphon has extremely fast healing capabilities and can regrow billions of cells in seconds. The Vevaphon can also stop bleeding by controlling the blood flow to damaged areas of its body.

Game Use: The Vevaphon regenerates at a rate of one hit point per round. No Wounds are ever taken when damage is dealt.

Domino Dog 23

See Page 80

STR	12
DEX	14
DIA	3
CONC	3
PHYS	13
KNOW	3
COOL	15

Walk:	2.5m
Run:	5m
Sprint:	7.2m

Weight:	95kg
Length:	2.6m (Nose to Tail)

Skills	Rank
Detect	6
Tracking	8
Sneaking	5
Hide	4
Unarmed Combat	6
Climb	5
Running	4

Natural Weapons	PEN	DMG	Position
Claws (2)	2	3	Fore Legs
Claws (2)	2	4	Hind Legs
Quills (1)	2	5	Back
Teeth (1)	3	6	Mouth

Position	Hits	P.V.
Total	50	–
Head	16	5
Torso	50	5
Legs (F)	25/25	5
Legs (H)	25/25	5

Media Package

Training includes journalism, the use of a camera, interviewing techniques etc. The character works for Third Eye and is assigned to a squad. Each Media Operative is permanently linked to 'Control' at Third Eye through their camera, and so is able to transmit their action live at a moment's notice if required. 'Control' is usually a Third Eye employee who stays linked with his or her Media Operative (when they are on line), and sees what the operative's camera sees. These personnel can often help the operative during times of need or danger.

Skills taught include:

Cinematography (KNOW)
Interview (CHA)
Communique (CHA)
Literacy (KNOW)
SLA Info (KNOW)
Streetwise (KNOW)

STORMER 114 LOW WAVE NPC

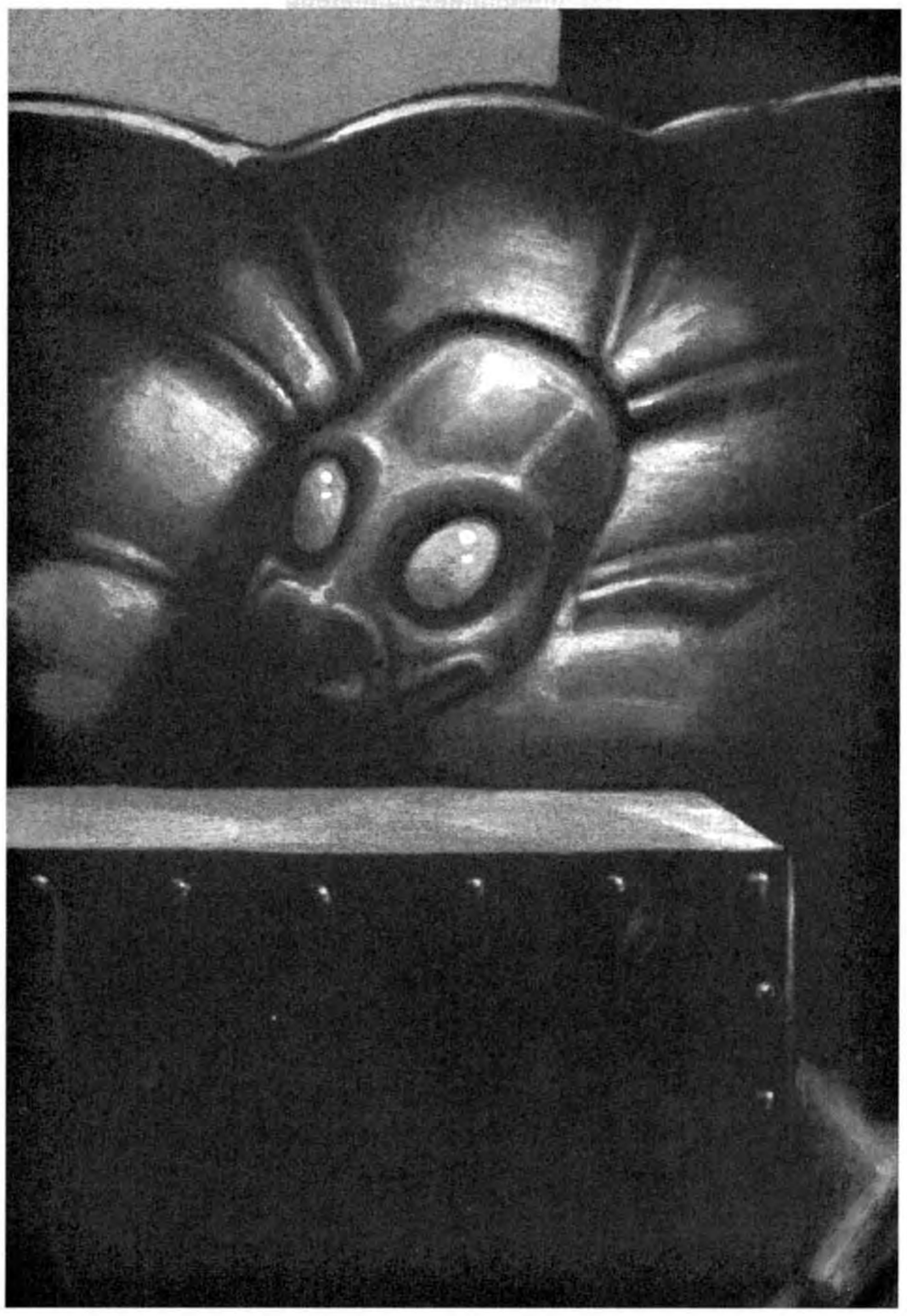
See Page 78

STR	30
DEX	3
DIA	4
CONC	4
CHA	1
PHYS	17
KNOW	4
COOL	15

WALK:	1m
RUN:	1m
SPRINT:	1m

HEIGHT:	2.9m
WEIGHT:	500kg

MOVEMENT:(Max. Load: 875kg) 1m/phase regardless of load carried



S·L·A INDUSTRIES OPERATIVE SCL CARD

NAME

RACE

PACKAGE

SQUAD / DEPT

LD ☐ SCL ☐☐·☐

STRENGTH		MOVE RATE
DEXTERITY		WALK
DIAGNOSE		RUN
CONCENTRATION		SPRINT
CHARISMA		ENCUMBRANCE
PHYSIQUE		MOVEMENT
KNOWLEDGE		HALF MOVEMENT
COOL		NO MOVEMENT

HIT POINTS	ARMOUR PV	ID
TOTAL		
HEAD	–	–
TORSO	–	–
L.ARM	–	–
R.ARM	–	–
L.LEG	–	–
R.LEG	–	–
	–	–
	–	–
	–	–
	–	–
WOUNDS	○○○○○○○○○○	

HEAD:1/3 (UP) TORSO:1/1 ARMS:1/2 (DOWN) LEGS:1/2 (UP)

HAND TO HAND WEAPONS	PEN	DMG	AD

DRUGS	EFFECTS	USAGE

INITIATIVE PHASE 1 2 3 4 5	DAMAGE BONUS	

WEAPON NOTES

SKILL	RANK	STAT	MAX RANK

S·L·A INDUSTRIES

WEAPON	SIZE	CALIBRE/TYPE	PEN	DAMAGE	AD	R.O.F	RANGE	CLIP	RECOIL

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AGE	
HEIGHT	
WEIGHT	
EYE COLOUR	
HAIR COLOUR	
COMPLEXION	

EXPERIENCE POINTS

SAVINGS

EQUIPMENT

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

RANK

LAD ACCOUNT

NOTES

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S·L·A INDUSTRIES OPERATIVE SCL CARD

NAME

RACE

PACKAGE

SQUAD / DEPT

SCL ____ ____ - ____

STRENGTH		MOVE RATE
DEXTERITY		WALK
DIAGNOSE		RUN
CONCENTRATION		SPRINT
CHARISMA		ENCUMBRANCE
PHYSIQUE		MOVEMENT
KNOWLEDGE		HALF MOVEMENT
FLUX		NO MOVEMENT
COOL		

EBON SKILLS	RANK	EBON EQUIPMENT	
FORMULAE	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○		
Blast		Flintlock	○
Blue Thermal		Thermal Gauge	○
Communication		Distracter	○
Detect		Pathfinder	○
Enhancement		Pineal Stim	○
Healing		Medikit	○
Illumination		Gem	○
Protect		DeathSuit	○
Reality Fold		Vector Box	○
Red Thermal		Thermal Gauge	○
Senses		Jade Probe	○
Telekinesis		Focus	○
Gore Cannon		Cannon	○

FLUX SELF	FLUX DEATHSUIT

HIT POINTS	DEATHSUIT PV	ID
TOTAL		
HEAD	–	–
TORSO	–	–
L.ARM	–	–
R.ARM	–	–
L.LEG	–	–
R.LEG	–	–
	–	–
	–	–
	–	–
	–	–
WOUNDS	○○○○○○○○○○	

HEAD:1/3 (UP) TORSO:1/1 ARMS:1/2 (DOWN) LEGS:1/2 (UP)

DRUGS	EFFECTS	USAGE

SKILL	RANK	STAT	MAX RANK

HAND TO HAND WEAPONS	PEN	DMG	AD

INITIATIVE PHASE 1 2 3 4 5	DAMAGE BONUS	

WEAPON	SIZE	CALIBRE/TYPE	PEN	DMG	AD	R.O.F	RANGE	CLIP	RECOIL

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AGE	
HEIGHT	
WEIGHT	
EYE COLOUR	
HAIR COLOUR	
COMPLEXION	

EXPERIENCE POINTS

SAVINGS

EQUIPMENT

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

RANK

NOTES

NECANTHROPE TRAITS

RANK

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AMMUNITION: Damage, Penetration and Armour Damage

	DAMAGE					PENETRATION				
Pistol	**STD**	**AP**	**HP**	**HEAP**	**HESH**	**STD**	**AP**	**HP**	**HEAP**	**HESH**
CAF	2	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–
8mm long	5	1	–	9	–	9	12	–	11	–
9mm BLA	4	1	8	6	–	4	8	1	6	–
10mm auto	5	1	9	7	–	4	7	1	6	–
12mm	6	2	10	8	12	7	10	4	9	2
12.7mm	8	4	12	10	16	8	12	5	10	3
17mm	16	14	18	17	34	11	12	9	12	8
10ga. shot	6	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–
10ga. slug	7	–	–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–

Rifle	**STD**	**AP**	**HP**	**HEAP**	**HESH**	**STD**	**AP**	**HP**	**HEAP**	**HESH**
CAF	3	–	–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–
8mm long	8	4	–	10	–	10	11	–	12	–
10mm auto	8	4	12	10	–	5	8	2	7	–
12mm	9	5	13	11	18	8	11	3	10	3
12.7mm	13	9	17	15	26	9	12	6	11	4
17mm	32	28	36	34	64	21	24	18	23	16
10ga. shot	9	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	–	–
10ga. slug	10	–	–	–	–	7	–	–	–	–

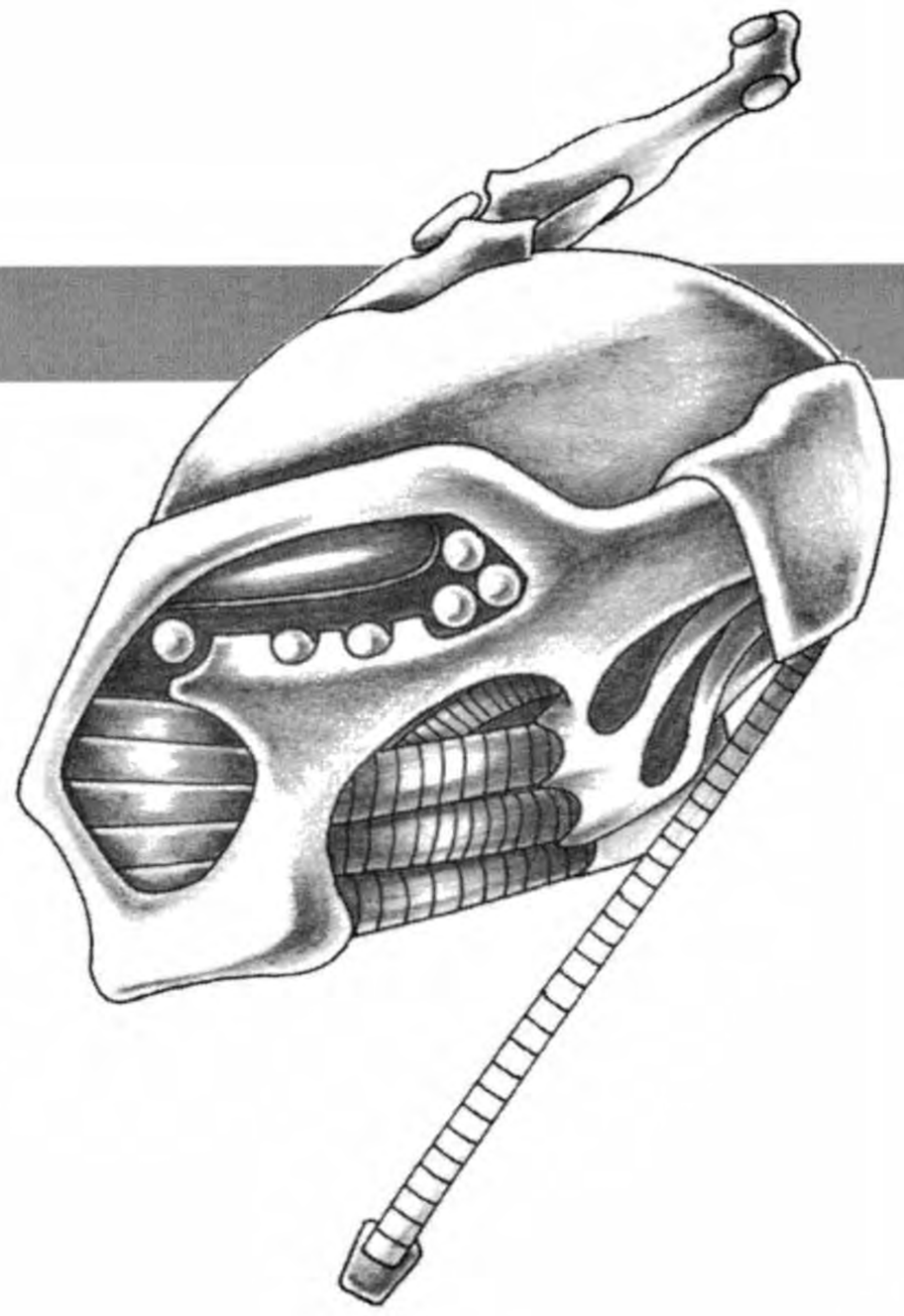
Armour Damage	**STD**	**AP**	**HP**	**HEAP**	**HESH**
CAF	1	–	–	–	–
8mm long	1	1	–	2	–
9mm BLA	1	1	3	2	–
10mm auto	2	1	4	3	–
12mm	2	1	4	3	4
12.7mm	3	2	7	6	6
17mm	4	3	6	5	8
10ga. shot	7	–	–	–	–
10ga. slug	4	–	–	–	–

PP 112 SilverBack

PV	ID/Location Head	Torso	Arms	Legs
15	10	24	18	20

Cost **4000₵**

The SilverBack gives the wearer a **+3m/phase** to their sprint move rate when in the suit. All close combat attacks are at a +1 to the PEN due to the speed of the suit which increases the velocity of the impact of any strike. Flight: 5 second bursts once every 3 rounds at up to a speed of 30km/h (8.3m/p). This also allows the user to hover to a height of up to 70m for the 5 seconds of usual flight. SilverBack helmet: Rangefinder monocular, Motion scanner, Proximity sensors, Headset comm (special), Nava–map, Radar, AV stalk, gyroscopic stabilisers (8), IR and UV Nightsight.



NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

CARNIVOROUS PIG



These creatures roam the sewers of Lower Downtown and the Cannibal Sectors hunting for food. The actual origins of the pigs are unknown but rumours abound, the most popular one being about Al Crawley's Slaughterhouse and how, when biogenetic meat became readily available, his huge slaughterhouse was shut down and the pigs, instead of being killed, were simply let loose in the sewers. Left there for years, the pigs bred, mutated and become the carnivorous monsters that terrorise the subterranean tunnels today.

Quote: "Oink, roar, chomp!"

STATS	Min	Max	Norm
STR	8	12	10
DEX	4	7	5
DIA	1	3	2
CONC	1	3	2
CHA	0	0	0
COOL	12	18	15
HITS	14	22	18
Height			1.5m
Weight			330kg
Length			1.9m

SKILLS	RANK
Detect	6
Unarmed	5
Tracking	5
Swim	3
Climb	1
Running	4

ADVANTAGES	
Good vision	5 (nocturnal)
Good hearing	5

Walk	2	
Run	4	
Sprint	6	+1.2 Running Skill

Weapons	PEN	DMG	AD
Teeth	1	3	1
Claws	1	1	0

Some of these skills are higher than the stat maximum due to animal instinct.

EX–WAR CRIMINAL

See Downtown Rising for Ex–War Criminal description

STATS	
STR	13
DEX	13
DIA	10
CONC	10
CHA	10
COOL	11
HITS	26

SKILLS	RANK
Unarmed Combat	11
Blade 1H	10
Blade 2H	13
Sneak	13
Hide	12
Pistol	12
Rifle	12
Running	10
Climb	8
Auto/Support	13
Throw	9
Leadership	10
Computer Use	8
Demolitions	10
Medical–Paramedic	10
Tactics	10
Tracking	10
Intimidation	10
Weapons Maintenance	7
Detect	10
Drive Military	9
Drive Motorcycle	11
Marksman	10
Computer Subterfuge	6
Electronic Repair	9
Mechanics Repair	8
Demolitions Disposal	10
Survival	10
Evaluate opponent	10
Navigation	10
Literacy	7
Rival Info	10
Streetwise	4

ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES

Delusions	10
Paranoia	10
Drug Addict –UV	10
–Kick start	10
Good Vision	5
Good Hearing	5
Good Luck	3
Good Sleeper	10
Good Timekeeper	10
Exceedingly Cool	1
Natural Aptitude – Survival	10
Arrogant	10
Ambidextrous	



EQUIPMENT

Vibro Sabre
Custom Crackshot +2 PV +5 ID Each Location
FEN 24 Warmonger
(Standard Issue to all Dante Troops
Unobtainable To SLA Employees on Mort)

ROF	Range	Clip	CAL	Cost	Weight
5	27m	40	11.35mm	NA	2.6kg

DAMAGE

11.35mm	STD	AP	HP	HEAP	HESH
	9	5	13	11	18

PENETRATION

11.35mm	STD	AP	HP	HEAP	HESH
	7	10	3	9	2

Armour Damage

11.35mm	STD	AP	HP	HEAP	HESH
	2	1	4	3	5

FEN 25 (04) Warmonger
Standard FEN 25 with underslung 40mm gauss fed and fired grenade launcher

FEN (04) Grenade Launcher

ROF	RNG	CLIP	CAL	COST	WEIGHT
1	10m	4	40mm(G)	NA	1.2kg

Grenade Type	Blast Rating	PEN
Impact Fragmentation	5	7
High Explosion	9	4

SHIVERS

STANDARD TROOP



SLA Industries' own private police force, these men and women are always at the sharp end of the stick, with the difficult task of policing the worst areas of Downtown where Monarch will not patrol and keeping guard on the various Cannibal Sector walls and gates. It is quite feasible to say that, for the amount of hardware they are supplied, they have the worst job in the world but these dedicated individuals are always on patrol in their green armour. Shivers travel in APCs in squads of ten including the driver and commander. The various Shiver types are forensic, standard and sleeper. Sleeper shivers guard the Cannibal Sector walls, doing six month shifts on the wall at a time.

Quote: "Its a dirty job and I got stuck with it. Thanks."

STATS		EQUIPMENT
STR	7	BrowBeater
DEX	7	Body Blocker Armour
DIA	5	SLA Blade
CONC	6	
CHA	5	
COOL	7	
HITS	14	

SKILLS	RANK
Unarmed	4
Blade 1H	4
Rifle	6
Running	3
Auto/Support	5
Throw	2
Drive–Military	5
Evaluate Opponent	4
SLA Info	5
Streetwise	4
Interview	1

DISPERSAL SHIVER

These imposing individuals are a special division of the Shiver Forces used for riot duties, civil unrest and demonstrations. Among the standard equipment is the arm shield. This weapon is unique to the dispersals. It appears as a long triangular piece of, what appears to be, armour running the length of the lower arm. It is in fact a retraction riot shield that when activated, fans out to form a circular plate 80cm in diameter. Trained in all forms of crowd control and suppression, the dispersals carry out their tasks with an almost fanatical zeal.

Quote: "Move on or we will open fire."

STATS	
STR	9
DEX	7
DIA	*6*
CONC	5
CHA	5
COOL	8
HITS	17

EQUIPMENT

FEN 603
Pacifier Baton
Retractable Arm Shield
Custom Body Blocker Armour

SKILL	RANK
Unarmed combat	6
Club 1H	5
Pistol	5
Wrestling	5
Running	3
Auto/Support	3
Detect	3
Intimidate	4
Drive Military	5
Evaluate Opponent	4
SLA Info	6
Streetwise	4

SCAF PILOT

The S.C.A.F. (Shiver Copter Airborne Forces) are an elite and elitist body of personnel that are used as reconnaissance and quick response units around Mort. They patrol in squads of four and are expert pilots, armed with a pistol version of the Browbeater. Their main armament is on their bike, a single barrelled Power Reaper. Although there are only 50,000 of these Shivers in operation on Mort, they are always visibly on duty, flying, sometimes dangerously low, over the street.

Quote: "Hey, if it wasn't for us 'fly–boys', you guys would fall apart."

STATS	
STR	6
DEX	8
DIA	7
CONC	7
CHA	5
COOL	6
HITS	13

SKILLS	RANK
Pilot–Military	6
Drive–Motorcycle	5
Detect	5
Pistol	5
Auto/Support	5
Navigation	6
Evaluate Opponent	4
Streetwise	5
SLA Info	4
Tactics	1

EQUIPMENT

SCAF Bike
Mini Browbeater
Custom Body Blocker Armour



THRESHER PILOT

STATS	
STR	8
DEX	9
DIA	7
CONC	8
CHA	5
COOL	8
HITS	17

SKILLS	RANK
Pilot–Powersuit	7
Rifle	6
Auto/Support	5
Unarmed combat	4
Computer use	4
Tactics	4
Mechanics Repair	4
Electronics Repair	4
Navigation	4
Survival	2
Medical Paramedic	3
Detect	5
Pistol	4
Thresher Info	6
Rival (SLA) Info	5

EQUIPMENT

Thresher Powersuit and Rifle
Pistol
Body armour

Although not seen in great numbers, Thresher have been known to bypass Mort defence and cause havoc on the streets. These individuals are well trained soldiers but tend to be somewhat out of their depth when not piloting one of Thresher's Powersuits as most of their training is geared towards this one area.

Quote: "No, I'm not coming out of the suit until you lower the guns."



MANCHINE

MAXIMUM STATS	
STR	14
DEX	13
DIA	12
CONC	–
CHA	–
COOL	–
HITS	28

SKILLS	RANK
Blade 1H	10
Running	10
Detect	12
Climb	8
Intimidation	10
Throw	8
Pistol	6
Rifle	6
Club 1H	8
Club 2H	8
Blade 2H	9
Torture	10

INFORMATION:

Height: 7 to 9 Feet (Depending on model)
Weight: 750kg to 1000kg (Depending on model)

EQUIPMENT

Four arms: Two ending in vibro sabres
Other two ending in claws Pen 1, Dmg 3, AD 1.
Armour PV: 6 Each location
ID: 20 Each location

With the failure of the Manchine to fulfil its intended role as an urban/industrial civilian pacification unit, the last attempt by SLA Industries to put them to use was to dump them in the Cannibal Sectors in the hope that they could help somewhat in clearing up these areas. They failed. Now these killing machines roam free in the Cannibal Sectors killing whatever they come across; man, woman, pig or Carrien. On occasion, a Manchine will get out of the Cannibal Sectors and into the streets to continue its final programming: Eradicate.

Quote: "Click! Whirr! Slash!"

MORT CIVILIAN

STATS	
STR	4
DEX	4
DIA	5
CONC	5
CHA	5
COOL	3
HITS	8



SERIAL KILLER

The pressure of living in such a metropolis as Mort can be, and often is, too much for some civilians. These individuals are the most unstable percentage of the civilian population, verging on insanity. They take up the masks, murder weapons and traits of mass murderers, obsessives, psychopaths, and stalk the streets looking for the next kill.

Quote: "Buttons."



'Bloody Valentine' A Serial Killer

STATS	
STR	7
DEX	7
DIA	5
CONC	6
CHA	4
COOL	7
HITS	14

SKILLS	RANK
Unarmed combat	5
Pistol	4
Blade 1H	4
Running	4
Climb	4
Disguise	3
Auto/Support	3
Tracking	3
Torture	4
Intimidation	5
Detect	5
Survival	3
Streetwise	6

DISADVANTAGES	RANK
Drug addict-UV	5

EQUIPMENT

MAC Knife
CAF Cold Shadow

The civilian population of Mort falls into two distinct categories; the employed and the unemployed. People with jobs usually have petty criminal records, slightly above average statistics (due to a better diet) and one or two specialised skills depending on their occupation. The rest of the population, approximately 85%, fill their days by watching t.v., committing minor crimes and drinking. These individuals will have a higher streetwise than their more civilised, employed counterparts. The majority of civilians live in Downtown accommodation usually consists of 3 room apartments in varying states of decay. The housing in the suburbs is mainly semi-detached, two story housing.

Quote: "Spare some change, friend?"

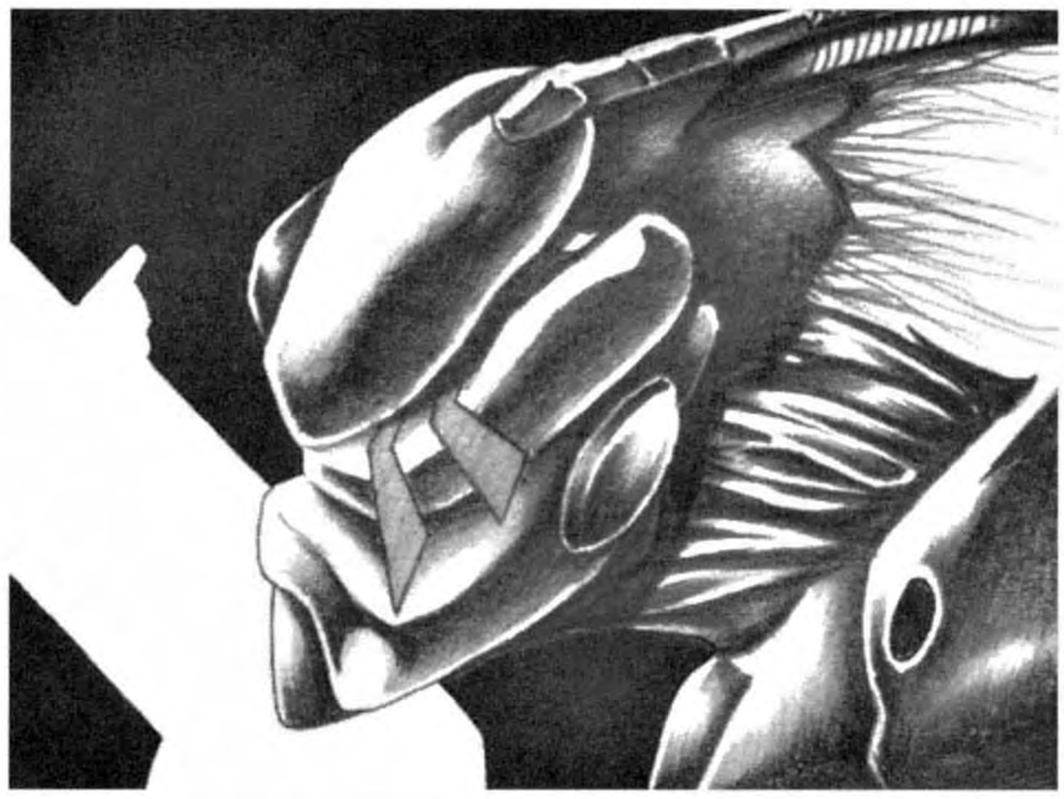
SKILLS	RANK
Streetwise	5
Unarmed Combat	1
Running	3
Club 2H	1
Sport-Baseball	4
Cooking	2
Play Guitar	2
Video Games	2
Pistol	1

EQUIPMENT

CAF Spinner
Guitar

ESPIONAGE AGENT

SKILLS	RANK
Martial Arts	5
Blade 1H	5
Gymnastics	3
Forgery – Manual	2
Sleight	3
Sneaking	4
Hide	4
Pistol	6
Rifle	6
Drive – Motorcycle	3
Running	3
Climb	3
Auto/Support	5
Disguise	3
Haggle	3
Computer Use	4
Demolitions	2
Medical – Paramedic	4
Tactics	2
Tracking	2
Bribery	3
Lock Picking	3
Electronic Locks	3
Read Lips	3
Weapons Maintenance	3
Drive – Civilian	3
Detect	6
Computer Subterfuge	3
Electronics Repair	2
Demolitions Disposal	2
Survival	3
Rival (SLA) Info	3
Navigation	3
Streetwise	3
Evaluate Opponent	4
Literacy	2
DarkNight Info	4



The Espionage agents are the true DarkNight operatives. Highly skilled and almost impossible to track down, full squads of SLA operatives are normally hired to take out a single agent. The espionage agents, as well as being expert assassins, are also recruitment officers for DarkNight, training Mort civilians to fight for their cause. Dangerous in the extreme, DarkNight espionage agents are responsible for nearly all SLA Operative deaths on Mort.

Quote: "Don't believe the bull on t.v. Its all SLA hype. I'll tell you what happens when the cameras are switched off."

STATS	
STR	8
DEX	9
DIA	7
CONC	7
CHA	5
COOL	6
HITS	17

ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES

	RANK
Major Enemy (SLA)	10
Sterile	
Good Luck	2
Good Vision	1

EQUIPMENT

Same as Civilian Convert but more Customised Equipment

CIVILIAN CONVERT

STATS	
STR	7
DEX	8
DIA	7
CONC	6
CHA	5
COOL	6



PROPS



The Props are civilian mercenaries that hire themselves out to gangs as added protection or to assassinate other gang members. Props keep their true identities secret, hiding behind masks to evade capture. As far as education goes, Props are not trained to the same standard as Shiver Units but can usually waste any other civilian in a fight. These mean and moody individuals frequent the black market areas of Mort. Props are paid in UNIs and their services cost from 200ū up to and sometimes over 10,000ū for the best.

Quote: "Pick up the money!"

STATS	
STR	8
DEX	7
DIA	6
CONC	6
CHA	4
COOL	7
HITS	16

EQUIPMENT

DarkNight Guns
DarkNight Armour
Guns and armour obtained on the Black Market.

SKILLS	RANK
Pistol or Rifle	5
Streetwise	6
Unarmed combat	4
Any 1 close combat skill	4
Gymnastics or Acrobatics	5
Sneak	3
Hide	3
Sleight	4
Haggle	4
Detect	4

DarkNight agents make up the largest percentage of Soft Company insurgents in Mort. The convert is usually unemployed with little or no prospects. When their social situation is at its worst, be they up to their necks in debt or wanted by the Shivers, DarkNight will step forward and enlist. The training they receive from these agents is basic. Learning to shoot straight is considered a major achievement. The worrying thing about civilian converts is that they look and act like ordinary civilians, giving them a great deal of freedom to move around without detection and strike without warning.

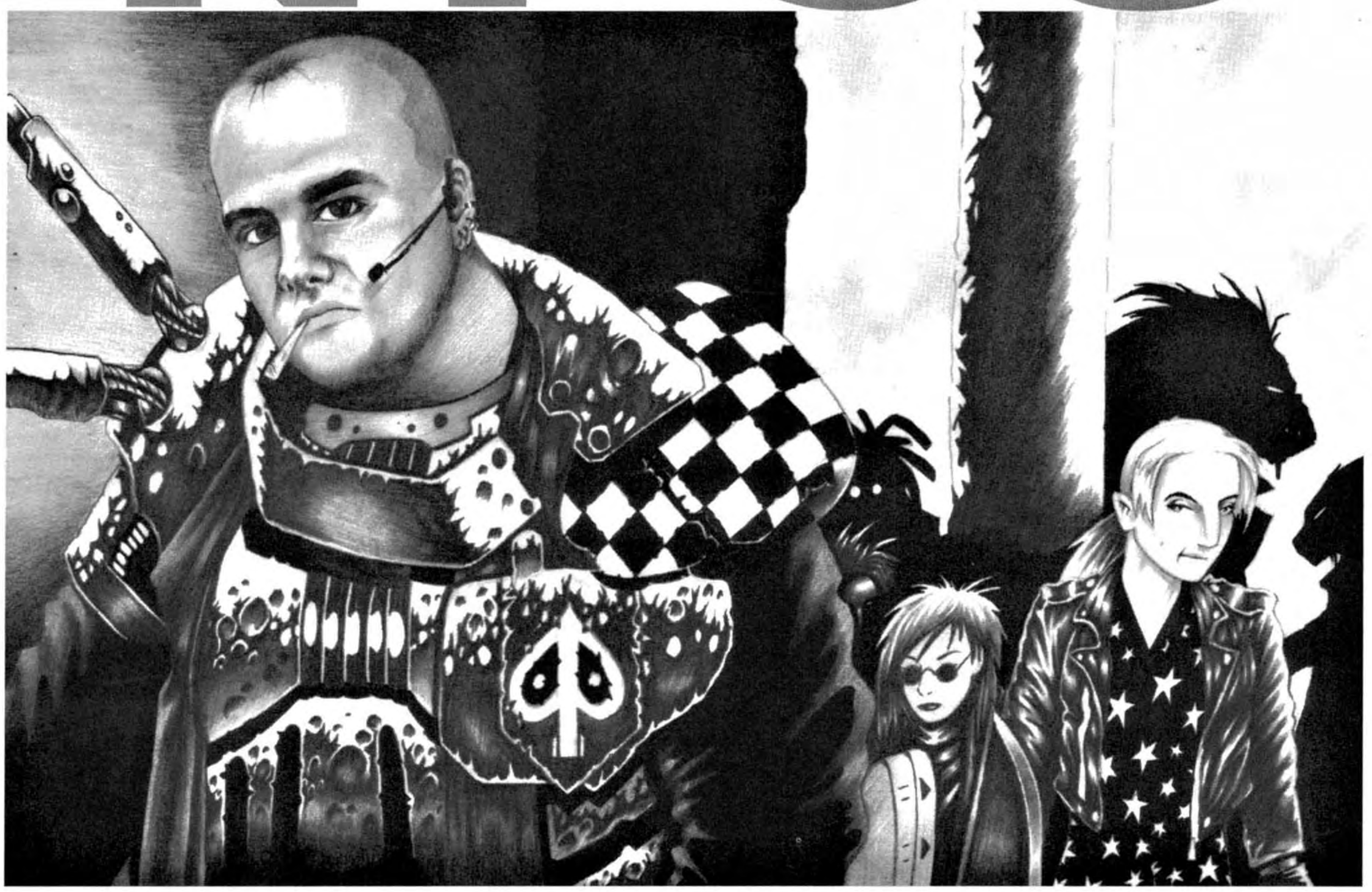
Quote: "DarkNight gave me a gun and showed me how to use it. If this was SLA, they'd have me shot. Here, I'll probably get a medal."

SKILLS	RANK
Unarmed Combat	4
Pistol	4
Rifle	2
Blade 1H	3
Sneak	3
Hide	3
Running	2
Auto/Support	3
Detect	4
Streetwise	4
DarkNight Info	3
Rival (SLA) Info	3

EQUIPMENT

DarkNight Equipment
DarkNight Operatives also use SLA Equipment bought on the Black Market.

OPERATIVE NPCS



The co–operation, both socially and professionally, between operatives is always an important part of an adventure. So what happens if one of the players wants to talk to that Shaktar, Wraith or Brain Waster you mentioned in passing? It's easy to run a one–to–one conversation and make up some background. On the other hand, if the player wants some Game Information, like stats, skills or equipment then unless you have a large pool of NPCs to draw from, it becomes a bit of a pain having to create one just so the player can roll on their Evaluate opponent skill. To aid you in this, there follows some samples of the sort of standard operatives that can be found propping up most bars on Mort. These NPCs have all seen some action and are quite well trained, as can be seen from their SCL. Feel free to change key skills and attributes to mould them to suit your adventure.

STORMER



SHAKTAR



KICK MURDER SQUAD

STATS

STR	12
DEX	13
DIA	8
CONC	8
CHA	7
COOL	12
HITS	25
SCL	8a

ADVANTAGE / DISADVANTAGES

Sterile	
Octophobia	5
Vehicle	9
Bad housing	5

EQUIPMENT

FEN 706 Power Reaper
BLA 046M
Crackshot Armour

SKILLS

Unarmed Combat	5
Detect	7
Martial Arts	5
Evaluate Opponent	2
Rival Company	4
Survival	2
Climb	5
Pistol	7
Rifle	10
Auto/Support	10
Throw	6
Demolitions	3
Medical Paramedic	4
Tactics	4
Intimidation	5
Blade 1H	5
Drive Military	6
Acrobatics	4
Hide	5
Sneaking	6
Killan	8
Navigation	5

DEATH SQUAD

STATS

STR	15
DEX	10
DIA	7
CONC	7
CHA	4
COOL	9
HITS	28
SCL	8

EQUIPMENT

Powercell Armour
KPS Mangler
Chain Axe

SKILLS

	RANK
Unarmed Combat	10
SLA Info	4
Rival Company	3
Intimidate	7
Streetwise	4
Evaluate Opponent	4
Chain Axe	7
Rifle	8
Wrestling	5
Running	5
Climb	5
Auto/Support	8
Detect	7
Tactics	2

ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES

Ambidextrous

FROTHER



STATS

STR	10
DEX	10
DIA	7
CONC	8
CHA	5
COOL	6
HITS	20
SCL	9b

DISADVANTAGES

Drug Addict – UV	5
Psychosis – Psycopathy	2

EQUIPMENT

HARD Armour
Power Claymore
FEN AR Assault Rifle
Calaharvey Motorcycle

DEATH SQUAD

SKILLS	RANK
Unarmed Combat	10
Blade 2H	10
Detect	6
SLA Info	5
Rival	4
Streetwise	5
Rifle	8
Drive Motorcycle	7
Running	7
Climb	5
Swim	2
Auto/Support	7
Medical Paramedic	4
Tactics	2
Intimidation	2
Evaluate Opp	4
Navigation	3

WRAITH RAIDER



HUMAN



STATS

STR	9
DEX	9
DIA	8
CONC	8
CHA	7
COOL	8
HITS	18
SCL	7

ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES

Good Luck	3
Allergy – Fur	3

EQUIPMENT

Heavy Exo Armour
BLA 046M Blitzer
Vidi–Cam
Slug deck

INVESTIGATION AND INTERROGATION

SKILLS	RANK
Detect	8
Rival Company	7
SLA Info	8
Literacy	6
Streetwise	5
Unarmed Combat	4
Martial Arts	5
Interview	4
Forensics	5
Diplomacy	4
Communique	3
Computer Use	5
Medical – Paramedic	5
Business Administration	3
Pathology	3
Drive Civilian	4
Pistol	4
Photography	3
Psychology	2

SCOUTING PACKAGE

STATS

STR	9
DEX	15
DIA	11
CONC	9
CHA	7
COOL	8
HITS	21
SCL	8a

Advantage/Disadvantages

Sterile

Equipment

Scout Helmet
FEN 30–30
HARD Armour

SKILLS	RANK
Survival	2
Tracking	3
Detect	10
Martial Arts	7
Running	10
Climb	7
Rifle	10
Sneak	8
Hide	7
Acrobatics	5
Computer Use	3
Computer Subterfuge	3
Medical Paramedic	3
Weapons Maintenance	4
Marksman	9
Streetwise	6



BRAIN WASTER

DEATH SQUAD

STATS	
STR	10
DEX	9
DIA	8
CONC	11
CHA	3
COOL	8
FLUX	20
HITS	19
SCL	7a

EBB SKILLS

Formulae	6
Blast	10
Blue Thermal	4
Enhancement	4
Healing	6
Illumination	5
Protect	10
Red Thermal	9

ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES

Arrogant	5
Sterile	
Bad Housing	5
Enemy Major–Shivers	5

EQUIPMENT

Deathsuit
Flintlock
Red Thermal Gauge
FEN AR
DPB Gash Fist

SKILLS	RANK
Intimidate	5
Unarmed combat	8
Streetwise	4
Literacy	3
Detect	7
SLA Info	3
Pistol	5
Rifle	6
Running	4
Auto / Support	5
Torture	3
Rival Company	3
Tactics	3
Evaluate Opponent	3

NECANTHROPE



ADVANTAGES

	RANK
Ambidextrous (Primary Arms)	
Ambidextrous (Secondary Arms)	
Good Housing	10

EQUIPMENT

Super DeathSuit
Gore Cannon
Flintlocks (2)
BLA 046M Blitzer



INVESTIGATION AND INTERROGATION

STATS	
STR	8
DEX	10
DIA	8
CONC	11
CHA	10
COOL	6
FLUX	20
HITS	17
SCL	8

EBB SKILLS	RANK
Formulae	5
Blast	7
Detect	5
Healing	6
Illumination	3
Protect	10
Reality Folding	7
Telekinesis	6

E B O N

SKILLS	RANK
Literacy	3
Detect	6
Rival Company	3
SLA Info	5
Communique	2
Persuasion	3
Pistol	5
Blade 1H	5
Martial Arts	4
Gymnastics	5
Acrobatics	4
Climb	5
Seduction	4
Streetwise	7
Evaluate Opponent	3
Psychology	3
Interview	5

DISADVANTAGES

Allergy-Alcohol	5

EQUIPMENT

DeathSuit
Flintlock
Pathfinder
Vector Box
Focus
FEN 603

DEATH SQUAD

STATS	
STR	18
DEX	14
DIA	13
CONC	16
CHA	9
COOL	18
HITS	34
FLUX	40
SCL	5b.2

EBB SKILLS	RANK
Formulae	13
Blast	15
Blue Thermal	14
Communication	3
Detect	3
Enhancement	10
Healing	10
Illumination	3
Protect	16
Reality Fold	3
Red Thermal	15
Senses	3
Telekinesis	3
Gore Cannon	10

NECANTHROPE TRAITS

	RANK
Voice Control	2
Soul Weave	
High Pain Threshold	5
Additional Limbs (Two Arms)	
Necanthrope Teeth and Claws	8

SKILLS	RANK
Intimidate	12
Unarmed Combat	10
Streetwise	8
Literacy	6
Detect	10
SLA Info	12
Pistol	10
Rival Company	7
Blade 1H	10
Running	9
Evaluate Opponent	12
Auto/Support	8
Rifle	8
Tactics	7
Hide	5
Sneak	6

EQUIPMENT LIST

Due to Errors and Omissions In SLA Industries
This Is The Definitive List of all Equipment

ARMAMENTS

TYPE	SIZE	CLIP	CAL	ROF	Recoil	Range	Weight	Cost	Black Market Cost
GA47	P	12	10mm	2	2	10m	0.5kg	75₵	1,500ū
GA50	R	18	10mm	3	6	15m	3kg	300₵	6,000ū
GA 9442	R	300	n/a	20	0	15m	2.4kg	n/a	2,000ū
FEN 603	P	20	10mm	3/1	3	12m	0.5kg	150₵	2,500ū
FEN 204	P	40	10mm	5/3/1	7/3/1	15m	2kg	350₵	7,500ū
FEN AR	R	25	10mm	5/1	8/2	20m	3.5kg	750₵	15,000ū
FEN 706	R(OS)	100	10mm	10/5	10/7	26m	14.5kg	1575₵	32,000ū
FEN 400	R(OS)	5	17mm	1	15	540m	24kg	2000₵	200,000ū
FEN 30–30	R(OS)	1	8mm	1	6	900m	5kg	1100₵	23,000ū
FEN TRI	R	1	12.7mm	1	0	1200m	8kg	1450₵	29,000ū
FEN 93 GAG	R	10	12mm	2/1	8/7	75m	3kg	800₵	16,000ū
FEN 091	P	5	17mm	1	10	24m	2kg	800₵	16,000ū
FEN 808	R(OS)	80	12mm	10/5	13/8	30m	15.1kg	1850₵	37,000ū
KK 20	P	20	12mm	2	6	15m	2kg	430₵	9,000ū
KK 30	P	20	12mm	5	8	15m	3.5kg	570₵	12,000ū
GAK 19	R	5	12.7mm	1	8	145m	11.5kg	1850₵	40,000ū
BLA 464M	P	2	12.7mm	2/1	12/9	3m	0.4kg	450₵	9,000ū
BLA 646M	P	180	9mm	10	8	10m	1.4kg	850₵	17,000ū
BLA 710M	P	14	9mm	2/1	2	15m	0.3kg	150₵	3,000ū
BLA 046M	P	6	12.7mm	1	7	20m	1.5kg	790₵	20,000ū
KPS	R	10	10g	3	9	10m	4kg	900₵	25,000ū
MAL AR	R	20	12.7mm	2	9	150m	12.7kg	2150₵	50,000ū
AGB Chopper	R	24	n/a	1	6	20m	4kg	1700₵	30,000ū
SP Vibro	P	4	n/a	1	0	25m	2kg	760₵	16,000ū
10–10	R	10	10g	1	8	10m	3kg	200₵	4,000ū
CAF P50	P	8	CAF	1	2	10m	0.3kg	150ū	–
CAF SMG	P	30	CAF	3	5	10m	0.6kg	250ū	–
CAF AR	R	20	CAF	2	4	15m	1.5kg	300ū	–
CAF R7	R	6	CAF	1	5	45m	2kg	400ū	–

WEAPONS

TYPE	DMG	PEN	Armour DMG	Weight	Cost	Black Market Cost
Chain Axe	5	4	3	3kg	85₵	1,500ū
Pacifier Baton	5	0	5	1kg	80₵	1,000ū
Vibro Sabre	4	4	2	1.5kg	100₵	2,000ū
Gash Fist	4	4	2	1kg	80₵	1,600ū
Flick Scythe	5	5	2	2.5kg	120₵	2,400ū
MAC Knife	4	1	1	0.75kg	80₵	1,200ū
Mutilator	5	3	3	1kg	85₵	1,700ū
Power Disc	4	4	2	0.4kg	100₵	1,900ū
Power Claymore	6	4	3	3kg	100₵	2,200ū
SLA Blade	1	0	0	0.25kg	2₵	40ū
Knife	1	0	0	0.4kg	5ū	–
Club/Bat	2	–1	0	1kg	20ū	–
Sledgehammer	3	–1	1	3.5kg	35ū	–
Sword	2	0	1	1.5kg	10ū	–
Jolt Glove	as user	as user	as user	0.25kg	105₵	2,100ū

Calibre	Prices For SLA And Black Market STD	AP	HP	HEAP	HESH
CAF	1ū	–	–	–	–
8mm long	2₵/40ū	3₵/60ū	–	3₵/60ū	–
9mm BLA	2₵/40ū	3₵/60ū	3₵/60ū	4₵/80ū	–
10mm Auto	1₵/20ū	2₵/40ū	3₵/60ū	2₵/40ū	–
12mm	3₵/60ū	4₵/80ū	5₵/100ū	4₵/80ū	6₵/120ū
12.7mm	3₵/60ū	5₵/100ū	6₵/120ū	5₵/100ū	7₵/140ū
17mm	8₵/160ū	10₵/200ū	12₵/240ū	10₵/200ū	15₵/300ū
10ga. shot	3₵/60ū	–	–	–	–
10ga. slug	4₵/80ū	–	–	–	–

Half 17mm Price for Pistol rounds

SPECIALISED AMMUNITION

TYPE	DMG	PEN	ARM DMG	Cost	Black Market Cost	Weight	Weapon
Ballbearings	3	–4	0	n/a	1ū/100	0.3kg/100	GA 9442
Vibro discs	8	12	2	5₵/disc	100ū/disc	0.01kg	Vibro Disc
Chopper Packs	15	8	6	3₵/pack	60ū/pack	0.1kg	Chopper
10mm Hotline Pistol	2*	0	2	15₵	300ū	–	–

*Stuns Powered Armour 2 minutes (40 rounds) no save
Stuns Wearer 30 seconds (10 rounds) PHYS –20 not to be stunned
Stuns Unarmored Targets 5 minutes (100 rounds) no save

Power Pack	–	–	–	50₵	1,000ū	0.2kg	Jolt Glove

*Stuns Powered Armour 2 minutes (40 rounds) no save
Stuns Armour Wearer 30 seconds (10 rounds) PHYS –20 not to be stunned
Stuns Unarmored Targets 5 minutes (100 rounds) no save
Cannot Be Worn over any Close Combat Weapon ie. ITB Mutilator

GRENADES

Type	Blast Rating	PEN	Weight	Cost	Black Market Cost
Blast	0	–5	0.5kg	10₵	200ū
Fragmentation	10	6	0.5kg	15₵	300ū
Smoke	n/a	n/a	0.5kg	4₵	80ū
Gas (Riot)	n/a	n/a	0.5kg	10₵	200ū

ARMOUR

Armour Types	Cost	Black Market Cost	P.V.	I.D./Location Head	Torso	Arms	Legs	Modifiers
Striker	10₵	100ū	1	–	5	5	5	–
Padquil Flak	20₵	200ū	3	–	8	–	–	–
Body Armour	400₵	8,000ū	5	8	14	10	12	–
Exo – Base	750₵	15.000ū	7	10	20	15	17	–2 DEX
Exo – Heavy	1,250₵	25,000ū	8	15	35	25	28	–
Exo – Stormer	1,500₵	30,000ū	9	20	50	40	45	+3 STR
HARD	1,750₵	35,000ū	10	20	50	40	45	–1 DEX
Powercell	2,000₵	40,000ū	12	20	70	50	60	+2 STR
Crackshot	3,000₵	60,000ū	15	20	80	60	70	–
SilverBack	4,000₵	80,000ū	15	10	24	18	20	+3m Sprint
Dogeybone	5,000₵	100,000ū	16	60	150	80	120	+5 STR
Shock Armour	10,000₵	300,000ū	18	80	200	120	180	STR 18,DEX 13

Type	Cost	Black Market Cost	Max. Weight	Range	User Life
Telesight	10₵	200ū	0.5kg	1000m	Full
Telesight	20₵	400ū	0.5kg	3000m	Full
Telesight	30₵	600ū	0.5kg	5000m	Full
Telesight	40₵	800ū	0.5kg	8000m	Full
IR/UV Nightsight	+10₵	+200ū	0.15kg	–	5000hrs
Goggles – IR/UV	30₵	600ū	0.5kg	–	5000hrs
Silencer – Pistol	15₵	300ū	0.4kg	–25%	Full
Silencer – SMG	15₵	300ū	0.6kg	–25%	Full
Silencer – Rifle	25₵	500ū	0.8kg	–25%	Full
Suppressor – Pistol	15₵	300ū	0.1kg	–	Full
Suppressor – SMG	20₵	400ū	0.3kg	–	Full
Suppressor – Rifle	20₵	400ū	0.3kg	–	Full
Recoil Baffling – Pistol	10₵ Per 1	200ū	0.5kg	–	Full
Recoil Baffling – Rifle	20₵ Per 1	400ū	1kg	–	Full
Fusion Recharger	2500₵	50,000ū	5kg	–	150,000hrs
Pistol Stock	10₵	200ū	0.5kg	–	Full
SMG Stock	10₵	200ū	0.75kg	–	Full
Bipod	20₵	400ū	0.5kg	–	Full
Tripod	20₵	400ū	0.8kg	–	Full
Laser Painter	5₵	100ū	0.1kg	8000m	Full
Headset Communicator	5₵	75ū	0.05kg	50km	10,000hrs
Nava–map	15₵	300ū	0.8kg	100kms	5000hrs
Map dataslugs	2₵	40ū	0.01kg	100kms	Full
Rangefinders	10₵	200ū	0.4kg	1000m	5000hrs
Motion Scanner	35₵	700ū	0.75kg	50m	5000hrs
Enviro Scanner	8₵	160ū	0.2kg	1m	5000hrs
Slugdeck	10₵	200ū	0.5kg	–	1000hrs
Dataslug (blank)	1₵	10ū	0.01kg	–	Full
Chippy lead	1₵	20ū	0.02kg	–	Full
Cellphone	8₵	80ū	0.3kg	15km	2000hrs
Finance Chip Scanner	50₵	1750ū	0.75kg	30m	5000hrs
Thumper Beacon	4₵	100ū	1kg	25km	24hrs
ECM Body Suit	100₵	2000ū	3kg	–	7000hrs
ECM Cape	75₵	1750ū	1kg	–	7000hrs
Medi–kit	50₵	2000ū	2kg	–	Full
Consumables (Medi–kit)	5₵	50ū	0.1kg	–	See text
Compressed Air Syringe	4₵	100ū	0.2kg	–	20 uses
Compressed Air Cylinders	1₵	30ū	0.02kg	–	20 uses
Drug Injection System	8₵	250ū	0.09kg	–	20 uses
Telescopic Tight Beam	75₵	2000ū	0.75kg	3000m	5000hrs
Lock Pick (Manual)	25₵	500ū	0.4Kg	–	Full
Lock Pick (Electronic)	150₵	5000ū	2.5Kg	–	5000hrs
Forgery (Manual)	25₵	500ū	1kg	–	50 uses
Forgery (Electronic)	300₵	8000ū	2kg	–	2000hrs
Laptop (Oyster)	20₵	400ū	1kg	–	1000hrs
Flashlight (Hand–held)	2₵	20ū	0.2kg	50m beam	500hrs
Flashlight (Mounted Spot)	3₵	40ū	0.4kg	100m beam	500hrs
Maintenance Kit	50₵	1000ū	4kg	–	Full
Laser Sharpener	3₵	60ū	0.05kg	–	1000hrs
Climbing Equipment	–	150ū	1.5kg	–	Full
With grapple	20₵	400ū	2.5kg	–	10,000 uses
Carbon Dioxide Propellant	1₵	10ū	0.02kg	–	1 use
Magazines	1₵	10ū	0.1kg	–	–
Snail Drums	3₵	60ū	0.4kg	–	–
Electro Belt Fed Ammo Bin	25₵	500ū	1kg	–	(100 round)
Electro Belt Fed Ammo Bin	40₵	800ū	1.6kg	–	(300 round)
Electro Belt Fed Ammo Bin	90₵	1800ū	1.9kg	–	(500 round)
Electro Belt Fed Ammo Bin	200₵	4000ū	2.3kg	–	(1000 round)
MagHold – Ammo	2₵	20ū	0.1kg	–	5000hrs
MagHold – Pistols & Blades	3₵	30ū	0.1kg	–	5000hrs
MagHold – Rifles	5₵	50ū	0.2kg	–	5000hrs
MagHold – Power Claymore	10₵	150ū	0.4kg	–	5000hrs
Waldo Unit	240₵	4800ū	3kg	–	5000hrs

	Cost	Black Market Cost	Weight	Max. Range	User Life
Scout Helmet – Standard	1000₵	25,000ū	1.6kg	–	5000hrs
Helmet – Rangefinder	25₵	500ū	–	3000m	–
Helmet – Motion Scanner	35₵	700ū	–	50m	–
Helmet – Enviro Scanner	20₵	400ū	–	1m	–
Helmet – Sonar	175₵	3500ū	–	100m	–
Helmet – Voice Modulator	80₵	1600ū	–	–	–
Helmet – Cellphone	50₵	1000ū	–	15km	–
Helmet – Retina Scan	250₵	5000ū	–	–	–
Helmet – Air Supply	120₵	2400ū	–	–	2hrs
Helmet – Radar	180₵	3600ū	–	100m	–
Helmet – Optical Defense	200₵	4000ū	–	–	–
Helmet – Rifle Targeting	150₵	3000ū	–	–	–
Helmet – Telescopic Image	200₵	4000ū	–	3000m	–
Helmet – Telescopic Image	350₵	7000ū	–	8000m	–
Helmet – Audio Enhancement	30₵	600ū	–	500m	–
Helmet – Nava–map	25₵	500ū	–	–	–
Helmet – Television	20₵	400ū	–	–	–
Helmet – AV Stalk	50₵	1000ū	–	–	–
Helmet – Gyro stabiliser	25₵	500ū	–	–	–
BLA Maintenance Kit	240₵	5000ū	1.5kg	–	50 uses
Consumables	10₵	200ū	–	–	50 uses
Weapons Maintenance Kit	30₵	600ū	2kg	–	45 uses
Consumables	4₵	80ū	–	–	45 uses

VEHICLES

Name	Type	Max. Speed	Skill	Cost	P.V./I.D.	Max.Crew/ Passeng.
Augustus	Car	320km/h	Drive,Civ	10,000₵	17/200	1/4
Calaharvey	Bike	340km/h	Drive,Mot	1000₵	10/100	1/1
Battle Taxi	APC	180km/h	Drive,Mil	125,000₵	25/750	2/10
GA 'J'	Jeep	220km/h	Drive,Civ	14,000₵	15/300	1/5
Pandora	Bike	280km/h	Drive,Mot	1500₵	15/200	1/1
Kilcopter	Copter	1000km/h	Pilot,Mil	450,000₵	19/550	2/4
SCAF	Copter	400km/h	Pilot,Mil +Drive,Mot	125,000₵	15/250	1/1
Civilian	Taxi	220km/h	Drive,Civ	–	4/55	1/6
Civilian	Car	180km/h	Drive,Civ	17,000ū	2/30	1/4
Civilian	Bike	280km/h	Drive,Mot	750ū	1/10	1/1

DRUGS

Name	Type	Addiction	Cost	Black Market Cost
Rush	Combat	–1 PHYS/4	15₵	500ū
Ultra Violence	Combat	–1 PHYS/1	15₵	700ū
Beat	Soft	–1 PHYS/2	5₵	100ū
Personal Interest	Soft	–1 PHYS/4	5₵	150ū
Pineal Stim	Combat	–1 PHYS/2	20₵	800ū
Kick Start	Medical	–1 PHYS/30	5₵	100ū
Pain Away	Medical	–1 PHYS/3	10₵	200ū
Flush	Medical	–1 PHYS/30	5₵	180ū
Streak	Medical	–1 PHYS/4	20₵	1000ū
Honesty	Medical	–1 PHYS/4	10₵	200ū
White Noise	Medical	–1 PHYS/5	10₵	1500ū

KARMA DRUGS

Soft Drugs

Lumo:

Game Effects: Changes colour of skin for 12 hours. 1774 different colours, including shades and tones are available.
Addiction: –1 PHYS/30 doses
Detox. Effects: Skin stays a certain colour.
Addiction: 1 per day
Cost: 4¢

Slosh:

Game Effects: Extreme inebriation
Addiction: –1 PHYS/20
Detox. Effects: –1 DEX
Addiction: 2 cans/day
Cost: 2¢/can

Alice:

Game Effects: For psychosis and phobia sufferers, intense nightmares. Others experience a fantasy trip.
Addiction: –1 PHYS/1 or no addiction*
Detox. Effects: –1 CONC, –1 COOL
Addiction: 1 dose/day
Cost: 10¢
* Psychosis and phobia sufferers do not become addicted to Alice unless the nature of the person actually craves the horrors that the drug creates.

Flip:

Game Effects: +3 to COOL for 3 hours
Addiction: –1 PHYS/20
Detox. Effects: –2 COOL
Addiction: 1 dose/day
Cost: 4¢

Drum:

Game Effects: (Ebon) Regain full FLUX in 3 hours, not 5 or 6.
Game Effects: (Other) +1 to COOL for 2 hours after waking.
Addiction: –1 PHYS/15
Detox. Effects: –1 to CONC
Cost: 3¢

Medical Drugs

Kick Start +:

Game Effects: 4 Hits recovered and stops 2 Wounds 3 phases after injection.
Addiction: –1 PHYS per 25 doses.
Detox. Effects: –1 PHYS, –3 HITS permanent.
Addiction: 2 per day.
Cost: 7¢ per dose.

Kick Start 'Solo':

Game Effects: 4 Hits recovered, stops 2 wounds, +1 to COOL for 2 hours (not cumulative), no PHYS rolls for 30 minuets (not cumulative) 2 phases after injection.
Addiction: – 1 PHYS per 15 doses.
Detox. Effects: –1 PHYS, –3 HITS, –1 STR, –1 COOL permanent.
Addiction: 2 per day.
Cost: 10¢ per dose.

Karma KS:

Game Effects: 2 Hits recovered (3 if Nuke Tendon implants are present), stops 2 wounds 3 phases after injection.
Addiction: –1 PHYS per 25 doses.
Detox. Effects: –1 PHYS, –2 HITS permanent.
Addiction: 2 per day.
Cost: 8¢ per dose.

Chain:

Game Effects: (LAD Stops tissue rejection. Controls mental state.) 1 dose/day
Other: +3 to COOL (Duration 10 hours)
Addiction: Automatic
Detox Effects (LAD): –2 STR, DEX, DIA, CONC
Detox Effects(other): –1 DIA, CONC
Addiction: 1 dose/day
Cost: 4¢

Combat Drugs

Blaze UV:

Game Effects: 2 free phases a round, no PHYS or COOL rolls, damage cut by 50%, 10 minute duration.
Addiction: –1 PHYS per 20 doses.
Detox. Effects: –2 STR (This is an instant effect after coming down), lasts for 3 hours.
Addiction: 1 per day.
Cost: 10¢.

Bass:

Game Effects: +2 to STR for 1 hour (effects are not cumulative).
Addiction: –1 PHYS per 17 doses
Detox. Effects: –1 to STR and DEX permanent.
Addiction: 2 per day.
Cost: 5¢.

PHASE INC.

"Everybody is as individual as we make them"

The name may have changed but the company is still the same. 'Phase' Incorporated, formerly 'Core Limited', are back. We still offer the same quality of service –the only real changes you will notice are in our prices. All our products are 25% cheaper than before. This was brought about to make our unique service available to a wider bracket of operatives, besides our established Contract Killer clientele. Those of you that are new to our products have a fantastic opportunity to view our latest designs from the new studio staff, all of whom have immaculate credentials from the finest schools on Mort and New Paris.

The art of customising armour in any way, shape or form is a delicate business that our skilled technicians undertake with the greatest care and precision. From a simple spray job to a full make–over, the greatest attention is paid to every detail from the precise shade, colour or tone of a respray to the exact style of full custom armour work.

Resprays

Each colour, tone, shade or blended pattern that Phase applies is executed to the highest possible standards of workmanship. All our paints, lacquers and laminates are of the highest quality. Any job will be undertaken from a single colour respray to the most intricate, detailed patterns. A full range of our most popular designs are available on request. The most surprising thing about our bodywork paint jobs is that they will cost the same no matter how much colour or detail you want. From matt black to a full colour map of Lower Downtown, the cost is the same and that cost is only 75₢.

Armour Customisation

Everybody has the right for individuality in the way they dress, their hair and their armour. At Phase, the design and construction of specialised armour projects is carried out with the utmost care and attention. We will be able to change any armour class blueprint, from Striker to Shock to any chosen by yourself. There is a large selection of customisation programs available, from simple cosmetic alterations to full body alteration that will make heads turn in any sector on any world.

Cosmetic alterations are the first and most popular form of alteration which we offer. These take up the major proportion of our workload here at Phase, so you can be safe in the knowledge that your customisation will be carried out in the most professional of manners. With the need for individuality of equipment, at a price that is affordable to everyone, this is the easiest way to look outstanding without knocking a massive hole in your budget. Leave your armour with us for one single day and we will change the way the world looks at you. The remoulding process which is used will give you the look you require and no one need ever know that it is not what it seems. The cost for this alteration varies.

Armour reworking tends to be more expensive –but you get the personal armour class that you've always dreamt of designed specifically for you, with the expert help of our technical staff.

Armour section

	Cost	Extra cost for Shaktars/Stormers
Helmet	63₢	30₢
Breast Plate	112₢	33₢
Plexus Plate	130₢	30₢
Back	150₢	33₢
Shoulder (pair)	100₢	26₢
Upper arm (pair)	56₢	26₢
Lower arm (pair)	48₢	22₢
Gauntlet (pair)	24₢	26₢
Thigh (pair)	78₢	30₢
Knee (pair)	30₢	22₢
Lower leg (pair)	41₢	26₢
Boot (pair)	37₢	30₢

In SLA Industries, the armour types produced by Power Projects are more than adequate for the day–to–day squads, but not if you want to get noticed. Have a suit of armour built to your very own specifications by Phase Inc.

Game Use: P.V. is bought for the entire suit at a cost of 30₢ per point of P.V.

I.D. is purchased at a cost of 5₢ per I.D. point per location. A power chassis must be bought to act as a frame and exo–skeleton for the armour plates. The cost for a power chassis is 500₢, and it comes with a user life of 10,000 hours. Extras which can be fitted include built–in lights, filters etc. These are bought as per the equipment list. Certain limits apply, as the chassis is a standard frame.

Location	Max P.V.	Max I.D.
Head	18	30
Torso	18	90
Arms	18	60
Legs	18	60

NUKE TENDON IMPLANTS

SHOCK TENDONS

Cost: 2000₵ (including insurance)

Game use: Gives +1 to the DEX stat maximum. (Not the stat itself.) This can be done any number of times as long as the increase does not exceed the racial maximum of the character class by more than three points. Does not effect the PHYS stat.
Recovery Time: 2 days. During recovery time a character is unable to take part in any physical activity. This gives the implants time to heal.

SINEWSHOCK

Cost: 900₵ per set

Game use: Creates a direct stat increase of +1 to DEX. These increases cannot exceed the racial maximum. The Sinewfication process takes 40 days, or 10 days if used in conjunction with Shock Tendons. If Shock Tendons are in place racial maximums may be exceeded. The Sinewshock must be bought on a one for one basis, one set of Sinewshock for one set of Shock Tendons.
Recovery Time: 1 day. During recovery time, a character is unable to take part in any physical activity. This allows the implants time to heal.

SKELETAL ENHANCEMENT: CLAWS

Cost: 100₵ per hand (5 claws)

Game use: +1 DMG to all Unarmed Combat attacks (punch).
Recovery Time: 12 hours. During recovery time, a character is unable to take part in any physical activity involving their hands. This allows the implants time to heal.

ADVANCED SKELETAL ENHANCEMENT: QUILLS

Cost: 200₵ per arm (Replacement quills cost 1₵ each)

Game use: +1 DMG/ +1 PEN to all Close Combat/ Martial Art attacks (punch).
Recovery Time: 12 hours. During recovery time a character is unable to take part in any physical activity involving their arm. This allows the implants time to heal.
Medical: Paramedic Rank 1 and above to remove from victim

BRACE TENDONS

Cost: 1750₵ (including insurance).

Game use: Gives +1 to the STR stat maximum. (Not the stat itself.) This can be done any number of times as long as the increase does not exceed the racial maximum of the character class by more than three points. Does not effect the PHYS stat.
Recovery Time: 2 days. During recovery time a character is unable to take part in any physical activity. This gives the implants time to heal.

SINEWBRACE

Cost: 800₵ per set

Game use: This creates a direct stat increase of +1 to STR. These increases can not exceed the racial maximum. The Sinewfication process takes 60 days or 15 days if in conjunction with Brace Tendons. If Brace Tendons are in place, racial maximums may be exceeded. The Sinewbrace must be bought on a one for one basis, one set of Sinewbrace for one set of Brace Tendons.
Recovery Time: 1 day. During recovery time a character is unable to take part in any physical activity. This allows the implants time to heal.

ADVANCED SKELETAL ENHANCEMENT: SHELL AUGMENTATION

Cost: Head 540₵, Torso 1200₵, Arms 300₵, Legs 425₵.
Special Price for all of the above: 1650₵.

Game use: STR and DEX maximums may be exceeded by five points instead of three when Nuke Tendons are bought. +3 HITS to each location that receives Shell.
Recovery Time: 3 days for each l implant. 5 days if all are done. During recovery time a character is unable to take part in any physical activity. This allows the implants time to heal.

SKELETAL ENHANCEMENT: RETRACTION

Cost: Add 70₵ per implant if retraction is required.

The Stormer Configuration

Stormer Implants

QUAD–LIMB DOMINION

Cost: 1800₵

Game Use: Having additional arms allows a Stormer to split their Unarmed Combat, Martial Arts, Blade, Club attacks. For example, if a Stormer has Rank 10 Unarmed Combat, it can select to attack as normal, striking at +10 to its roll or using its extra limb ability it could split its attacks to allow it to strike twice in the one action like this: Primary attack at Rank 7 secondary attack at Rank 3. Secondary attacks must be weaker or at most equal to primary attacks. The double attack per action can also be split further into offensive and defensive. For example two attacks at Rank 3 and two defensive at Rank 2. To use the extra arms in any situation requires a CONC roll, for each, of 14 or higher.
Recovery Time: 4 hours. During recovery time a Stormer is unable to take part in any physical activity. This is to give the implants time to heal.

LASH VERTEBRAE ELONGATION

Cost: 450₵

Game Use: 4 DMG, 2 PEN, 1 AD +3 HITS to torso. Having a tail allows a Stormer to split their Unarmed Combat, Martial Arts, Blade, Club attacks. For example, if a Stormer has Rank 10 Unarmed Combat, it can select to attack as normal, striking at +10 to its roll or using its tail, it could split its attacks to allow it to strike twice in the one action like this: Primary attack at Rank 6, secondary attack at Rank 4. Secondary attacks must be weaker or, at most, equal to primary attacks. To use the tail in any situation requires a CONC roll of 14 or higher.
Recovery Time: 2 hours. During recovery time, a Stormer is unable to take part in any physical activity. This is to give the implants time to heal.

SKELETAL ENHANCEMENT: TEETH

Cost: 125₵ per set (2 teeth)

Game use: +1 DMG to all Unarmed Combat attacks (bite).
Recovery Time: 12 hours. During recovery time a character is unable to speak or eat. This allows the implants time to heal.

ASSERTION TENDONS

Cost: 2400₵

Game Use: Gives a +1 to the DEX and STR stats. This can be done any number of times as long as the increase does not exceed the racial maximum of the Stormer by more than three points. Does not effect the PHYS stat.
Recovery Time: 2 hours. During recovery time a Stormer is unable to take part in any physical activity. This is to give the implants time to heal.

MAUL CLAW AND TEETH ENHANCERS

Cost: 175₵

Game Use: 3 DMG, 2 PEN, 1 AD (Claw), 4 DMG, 1 PEN, 1 AD (Teeth).
Recovery Time: (6)+2 hours. During recovery time a Stormer is unable to use its teeth or claws. This is to give the implants time to grow.

SURVEYOR TRANSITION OPTICS

Cost: 260₵

Game Use: Gives the Stormer an effective third eye that can be manipulated to look in any direction required. Cannot judge distances as eye gives only monocular vision, unless used with Stormer's own eyes.
Recovery Time: 1 hour. During recovery time, a Stormer is unable to see. This is to give the implants and the optic nerves time to heal.

SKELETAL ENHANCEMENTS: ELBOW/KNEE IMPLANTS

Cost: 150₵ per implant (1 knee or elbow)

Game use: +1 DMG/ +1 PEN to all Unarmed Combat/ Martial Art attacks (kick/ punch).
Recovery Time: 1 day. During recovery time, a character is unable to take part in any physical activity. This allows the implants time to heal.

Replacement Limbs and Organs

Spore–Tech

	Item	Cost	Game Use
Hearts:	**Quad Valve**	1000₵	+1 to PHYS roll
	Forever Young	900₵	+1 to PHYS roll
	Ignition 10	1050₵	+1 to PHYS roll
	Inclinations	1000₵	+1 to PHYS roll
	Devout Fury	1200₵	+2 to PHYS roll
Lungs:	**Respire**	1250₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Infuser	1100₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Atmogator	1300₵	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
Livers:	**Filter–Max**	750₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Forever Young	800₵	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Bio Filter	600₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
Kidneys:	**Filter–Max**	750₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Inclinations	850₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Purify 2000	700₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
Spleen:	**Filter–Tox**	950₵	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Poison Crusher	875₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Inclinations	1000₵	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Shock Grinder	900₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison

Hennson Organs

Hearts:	**Original**	1250₵	+1 to PHYS roll
	Multi–Pulse	1350₵	+2 to PHYS roll
	Excalibre	1500₵	+3 to PHYS roll
	Silver	1000₵	+1 to PHYS roll
	Patch Match	1100₵	+1 to PHYS roll
	King Maker	1000₵	+1 to PHYS roll
	Griffin	1300₵	+2 to PHYS roll

Clicker

Livers:	**Series 1**	750₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Series 2	800₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Series 3	900₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Series 4	1000₵	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Filter King	850₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Filter King II	950₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison

Live–Wire

Hearts:	**Live–Wire 'Debaser'**	2000₵	+5 to PHYS rolls

Oyanas

Eyes:	**Engager**	250₵	+1 Rank Good/–1 Rank Bad Vision
	Survivor	300₵	+1 Rank Good/–1 Rank Bad Vision
	Scrutinisor	500₵	+2 Ranks Good/–2 Ranks Bad Vision
	Butcher	350₵	I.R. Vision

Di–San

Hands:	**Claw**	250₵ each	See LAD
	Gripper	200₵ each	See LAD
	4–Paw	200₵ each	No little finger
Arms:	**Bi–Tech**	450₵ each	See LAD
	Flex	400₵ each	See LAD
	Frontier	300₵ each	See LAD
Feet:	**Sprinter**	300₵ each	See LAD
	Stretch	250₵ each	See LAD
	Far Reach	200₵ each	See LAD
	Frantic	300₵ each	See LAD
Legs:	**Sprinter**	450₵ each	See LAD
	Frantic	600₵ each	See LAD
	Bi–Tech	650₵ each	See LAD
	Gripper	500₵ each	See LAD

Cut 'N' Tuck

Hearts:	**Bio–beat**	800₵	+1 to PHYS roll
	Mono–beat	750₵	+1 to PHYS roll
Livers:	**Filter Dump**	650₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Strainer	500₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
Lungs:	**Quad–Filter**	950₵	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Club–Filter	800₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
Kidneys:	**Philtre**	650₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Blend Filter	675₵	+1 to PHYS roll VS poison
Spleen:	**De–tox**	850₵	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
Arms:	**Brute II**	500₵ each	See LAD
Legs:	**Bi–Sport 3000**	800₵ each	See LAD

Driver Limbs 'N' Ligaments

Hands:	**Club**	175₵ each	See LAD
	Flexer	200₵ each	See LAD
	Prehensa	195₵ each	See LAD
Arms:	**Flexer**	350₵ each	See LAD
	Stretch Limb	300₵ each	See LAD
	Bi–Limb	325₵ each	See LAD
Feet:	**Flexer**	250₵ each	See LAD
	Bi–Pad	200₵ each	See LAD
	Sure–Foot	270₵ each	See LAD
Legs:	**Bi–Pad**	500₵ each	See LAD
	Flexer	540₵ each	See LAD
	True Step	495₵ each	See LAD

Creeper

Skin:	**Easy Flow**	600₵	See LAD
	Body Wrap	750₵	See LAD
	Hugg	650₵	See LAD

The Real Cost of LAD

When a player dies:

In the course of a game, a player will occasionally, unfortunately, die. If the player had any form of hindsight they will have opened an LAD account at the start of their career (it is possible to place money from character generation into an LAD account). In the event of death, when and if a character is fortunate enough to be picked up by a LAD retrieval team (GMD), they will be saved. How much it will cost to actually bring them back to a playable state depends entirely on how much damage they suffered prior to their death.

The price of LAD is dependant on how much damage that the character has taken and to which locations, arm and leg damage being the cheapest and torso and head damage being the most expensive.

Arm damage: This covers all damage done to any and all parts of arms, such as hands, upper or lower arm, elbow, etc. The cost, in credits, to repair or replace a damaged arm is the number of HITS lost multiplied by 20. If all HITS are lost in the arm an additional cost of 200₢ is added for replacement of the bone structure.

Leg damage: This covers all damage done to any and all parts of legs, such as feet, upper or lower leg, knee, etc. The cost, in credits, to repair or replace a damaged leg is the number of HITS lost multiplied by 25. If all HITS are lost in the leg an additional cost of 250₢ is added for replacement of the bone structure.

Torso damage: The chest and abdomen are extremely expensive to replace as these areas include the vital organs; heart, lungs, liver, etc. Multiply the total number of HITS to the torso in damage by 35. This is the cost in credits to repair the torso to full working order. If the torso is completely destroyed there is an additional cost of 1740₢ for the replacement or repair of all internal organs and a new ribcage. NB There must be at least one HIT POINT left in the torso or recovery is impossible –you cannot repair something that no longer exists.

Head damage: The head is the most expensive part of the body to heal/repair. The head must, as with the torso, have one HIT POINT remaining or repair is impossible. To repair head injuries costs the number of HITS in damage, multiplied by 40, in credits. If there is only one HIT remaining in the head there is an additional cost for cranial, optical and other sensory reconstruction of 1230₢.

Optional rules

If the GM wishes they may add or subtract from the cost of the above. This can be represented as luck, bad or good, on the players part ;i.e. "You where lucky that the chest damage didn't run deep enough to do anything to your internal organs." or "That 10mm you took in the chest has punctured a lung. That will be an extra 475₢ or you die on the operating table." The exact amount and type of damage is up to you and your biological and physiological knowledge. Please try and keep it as realistic as possible or the players will let their characters die rather than pay the high costs for injury repair.

Royal

Hearts:	**Excel**	1000₢	+2 to PHYS roll
	Sterling	1250₢	+3 to PHYS roll
	Professional	1100₢	+2 to PHYS roll
Lungs:	**Purifier**	1100₢	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Filter Valve	1275₢	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Professional	1400₢	+3 to PHYS roll VS poison
Livers:	**Blood**	800₢	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Monarch	850₢	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Leach	900₢	+3 to PHYS roll VS poison
Kidney:	**Professional**	800₢	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Angel	750₢	+3 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Excel	875₢	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
Spleen:	**Sterling**	1000₢	+2 to PHYS roll VS poison
	Leach	1125₢	+3 to PHYS roll VS poison
Hands:	**Excel**	300₢ each	See LAD
	Excel II	375₢ each	No little finger
Arms:	**Excel**	500₢ each	See LAD
Feet:	**Excel**	450₢ each	See LAD
Legs:	**Excel**	700₢ each	See LAD

Extra Limbs

Cost: 1500₢ per limb

Game Use: Having additional arms (maximum: 2 additional appendages) allows a Human or one of similar race (Shaktar, Wraith) to split their Unarmed Combat, Martial Arts, Blade and Club attacks. For example, if a Human has Rank 10 Unarmed Combat, they can select to attack as normal, striking at +10 to its roll or using its extra limb ability it could split its attacks to allow it to strike twice in the one action like this: Primary attack at Rank 7 secondary attack at Rank 3. Secondary attacks must be weaker, or at most, equal to primary attacks. The double attack per action can also be split further into offensive and defensive. For example two attacks at Rank 3 and two defensive at Rank 2. To use the extra arms in any situation requires a CONC roll, for each use, of 14 or higher.

Recovery Time: 3 days. During recovery time the character is unable to take part in any physical activity. This allows the implants time to heal.

Recovery Time For All Replacement Organs:

36 Hours. during recovery time character is unable to take part in any physical activity.

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