

WE ARE THE PEOPLE – THE DARKNIGHT SOURCEBOOK.

We are the people

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WE ARE THE PEOPLE

Start at the beginning that's where we go from, that's how you'll understand.

900 s.d, spring. We regularly visit O'Kneels, a bar in downtown sector 15, we being me and the guys, well, there's three of us, but we're the guys, we've known each other for over ten years, and have been there for each other throughout all those years. I like to think that our friendship is one of the strongest in the world of progress. Still, It was Friday, last Friday of the month, pay day, and something just has to be done. Getting drunk and partying hard, that's what has to be done. Friday night at O'kneels is live music, its usually not brilliant, but they usually have a band that knows what a tune is and don't try all that mindless computerised crap.

The band tonight is not a band; instead, one young lady called Sara goes up on stage and starts singing without any backing instruments, without any backup at all. Strangely enough, the bar goes quiet, I say strangely enough, because usually the bar noise drowns out most of the things on stage. I glance around from our table, Jim and Alex are doing much the same, the ball tables are silent, the competitors are standing calmly by their tables, watching appreciatively of this young girl.

She's singing something about a young soldier going to war, about the battles he fights for his country, and how all that he has fought for is for naught when he returns. The song ends to spontaneous applause from all in the bar, quickly silenced as everyone waits for the next song.

She sings for three hours, it doesn't seem like ten minutes has passed by the time she's finished. The bar erupts in applause and cheering as she leaves the stage. The bar owner knows a good thing when she sees one, and promptly re-hires Sara for a repeat performance. The bar is packed to the rafters this time, only the regulars like me and guys get seats at all, and once again the bar is silent throughout her performance. This time, she sings about a young girl looking for a hero, a knight in shining armour in the darkness of the world we live in. She's looking at me, I'm sure of it, I tell the guys. Jim grins in a "Really..." sort of way; Al just raises his eyes to the sky.

The performance ends and I feel the need to go speak to this lady, I could not leave it not knowing if she was looking at me or not. Al and Jim leave me to it, Jims comment of "take her a sick bag for when

you go in there” does not aid my nerves. I spend ten minutes cleaning myself up, must have eaten about twenty breath mints, and then I go to her dressing room. Standing there, I spend five minutes rehearsing the line I’m going to introduce myself with, and then I knock on the door.

No answer

I wait another minute, then knock again

No answer

I wait another two minutes, Julie, the owner of the bar, walks past

“You’ll have to be faster than that Dwayne, she’s out of here five minutes after the songs finished”

She smiles at me, patting me on the shoulder as she goes. I drop my head with a self-conscious grin, should have guessed that she’d not be hanging around a place like this any longer than she has to. I decide that I’ll do things the old-fashioned way, and go out to find a place that does flowers. I’ve seen them before in places like uptown when I’ve been on jobs, I’m sure that somewhere downtown will do them.

Sure enough, somewhere in downtown does them, fresh one cost five credits apiece, plastic ones cost 1 Uni. I figure that I’ve got to impress her to ever get her attention, and so I order a single red rose for the next night of her performance. Julie allows me to place the rose in her dressing room. I leave one of my cards by the rose, and hope that it will make some sort of impression on her.

That night, she seems a little subdued, she sings about a young man in love, who is chasing a girl who has a dark secret, and how the whole thing ends in tragedy. She’s definitely looking at me, I know she is, I tell the guys. Their reaction is the same, and in truth, I am beginning to think I’m a little outclassed by this lady.

I’m wrong, at the end of the evening; Julie passes me a note inviting me to the dressing room. I find myself standing there like a ten year old schoolboy, all my lines and careful plans for naught as I wait for the courage to knock on the door. I think fate smiles on me for once, the door opens and she’s standing there, her face seems paler, and I realise its because she’s removed her stage makeup. The smile she gives me is perhaps the most beautiful thing I’ve ever seen. She doesn’t say anything, just takes my hand and leaves the bar with me in tow like some docile sheep.

At her apartment (I must be dreaming, I really must), we talk, we talk all night, and for some reason, that is enough. When it comes time for me to leave for work, I’ve found out absolutely nothing about her, all she did was ask about me, my hopes, my dreams, where I work, what I do, who my friends are. I’ve never known a night like it before, I doubt I will again. We arrange to meet outside of the bar, three days from then.

At work, me and guys are on patrol, we work as shivers in sector 15, it’s a thankless task, with little rewards and no real bonuses to look forwards to. We’ve been on the streets since the three of us graduated, and as we’ve always worked better as a team, we almost always get drawn for patrol together.

Foot patrol isn’t the best duty in the world, but it’s far from the worst. We are given an assigned patrol for eight hours straight, if we find anything breaking the law, we break it. The worst thing we have to contend with is a rogue carnivorous pig, and they’re not the brightest creatures in the world. We normally pass the Sweettooth candy bar on the round, and normally, we stop in to check on the owner, an old man by the name of Jake. Jake is true salt of the earth, a man to walk the mountains with as they used to say. All of us have known him since we were children, and he has been like a father to us. When we need someone to stand with us, we know that Jake will be there. As we approach the shop today, it is apparent that something is wrong. Three children run from inside the shop and down the street at the sight of us.

Jim and Al take off after the kids as I run into the store. Jake’s dead, and whoever killed him took their time, he didn’t die easily. His body has been cut open, and carved on his body the words “next time pay”.

The knife is still embedded in his chest, an expensive piece, the blade is carved with runes, it matches the weapons used by an operative called Crush. I know what will happen if I leave this to forensics, the weapon will be impounded and the operative will get away with it, perhaps a small fine and a slap on the wrist, nothing more. I call in backup and take the blade, securing it in a sealed bag.

Al and Jim have got the kids, they didn't know anything, they just came in and found him there, already dead. Forensics confirms that he's been dead for a good seven hours. I call in a few favours with the special investigations division and find out that the weapon was in fact Crushes, he reported it missing a few days ago, a convenient excuse for giving him a perfectly good murder weapon, all the pieces fall into place.

I see Sara as arranged, she senses that there is something wrong, once again, she takes me back to her place, and listens as I pour out my grief to her. Night falls, and she doesn't ask me to leave. I am more grateful than I can ever express. I call in sick the next day and we spend the day together. I am more content than I have ever been, and even though the death of Jake weighs heavy on my mind, I face it with resolve, knowing that somehow I will make it right.

900 s.d, summer – You can't really tell the difference with the seasons, summer is a little warmer than winter, you wouldn't notice it if you weren't looking. I see Sara more often now, she still performs at O'kneels on a regular basis, and my plans for getting revenge on crush gather in speed. Alex and Jim are with me on this, they too are tired of SLA getting its own way all the time. In this way, we will strike back at one injustice too many. The world will not be any richer for it, but in some way, we will have made a difference. On the night of our plan, I will meet with Sara, and try to apologise for the thing that will most likely see the death of me before the night is out.

The night arrives, and Sara is not there. I speak with Alex and Jim, if I am killed tonight, one of them is to tell her that I loved her. After a while, we settle down to wait for Crush. We have kept him under surveillance for over a month now, and every Thursday, he comes to this bar in sector 7, he always leaves drunk as a skunk, and usually sleeps it off in the alleyway. It is here that we will avenge Jake.

Sure enough, a creature of habit, he arrives, obliges us by getting very drunk, and staggers out to the alleyway. As he slumps down, we strike. We have obtained unmarked weapons from the black market, and we will use these to kill him. I leap to the attack first, and am caught off guard as he moves with deceptive swiftness. His boot crashes against my head and I find myself head over heels and onto the floor. Alex and Jim also leap to the attack, there is a soft clashing noise, I do not know quite what happens, but as I rise up, Alex and Jim are laying on the floor, unmoving. Crush is stood, seemingly quite sober, with a long knife in his hand. Identical to the one that killed Jake.

“Why?” he asks, casually, indifferent to the fact that three men just tried to kill him.

I hold up the knife that killed Jake, turning it in the streetlight.

“Ah” It is not so much a statement as a sigh “very well, come join your two friends” He reverses the angle on his knife and begins walking towards me. There is a soft noise like a string snapping back, and he falls over. Unsure as to what just happened, I walk over to him, looking down, I see a single shaft of wood sticking from his left eye. A figure steps out from the shadows behind me, lowering the bow in their hands. The figure reaches up and removes the hood.

Sara

I am struck dumb and paralysed like I was that first night. She smiles softly and takes my hand again. I am lead through the sewers to my apartment, she knows the way well, and has obviously done this before. It is darkest night when we get there and I collapse in exhaustion, not bothering to change out of the clothing I was wearing.

The next morning, I go to work in a daze, half wondering if last night was nothing but a bad dream. I am met by Sergeant Karnax, who informs me that Alex and Jim were killed by a terrorist group along with an operative by the name of Crush. I drop to the bench in the changing rooms, the events of the past few days catching up with me. My squad misinterprets this as grief over Alex and Jim, and volunteers to cover me the next few days if I need the time. I thank them and take the days gratefully.

That night, Sara comes to my house, she seems different. It's probably the fact that I saw her kill someone with an arrow yesterday that's doing it. She waits to be invited in and waits for me to sit, then stands in the centre of the room.

"I can explain everything," she says calmly.

I nod half-heartedly, I'm not sure anything that she says will make any difference.

"I'm a member of Darknight"

The world stops, I'm going to wake up soon, I know I am, I'm going to wake up and it's all going to have been a dream, and it'll all be better.

Apparently the world does not agree, she's still there, there's no alarm clock going off. I digest this information for a second, then say the only thing that comes to mind.

"Pardon?"

She was expecting this, I can see from the way she smiles.

"Is it so hard to believe?" she cocks her head to one side "We knew you were going to jump crush yesterday and I couldn't let you die like that"

"Why didn't you save Alex and Jim?" The words are out of my mouth before I can stop them

"I didn't get there in time, I thought you were going to wait till he was asleep before you jumped him"

It makes sense, I can understand that, looking back, that would have been the far more sensible thing to do. But it seemed so much more important for him to know why he was dying, who he was dying for.

She seems to sense this as well, sitting down next to me and drawing me close.

"I'm still the same person I always was, and you can't tell me that you don't understand why I do this, can you?"

There's truth in that statement, but still, I'm sitting here with a woman who saved my life, a woman who means more to me than anything in the world, a woman I could happily live for.

A woman who is the enemy of all I have ever worked for.

We have always been taught that darknight are sneaky, unprincipled scum, who would stab you in the back as soon as look at you. Before today, that was what I believed. Lord knows, I've gunned down darknight terrorists, I've felt righteous pride in doing so, how can this woman be one of them? She smiles at me again, and I know that nothing has changed between us. I am still one of the faithful though, how can I consort with one of the enemy? Lost in my reverie, I don't notice that Sara is speaking again. I stop her and apologise.

"It's okay, I'd be a little out there after what's happened to you in the past few days as well, look, I'm nearly finished with Darknight, I leave in ten months, can you stay with me till then?" She looks at me with those same eyes that captured me all that time ago. "Please?"

"Ten months?" It is not so long a time to have to wait for a woman like this "That's all?"

She smiles again, and the smile is more radiant than anything I've ever known "Ten months, then I'll not have anything else to do with them"

I nod, I can wait.

900 s.d, Autumn. Sara moved in with me a month after the death of Alex and Jim, it seems to be the right thing to do. She knows where I patrol, and makes sure that her people stay away from where I am, in her own way, she is protecting me as best she can.

I think that some of her is rubbing off on me, I see the world around me, and I see how SLA is like a cancer in the heart of the world. They don't actually do anything except feed off the misery of others. Those people who are truly good do not prosper, those willing to kill and destroy for money and the promise of power will gain everything. It is not the world that I believed in, I cannot see how I ever

thought that it was. My colleagues are mostly corrupt, and those who are not, like Alex, Jim and I, will never rise above the streets, we will never make a difference to the world. Sara is still singing when she's not doing whatever it is she does for darknight. I never asked her what it was that she does for them, I'm not sure that I could handle it just yet. There will be time in the future for that sort of thing, when we are both free of the ties that bind us. My mind is made up, I will take a different job when she leaves darknight, and we will forge some kind of life together somehow.

900 s.d, Winter. I'm not sure how I feel about things at the moment, it is a strange thing to be living with a member of the enemy. Daily I hear reports about darknight terrorist activity, and always I wonder if one day a report will come in with Sara's name on it. It doesn't, and everyday, I find myself thanking any gods who are out there to listen that it doesn't.

As the end of winter draws near, Sara becomes a little withdrawn, I'm not sure why, she seems less happy, a little more secretive about what she's doing. A part of me considers that she's having to do something that she doesn't want me to know about, I feel that she should be able to tell me whatever it is. I return home early one day and slip in silently, hoping to find out something of what is going on. As I enter the main room, I can hear her in the bedroom, I anticipated that I might, so I picked up some of her favourite chocolates on the way back, so I could say that I planned to surprise her by returning home early.

It's a surprise alright.

She's standing in front of the bedroom closet, naked, looking in the mirror. It is not that that gets my attention. What grabs my attention like a vice is her stomach, slightly swollen, she is cupping it with both hands, gently massaging it.

"Er" Lord knows, it's not the best comment in the world for a moment like this, but it's the only one that I've got right now. She spins and drags the covers up off the bed to wrap around herself. Seeing it's me, she relaxes a little and sits on the bed.

"Surprise!" she whispers softly

I sit next to her, pulling her into my arms, all the nervous tension about what could have been wrong leaving me in one exhalation

"Yeah, you could say that", I pause "Will you marry me?"

Her face is a mixture of confusion and joy "W-What?"

"It would be the right thing to do, and it would make me a happy man"

"I-I" she stops, flustered

I smile, it's the first time that I've caught her off guard, and somehow, she looks more beautiful in that moment than ever before.

"Yes" she smiles, hugging me tightly.

We get married five days later, some of my colleagues from work are there, but it is a small ceremony, neither of us have any family left, and it would seem that none of Sara's colleagues want to be in the same place as mine. Given the circumstance, I can quite understand their reluctance to attend.

901 s.d, Spring – Sara's getting quite large now, my work schedule prevents me from going to the various clinics with her, but she brings home all the scans and reports for me to read, it's looking like triplets according to the reports. A few more than I had intended to begin with, but it just means that I'll have to secure a better job, or get a promotion of some sort. She tells me that given her condition, darknight don't want her to be working for them anymore, as she can no longer undertake field missions. I can understand that, and in truth, I'm pleased, it means that she's no longer in any danger. I throw myself into my work, and quickly secure a field sergeant role in the station-analysis surveillance unit, it pays slightly better, and I have my sights set on a small place two sectors away, the days go quickly, and I am content.

901 s.d, Summer – Sara is enormous now, she's having trouble moving around the house, and I find myself getting home earlier to try and spend more time with her at the stage she's at. She tells me that

the babies are due any day now, but not to worry, she'll call me if she goes into labour. I am truly happy with what I have now.

Late on a Friday evening, I get a call, It's Sara, and she's not at the house.

"Are you at the hospital? Do you need me there?" They're the first two questions that I can think of.

"No" She sounds a little out of breath "no, nothing like that"

"Then where?"

"I'm in the operative BPN hall in Sector 13"

"What are you doing there?" I'm a little concerned by this point, there is no reason for her to be there. As I think about it, I commandeer a local scanning post and switch the view to the BPN hall in 13

"Well", She pauses again, there is a wealth of sadness in her voice as she speaks "I just wanted to call to say I'm sorry"

"Sorry for what kiddo?"

"For lying to you"

Now I'm confused, but something at the back of my mind is working overtime, she said that her time with darknight would be over in ten months. I snatch a glance at the calendar. She had said that exactly ten months ago.

"Lying about what?" I'm not sure I want to know the answer.

"We're not having a baby"; she's close to crying now "We never were"

"But, but the scans, the reports", I'm bordering between shock and confusion "you've been getting bigger for nine months, what's going on?"

"I-I can't tell you, it's better if you don't know" She's crying now "Just remember that I love you, and I always will"

"I love you too" The line suddenly goes dead in my hand.

On the screen in front of me, the BPN hall disappears in a ball of flame and shrapnel, all the cameras for a block follow in less than a second. I sit stunned for a second, then my training kicks in and I punch up the code for an level one emergency in the vicinity of the BPN hall. I leave work early that day, and head home, not knowing what to think.

I get in, there is a letter on the mantelpiece, it's from Sara, I can smell her perfume on it. The fact that she's gone hits me like an anvil, and I open the letter with tears running down my face.

Dearest Dwayne

By the time you have read this, I'll be dead. I cannot ever explain to you why I have done this, I just hope that some part of you understands. When we met, I was already in the Genesis program, nothing could have prevented my death at that stage, and I just wanted to live a little bit before I died. What you thought were our children was in fact a biogenetic explosive designed to grow inside of me, mimicking a normal pregnancy, at exactly twelve months from its insertion, the explosive will detonate, no matter where I was or what I was doing. It couldn't have been removed, and any attempt to do so would have resulted in it going off. Don't blame yourself for this, none of it was your fault, you weren't to know. All that remains is for me to say that I love you, that wasn't a pretence, and no matter how long it takes, I'll be waiting for you.

Your Love

Sara

I put the letter down, the whole world is ashes before me, all that I had worked for, fought for, and all the things my friends had died for, all of them ashes. This note is a simple explanation for anyone who wants to know what happened here. As I sit here, my gun is by my side, it has served me well in my career, and it has one more duty to perform. To whoever reads this, they're not all bad, they believe just as much as we do, maybe one day all this will be over. I bring my gun up to my head, it's cool and reassuring.

Hold on Sara, I'm coming...

Sergeant Karnax looked at the body on the floor, then up to the other members of the squad in the room.

“The report will read that he died in combat” He ordered sharply “not one word of this will go any further”

He looked at the other faces in the room.

“Anyone have any objections to that?”

A ragged chorus of “no sir” went around the room

Karnax took his lighter and ignited the paper of both notes, leaving the ashes to drift out into the rain.

Lowering his helmet, he keyed the communicator into life, switching from the normal SLA frequency

“Karnax, 1172, sec clearance 4, operative 1211 and her shiver lover are both dead, no residuals, all ends tied. Report ends, We are the people”

DARKNIGHT OPERATIVES

There are two different types of operative within Darknight, the converted, and the faithful. Each has their own purposes, and have many subdivisions within the two classes.

CONVERTED OPERATIVES

These are personnel that were at one point either unsympathetic or downright hostile towards the darknight cause, the various methods of conversion are detailed at a later point, but the two basic types of converted operative are Civilians and Operatives

Civilians

Civilians are never forcibly converted, it is not considered to be a righteous expenditure of resources. Instead, propaganda and various wide-effect chemicals introduced in either the air or the local water supply are the usual methods for such things to occur. Civilian converts are used only for low level things, simple things like sending out leaflets and other propaganda. Civilians are ultimately expendable, and as a net result, will never be given access to any of the darker secrets of the organisation.

Operatives

Operatives fall into two categories, those who have fallen from the light, and those who were forced into the darkness. Those who fall from the light are never given complete trust, as it is considered that at one point or another, they will show their true colours. Those who were forcibly converted will never have the intellect after the conversion process to understand the higher levels of the darknight organisation. As a net result, only those who have been through the brain re-plan will ever be allowed to go into the higher levels of darknight.

THE FAITHFUL

The faithful make up the majority of the operatives within Darknight. These people have been raised in the service of darknight, and are trusted without question in their duties. There are several levels of Operative, these are as follows.

CIVILIANS

Civilians make up the largest proportion of the ground units in the war against SLA. They are mostly on the darknight home world, but there is a small proportion of them scattered throughout the rest of the SLA multiverse. Not all that different from typical SLA civilians, they do almost all share an undying faith in their leaders, and most of them will fight to the death for the promise of liberty and freedom. Given the nature of the Darknight home world, none of them have ever seem anything to make them question the sheer truth of their position. Those who encounter the outside world are often faced with uncomfortable questions that they are not equipped to answer. More on this later....

OPERATIVES

In the same way that SLA has operatives, so too does Darknight. The fundamental difference between the SLA operatives and the Darknight ones is the simple fact that the darknight operative is at all times fanatical in their devotion. There are times when SLA operatives become disillusioned in their ways and mannerisms, when their company fails to support them, and they turn from their light. Darknight operatives are always cared for, neither needing to spend money nor concern with regard to their future. If they are cut down in the line of duty, their company will care for them and keep them safe until death.

INTERCEPTORS

Thought by most of SLA personnel to be the equivalent of the SLA operative. They are wrong, Interceptors are the prime operatives within Darknight one of them equal to the higher level of SLA operative. Interceptors are the elites within Darknight, they are the few who fight in the front line. Where the plain operatives are given the simple tasks of bombing and killing, Interceptors are the ones who carry out the grand plans, the viral plagues and air bombs. Interceptors are given the best of equipment and weaponry, and each team is specifically chosen under the leadership of one of the Terminators.

TERMINATORS

Above the Interceptors are the Terminators. These are the best of the darknight operatives, supremely skilled in their chosen field, they are the equivalent of the SLA Darkfinders. Terminators are genetically enhanced to be the supreme warriors on the darknight front, and they are the only darknight personnel that are put on warworlds. It is not known by SLA whether or not these particular warriors are able to talk, for they have never been heard, but they live for the day when they find out what lies under the dark armour of the terminator.

PERSUADERS

Persuaders is somewhat of a euphemistic name for what these specialists do. There is usually one persuader in any team of darknight operatives who are likely to come into contact with something that can be converted in one way or another. They are masters of all the different forms of conversion, and are the only darknight operatives to be allowed to carry the conversion kits.

TSUNAMI DIVISION

The Tsunami Division is trained for one thing, to give their lives in the course of their duty. When one of these specialist is called up, they do not expect to come back from their assignment. Tsunami Division do exactly what their name suggests, they sweep all before them. They are trained in the use of massive explosives, structure, and how to destroy anything that stands. Ranging from the aerial bombardments that destroyed much of SLA central back in 893, to the underwater charges that sent a wave smashing into the south wall of mort, flooding most of the carrier sectors, Tsunami division are the undisputed masters of destruction.

PROJECT

This particular division is not actually a single division, rather it is a combination of all the ongoing things within the darknight company, each project has a team leader, and a number of operatives working on it, each one of these is explained in more detail below

GUIDANCE

Not to be confused with the SLA version. Guidance is in effect the control of darknight, they dictate the direction that the society is moving in, what will be done, what won't, who lives, who dies. They are fully the equivalent of Cloak Division within SLA, but they are never seen outside of the Darknight home-world.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organisational structure of darknight is one that is simple in the extreme, and in being so, is more powerful than infinitely more complex structures. Each level of operative within Darknight has a clearance, unlike the SLA SCL code, these clearances are absolute, for someone to gain a clearance above the one they have, they must have proven in countless situations that they are worthy enough to command all those who were once their peers. Further details on this are given later.

The various levels of Darknight are as follows

Fifth Level – Civilians and other such low level troops. This is the lowest clearance level that can be assigned to any member of a darknight cell, the only people who actually hold a lower clearance than this are the civilians on the homeworld, and the forced conversions, these people hold no clearance whatsoever. People with this clearance are told what to do, where to go, and how to do it, they are given little to no autonomy within the cell, and are generally reserved for only the most menial of tasks.

Fourth Level – Basic Darknight operatives. This level is the basic Darknight operative level, at this level, they can make simple requests of anyone below them, but they are not to abuse this privilege. Basic Operatives are given privileges which include the right to requisition vehicles and ammunition, as well as basic access to the Night-network, the darknight central mainframe.

Third Level – Interceptors and Tsunami Division – This is the level where the operative begins to learn something about the true nature of darknight. If they show willing and understanding, they may be given command of a cell of their own in the case of Interceptors, or the ability to make attack plans as a member of Tsunami, rather than merely following orders.

Second Level – Terminators and Persuaders – At this level, the operative is fully aware of the nature of the beast, and they are also fully loyal to the cause. Most of the second level have been fitted with some sort of loyalty device. At this level, the operative can set targets and begin campaigns against SLA at their whim. The only people who will stop such a campaign are those at level one, and they will only do this if the Terminator/Persuader seems to be personally involved in their crusade. It is not considered to be a good thing for emotions to get in the way of business. At this level, the operative can requisition the use of Project Staff for their particular campaign. This request is passed to level one for approval, and any such resources are assigned at the whim of the first level.

First Level – Head Office and Guidance – At this level, entire legions of Darknight operatives may be commanded, and campaigns that involve several sectors of mort can be launched. The only people who can stop such campaigns belong to the darknight council of twelve, and it is rare for the council to become involved in such matters.

The project teams and the council of twelve are the only people within darknight who do not merit a clearance of their own, the project teams exist only to serve, and the council of twelve exist only to command, there is no need to classify them in any further way.

HOW IT WORKS

In terms of making the system work, its very simple, each clearance level is allowed to command those below them, and make a request of those one stage above them. No one is allowed to go any higher than one stage above them, it is considered bad protocol, and can very often get people killed if the next stage up gets word of what's going on.

REQUISITIONING EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS.

Each sector of downtown has its own requisitioning department, there is only one for each sector of downtown, it is considered to be not a good use of resources to over provide one area. The people in the store houses are considered to be security clearance level 2 for purposes of who they can override. This is to prevent lower level operatives from marching in and taking what they want.

A requisition for equipment and weapons takes between one and three days, depending on the need that is placed on the item, and the availability of it. Small items and common weapons can usually be

authorised within a few hours. If the item being requested is deemed to be not required, the store keepers can refuse to authorise its use without extremely good extenuating circumstances.

“So let me get this straight, cell 217 has requested ten grapples, with lines and quick release catches?”

“Yeah, I was about to okay the request”

“Before you do that, perhaps you should consider that 217 only has five people in it”

“Really? Then why would they want ten grapples?”

“I have a theory about that, did you see channel 27 yesterday, that new show?”

“Tarzan the ape killer?”

“That’s the one, remember the equipment he was using to swing from building to building”

“Yeah, he was using twin grapples with.....ah”

“Exactly what I was thinking, I wouldn’t be surprised if we get quite a few more requests for this sort of thing before that series runs its course, deny them anything more than five, I’ll wager you that they’ll send them back after falling off a few times.”

Conversation between Sector 12 store keeper Edmonds and apprentice keeper stone, shortly after receiving over one hundred requests for grapples and lines.

It has been known for some operatives to try and force the store keepers to give them what they want at gun point. Such attempts are met with swift and deadly force, and the things taken will be returned to their proper position in less than a day.

PROJECT

There are several projects that are ongoing within Darknight, these are explained in the following pages, each one of these projects is listed with its team head and the requester of the actual project. For ease of convenience, only those projects with over a thousand operatives on them have been listed in any detail, the other projects that are ongoing to any degree are listed at the end of the main section.

PROJECT HOLOCAUST

Project Holocaust is the division of darknight that deals with the development and implementation of new explosives and other weaponry. They have some of the most brilliant minds in the world of progress working for them, unhindered by delusions of morality or sentimentality. Many of the scientists working in these labs are on the SLA black list for experiments that went beyond the conventions of SLA. Of most interest to Darknight are the particular weapons that target specific races and groups, as these are most useful in setting public opinion against itself. Project Holocaust also has a sub division which deals with Toxins and Virii.

THE PLAGUE PROJECT

The Plague project is an offshoot from project Holocaust, it deals with the virii and toxins that are used in the various terror campaigns launched from darknight. They also have a division that experiments on toxins and hallucinogenics within food and drink, permitting darknight to hit operational centres for SLA operatives. More details on this are given later in this book.

GHOST PROJECT

The ghost project stems from the technical superiority that SLA have over Darknight. The Ghost project is a simple concept, but the implementation of it is complex in the extreme. Using operatives whose bodies have been damaged beyond recognition, or those who volunteer for the procedure, the operative is hard-wired into the Night-Network. In some cases, only the brain of the operative remains, kept alive in a stasis chamber. The Ghosts are the most excellent of the hackers within the darknight command structure, able to think in machine code, and blast through all but the most shielded systems with the ease of a laser through butter. The Ghost project is maintained in the Darknight homeworld, in an underground bunker over a hundred miles across, rows upon rows of operatives lay within nutritional chambers, constantly seeking the information that may prove to be downfall of SLA.

On certain missions, Ghost cover may be requested by the cell undertaking the mission. Depending on where the cell are going, the ghosts can modify security systems, rewrite identifications, and forge

identifications to some degree. The more shielded systems may have the SLA version of the ghosts covering them, but the SLA ghosts are far less proficient than those employed by darknight. Using ghost cover, it is possible for a cell to walk undetected through a sector, and for shivers and operatives to be diverted using falsified Station-Analysis codes.

The best of the Ghosts regularly cause havoc amongst the ranks of the SLA operatives by calling out Enforcer shivers and Darkfinders to locations where they have no purpose. They occasionally call down the wrath of these elite forces on unsuspecting innocents, where they will do most justice to the darknight cause.

It is considered an honour to be chosen for ghost duty should an operatives physical career be brought to an end. A Ghost can usually serve as merely a brain in a jar for upwards of fifty or sixty years after the death of their physical body. However, the number of disembodied ghosts is far less than it once was, as many of them cannot cope with being separated from their body for too long.

FALLING STAR PROJECT

Darknight have a suitably large deficiency of ebb using members within their ranks, Project falling star was created to cope with this. Using the advanced cloning techniques of their progenitors, and several tons of captured ebon/waster material, the founders of Darknight began the tests to see if such races could be cloned in the same way as normal humans.

The test was partially a success, using the basic tissue samples, they were able to create rudimentary clones of Ebons, damaged in certain ways to be sure, but none the less, the potential for perfection was there. In 627 s.d. over two hundred years since the projects inception, more breakthroughs were made, these enabled the Darknight clone masters to create unflawed clones. Their only problem was the teaching of the ebb abilities, having no one with any experience in the field of ebb, they were at something of a loss when it came to the teaching of the arts.

In 650 s.d. Twelve Brain wasters were enticed from the arms of SLA with massive bribes and the promise of all they could ever need, in return for the knowledge that they possessed. These twelve taught the fledgling army of clones the basics of ebb, and from them, they began teaching the word to all the other new recruits.

It was found that the clones were unable to process flux in the same way as normal ebons/wasters. Instead, their bodies absorbed flux from other living creatures. Not a serious problem given the number of other living creatures in the universe, but with this came the first problems. Some of the Clones became unable to stop the hunt for more flux, they began turning on their own kind in their desperate need.

With this new thirst came a new problem, as the clones began learning more of the ways of flux, some of them became close to the white. Unable to go into the white like the other ebb races, they began to mutate, some of them killed themselves rather than face the agonies that they were going through.

Project Falling Star took a turn for the worse at this point, the scientists could not understand how to deal with what their creations were going through, and of the original Twelve wasters that were recruited in the beginning, only four remained, the rest having been killed in active service or in training accidents. None of them knew what to do either, it looked like the clones would have a very limited amount of use beyond a certain point.

The Solution came from an unexpected quarter, on one of the raids through SLA territory, four of the clones who had been very close to the white encountered the necanthrope union Fury. Normally, they would have been slaughtered out of hand, but something about them struck a chord with the Union leader, a long term necanthrope by the name of Lock. Lock retired his union from SLA, and journeyed to the Darknight homeworld, pledging his allegiance to the Darknight cause in return for power and privilege equivalent to that enjoyed by the preceptor within SLA. Under the guidance of Lock, the falling star project gained momentum, he taught those who were close how to focus and define their surroundings, how to go beyond the teachings that they had been raised upon.

Locks union had defected with him, and they worked side by side with the members of the falling star project to find ways for the tormented clones to progress beyond what they had been created as.

It was theorised that as necanthropes are dead, so too the clones would have to die, but in doing so, not die, there were many failures in this part of the testing, and only after many deaths did they find a way to get around the problem

The problem is that no matter how close you are to the white, the dream demons only come for you while a heart still beats within you, the solution seemed to be a simple one, find a way to live without needing to use blood or air. Such a task could easily be accomplished with normal implants, the drawback with that was that the clones retained their species basic problem with biogenetic implants.

The Solution was a strange one to say the least.

It was considered that as long as the clones basic life functions were gone, the dreams would fade, and they would be able to continue without further problems. A symbiotic lifeform was created that could sit upon the clones body and keep it "alive" without the clone actually living. Destruction of the symbiote will kill the clone in less than a few seconds, and for this reason, most of the clones who require the symbiote are at least slightly proficient with the protect discipline.

The first symbiotes were hideous failures, they simply kept the clone alive for a few hours before rejection set in. The final move that created the symbiotes that are used by the darknight operatives of today.

The procedure is a simple one, the clone is taken to the falling star facility and strapped to a table, surrounded by three others who they have served with.

The first one administers the death blow, a single strike to the heart of the clone, this strike with go straight through the clone, allowing the heart to die, and the blood of the clone to leak out onto the floor.

The Second transfers the blood of the clone to the symbiote, activating it as they do so.

The Third brings the symbiote to the clone and places it within the cavity left by the missing heart. As it comes to rest in the space, it takes over the functions of the heart, coming to be part of the clone.

The whole procedure takes less than three minutes, during which time, the clone will have died for less than a minute. Complications are rare in the most extreme, occasionally, the clone will have suffered some minor form of brain damage, but these examples are few and far between.

The new symbiotic creature does not live in any sense of the word, blood is oxygenated and passed around their body by the symbiote, but their own body ceases to function in all other ways. The symbiote keeps the body functioning, but there are no life signs within the clone any longer. As a result of this, the dream demons no longer plague them. The clone is no longer referred to as either an ebon or a waster, now they are better, now they are Nightbound. More details on this are given later in the book.

The falling star project works closely with the Lock foundation to produce all the weaponry and equipment that the clones use, this includes the symbiotes and the stabilising drugs needed to keep them alive.

LOCK FOUNDATION

The lock foundation is the name given to the science friction department of darknight in honour of their master and creator, Preceptor Lock. All the items created within the Lock foundation are similar in function to those created by dark lament, they are not quite as polished in their performance, but they are more rugged in their construction. There are several new pieces of equipment that the lock foundation produce that have no copies within SLA industries, these being unnecessary for the normal

ebons and wasters, who do not have the problems absorbing flux that the clones do. More details on this are given in the equipment section.

PROJECT ABOMINATION

There has always been an understanding that darknight will always be fewer in number than SLA industries. The main part of this is due to SLA's army of engineered warriors, the Stormers. Whilst they do not possess the complex technology of the deathwake device, darknight have made tentative forays into the field of biogenetic lifeforms. This project was one of the first that any serious resources were allocated to, and it's inception date was back in 320 s.d.

The first prototypes for the renegade stormers were little more than huge masses of living tissue that lived and died within seconds, but from these, more successes were made, these too did not last long, but they paved the way for more things. The project quickly gained the title of Abomination due to the appearance of the creatures that crawled out of the vats. More and more failures were made, each one of them barely living long enough to crawl out of the vat, till 370 s.d, when the first breakthrough was made.

On a raid upon the SLA laboratories in Central, samples of stormer DNA were stolen and analysed. It was discovered that SLA stormers are not created from ordinary bio matter, they are instead a combination of new materials, most of which were unheard of by the darknight researchers. Using these samples, they began to experiment with cloning. Many years of perfecting this skill, they began to replicate the dna samples that had been stolen all those years ago.

As with most things created by darknight, the results were rudimentary at best, and still required much work, but still, there was the possibility, and where there is possibility, there is hope, where there is hope, inevitably there will be success.

Thirty years passed, the original scientists had long since died, and the new generation had been passed the torch to carry on the holy work. The problem was not the bio matter itself, but rather the spark of creation, it was this that eluded the darknight teams.

Brief forays were made into grafting insane amounts of muscle and bone tissue onto human subjects in an attempt to equal the Stormers, the resulting creations usually went berserk when forced to confront what they were, those that didn't were no match for any of SLA's creations. In a last ditch effort, darknight began studying how normal life was created, and in doing so, what provided the spark of life there, where the soul was generated in effect.

It was found that just as normal children inherit some traits from their parents, so too, stormers must inherit something from their genetic kin. Lacking the sterling Genetic material base that had created the stormers, darknight began working on other things. Several attempts were made to take the better SLA stormer operatives alive, and use their basic genetic material to create new stormers. The early attempts met with failure, the operatives were happy to fight to the death, a grim testament to the power of SLA.

When all else had failed, the Abomination project began ransacking the bodies of the dead stormers who had been killed in their terrorist actions. With this material, Darknight began to create simple copies of the SLA stormers. Using rudimentary programming techniques, they implanted basic skills into the new stormers, and gave them the capacity to learn from their mistakes. Training these creatures took up to two years at a time, but the sheer destructive capabilities of the new abominations were worth the wait.

Abominations are Stronger and Faster than SLA stormers, having been enhanced to the upper limit that their bodies can withstand. To offset this, they are less intelligent by and large, and do not learn very quickly. They are typically used to hold off far more than their number of enemy troops while the other operatives do what needs to be done. Abominations are able to learn, but it requires intensive training for them to learn things that other creatures can pick up with casual observations.

With time, it is presupposed that they will eventually become the equal of the SLA stormers, but no real hope is held out for this occurring any time soon. More Details on Abominations are given in the players section.

PROJECT NEMESIS

An offshoot of the Dead Man Walking project, project nemesis is the ultimate recycler of the fallen. When SLA operatives are killed by Darknight operatives in the course of a mission, and the conditions are favourable to bring them with them, then the fallen enemy becomes a candidate for this project. Project nemesis takes the fallen enemy, and restores some semblance of life to them. Some of their skills are lost in the process, and the conversion techniques that have to be employed reduce a lot of their cognitive powers, but they remain, externally at least, the same people they always were.

Nemesis teams remain on standby at all times when missions into SLA territory are authorised with a strong possibility of encountering operatives. The teams can usually arrive anywhere in most central within a few minutes, although their entrance could never be described as covert. The teams usually carry at least one freezing unit and they have specialist training in keeping the body just at the point of death till they can reach the underground zone in mort.

At best, the nemesis conversion leaves the individual much the same as they were in life, albeit with a renewed and redirected loyalty towards Darknight, at worst, it leaves them as little more than a target dummy to be shot down as an example.

The Nemesis conversion has one sizeable bonus to it, if someone is converted, they can still answer queries that prove their loyalty to SLA whilst being 100% truthful about it. No one is quite certain as to what causes this, some theorise that the conversion plan causes some form of split personality that allows the person to be 100% loyal to all things, whilst being able to deceive them in other ways.

Rumour has it that sla is working on a way to detect nemesis conversions in its operatives, but this is unverified at the moment, and Darknight are not too worried about it to say the least.

PROJECT GENESIS

The genesis project was first considered in darknights more radical phase, when it seemed like there was no hope for the company, many considered the final option of suicide bombing. Many were the number of the faithful who gave their lives with crude home made devices, in the hope of taking some of SLA with them. As the years passed, darknight as a company actually survived the hopeless years, and flourished. Still there was occasionally the need for heroic sacrifice, however, SLA had refined their techniques for spotting the bombers at a distance, and so other methods were required. The Justice division came up with plans for a living bomb, the drawback for this was that they could not find a way to duplicate the stormer technology, and so they were left with no viable means for delivering the bomb. A solution was found in 200s.d, when a brilliant (if somewhat morally unethical) scientist by the name of Callidus came up with the idea of having a self replicating bomb implanted into a human volunteer. This would solve the problem of both delivering the device, and also its creation without too many complications. The bomb would start off as a small lump of bio matter less than the size of a human finger, implanted into a human womb, the bomb would react with the natural reproductive system and begin to replicate itself a thousand times over. The time for the bomb to reach full capacity was around twelve months, and the volunteer would steadily grow to accommodate the bomb. The early tests were a resounding success, the volunteers effortlessly carried the bombs for the length of time required, with regular exercise, they were still fully mobile by the time the bomb was ready to go off.

A few psychological problems occurred as the volunteers began to have problems with the ramifications of what was happening, to know you're going to die is one thing, to know that your death is growing inside you is something completely different.

Project Genesis now works in two different ways, the faithful, who have been psychologically screened and are capable of carrying the bomb to detonation, and the others, who are not aware. The second method is the more favoured, as it does not cost darknight a valued operative. Citizens who have proven faithful to SLA will occasionally be abducted and implanted with the bomb, the whole

procedure takes less than a day, and the abductee will be unaware of what has happened. Over the next twelve months, they will gain weight exponentially, no medical scans short of an invasive procedure will report anything else except normal weight gain. In the event that an operation is attempted, the bio bomb is set to explode on contact with air, this has so far proven to be more than effective. Darknight keep a careful chronological and locational monitor on each of the Genesis people. When their time is drawing near (within a day of explosion), the faithful are given their targets, and a small syringe of reactive agent that will automatically detonate the bomb. Should they find themselves in a situation where they will be thwarted, they will take this and detonate the bomb early. Those who were not aware are taken and held in a secure facility, there they are fitted with a small collar containing the same drug. They are dropped off by a fast response team very close to the target, sometimes on top of the building in question. Most civilians do not have the presence of mind to warn the authorities about what is going on, and as a result, 99% of the time, the bomb is delivered to the proper target and in a good frame of time. There are some in darknights higher chain of command who disagree with the use of this particular project, but it has proven itself time and again as an effective method of destruction.

The average full-sized genesis bomb can devastate an entire block of buildings, they are usually used to crack reinforced positions like shiver stations and BPN halls, the building can usually stop the greater destructive force of the bomb, but will be reduced to rubble in the process.

DEAD MAN WALKING

The DMW project is an offshoot of SLA's LAD procedure. Not quite as refined as the LAD procedure, it does have its uses.

Dead man walking was founded in 902, shortly after a raid on an LAD facility that was somewhat of a failure in terms of what they had set out to achieve. However, despite the fact that they failed in their primary objective, they did manage to steal an entire data archive of the LAD process.

Whilst they were unable to duplicate the entire process, they did manage to make a rudimentary copy of what LAD actually suffices to be. DMW does all the things that LAD does, but it also wreaks a little havoc on the subjects mind and memory, sometimes they lose a little of their actual memory, sometimes they gain something that was not there before. The mental effects of the DMW process are described in detail later in this book.

REVENANT PROJECT

The Revenant project is a spin off of the Justice division. Sometimes, there is nothing more than can be done to help the dead. When this happens, the corpse is sent down to the revenant project unless they died in a manner that requires a heroic send off.

The revenant project is a rather macabre idea dating back to 556 s.d. Using Wire frame technology, the corpse of the dead is wired to be able to walk see through implanted cameras, the internal organs are removed and replaced with either bombs, or other sorts of damage causing devices. The corpse is then directed through remote control to the location where they are due to explode, at which point they are detonated.

The corpse is usually very obviously dead, but amongst the jaded inhabitants of downtown, this is usually not enough to raise a panic. Should the corpse manage to make it to central, the alarm will be raised instantly upon it being sighted. It is a popular ploy to send several of the revenants with ghost cover to facilitate their arrival at the point of destruction.

SLA are as yet unaware of the weakness of the Revenants, they are controlled by radio wave, a means of technology so far outdated that no one has thought to check for it in the vicinity of darknight operations. The Revenants are completely destroyed when they complete their mission, and so no remains are left to identify, this means that SLA is still without any clues as to how to stop the walking cadavers.

PROJECT JUSTICE

The justice project was instigated in 206 s.d, after SLA's continued success with the Karma facility and the related projects. Justice was requested by one of the council of twelve, and the cry for justice was echoed as the project title.

The basic enhancements from the various companies within SLA such as Nuke Tendon and others have all been copied in one form or another. Various others have been created since then, darknight are unable to rely on the limitless funding that Karma enjoy, and as such, they have been forced to improvise on many of the more sophisticated techniques. Muscle and sinew lacing does not take place under the skin, it is bound and attached to the outside of the body, using electrical skin impulse to operate.

The more complex implants include a trigger to the brain which allows them to be turned on and off at will. In the case of the ripper implants and the bone re-setting unit, this is mandatory, in the case of the other implants, it is not always necessary, but in many cases it is most useful.

The full range of Darknight implants and accessories is details later on in this book

HAMMER OF FREEDOM

The project titled "Hammer of Freedom" is ill fated at best, begun in 875 s.d. The aim of the project is simply to try and emulate the most dangerous of the "normal" sla operatives, the Darkfinders. Using all the available technology from the Justice project, several prototypes have been created, they are not quite the equal of the darkfinders, but they are along those lines. The Terminators were created from this project, and remain, so far, the only success to come out of the project. Attempts to make more powerful creatures have met with failure, and darknight are at a loss as to how SLA manage to create the superhuman creatures that frustrate them so. Details on the darknight terminators are covered later in this book.

GD'KLLR PROJECT

Not so much a project as a diplomatic negotiation, Darknight have been aware of the renegade Shaktar known as the Gd'Kllr since they were first found on the New paris habitat ring, immediately, word came down from on high to find these renegades and enlist their help. They were traced to one of the fringe worlds beyond Cross, and it was there that darknight made contact. The Gd'Kllr are a warrior race who have distorted all the various codes of honour into something at once obscure and at the same time chillingly familiar. They will happily kill for pay, but their preferred payment is in the bodies of the fallen, who they take as both nourishment and for the various items that they carry. Darknight have an uneasy truce with the leaders of the faction near Cross, and can call upon them for a payment in the forms of live meat. They only engage the Gd'Kllr in times of darkest need.

SLAUGHTERERS

Slaughterers are the only forms of powered armour that Darknight possesses, in 564 s.d, Darknight had a small skirmish with Thresher, and in the ensuing struggle, two powersuits were rendered inert by various EMP weapons. They dissected both the pilots and the suits and began to design prototypes of their own. Whilst Darknight armour will never match the level of Thresher powersuits, they are the only darknight units that are capable of almost going toe to toe with the Thresher legions. Slaughterers stand up to twenty feet tall depending on the situation, and are controlled from a set of four brains that is held deep inside the armour. Utilising a very similar control method to the Ghosts, the Slaughterers are able to engage several targets simultaneously whilst still being in full control of their surroundings. The problem is that if the control unit is disrupted or dislodged, the suit will immediately self destruct to prevent the capture of the technology that Darknight have fought so long to keep hold of. In defence of this seemingly easy way of destroying Darknight powered armour, the brain units are extremely well secured within the armour.

DARKNIGHT DRUGS

WITRINOXPERIOUTANA – Otherwise known as wipeout, this drug is used to swiftly convert those who would otherwise be dangerous to the cause. The drugs destroy all the higher memories of the target, but leave the formative years intact, effectively reducing the target to the mental state of (in

human terms) a four year old. In basic terms, this drug costs the target one point of DIA every round until they are reduced to 0. At this stage, the only skills that they will remember will be reading, writing, and speaking in their native language, everything else will have been taken. This drug does not work too well on the wraith raiders as the metabolism of the raider plays havoc with the genetic coding of the drug. It still reduces them to the mental state of a four year old, but considering that the wraith four year old is almost an adult, this does not always have the desired effect.
Not available on the black market

KO – One of the most popular darknight drugs, KO is a powerful soporific, it can be administered by nose, mouth, or contact with exposed skin. One dose will put down a human sized target (including Ebons and wasters) for thirty minutes straight, and will be effective in less than ten seconds. The other races have a greater degree of resistance to the drugs. In the case of the Shaktar and the Stormer, it is due to their size, in the case of the wraith, their natural metabolism causes problems, and as for frothers, their natural abilities in coping with drugs cause the problems. In the cases of each of these, the number of doses required to put the target down are as follows.

Shaktar/Stormer/Wraith/Frother – 2 doses

Chagrin/Xeno/Vevaphon – 3 doses, however, in the case of the vevaphon, once it is down, it will stay down for at least an hour, possibly longer as its body cannot naturally expire the drug.

Carnivorous Pig – 2 doses

Lesser Carrien – 1 dose, and that will put it down for an hour

Greater Carrien – 3 doses

Domino Dog – Don't make me laugh

Low Wave – Don't make me laugh even more than the Dog Idea, and don't even get me started on machines.

Black Market cost – 50u

RAGE – The darknight combat drug of choice, similar in properties to Ultraviolence, it replaced the dangerously unstable Shatter as a combat drug. Rage is a combination of pure adrenalin and Pain Away, subtly blended to have the strength of neither, nor the drawbacks that would come with the basic mixing of the two. The Drug adds 1 to strength and gives the user one extra phase in which to act, it also reduces damage caused by 25%. However, it does lower the users ability with ranged weapons by one for the duration of the drug. A single dose lasts for ten rounds.
Black Market cost – 200u

REBUILD - A slightly less effective version of Kickstart, Rebuild has the added advantage of being able to be combined with the other darknight drugs to produce other effects. A single dose of rebuild will heal one hit immediately, and stop one wound in the next phase.

Black Market cost – 50u

NITRO – one of the more vicious drugs within darknight, nitro is a combination of adrenalin and nitric acid. It can only be stored within specialist chambers, and is hardly ever used except on specialist assassinations. The drug works in two stages, the first is when the drug is first administered, the adrenalin causes the rest of the drug to flood the system, it is at this point that the acid kicks in, and the target suffers an immediate and progressive melting of their internal organs. As with all darknight drugs, it can be combined with others to make other effects. In game terms, the drug does five damage a round for six rounds, after which it is neutralised.
Black Market cost 1000c

STATIC – Not so much a combat drug as a mild irritant. Static is usually packaged in aerosol cans, and is used by the lower level of civilian operatives. Static affects the equilibrium centre of the brain, causing disorientation and nausea. It does not work as well on the non human races, but it was never envisaged for civilian converts to go up against anything not human. The spray will not affect anything in sealed armour or with breathing protection of any kind, but all human targets hit by it will suffer -2 to all actions for five rounds, all non human targets will suffer -1 for five rounds.

Black Market cost – 50u for a spray can of five doses.

BLUR – The companion spray to static, blur specifically affects the visual organs of the target, equally effective on all races with eyes, it causes pain, irritation and temporary blindness. The targets vision

will return shortly, but the temporary delay will often cost them dearly. The target will suffer -8 on any actions that require the use of their eyes (this includes the targetting of ebb abilities), and -2 on all other actions. Targets wearing fully enclosed eye protection or vevaphons are completely unaffected by this weapon. Targets making a Dex check when being attacked by this weapon may avert their eyes sufficiently to halve the effects of the spray.

Black Market cost – 100u for a spray can of five doses.

SPASM - Spasm is a chemical designed to be injected, it is not known what the precise composition of it is, but it is thought to be a mixture of hormones occurring naturally that affect the muscles. When this drug is administered, the targets muscles all seize up, curling them into a fetal ball. The effects only last for around twenty minutes, but this is more than enough for the needs of any darknight operative to get away with what they need to do. The drawback of this drug is that it needs to be in the targets system to work, and this usually presents a problem considering the fact that most operatives wear armour of some sort. The two methods of delivery are detailed in the weapons section.

Note that this drug is race specific, as each race has a different racial genetic profile. There is a type of Spasm available for all the races except for Stormers, whose metabolisms seem to throw it clean out.

Black Market cost – 1500u per dose.

SET – Originally designed to be a medicinal drug, Set has since been included in the repertoire of drugs used in combat. Set incorporates a fast bonding calcium paste with a nutrient supplement. The primary use of this drug is for setting broken limbs, however, it is fast finding use as one of the combination drugs within Darknight. If used on broken limbs, it will immediately set the bone in place for 12 hours, in the case of joints, it will fuse the joint and prevent any further movement by the limb in question. It also stops any bleeding that is occurring at the time. In game terms, this stops three wounds in the phase it was administered, and sets any broken bone in the area that the drug was administered. It also stops all bleeding damage that the target is suffering.

Black market cost – 500u per dose

CONVERSION PROCEDURES

There are many different types of conversion procedure that can be administered to the unfaithful, they vary in length of indoctrination and effectiveness, but all are available to the persuaders.

WIPEOUT

The most used procedure is known by its nickname of Wipeout, it consists of a simple injection of Witrinoxperioutana, followed by an intensive Audio/Visual Barrage which redirects the loyalty of the subject towards darknight. The drawback behind it is that the subjects formative memory is wiped out, all the skills and knowledge that they had accumulated in their life are also gone, and they are replaced with skills that could only be described as rudimentary. The Wipeout drug releases a massive imbalance of neural hormones that take hold around the cerebral cortex, slowly causing a progressive cessation of all higher brain functions. It does not affect basic brain functions, and the subject will not have to be completely retrained, they will still be able to walk, talk in their native language only, and they will not have to be fed, but they will lose all other skills and memories.

Effectively, the drug takes one minute per year of memories to wipe out, the target can still move around during this time, so the drug is usually mixed with a strong sedative to facilitate less resistance. The Audio/Visual barrage will implant up to five skills in the newly wiped target, all of them at a low level. See the separate entry for Audio/Visual barrage device.

REWRITE

Darknight have very extensive capabilities in the field of the mind, this extends to knowing which parts of the brain control morality and loyalty. The Rewrite procedure is an intensive course of Brain surgery taking over three months, at the end of this time, the subject will be completely loyal to Darknight in every way. This procedure cannot be attempted on any creature that has natural regenerative capabilities. This is due to the fact that the brain is also under the influence of the regeneration, and all attempts at surgery and delicate to say the least, the minor injuries inflicted by the scalpel are almost immediately healed and cause no real effect.

Those affected by this surgery occasionally recover, this is rare (5-6%), and if so, will usually be detected within a few months of the conversion having taken place, as blinding headaches, muscle spasms, and general disorientation will follow.

This procedure is the most commonly used one in the case of the higher level operatives that are captured by Darknight.

BOX

Slightly more sinister than it suggests, the box method of control is a simple one, a small box is implanted at the base of the spine, extending into the upper spinal column. The box is controlled from a distance, and contains a mixture of different chemicals, when the target is about to do something contrary to the interests of darknight. The box responds by dumping a dose of the relevant chemical, usually inducing massive agony and an inability to move. In many cases, the box is keyed to release endorphins when the subject is doing what darknight want them to do. The usual method of using the box is to keep the subject in a holding area and then give them several chances to escape, these chances are met with pain and suffering. After this, the subject is given several chances to do the will of darknight. Each of these things is met with ecstasy the likes of which the subject has never known. There are very few who can resist this, and this conversion procedure is amongst the most popular as those taken by it very rarely want to resist it.

The drugs supply in the implant is usually good for up to six months, after which, the operative is usually visited to have the supply replenished. If they refuse to do this, the implant has a final safeguard, if it is tampered with by anyone who doesn't know precisely the settings that it uses, there is a special unit of nerve toxin at the base of the implant. This implant is triggered if the target is doing something very detrimental to the cause, or is refusing to do something vital to the cause. Death follows within a minute of the box overloading, and it is common practise to kill at least one subject in each batch of box fittings, just to demonstrate the punishment for those who will not obey.

WIRE BOX

Similar to the ordinary box, the Wire box works a little differently, implanted at the top of the spine, it controls the central nervous and muscle system of the body. Normally, the box is left dormant, and will play no part in the subjects life, however, when activated, the box takes over complete control of the targets body. The box also has a linkup with the optical nerves, which allows the central computer to keep an eye on what is going on. A ghost is usually assigned to each wire box, and they monitor what goes on. The box is programmed with several basic patterns including attack, evasion, and defence. The ghost will be able to use the subjects body as well as the subject can, and will be able to use all their physical abilities, if not their mental ones.

The only drawback of this system is that the subject is able to warn those around them that they are not acting of their own volition. Several operatives who have been found to have this device implanted are usually not willing to mention this as admitting it is tantamount to a death sentence, as the wire box is fitted with the same safeguards as the normal Box.

SENSE/NERVE CONVERSION

This involves the subject being left in a sensory deprivation tank for months on end. They are fed through the machine, and subjected to a barrage of subliminal information. This process takes up to twelve months, and as such, is no good for covert insertions as the target is very obviously missing for the time. The subject retains all their mental facilities, although their bodies tend to atrophy when in the tank. When they come out of the tank, the operative is always nursed back to health with the greatest of care, reinforcing the illusion that their new masters do truly care.

It is extremely rare (1-2%) that the subject will throw off the conditioning and turn against their new masters, but some of the most fanatical have shown some resilience to the procedure.

It is to be noted that this particular procedure is only used for those captives that darknight require entirely in one piece. In the case of Ebb-Users. the deprivation tanks can be loaded with glyph pillars that prevent the use of their powers, for the ebb user, this is often more horrifying than any of the other

tortures that could be levied against them, many of them crack when they find themselves without their powers for any length of time.

THE OLD WAYS

In some cases, the new ways are not sufficient to work on some operatives, or failing that, there is not sufficient time to convert the operative, the old methods of implanted cortex/body bombs are used, these procedures can be carried out within a few hours. The bomb can either be set on a timer, or by remote. There are very few operatives who are willing to sacrifice their lives to further the cause of SLA, and darknight are very aware of this. The other methods of threatening those close to the operative also works well in certain quarters. Horses for Courses as the saying goes, everyone has something that means something to them, and if it means that Jones the cat suddenly acquires a cortex bomb, then so be it.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

There are several different standard operations that darknight carries out, each one of them requires a certain number of people and co-operation from a number of the divisions to carry it out. In each case, the operation has a minimum security clearance for the operation to be launched, and a list of the divisions that are usually required to provide assistance.

BOMBING

Security Clearance required – Level 3

Divisions required – None, occasionally Projects Holocaust or Revenant for larger campaigns.

In a typical bombing campaign, the cell will plant explosives on targets designated by the cell leader, they will detonate these at a time most suitable for them. The usual reason that a bombing campaign is instigated is to equalise some sort of advantage that SLA has. As a result of this, the campaigns are usually targeting Karma and Dark Lament facilities, although the occasional civilian target is taken, usually the ones who have received awards for devotion to SLA in one form or another.

The most ostentatious of the campaigns involve several cells, and can devastate entire sectors of SLA at a time, keeping the rescue and repair services busy for weeks on end. Given the general incompetence level of the lower levels of SLA (the Shivers for one example), it is almost impossible to halt one of these campaigns without calling in operatives at some point or another.

POISONING

Security Clearance required – Level 3

Divisions required – Plague project, occasionally Ghost project

The poisoning campaigns go in three different variants, the first is the standard poisoning of the water supply in a given district, the usual operation is to introduce Hallucinogenics into the water, also popular is the placing of illness causing chemicals into the water supply. The second campaign type is to modify the food or drink in some way as to make it impossible to use. Preferred methods of this include introducing powdered acid into the water system, this not only damages/kills anyone drinking the water, but it can also damages the actual plumbing system. The final method of poisoning is to attack places where food is served to the public, notable examples of this include the infamous assault on several Downtown burger bars where the meat was laced with a protein compound that increased in size a hundred fold when exposed to stomach acids. There were two hundred recorded fatalities and over a thousand hospitalised before the cause of the trouble was discovered. The Ghosts are sometimes required to cover the operatives as they introduce the chemicals into the food supply.

DISPERSING ASSAULT

Security Clearance required – Level 2

Divisions required – Depending on the payload, Plague or Holocaust Division, project revenant is occasionally involved

The Dispersal Assault is one of the more overt of the operations that Darknight undertake. Using Hijacked SCAF fighters or other similar fast attack craft, the cell will blast through a single sector and disperse small parcels of explosives or air based toxins, Nerve toxins are especially popular for this sort of thing. Explosives can be used, but their usage tend to be limited as the collateral damage tends to turn away civilian converts to the cause. Another use for this type of assault is the distribution of propaganda to the masses, leaflets can be distributed across entire sectors by this method, but there are usually easier ways of distributing things (that also cost less).

PROPAGANDA

Security Clearance required – Level 4

Divisions required – None, occasionally Ghosts (see below)

Central to the darknight cause is the gaining of new converts, to this end, all cells are empowered with the ability to spread the word of their lords and masters. This is usually by word of mouth, as the faithful move through mort and the other colonies like some insidious virus. The other ways of spreading propaganda are through the Ghosts, who can occasionally hack into the television feeds into a certain sector, incorporating subliminal messages into the programs that are being watched at the time. The final method of doing propaganda is to hijack SLA events as they occur. This is dangerous in the extreme, but can be worth its weight in gold should it come off. The favoured events to break into are the Gorezones, as there is little in the way of actual control in these events. Darknight sponsored Contract and Serial killers will often jump into these events, sweeping most of the SLA killers clear and then making their escape before the forces of SLA can stop them. The common person does not register the political statement, they merely see that SLA have been defeated by Darknight, and as a net result, the general views of SLA being more powerful than Darknight are steadily eroded.

ASSASSINATION

Security Clearance required – Level 2

Divisions required – Depending on the target, anything up to Hammers of Freedom and Slaughterers can be commanded

Assassinations are not usually sanctioned by Darknight, it requires too many resources to simply allocate the death of one individual, but in some cases, when conversion is not an option, and the target is too well protected for the usual “accident” style of killings, then an assassination will be authorised. Typically a Squad of five Hammers or Slaughterers will be assigned to the killing, each one of them will fully expect to die in the attempt, but they will be happy to die for the cause.

There are other sorts of terrorist action that darknight undertake, but for the most part, they fall under the above headings in one way or another. The most successful campaigns are listed in the darknight history later in this book.

WEAPONRY

Darknight operatives can gain access to all the things that normal SLA operatives have access to, but they also gain a few home grown advantages from being a part of darknight. The first is in the form of advanced weaponry that most SLA operatives would consider too dangerous to themselves to be of any true tactical value. The nature of darknight weaponry is that it is not tremendously sturdy, this is more due to the fact that darknight do not want any of their technology falling into the hands of SLA than for reasons of solid construction.

Hand Weaponry

Darknight hand held weaponry is simple and brutal, what follows is a listing of hand held weaponry with a security clearance required to obtain it, and its statistics. Darknight operatives are still able to purchase any normal SLA weaponry that they want to, but they also have the contacts to get the following pieces.

Shatter Blade – The Shatter Blade is a simple weapon constructed from a single piece of glass, the blade is carefully honed to be as sharp as any metal knife, but it is only designed for single hits. The purpose behind the knife is to snap it off when it wounds something, the nature of glass means that the blade will drive itself deeper into the wound, and prove rather resilient to attempts to get it out. The actual knife damage is comparable to a normal knife, but the user has the choice to either break the knife in the wound, or to take it out and use it again.

Sec Clearance – 4 Black Market cost – 200u
Damage 1
Pen 0
Ad 0

If the user breaks off the blade in the wound, it causes a further three points of damage, and bleeding at the rate of one point per round. This bleeding cannot be stopped until the knife blade is removed, as while it is in the wound, it continually moves, opening new injuries. If the blade is broken, the weapon becomes useless.

Blocker – The Blocker is an unpowered close combat weapon worn over the back of the forearm, extending a foot from the hand when in use. It is used both as a striking device and as a device for stopping other hand to hand attacks. It is a very specific art of fighting, and is only taught professionally within darknight. The weapon is always used in pairs, the fighting style does not allow for single weapon blocking and striking. When not in use, the striking part of the weapon retracts into the forearm part of the weapon, this can then be concealed under most clothing.

Sec Clearance – 4 Black Market cost – 500u
Damage 3
Pen 2
Ad 2

Spike – Rather more vicious than its somewhat euphemistic name suggests, the spike is a hollow tube with a spring loaded spike. The spike is triggered by the tube striking an object, the spike is hurled forwards at extremely high speeds, the damage done, the spike can be retracted back into the tube at the press of a button.

Sec Clearance – 3.....Black Market cost – 300u
Damage 1 + 4 when spike is activated
Pen 1 (3 when spike activated)
Ad 1 (3 when spike activated)

Claw – The Claw is one of the more favoured of the darknight weapons, in the same manner as the Blocker, it is a retractable close combat weapon, the only difference is that this weapon is a single blade held in a forearm sheath. The weapon is usually used as a surprise extension to the users fighting style. Operatives are trained to start an unarmed fight, then to finish it quickly with a swift extension of the blade at an opportune time.

Sec Clearance – 4.....Black market cost – 400u
Damage 4
Pen 1
Ad 1

Studd Mitt – Similar to brass knuckles, this is merely a pair of leather gloves with a reinforced pad of weighted leather underneath spikes on the knuckles. Not the most formidable of weapon, but it is easily concealable and most SLA personnel will not consider them to be dangerous until such time as they are used.

Sec Clearance – 5.....Black Market cost – 30u
Damage 2
Pen 0
Ad 0

Gunblade (1) – The first type of gun blade is simply a long knife that fits over the end of the barrel of a gun, this converts the gun into a clumsy close combat weapon, but it is better than nothing.

Sec Clearance – 5.....Black Market cost – 50u
Damage 3
Pen 1
Ad 1

Gunblade (2) – The more popular of the Gunblades, this incorporates a single shot pistol into a sword blade. The pistol is a 10mm calibre pistol with a short range and a breech load system in the hilt of the weapon. It can chamber any type of round in the hilt, and is fairly reliable.

Sec Clearance – 4.....Black market cost – 1000u
Pistol Range – 10
Sword Damage 4
Pen 1
Ad 1

Ripper – One of the more vicious of the darknight weapons, the Ripper is two circular saws, revolving in opposite directions, the weapon chomps into the target, then tries to drag the target through the two blades. When it gets hold of a target, it is often difficult for it to let go of it until it has sawn through. The weapon has an inbuilt reversing mechanism in case the blade chews in on something that it can't get through.

Sec Clearance – 3.....Black Market Cost – 2000u
Damage 5 + 2 per phase thereafter if still locked on the target
Pen 3 + 1 per phase thereafter if still locked on the target
Ad 3 + 2 per phase thereafter if still locked on the target.

The power supply on the ripper is good for several hundred hours of continuous operation.

Cats Cradle – The Cats cradle requires many years of practise to use effectively as a weapon, consisting of two gloves connected by a net of monofilament wire. The weapon can effectively parry any weapon by simply wrapping the hands around it, in the case of unpowered weapons, the cats cradle will destroy any weapon caught in this manner. When wrapped around an opponent, the wire will quickly lacerate most types of ceramics, metals, and will make a bloody mockery of bare flesh exposed to it. The cats cradle is a very specialised weapon, but it is well worth mastering it, in the hands of a master, this weapon can decimate any number of opponents.

Sec Clearance – 3.....Black Market cost 3000u
Damage 7 – Choke damage against bare skin is 10 per round of choking, anyone caught by this attack can attempt to break free every phase that they have, continual damage is done only for every full round of choking that takes place.
Pen 4
Ad 5 – If the wire is used for continual laceration, then it does 7 points of armour damage per full round of choking.

RANGED WEAPONRY

Darknight operatives can still buy normal SLA weaponry, they occasionally have trouble getting hold of the larger pieces of ordnance, but by and large, they can get most things. The following equipment is available to any darknight operative with Security clearance 4 or over, in some cases, a higher clearance is required, and this is noted in the weapons description.

Streak Pistol – The streak is a distraction weapon, it fires a concentrated burst of light in a wide arc, extending approximately 30 degrees from the barrel of the weapon. The beam from the weapon is powerful enough to cause temporary blindness, and can overload the lower level armour compensatory devices. Anything looking into the weapon when it goes off will be blinded for up to seven minutes, with those wearing photochromatic lenses or eye protection will possibly be blinded, at the discretion of the GM.

Hail Pistol – This weapon is called a pistol euphemistically, it comes in several parts that when disassembled, resemble nothing of any danger. When assembled, the weapon is rifle length, with pistol range and statistics. However, the primary thing about this weapon is that it fires ice shells, it has no facility to grind new shells, but the main part of the weapon is taken up by a cooling device that can hold up to a hundred sharpened ice shells. The primary purpose of the weapon is that the shells are never found after the actual hit. The body heat of most creatures, and indeed, the heat of the atmosphere are enough to melt the shells. This has the twofold effect of leaving the culprit unidentifiable, and also allowing shells to be manufactured in any place where a freezer is available.

Range – 15m
Rate of Fire - 3
Damage – 5
Pen – 7 versus cloth and soft armours, 2 vs hard armours
Ad – 1
Clip – Ice
Rounds per clip – 100 fully loaded.
Black Market cost – 5000u

Sliver cannon – A variant of the hail pistol, this weapon has a shorter range, but is hideously damaging in its effect. The sliver cannon fires a spray of ultra-fine metal shards at close to the speed of sound. When fired, the weapon is used in much the same way as a flamethrower is used, hosing the target down with a spray of cutting metal.

Range – 10m
Rate of Fire - 1
Damage – 10
Pen – 9 versus cloth and soft armours, 5 vs hard armours
Ad – 6
Clip – Slivers of metal.
Rounds per clip – Ten bursts per clip of slivers.
Black Market cost – 15000u
Cost Per clip of Slivers – 200u

Screamer – The screamer is a multibarrelled minigun variant weapon, its rate of fire is slower than most miniguns, but it does have the added bonus of being able to fire any types of shell without penalty or slowing in its rate of fire. The weapon is powered by a rotary hammer system which is cooled by jets of air being blasted past the barrels at speeds of up to 100 mph. This air rushing over the barrels causes the screaming sound which give the weapon its name. It is usually backpack fed, although it can be used in large clip mode if need be.

Security clearance required - 3
Range 50m
Rate of fire – 1 if used in single round mode, 10 If used on full auto
Damage, Pen., and Ad as per the shell type
Calibre – 12mm
Clip – Long clip 100, backpack 1000
Black Market cost – 20000u

Arm Blaster – the arm blaster is the most common of the darknight weapons, it is a short range pistol that fits on the back of the arm, the trigger is brought down manually and grasped in the hand. When the hand clenches into a fist, the weapon is fired. The weapon is favoured for its concealability

Range – 10m
Rate of Fire – 1
Damage, Pen, and Ad as per the shell type
Calibre – 10mm
Clip – 10 rounds in a lateral clip holder.
Black Market Cost – 6000u

Melta – This weapon is a strange one, it does not do any damage in the conventional sense, instead, the weapon fires a concentrated pulse of Electrostatic energy, this pulse has the effect of frying all non-shielded equipment in the area. The pulse can fry low level shielding for most items, and on bare flesh, can cause third degree burns. One of these weapons is usually issued when data theft is underway, as the damage covers the nature of what was actually stolen at the time.

Range – 10m

Rate of Fire – 1

Damage – 4 + special effects

Pen – 0

Ad – 0

Calibre and Clip are a special case, the backpack on the weapon carries enough power to last for fifty shots, it can be recharged at any normal SLA power point at a rate of ten minutes per shot.

Black Market cost – 15000u

Crossbow/Bow – Given the distinct lack of technological parts in certain cells, the construction of ancient weapon variants has become more than popular. The crossbow has more effective damage than the bow, but is often more difficult to construct.

Range – Crossbow 30m, Bow 50m

Rate of Fire – Crossbow 1 to fire, one to reload, Bow 1

Damage – Crossbow – 6, Bow – 5

Pen – Crossbow – 4, Bow – 5

Ad – 2

Calibre and clip are irrelevant, crossbows use bolts, bows use arrows, simple as that.

Black Market cost – Crossbow – 300u, Bow 200u

Cost of Ammunition – Crossbow bolt 6u, Arrow 10u

Net Cannon – This weapon comes in two separate types, each with several different types of net. The pistol variant fires a 5' by 5' net, whilst the Rifle variant fires a 12' by 12' net. The net is one of five different types, each one with a specific nature. These are as follows:

Pin Capture net – The pin net has a net that is connected to four pins at the far corners of the net. These pins can burrow into concrete and other forms of construction. The net is designed to hold a target within the net and pin them to the nearest surface. The net can hold a target/targets with up to a combined strength of 35. The target does not suffer any further damage, but they are held in place until such time as someone frees them. They can attempt to break free of the net themselves, this requires a dex check at –10 to free a limb to acquire a weapon or something that can break the net. Once they have a limb free, it will take them 20 – PHYS rounds to escape.

Pin Capture Mono net – Identical to the normal net, except that the net is constructed from mono filament wire, this does 5 damage, with 7 Ad each turn that the target tries to escape, further more, the escape time is 30- PHYS rounds due to the stronger construction of the net.

Zapper Net – this net is a normal weighted net, the weights at the end of the net are powerful electric generators that produce several thousand volts when activated. The electricity activates when the net leaves the gun. This will reduce any non-shielded target to a quivering mess on the floor for a number of rounds equal to 40 minus their PHYS statistic. If the target is wearing powered armour, the net will render the armour inert for 20 rounds minus the PV of the armour. Multiple targets will be affected equally. If the target remains under the net when they fall, they will remain incapacitated until the net is removed or runs out of power. It is to be noted that the net has a power supply good for 5000 hours without needing to be recharged.

Shredder Net – The Shredder is a variant of the cats cradle. The net is a finely wound monofilament wire net with five centimetre gaps in it. The net is designed only in a 6' by 6' net, and is designed to wrap and constrict around the first target it encounters. The net will do no damage to the target providing that they do not try and escape. The net will constrict to the point that the target will not be able to move without causing damage. If the target tries to escape, the net will do seven damage per round, with five points of armour damage per phase. If the target is unarmoured, the net will do twelve

points of damage per round to bare flesh. Escaping from the net requires a Dex check at -5 three times. Each attempt takes one round, and the target cannot do anything else whilst trying to escape. Targets with a strength of more than 24 can escape the net in one round, taking one round of damage as they do so.

Energy net – A single shot net, this net is a 6' by 6' net with a core of magnesium alloy. The weights on the net have powerful ignition devices that go off when triggered by the main gun. When ignited, the whole net erupts into a rolling blanket of superheated metal. This weapon is not often used by Darknight, as it does tend to kill those caught by it, however, there are always exceptions. This weapon is unmatched in close quarter suppression fire. The weapon does no damage until activated, when activated, the weapon does 15 damage, with a Penetration of 7 and 15 armour damage per round until the net runs out of fuel. The net usually has fuel enough for twenty rounds of continuous burning. Targets can escape by making a strength check at -10, or two dexterity checks at -5. Targets will continue to take damage whilst escaping.

Range – Pistol – 10m, Rifle – 30m
Ammunition – Special.
Rate of Fire – 1
Clip – 1
Reload time required – one full round.
Black Market cost – Pistol – 3000u, Rifle 5000u
Nets Costs
Pin Capture net – Pistol: 100u, Rifle 200u
Pin Capture Mono net – Pistol 300u, Rifle: 500u
Zapper net – Pistol: 500u, Rifle: 700u
Shredder Net – 400u
Energy Net – 600u

Explosives – These are the constructed explosives that darknight operatives are taught to construct from mundane materials, each type lists the statistics for one pound in weight of the explosive, the cost indicates how much the materials for one pound of the explosive would cost, the time is for one person creating the explosive. Up to three people can work on any one piece of explosive at the time, each person halves the time taken to construct. Type Four explosive and modifying any explosive to be used in a timed weapon such as a grenade requires at least a half equipped laboratory to work with.

Type One – Type one explosive is typically used to detonate small things such as cupboards, the explosive power and radius is limited.

Blast radius – 4' Damage – 4 Pen – 4 Ad – 3 Cost = 100u Time = One hour

Type Two – Type two explosive can damage stone if placed directly upon it, but it will be no threat to hardened buildings and steel.

Blast radius – 8' Damage – 10 Pen – 5 Ad – 5 Cost = 400u Time = Three hours

Type Three – Used to crack most targets, can cause minor structural damage if placed in the correct locations.

Blast radius – 20' Damage – 25 Pen – 10 Ad – 8 Cost = 900u Time = Seven hours

Type Four – Difficult to manufacture, but capable of cracking almost any targets, this is the explosive used to bring down buildings

Blast radius – 50' Damage – 50 Pen – 35 Ad – 15 Cost = 3000u Time = Fourteen hours.

Modifying an explosive to be a grenade, only possible with types one to three, the cost is equal to one quarter of the cost of the explosive.

EQUIPMENT

Darknight have access to most types of SLA equipment, such things as finance chip scanners are especially popular amongst them, it saves on trying to find certain things out about operatives when you can scan it at fifty paces. Other darknight equipment is available to all operatives on missions, there are some pieces of equipment that are not available unless for certain missions. There are other

restrictions on certain items, conversion devices are only available for persuaders, and combat drugs are only available to operatives with level 4 clearance or higher. Security clearance is noted on the item if it is required.

NIGHTCHIP – Similar to the SLA finance chip, but somewhat more advanced, the nightchip does not allow people to see through the darknight operatives eyes, instead, it records all the things they are doing and seeing, hearing and experiencing. These things are all recorded on the chip, the information is downloaded via a port at the base of the spine once every three months, the chip can store up to six months of data at a shove, but this is not recommended or common practise. All darknight operatives at level 3 or higher have these chips fitted as standard. The chip is basically biological in design, this prevents the chip registering on things such as energy scanners.
No cost to darknight operatives, not available on the black market.

XKEY – A little better than its simple name suggests, this device can open up any electronically sealed doorway, including most SLA security systems. Each key is given a Security clearance, this is a SLA security clearance that it can open up to, it can open this level and anything below it. This takes around a minute, and works one of two ways. The key will either display the code required to open the door, or in the case of doors that require card keys or something similar, it has a universal adapter that can fit most SLA doors. The clearance level of the key will vary according to the situation that the cell find themselves in. All keys are issued by central command, and can only be modified by high level ghosts. Black Market Cost – 2000u per full point of security clearance, highest level available SCL 6, highly illegal, possession by SLA ops is punishable by excommunication and prison.

CHARRACH – The Charrach is a small device designed to impede the flow of information in the area. It jams all short range communication devices, this includes squad com units, radios, and all incoming messages from Station-Analysis, which is the main point. The range of the device is approximately fifty metres, and is only issued to cell leaders at the best of times. The devices are rather prone to strong electrical fields, and in the presence of such things, they can fail to operate, or be short circuited. Black Market cost – 8000u, highly illegal

MACHE – The Mache is a bracer of fused alloy. Activated by a single button on the underside of the bracer, the back of the bracer extends in a fan-like fashion to form a shield of strong, inflexible alloy over the back of the arm, similar in style to the small shields of old. When not extended, the bracer appears to be a simple item of questionable fashion. The shield is comparable in strength to the weaker of the dispersal shiver shields, and in truth, the weapon was copied from a dispersal shiver squad that had been taken down by darknight.
Black market cost – 5000u, not strictly illegal, but frowned upon

ARWEN – The Arwen is the preferred motion and energy scanner within Darknight. It detects all life forms in the area, then highlights the ones that have darknight identification tags, all those that have SLA finance chips in them, and then presents the whole thing in a manner that allows easy detection of the aforementioned SLA ops. It is not affected by the Charrach, and most squads carry one when within SLA territory.
Black market cost – 20000u

COPIER – The copier is a little darker in design than its title sounds. When used, the copier can copy the records and files stored on any finance chip that is placed within it. These records can be used to gain access to various things within SLA by using the stolen data and access codes stored within. The drawback to the copier is that the finance chip must not be allowed to power down before it is placed in the copier. This means that the chip has to be cut out of the operative whilst they are still alive (or freshly dead, one or the other). The Copier can store the equivalent of twenty finance chips in the onboard memory before the data cache needs to be uploaded. Ghosts are the preferred transferers of this data. Security clearance required – 3
Black Market cost – 40000u, hideously illegal

PRESERVER – The preserver is the device used to keep the Nightchips of the fallen darknight operatives still functioning until such time as they can be placed back into the night-net back at darknight headquarters. The device can hold up to five chips at a time, and can be charged/recharged at any normal SLA power supply. The chips can be held indefinitely on the preserver should this prove

necessary, but the preserver also has an inbuilt self destruct device, should anyone not possessing the required codes try to access the information held on it.
Not available on black market.

JAMMER – The jammer is a very specialised white noise generator, it does not actually generate white noise as such, it simply sends out a distorting pulse for ten metres, this pulse will scramble any non-encrypted/shielded communications. It does this by filling up all available frequencies with random sound. In the hands of a skilled operative, the jammer can be used to isolate and lockdown certain frequencies, in the hands of the inexperienced, it jams everything in the area, creating a localised blackout of communications that proves rather simple to track down.
Black Market cost = 1000u, illegal

TORC – Fashioned to look very much like a normal piece of jewellery, the darknight torc is in fact a sophisticated drug usage system. It has twelve compartments all around the entire ring, each one of these can hold one dose of any given drug. The drugs are injected directly into the central nervous system when the relevant section is touched. It is usually loaded with the same drug all the way round, this prevents the operative from accidentally overdosing on ultra violence when they were trying to use kickstart. There have been a few mishaps when operatives have been in hand to hand combat and their opponent got a choke hold, but otherwise, they are the preferred method of combat drug administration within Darknight.
Black Market cost 20000u, illegal

NIGHTWALKER – The nightwalker is the default darknight survival suit, combining the aspects of a sealed suit with an intravenous food and drink supply. The suit is used when operatives are out on sniping jobs or have to monitor areas for any length of time. The suit can be calibrated to keep the operative awake and alert for up to fifty hours at a time. As a default system, the suit has light defraction and ecm capabilities built in, as well as mild armour built into the main shell of the suit. The light defraction system built into the suit prevents the user from being seen beyond 300metres, and lowers the chances of them being seen by -1 per round of remaining motionless, maximum bonus, -10. When the user is moving, the suit makes them difficult to follow, reducing the target chance of them being seen by one for each metre they move in any one given round.
Black market cost – 20000u, mildly illegal, SLA tends to forgive their operatives using this piece of equipment as it is a superior piece of equipment.

RUSHER – Given the darknight approach to fighting, it is a part of several darknight operatives package and training that they learn to fight whilst surrounded by massive noise and disorientating lighting effects. The Rusher is a personal stereo system that connects to the armour that the operative is using at the time. It can either be used personally, in which case it projects their personal combat sound into their helmet, or it can be set of wideband, in which case, it broadcasts the sound at over a hundred decibels in all directions. All darknight operatives are trained to deal with this sort of thing, but those not trained to deal with the noise will suffer a -2 to any action they undertake whilst within 10 metres of the user of this system unless they are wearing ear shields of some sort.
Not available on the Black market (not really useful to anyone except darknight)

A/V BARRAGE DEVICE – The persuaders are given several methods of conversion at their disposal, the easiest one is the wipeout technique. After the drug has been administered, the vacant target needs to be reprogrammed, the A/V barrage device flash imprints a basic set of skills onto the newly cleaned mind. In simple terms, the A/V barrage imprints the skills that have been placed in the chip socket at the top of it. The chip skills are carried around with the persuader, and are only available to authorised personnel. The chips only hold skills up to level three, and the average Barrage device can carry up to five chips at any one time. It is not recommended to try and implant more than three skills at a time, the mind tends to rebel against too much force being used.
Not available on the black market, these items are destroyed rather than letting them fall into enemy hands.

SNEAKER HARNESS – The darknight sneaker training package includes specific training in the use of the sneaker harness. This piece of equipment is a sleeveless jacket of webbing with the equivalent of the SLA climbing equipment pack. In addition to this, it also has two arm mounted grapples with quick release catches, the sneaker can use the swift release units to rapidly climb up structures that

would be too tall for normal climbing equipment. The harness requires specialist training to use, but those trained in it are unmatched in their capabilities for traversing the urban jungle of mort.
Black market cost – 2000u

COMMS HAMMER – The comms hammer is a communications device that is designed for one purpose alone, it redirects communications from one frequency to another. There is a quarter second blip on the communications when the switch occurs, a sharp eyed operator will notice the blip, but the switch will be permanent until the hammer is switched off or the comms systems being jammed is rebooted.
Black Market cost – 4000u

JUSTICE IMPLANTS

The Justice facility provides a number of implants and upgrades to darknight. Operatives are free to obtain any SLA based augmentations and other such things that they wish to purchase, but they are also able to pick up anything from this list of implants from the Justice facility. It is to be noted that these implants sometimes have incompatibility problems with Karma implants. The incompatibility ratios are noted on each implant.

It is also to be noted that most of the implants are mechanical in nature, darknight's area of expertise is not anywhere near as well developed in the region of Biomechanics as Karma. If an implant is organic in nature, then it will be noted in the description of the device, otherwise, it is assumed that the implants are in fact mechanical augmentations.

SPINAL DRUGS IMPLANT (SDI) – The SDI is the implant of choice for the drug addicts within darknight, fitted along the length of the spine. The implant sheaths the spine in a layer of titanium plate, the drugs themselves are contained in powdered form in small boxes placed alongside the kidneys. A typical SDI can have up to three boxes inside it, each one of these boxes holds up to fifty doses of a particular drug. These drugs are administered by nerve impulse, the addict quite literally thinks of the drug required, and the system will make it so. The drawback to this implant is that in the event of severe impaling damage, the boxes can be damaged, leaking the drugs into the central nervous system. Each time the user of this system takes a body hit that does more than five damage, there is a 10%+5% per extra point of damage sustained in the same attack, that the SDI will be damaged and leak the entire contents of the implant into the character. The implant can also be set to overload at the user's discretion. If the implant is damaged, or the character opts to have it overload, the drug that is overloaded, then the effects are equivalent to ten times the normal use of the drug, after which the character will most likely die. The percentile chance of the character dying is equal to 100% minus their PHYS statistic, even if they do survive, they will most likely have damage suffered in the overdose. The exact nature of this damage and how it is applied is up to the GM to decide.

Cost of Implant – 3000u + cost of the drugs used in the implant.

DEATH TRIGGERED DEVICE (DTD) – The DTD is an implant designed to provide the dying operative one last chance to attack his killers from beyond the grave. The device is usually a bomb of some sort, or some form of attack device, but such things as recordings are occasionally used if there is a point needing to be drummed home to those watching on the home audience. The device can be set to detonate instantly upon the death of the user, or can be set to delay a short while (up to 24 hours)

Cost of Implant – 300u + cost of the device to be triggered.

SCRAMBLER – The scrambler is a device fitted into the body cavity, it generates continual low level EMP pulses that disable most electronics in the area. The operative can turn the device on and off at will, but when the device is active, it will short out all the equipment they are carrying unless the items are shielded in some way. The range of the device is five metres, and the switching time of the machine is two phases.

Cost of implant – 2000u

FINANCE CHIP – This implant is one of the rarer ones, the implant is in fact a stolen finance chip that has been copied from the vast data banks of SLA chips that have been taken over the years. The chip cannot be looked through like most finance chips, but will broadcast a reasonable explanation as to

why the broadcast functions are not working. In all other ways, the finance chip works as the normal SLA chip works, and will also act as identification that the person using the chip is in fact the person who the chip originally belonged to. This will allow the operative to use the chip to access information directly from the SLA Info-net without fear of repercussions.

Cost of Implant varies depending on the nature of the chip, its level, and classification of the previous owner.

ADRENAL GLANDS – This biogenetic implant is a spare set of adrenal glands implanted within the main body. When activated, these send a carefully controlled amount of adrenalin directly into the nervous system, this makes the user stronger and faster for a brief period of time. Each implant can generate one dose of adrenalin per day, but several of these implants can be put inside a normal operative. When activated, the adrenal boost give the user +2 strength, +2 dexterity, and one extra phase per round above their normal entitlement. This boost lasts for five full rounds. Activating the gland takes one phase.

There are a few drawbacks with this particular implant. The first is that the nervous system of any creature was not designed to overload on natural boosters, the body can take up to three shots of adrenalin in one day without serious ill effect. After this, the body starts to rebel against the sheer amount of booster being put through it. Each dose of adrenalin after the third will cost the user one hit point for the remainder of the day, no drugs will help with this damage, it is the body beginning to break down with overuse. These hit points are restored when the user gets a full eight hours of natural, unassisted sleep. If the user takes more than five hit points of damage in this way in any one day, they lose one hit point permanently. Any hit points lost in this manner may never be regained.

A final note regarding this implant is that the natural surge of adrenalin will wipe out the effects of any normal drugs that are in the system at the time. This does not prevent the drugs in the system from re-asserting themselves when the adrenal boost wears off, It just stalls them for a few minutes.

Cost of implant – 5000u per set of Glands. Maximum number of glands usable by one person is equivalent to their PHYS statistic.

BATTLE TATTOOS – Different to normal tattoos, these tattoos are invisible under normal circumstances, they are usually crafted to a specific cell or design, but only become visible under the effects of the darknight drug, Reveal. When this drug is administered, the tattoos become immediately visible and remain in evidence for three hours. The SLA drug Lumo sometimes (60%) and any use of the darknight adrenal gland implants (100%, only while the adrenalin is in the system) sets off the tattoos as well.

Cost of Tattoos – 50u for a limb, 200u for torso (either side), 75u for the head.
Cost of Reveal – 20u per dose

REPLACEMENT LIMBS – The typical darknight replacement limb is a angular metal replacement that will serve as an identical replacement in all mannerisms except appearance. Each limb is specifically designed for the user, and will work as well as the original for all basic functions. If the character requires the limb to be used for combat or other purposes, then special modifications are required.

Basic Cost – this will mimic the limb in all ways, including the number of hit points that the original limb had.

Hand – 5000u

Arm (including basic hand) – 10000u

Foot – 2000u

Leg – 7500u

Basic Modifications

Inbuilt armour – Cost 100u per point of stopping power, anything that gets past the armour will do damage direct to the limb. The maximum stopping power on any one limb is 15, the limbs simply cannot carry any more

Inbuilt structure – This modification adds to the structural integrity of the limb in question, Cost 100u per extra hit point.

Increased Strength – This increases the strength in the limb by one point, the maximum strength that any limb may possess is 25. Note that the operative will not be able to utilise the full power of Increased strength in the limbs unless they have skeletal reinforcement, or a matching pair of limbs with equal strength. – Cost = 1000u per extra point

Increased dexterity – only available for hands, this increases the manipulative rate of the fingers in the hand. It does not actually increase the chances to hit with weapons, but it will affect the operatives capability when using manual tools and other such things – Cost = 1000u per extra point, maximum limit – 20

Inbuilt Device – This implants a device of the users choice into one of the characters artificial limbs. The limb needs to be of sufficient size to house the aforementioned implant, but once it is implanted, the user may activate or deactivate it within a single phase.

Cost – 1000u plus the cost of the device.

Skeletal reinforcement – This comes in three different settings, the first reinforces the basic skeleton, increasing the load carrying capacity and allowing the user to use other limbs at up to strength 25. The second level increases the skeletal capacity to allow the user to carry almost most loads without penalty, this increase also boosts the inherent strength of the user to 20. The final level of augmentation increases the structural strength of the user to 30, it also has a separate set of rods built along the length of the spine, legs, and shoulders, that, when set, can support upwards of three tons in weight. The drawback of this is that if the user is locked down with a weight larger than that that they can normally carry, then they will be left stuck in position till the weight lessens enough to allow them to move normally.

Cost of implant

Level One – 20000u – Increases users hit points by 50%.

Level Two – 30000u – Increases users hit points by 100%

Level Three – 50000u – Increases users hit points by 300%, body area is armoured to 10 points.

Combat Modification – This option replaces all the fragile components in the limb with hard wearing ones, and coats the contact points with a resilient coating of flexible composite plastic, this allows the limb to be used in combat to normal specifications. The limb will still take damage if it is involved in impacts with more solid objects such as stone and metal. Cost = 4000u per limb

Extreme Combat modification – This coats the entire limb in heavy duty polymer, the user will be able to punch or kick all types of material with the full power of anything that the limb can produce. This includes such things as high physical strength limbs without backup skeletal reinforcement. This also adds 4 to any damage done by the character in hand to hand combat. Cost = 10000u per limb.

Specialist Modifications.

Static Implant – The static implant is a specialist device designed to prevent operatives from carrying around several kilos of surveillance equipment. The implant is two fold, the first replaces one eye with an audio/visual display unit, this is linked to the second implant, a radio/digital communications monitor. This implant can tap into any unsecured communications going on in a fifteen metre radius, allowing the implant to display on the inside of the operatives eye what is going on through the communications link. Occasionally, the sheer amount of information in the area will overwhelm the sneaker, but this is rare. The sneaker can usually isolate the transmission required and record it on the R/D implant. The implant can download to any configured device within a few minutes. The static implant can also be reconfigured to occupy a particular channel and modify the information going down the line. This can only be attempted on non-shielded lines, or over squad radio. The best jammers are able to intercept and modify Station-Analysis transmissions to operatives out on patrol. Cost = 10000u

Ghost Interface –The interface device is a multiple option interface device that can be adjusted to fit any normal SLA input terminal or access panel. Using this implant, the ghost can access SLA terminals without the required hardware and attempt to gain access to them as a result of this. The interface unit is retracted into the limb when not in use, and as a result, can be used in any limb. The hand us usually used for ease of access. Cost = 5000u per interface.

Crush Hand – The hand implant is modified with a set of super powered opposable pincers in the middle and little fingers, and also in the thumb. When the implant is activated, the three digits will constrict with over two thousand pounds of pressure per square inch. This is sufficient to crush almost anything that it grips. Favoured techniques are grabbing the opponents weapon and crushing it to a pulp. But given the chance, the opponents wrist is just as good a target. Cost = 4000u per hand.

Ripper – This fits razors all the way along either the hand or the forearm of the user, at a thought, these can be extended or retracted. They make the perfect weapon for close fighting. These weapons add 2 to the hand to hand damage, penetration, and armour damage of the users close combat abilities. Cost = 5000u per hand.

Cats cradle – This is a specialist modification that requires two cybernetic hands, it has a mag hold on one hand and the cats cradle in the other hand. The weapon is activated by bringing the hands together and activating the maghold, this brings the cradle out of the other hand, the weapon can be retracted by simply disabling the mag hold unit. Cost = 6000u

Eye cannon – fitted as a single shot derringer carrying a 17mm round, this modification replaces the targets eye with a false eyeball, containing the firing mechanism. The round can be fired usually by some facial gesture, typically winking in a specific order. The eye is patently false to any close scrutiny, but does look very much like an ordinary glass eye for those who are unable to afford expensive Karma replacements. The reloading of the gun requires popping out the eye to rearm the chamber, this takes up to three rounds if something like this is attempted in a combat situation (and it is recommended that such things are not tried). Cost = 5000u + cost of round.

Head plate – This modification adds a set of metal plates around the skull, the skull is reinforced with a cage that the helmet fits onto, this armours the head area of the user to PV 17. With additional modifications, the head can be made airtight, allowing the user to wander around in areas where the atmosphere is unbreathable by normal standards. It takes less than a minute to put the plate on or take it off.

Cost of plate – 3000u

Cost of inbuilt air system – 5000u

Jackhammer assault system – This option can only be fitted on someone who has already had skeletal enhancement to at least level two or higher. This modification fits a powerful motorised override onto the skeleton in one section only. In the case of the arms, this makes the attack from the side or above, in the case of the legs, the kick will always be of the roundhouse or snap kick type. The skeleton does not work well with thrusting and other direct striking motions, the motors tend to chew up the other muscles working within the body at the time. The modification can also be fitted to the lower spine, in which case, the head is the extremity that delivers the blow. If this is the case, the user usually has to have some form of helmet to prevent themselves being knocked out. Regardless of the limb doing the attack, the attack does 10 damage, with a Pen of 6, and an Ad of 6.

Cost of implant – 9000u

PLAYERS

For those wishing to play a darknight operative, the following guidelines cover what the character would have as a normal operative. If the character wishes to play one of the specialist character types, then they will have to take a reduced number of points in order to take the specialists particular skills. Stat ranges and skills for the higher level operatives are also included for ease of reference.

Races available – most darknight operatives are human, there are a few of the other races intermixed, but these are not recommended as starting characters. The other races available as player characters are as follows.

Falling Star project – darknight characters may be one of the clones from the falling star project, use the starting template for brain wasters if they wish to choose one of these characters. These characters may not be chosen below operative level, there are no lower ranking clones. Their starting equipment is the same as that of other characters.

Abomination – (only by option of the GM) – The abominations are sometimes assigned to lower level squads, they have certain problems and as a net result, can only do certain things within the field. The characters statistics range is as follows

STR – 7-20 DEX – 4-10 DIA – 1-5 CONC – 5-10 CHA – 0-3 COOL – N/A

The character receives no bonus points for the statistics that start below 5, and in addition to this, any skills they purchase cost double the normal amount. The abomination starts with the following basic skills – Unarmed Combat 5, Club, 2H – 5, Wrestling – 5. To offset this, their psychological profile and construction means that they are unaffected by any type of mental distress, this does not extend to any effects caused by such things as necanthrope abilities and chemicals. It will just leave the abomination somewhat curious as to what it is experiencing.

Gd'klr – If the player wishes to play one of these renegade shaktar, they should be aware that they are one of the few character types that starts with a disadvantage chosen by the GM. Their statistics range is as follows

STR – 6-14 DEX – 6-14 DIA – 4-7 CONC – 4-7 CHA – 4-8 COOL – 6-13

The Gd'klr start with a level two skill in Unarmed combat, Rifle, pistol, and Survival. They also begin with a Mental disadvantage chosen by the GM to the value of ten points. The disadvantage can be several different ones, as long as they add up to ten. Furthermore, for every fifty experience points that the Gd'klr player accumulates, they acquire a further two points of mental disadvantages, this represents the Gd'klr steady descent into madness and depravity.

CHARACTER TYPES

Civilian – 150 points on skills and stats, nothing above level five on the skills, nothing above 7 on the stats. Skills are limited to non-military skills and the darknight civilian list of skills.

Starting skills – Literacy 1, Computer use 1, Pistol 1, Rifle 1, SLA info 3

Starting equipment – one box of propaganda, knife, CAF steel death and twenty rounds of ammunition, darknight contact information to the cell leader.

Starting money – 200u

Operatives – Operatives get a variable number of character points, depending on the character skill program that they choose. Their statistics and skills are limited as per racial maximums for highs and lows depending on the race played. As an operative, the character must take an operative skills program at the beginning of character creation. Any skills they choose after this are added on to the basic skills they are given in training.

Universal Starting skills – SLA information - 3

Starting Equipment – NightChip, Arm blaster and two clips of standard ammunition or Hail pistol, Blocker armour, DN communicator, Darknight level four access codes and information leading to the cell leader.

Starting money – 3000u

Interceptors/Tsunami Division – 800 points on skills and Statistics, no statistic below 7, at least three combat skills at level 8 or higher. Must take one of the darknight speciality skills at level 5 or higher. The interceptor character will usually have control over a cell of 4-10 operatives/civilians, although it has been known for them to operate by themselves from time to time.

Starting skills – SLA information - 5

Starting Equipment – Nightchip, choice of two ranged weapons, one pistol/smg variant and one rifle variant, choice of any armour within darknight or any SLA armour up to and including crackshot armour. Any three implants with up to 40000u of upgrades to the implants in question, and any devices from the darknight list of items.

Starting money – 10000c in a fake SLA account, 50000u in unmarked bills.

Terminators – 2000 points on skills and statistics, statistics range is as follows

STR – 10-25 DEX – 9-20 DIA – 10-20 CONC – 10-20 CHA – 5-10 COOL – 15-30

Starting skills – SLA information – 10

The terminators minimum attribute levels do not cost any points, they are just the lowest possible profile that a terminator may possess. Terminators must take Four weapon skills at level 12 or above, and be a master (level 8 or higher) in one of the Darknight speciality skills.

Starting Equipment – Anything in any of the rule books, any weapons they choose and the ammunition to take with them, any armour or equipment that takes their fancy short of unique or very rare pieces. Terminators may command any cells in their vicinity, and may overrule any protest from those lower in station than them. Terminators are usually solitary workers, but they may engage others as a tactical distraction. Terminators are typically fitted with a Night and finance chip, as this is most helpful in their duties.

Starting money – upwards of 50000c in a false SLA account

Mobile Ghosts – 250 points to spend on skills and statistics, Stat range as follows.

STR – 2-7 DEX – 6-11 DIA – 7-12 CONC – 7-14 CHA 2-7 COOL – 3-7

Mobile ghosts are the novices of the ghost world, they are not sufficiently skilled to join the hallowed ranks of the ghosts in the vaults back on the darknight homeworld. Instead, they are given the necessary implants to break into normal SLA security vaults, and are then sent out to join a normal Cell. When they reach the required level of proficiency that a normal ghost is recognised at, they are given the option of continuing as a mobile ghost, or returning to the homeworld and becoming one with the crusade.

Starting skills – Ghost – 5, Computer Use – 5, SLA information - 3

Starting Implants – Cybernetic hand with Ghost implant

Starting equipment - Darknight Oyster, copier, nightchip

Starting Money – 3000u

Persuaders - This persuader class represents one of the beginning persuaders, not one of the masters of the craft, they are merely learning the most sacred art of darknight. Beginning character points – 200
Statistics range

STR – 3-5 DEX – 5-10 DIA – 7-12 CONC – 8-13 CHA – 5-10 COOL – 3-6

Starting Skills – Conversion Theory – 6, Conversion Practise – 5, SLA information – 5, Physiology - 4

Starting equipment – Standard Conversion kit, three doses of wipeout, one a/v crammer, 10 doses of KO, nightchip, preserver, copier.

Starting money – 3000u

SKILL PACKAGES

Operative training packages.

HACKER – These people are the most basic level of code breakers within darknight, they typically use hand held computers to try and interface with the sla computer systems. Hackers are given basic combat skills, but their forte is in cracking SLA information bases. The best of the hackers will be given the chance to become ghosts in time.

Character skill points – 250

Beginning skills – Computer Use 6, Computer subterfuge – 6, Ghost – 1, Pistol or Rifle – 2

Package equipment – Darknight Oyster and connection cables, Ghost implant (optional)

SLASHER – Trained to be the equivalent of the SLA kick murder squads, slashers are highly trained in martial arts and close combat weaponry, but are trained in precious little else. Their primary role is to serve as close quarter bodyguards for the other operatives travelling with them.

Character skill points – 260

Beginning skills – One close combat 1h weapon skill at level 5, Martial arts – 5, Pistol – 4.

Package equipment – Close combat weapon that they have the skill in, Arwen detector

BREAKER – The breaker is the specialist in heavy duty destruction, trained in demolitions and support weaponry, the breakers are usually sent along when buildings or reinforced positions need to be taken down. Their secondary role is in the suppression of operatives and shivers who may be about to intervene against the mission. There are never more than two of these operative types in a cell.

Character skill points – 240

Beginning skills – Demolitions – 4, Demolitions Disposal – 4, Auto/Support – 3, Rifle – 4

Package equipment – Fen AR and five clips

SNEAKER – The sneaker is the nearest thing to an out and out assassin that darknight employs. The sneaker is trained for a close quarter search and destroy role. They typically operate alone and are occasionally used in a scout capacity, but this is rare.

Character skill points – 220

Beginning skills – Blade 1h – 3, Martial Arts – 3, Pistol – 3, Urban Tracking – 3, Urban traversing - 3

Package equipment – Darknight Sneaker harness, one close combat weapon.

JAMMER – Jammers are operatives specifically trained in the stopping and misdirection of SLA information. They are also able to intercept and record other information at times, and they are often sent out for days on end simply recording information and sending it back to headquarters.

Character Skill points – 220

Beginning skills – Comms Jamming – 4, Information intercepting – 3, Falsify Transmission – 4, Computer Use – 2, Computer subterfuge - 2

Package equipment – Darknight Oyster, Comms Hammer, Static Implant, two Jammers.

RUSHER – The rusher is the nearest thing to a frother that Darknight can produce. They do not have the vast wealth of clans and culture that SLA has access to, but they have perfected other technologies for the operatives to work with. Each rusher is usually employed as a distraction while the other operatives complete their mission, however, it is not unknown for whole cells of rushers to engage squads of operatives on blitz raids. There are two different types of rusher, the ones with guns, and the ones without, the player must choose which of the two types they want to be, this cannot be altered once the character is created.

Character skill points – 210

Beginning skills (ranged rusher) – Rushing – 2, Pistol – 4, Rifle – 4, Auto/Support - 2

Beginning skills (close quarter rusher) – Rushing – 3, One Close combat weapon of the operatives choice – 5, Martial Arts - 4

Package equipment – Torc, Rusher, two close combat weapons and Mache (close quarter rusher only), one ranged weapon costing 800c or less and two clips of standard ammunition (ranged rusher)

DARKNIGHT SPECIALITY SKILLS

RUSHING – Rushing is the specialised combat training undergone by the darknight berserkers who use the rusher implant. All darknight operatives are taught to fight without penalty in areas of extreme noise and disorientation, as they never know quite when or where they will be called upon to fight. It also helps that the people they are facing are not used to fighting in these conditions, and are therefore at a disadvantage. Operatives with this skill are adept at using the sound and fury of the rusher sound system to fuel their fighting prowess. Operatives with this skill (if they succeed a normal skill roll at the beginning of the combat) gain an extra phase per round and +1 to their fighting skills for the duration of the combat. All those not trained in dealing with the sound produced by the rusher are at –1 to all their skill rolls when within 5 metres of the user of the system.

COMMS JAMMING – Using the various tools of their trade, darknight operatives can stop the flow of information between one point and another, a successful roll on this skill will stop one specific transmission from reaching its intended location. The more secure the communications line, the more difficult the jamming will be. Simple things such as operatives personal headsets will incur no penalty, things such as jamming the flow of information between secure stations such as shiver headquarters to shivers will incur a –4 to the roll. Hard line encryption such as the flow of information from Station

Analysis to Operatives will incur a penalty of up to -9 on the roll. Data flow on the order of cloak division has (as yet) proven to be impossible to jam.

INFORMATION INTERCEPTING – Similar to the Jamming technique, Information intercepting requires that the transmission is uninterrupted, and that it continues on its way to its target. A successful roll on this skill will allow the operative to monitor the flow of information and keep a record of it if they have appropriate recording devices. If the operative fails the roll, they may make another attempt after a minute or so (re-calibrating the device takes time). If the operative botches the roll, not only will they fail to gain any information, they will also alert the people using the line as to the interception attempt. Again, simple frequencies have no penalty to the roll, more secure systems will incur penalties to the roll.

FALSIFY TRANSMISSION – The most specialised of the information tapping skills, not only can the operative take the transmission being made, but they can substitute a transmission of their own. The most skilled of the hackers and ghosts are able to do this without the monitored party realising anything has happened. To successfully modify a piece of information, the operative must first have their counterfeit information ready to transmit, then they wait for the original transaction to go through. At this point, they must make a roll on information intercepting, if this succeeds, they then make the falsify transmission roll. A success on both of these skills will send the false information to the target without them realising it. A failure on the roll will alert all concerned that there is tampering in progress. A favoured method of changing information is to wait for operative squads to request help from station analysis, then to have them redirected to a point where the darknight operatives will be best placed to ambush them. This roll is never modified, the difficult parts of the job are done in the stopping and intercepting of information, the actual sending of false information is the easy part of it.

GHOST – Ghosting is the ultimate form of hacking, to become one with the machine, that is what the ghost does, nothing so mundane as trying to interface the machine through another machine, to ghost is to speak in the same language as the machine itself. Ghosting takes two separate forms, trying to access files that you are not allowed to, and trying to alter things to your advantage. When ghosting to access files, treat the ghost skill as computer subterfuge multiplied by two. If altering things, the difficulty of the alteration is dependant on the system security. Anything of a normal security level (standard SLA records) will not cause penalties, minor security systems (Station Analysis files) give the user a penalty of around -6, industrially sealed systems such as higher SLA records and secured access protocols would give a -10 to -15 penalty to the roll. Ghosting requires a direct access to the system in question, this often requires that the ghost be on site with a team running cover for them.

URBAN TRACKING – The process of tracking a target through urban areas is somewhat different to tracking a target through rural areas. There are no tracks that can be followed, and the target should ideally be kept in sight at all times. Experienced urban trackers develop almost a sixth sense for where their target is headed, and they can read the signs of the crowd as well as any normal tracker can see the spoor of the animal they are following. As always, if the target being followed is aware of their pursuer, they can apply their own skill at hiding and evasion against the trackers skill.

URBAN TRAVERSING – Urban traversing is a new skill, created and mastered by those requiring to travel across the city quickly and without using the normal forms of transport. Traversing usually requires a grapple and line of some sort, which can be used to travel from one building to the next without touching the floor. Other popular ways of traversing include riding on the top of trains, and using lines and skates or boards to drag along behind vehicles. Traversing is technically illegal, but most shivers and other SLA authorities will ignore traversers for the most part. A simple roll on this skill will allow the operative to either alight a moving vehicle, or secure a hold on a building from another building. More complex actions such as trying to secure a hold on another building while swinging on a line will incur penalties of up to -7 depending on the conditions at the time. Activities such as switching from one train to another are possible, but no recommended, penalties are at the GM's discretion.

CONVERSION THEORY – Conversion theory is required practise for persuaders, it is not actually the theory behind the conversion processes, it is rather the hard data of hundreds of years converting the unwilling. Conversion theory allows the persuader to evaluate which procedure will work on which individual. A basic roll on this will give the persuader an insight into what will work best. If a psychological profile is available for the target, then bonuses can be applied depending on how detailed

the profile is. If the target is an unknown quantity, or has some sort of mental defect or disability such as Psychopathy or some similar thing, then it can cause penalties to the roll. These are at the discretion of the user.

CONVERSION PRACTISE – This is the practise of administering the conversion process. Whatever process is being used, this skill covers all the methods that are used without surgery being involved. The stronger subjects may cause penalties to the roll, things such as mental defects will also cause penalties to the roll. If the roll is failed, then the conversion procedure will appear to have worked, but will recess between one and three months after it has been done, leaving the target fully aware of what has happened, and most likely leaving them as a danger to darknight. If the roll is botched, the target will be completely unaffected by the process, either the drugs were mixed improperly, or the devices used were calibrated incorrectly. Either way, given time, the procedure can be attempted again, but there will be an additional –1 for each failed attempt, this represents the subjects system becoming inured to the systems being used.

DEMOLITIONS CREATION – This is the skill of constructing explosive devices from mundane things such as cleaning materials and cooking ingredients (you'd be amazed what nails and cans of fizzy drink can do). The larger and more complex the explosive, the more penalties to the roll there will be. The penalties listed are for type one, two, and three as listed in the hardware section. Type four and grenade style explosives cannot be constructed without a laboratory. A successful roll on this skill will make one pound of the desired explosive. A failed roll will destroy 50% of the ingredients but not do anything else, a botched roll will set off the explosives in the room at point black range.

Type One – No modifier

Type Two – Minus three to the roll

Type Three - Minus six to the roll

THE CITY IN THE DARKNESS

Deep below mort central is the greatest secret of darknight, far below the undercity of mort, a huge reinforced shelter has been carved into the fabric of the world of progress. The perimeter of this city is heavily guarded with robotic guns and living sentrys, and access to the city is prohibited for anyone below level 3 clearance. The knowledge of the cities existence is almost always restricted to operatives of level 2 clearance, or those about to progress to level 2 clearance. The city has no actual name, save perhaps in legend, it is known to the operatives as Ragnarok, for it is the place where the final battle will begin, and indeed, it is from here that the last battle will be fought.

There are seven entrances to Ragnarok, two through the cannibal sectors, one in orienta, and one by each of the entrances to mort city. These entrances are heavily fortified, shielded from scanners, and manned by many personnel who will happily destroy the entrance rather than let it fall into enemy hands. All the supplies for the store houses are brought in at this location, usually through the entrance in the orienta section of the world, a huge rail line runs constantly in both directions, keeping a steady flow of provisions to the city. The provisions are carried to the surface in elevators that reach to the lower levels of the undercity, from there, specific routes are mapped out that allow the provisions to reach the surface with minimal interference.

The city itself is a major training ground for those who have reached the higher levels of darknight, and it is here that most of the higher level operatives within darknight are brought to be fully indoctrinated into the ways of the faith.

The city does not have any non-essential personnel within it, and it is from here that most of the larger campaigns are orchestrated. The communications systems within the city are second to none, and this city also serves as a place where all the information from those who work as hackers and jammers is recorded. The full capabilities of the city are very rarely used as the sheer broadcast power is very easily detectable, and it would not do for SLA to find this jewel in their crown.

The city has its own internal power supply, but in times of larger campaigns, the electrical supply of the city can be taken from one of the SLA grids. This requires a separate incursion into the power grids to redirect the power supply down to ragnarok. When the charges kick in, to the SLA higher command, It looks as if the grid somehow suddenly requires five times the power it originally did. The charge that flows into the grid is sufficient to blow the power grid and plunge the grid into darkness.

The charge will continue for a few minutes before SLA notice the problem and activate the power breakers. By this time, ragnarok will have stored sufficient power to power itself for a week, and the grid that was used to siphon off the power will be in complete darkness for over an hour. During this time, Darknight will launch several other attacks on the sector, all of them gaining a much higher level of success than would normally be enjoyed due to the confusion of the SLA forces in the area.

Blackout attacks happen approximately once a month, and SLA are steadily becoming more efficient at dealing with them, however, given the cost of upgrading all the systems all over mort city, it is almost impossible to deal with these attacks at this point in time.

EDEN

Eden, the darknight homeworld, is located several thousand light years from mort, it is a shining example of what could be. The world is divided into two equal halves, on one half is the industrial work zone, where the weapons and armour needed for the war against the great oppressor are created and maintained, and where the faithful go to master their arts. The other half of the planet is where the civilian population of darknight make their home. A green, natural appearing construction of boundless beauty, it is here that the population goes about their happy lives.

The defence systems of this world are amongst the most complete that have ever been witnessed in the worlds of progress. The industrial side of the world includes a powerful directional force shield, capable of withstanding almost any assault short of missiles the size of citystates. Should this primary measure fail, the planet is also scattered with mass drivers that can launch huge projectiles into space at close to hyperspeed. To compliment this system, the outlying system has been scattered with pain mines and gravimetric distortion satellites. These have the effect of making the darknight system appear to be one large blur on the scanner. Those SLA ships that have entered this region have been destroyed to a fault, not one of them has ever escaped to tell the tale. SLA have currently labelled this region of space a no go zone, along the lines of White Earth and the areas around it. Plans are underway to find a ship that can breach the dark zone and find out what lays within it, but they are low priority compared to the continuing wars on Dante, Cross, and Charlies point.

As a result, although Darknight are ever vigilant in their protection of their home system, SLA finding out about them is not a matter of great concern.

On Eden, there are two different types of people, the true civilians, and the operatives who would play at being a civilian.

The true civilians have no idea of any world beyond the one that they live in, their lives are filled with devotional prayer to their gods, and a life of contentment and fulfillment. There are no regulations beyond the cause, and all of them are happy to do their part in life to see the greater good prevail. This is not to say that the civilians of eden are sheep, far from it in all actual fact. The civilians of eden are usually well read, and many of them are considerably more erudite than some of the teachers in the SLA world.

There is of course, a control point for all of this, deep in the heart of the industrial zone, the council of twelve continually plot the course of their people, making minute adjustments to the course of the society as they see fit, steadily producing the race of people that will be needed to win the war. There are too many subcultures within the world of eden to list, suffice it to say that there are several different classes of people within the homeworld. For the most part, these people are workers, these form the lowest level of the society, tending to the farms and crops that are needed for the continuance of the great crusade against the oppression of SLA industries. There is no shame attached to this position, indeed, it is always viewed as being one of the building blocks of the crusade, and without foundations, no building can stand long against the storm of the oppressor.

Of the other two uses of the normal civilians on eden, one is as artisans, these people spend a fortnight at a time working in the industrial half of Eden, making whatever needs to be made at the time. They then receive a fortnight off, thus enjoying the fruits of their labour. In this way, the darknight high command avoid the problems of overpopulation, and also keep the workforce satisfied with a constant amount of holiday and leisure time. The final use of civilians on Eden is reserved only for the finest genetic stock, and this is in the form of breeders. In some cultures, this may seem to be a basic

violation of the individuals rights, however, in the society of the night, it is the ultimate expression of loyalty to a world that needs loyalty. Typically, the greater operatives within darknight are usually required to make a pilgrimage to eden at some point in their career to ensure that their genetics are passed on. This has led to a few problems with a reduced genepool, but this has not caused a serious problem at this point.

Each of the basic professions of the civilians of Eden is regarded with equal respect, and while some families have proud traditions in certain lines, no family is above another, all are equal under one god, the god of freedom.

The other type of civilian is the darknight operative who has been summoned back to the homeworld. For what ever purpose this is is mostly irrelevant, when an operative returns to the homeworld, they are given a heroes welcome, they are the embodiment of all that is good and righteous within Eden. They are quite literally the conquering heroes, returning home from the crusade. It is not unknown for some operatives to return back to the homeworld to train the next generation.

The normal civilian ranks of eden are constantly monitored for those who stand out from the rest. This is perhaps 2% of the total population, of these, perhaps five percent are suitable candidates for operative training. It is a time of great joy for the families of those chosen, and the candidates are taken away to the dark side of eden to train under the direction of terminators in the ways of the operative. It is here that they learn of the true nature of the world, and the sheer shock of this fact is what causes a mere five percent of those chosen to be suitable for full training. Those who do not make it through the selection process are killed, there is no going back once you know the truth. It would not do for the general population to learn what their true purpose in life is.

To help reinforce the general mood and tolerance of the civilians within darknight, the code of freedom was introduced when the world was first created, as a means of stabilising rogue elements. Ministers of the faith were ordained, and temples for the faithful were erected all over the world, as a place for those who had lost hope to go and be forgiven their transgressions. The code of freedom is a simple one, and like most cults, its messages are inherently self centred. The basic tenets of the code of freedom are as follows.

- 1: To fight for the cause is to fight for freedom
- 2: Those who would fight for freedom are loyal to the cause
- 3: Those loyal to the cause will receive their reward, in this life and the next.
- 4: Those who would not fight for the cause are damned, and will be found wanting when judgement is drawn.
- 5: The will of the twelve is the cause that we fight for.

This is drummed into all civilians from birth, it is in everything that they see, and it is everywhere that they go, it is all they have ever known. To rebel against it is unthinkable. The whole basis of Eden is to believe in the cause. Operatives are known as knights of the cause, Terminators are known as Templars, and they receive great renown amongst their people for this, they are recognised as protectors of the faith. Persuaders are known as Bishops and clerics of the faith, and they garner just as much, if not more respect than the Templars.

And yet those who rebel are the ones who have shown initiative enough to reach beyond the basics of faith. On a monthly basis, those who question are taken to evaluate their faith, those that test accurately are inducted into operative training. Those who fail in the testing are killed, their deaths blamed on the great oppressor.

LAW AND ORDER ON EDEN

There are no real laws to be broken on eden, everyone knows their place, and everyone stays to that place, it is not even considered that someone would want to leave this most beautiful of worlds. When dissention occurs, one of the knights or templars will intervene, and remove the offending party to evaluate their purity and strength. Usually this takes around a week, the persuaders can usually burn out the relevant parts to return the individual to society as a model citizen. If they cannot be turned back into the light, then an accident will be arranged for them, in some way a sign of how god was

displeased with them, and a sign of what happens to those who have no faith. This combination of reward and punishment is a powerful incentive to remain faithful to the cause of freedom.

It is to be noted that there are no laws set in stone by the council of twelve, this is for a reason, true freedom cannot have laws to govern it, and if laws were seen to exist, then the illusion of utopia would cease to be. Such things as murder and rape, theft and any such other crimes that exist so much in other worlds are non-existent here. There is no conspiracy of silence to protect the criminals, there is no fear of the criminals ever getting back at those who have spoken against them. If something is stolen, then everyone will know who stole it by simply looking at who now has it. In the case of murder and rape, the operatives on the planet will be able to trace the perpetrator swiftly and effectively. Public executions for any crime as an “enemy of freedom” are rare, but death is the only penalty when the only crime is a sin against all the people of Eden. People know that justice is harsh, but it is only for those who would break the law of freedom, and no one would doubt that there is no worse crime. Those who would betray freedom are an abomination against everything that Eden stands for, and they deserve all they get.

THE COUNCIL OF TWELVE

The council are the ultimate power within darknight, they are the very spirit of the people. Decisions are always made by democratic vote, with no one persons vote counting as any more or less than the person next to them. None of the council of twelve are known by face or voice, and their commandments are always given by proxy. A standing policy of the council of twelve is that no more than ten modifications to the order of the world may be passed in any twelve month span. Too much change incites thinking, too much thinking incites rebellion, and it would not do to have a rebellion caused by those who the world needs. The council are chosen from amongst the highest ranking operatives within the organisation, when a council member dies (there has never been a record of an assassination), the remaining eleven choose the successor from a list of the best and most loyal operatives at that time. Council members can also be removed from the council by a vote of eleven to one, at which point, the removed member is “retired” from the council and a replacement chosen. It is also a standing policy that any member of the council of twelve may not serve for more than ten years at a time, although it has been known for council members to be re-chosen to continue to serve their people.

THE EQUALS

The equals are the most proficient operatives of their generation, there are the very best of the best, and it is their responsibility to direct the training patterns for the other operative training programs. There are seven equals, one representing each specific branch of training or a particular race. Revered as living gods on Eden, these people have the skills and ability to justify their godlike status. To be elected to the equals is the highest honour of the darknight cause. The only way that an equal is ever removed from their position is if they fall in battle, or someone else proves themselves better in the field. The equals are almost never away from Eden, their duties as living legends prohibit too much time away from the adoring masses. The current equals are as follows.

Todtmachter – Maestro of Close Combat, and first amongst equals. A human of purebred genetic stock, Todtmachter stands 6’7” in his bare feet, heavily muscled with no actual augmentation, he is a walking symbol that man can overcome anything. Skilled beyond all belief, Todtmachter has been the equal of close combat for the last fifteen years, and is undefeated in his field of combat. Speaking with a soft germanic accent, complimented by his natural excellent looks, Todtmachter is the embodiment of perfection within Darknight.

Marcus Vincente– Ranged Combat – Vincente is a hot headed psychotic, but his ability with a ranged weapon in his hands is far in excess of anything short of the keepers of the faith from the wraith homeworld. Pure bred human, he is highly strung, and prone to bad mouthing any who offer him anything except blind devotion, he is still the very best of the best.

Darius Archona – Persuasion and conversion - Darius is a small man, slight of build, and unassuming in the most extreme. Seen on the street of any SLA sector, he would be dismissed as a typical welfare case. Darius possesses an almost uncanny ability to sense what will work on an given target, and has

personally converted over a thousand of the unfaithful to the cause. He currently holds the rank of cardinal in the church of freedom, and is revered beyond all others on Eden.

Uriah Winter – Jamming and interception – Known as The Block on Eden, he was the operative who (it is rumoured) intercepted transmissions between Slayer and his lieutenants, replacing them with his own brand of humour. Uriah is unparalleled in his abilities, seeming to know just when people will be making the transmissions he seeks. He is one of the only equals who has implants enhancing his abilities.

W'lf - Gd'Kllr – W'lf is the most bloodthirsty lunatic ever to come from the ranks of the Gd'kllr, his was the infamous slaughter on new paris, when over three hundred civilians and thirty shivers were killed by one man who SLA have yet to learn the identity of. W'lf stands nine feet tall, and is heavily augmented to supplement his natural abilities. He is cursed with Schizophrenia, with one of his personalities gentle and kind, the other one a ravening maniac. He is not often seen in public, as it cannot be chanced that his fighting persona will emerge.

Azazel – Ghost – It is not known wether Azazel is a man or a woman, for no one has ever seen them in person. What is known about Azazel is that he/she regularly leads crusades deep into the most protected of SLA files, emerging unscathed and victorious at all turns. Azazel has been leading the ghosts for over thirty years, and none of the emergent ghosts show anywhere near a quarter of the ability that Azazel has always wielded with impunity.

Emil Banner – Abomination – Banner was one of the first Generation abominations, over three hundred years old, a product of combined stormer/human DNA. His exceptional status is a result of a quirk that has never been replicated allowing him to learn skills like a normal operative and then to keep all the things he learned indefinitely without needing to dump some of the skills like his brethren. Banner is the poster child for abominations working, and is often seen out and about eden, teaching the darknight faithful that there is nothing to fear from his people.

BASIC TRAINING

It is a special day here today, today we begin our basic training against the great oppressor. My name is Raziel, I was a farmer here on Eden, until one of the templars singled me out as being worthy of joining the great war. It is the greatest of honours to be bestowed upon one such as me, and I will strive to be worthy of it.

We have been here for a month, we train in units of five, each one of us learning skills that will compliment the others, in preparation for when we have to go out and fight the good fight. It's strange, but I find myself having a few doubts about what we are doing. I've never felt this way before, I've been taught my whole life to respect the value of freedom, to be ready to fight for it when I have to. All my life, I've been ready to do this, but now, on this day, I find that I have a few doubts. We have been brought to the main arena on the dark side of Eden, for a "demonstration".

The Arena is a large scarred place, it has obviously seen its share of combat and no attempt to repair it has been made, the holes and blood scattered around it are a grim reminder of the reality of the conflict that we are about to be embroiled in. At one end of the arena is a cage with over thirty people in it, several of them appear to be Abominations, a few more are Gd'kllr from their appearance. My fellow cell members and I have been brought here to find out something about the nature of teamwork.

The door at the other end of the arena opens and a figure strolls through the opening. Standing nearly seven feet tall, dressed in a loose fitting training suit, my breath catches.....

Todtmachter.

He walks to the centre of the room with the measured gait of one of a predator born, not looking up from where he is walking or pausing till he is at the centre of the room. He pauses and raises his head, his gaze covers all of us without difficulty.

“You are all here because you have been chosen to fight for freedom”, His voice is clear and crisp, all the words perfectly enunciated, his tone inhumanly level in timbre “What I am to do here is show you what you will face when we send you out into the world”

He turns to face the cage at the end of the arena, raising his hand to the people held within.

“These people are employees of the great oppressor, you may think that you recognise the races within that cage. Trust me, you do not, what will follow is an example lesson in how to deal with each of them in turn.”

He pauses again, bowing deeply to those in the cage

“Morituri Te Salutant” He intones deeply, I don’t know what it means, but he seems to be honouring them in some way that we do not understand.

“Firstly” he begins, “the creatures that most of you are thinking are abominations”, He gestures towards the cage and three of the big creatures are led out. All of them are wearing armour and carrying melee weapons.

“These creatures are called stormers, smaller, slower and weaker than our abominations, they are however, generally smarter and more skilled in their abilities” Todtmachter walks slowly towards the stormers, going into a high, functional stance, keeping them all an equal distance from him. The first one bellows a war cry and attacks as the other two circle him and attack.

Todtmachter spins to the side with a deceptive lack of speed, his hand lancing out to tear the throat from the first “the problem these poor beasts have is their lack of fore thought”. His voice is perfectly calm as he takes the knife from the second and cuts the third’s head off “They tend to attack in a direct line, not wondering what will happen if the opponent is capable of thought”. He pauses at the end of the spinning move that decapitated the third stormer “you can use this to your advantage, a good diversion will prove the downfall of most of these creature”. He throws the knife to the side wall, as we watch, the stormer’s eyes flick after it for a split second, it is more than enough. By the time the stormer’s attention has flicked back to Todtmachter, he has moved behind it and smashed its spine to small shards.

Still not breathing hard, he turns back to us.

“there will, of course be exceptions to this rule, but by and large, the stormers are not to be feared unless they get to close range, and of course, if they get to close range, just do what I do” the last comment is delivered with a dazzling grin, as if it was the most obvious thing in the world.

He turns back to the cage, gesturing again. This time, several Gd’kllr are released from the cage.

“These creatures are known as Shaktar, they are the unmutated breed of Gd’kllr, and are somewhat handicapped by their code of honour.” He looks to the shaktar at the end of the arena and bows again, two of the shaktar return the bow.

“If I was to demand equal combat at this point, it is likely that they would agree to this, even though they have seen what I just did to their team mates”

The shaktar glance at each other, each one of them taking up their weapon and advancing in a split formation towards Todtmachter.

He smiles, as if this was expected “However” he continues “you cannot always expect them to follow honour in a situation such as this”

One of the shaktar grins, I can’t be too sure, it looks like a grin of sorts, then throws his weapon before charging. The other shaktar attack from four separate angles. It is perfectly executed, a move that all of us would be proud to make. Todtmachter is suitably unimpressed. Catching the weapon out of the air, he stabs it into the first shaktar’s head before turning to the side, allowing the shaktar on his right to lunge and impale his comrade. The two bodies become slightly entangled, causing one of the remaining two to trip over them. The remaining shaktar lands a blow with his foot to Todtmachter’s back. The shaktar pays for his impudence with the loss of his foot as Todtmachter continues his turn, raking the blade across the eyes of the wounded shaktar before stabbing it down into the spines of the two who are struggling to escape the mess they are caught up in.

The whole thing has lasted less than five seconds, and at the end of it, all the shaktar are dead or dying.

“Understand this people, the risk I just took there was unacceptable, but I have the arrogance and the confidence in my own abilities to know what I can do, the same arrogance could very well kill all of you” He seems quite unrepentant about it however “you would all do well to learn this lesson, you have all seen what one man can do, and now you have seen what a team can do when they work together, it is a lesson I will only teach once”

He pauses again, removing his shirt, his chest is ridged with muscle, all of it natural, and there are no scars on his body at any point.

“understand this, I say without false modesty, I am the best at what I do, there are few who can even hope to stand on a level playing field with me, fewer still who would still walk off it.” He gestures to the cage again, and the remaining people are released, all of them human, four women and two men, all of them armed, none of them wearing armour. “normally, I am loathe to strike women, just as most of you will be, but you must understand, these people are not women, they are the enemy, and we must show them no mercy, no matter how deserving of it they seem to be”

He pauses again “you will learn many things in your time here, you must remember them all, you do not know when you may need to use them. I will end the demonstration with some of the tools of our trade, and how best to apply them”

He stops in the centre of the arena, allowing the SLA operatives to circle him. As I look, he puts two gloves on and then waits with his hands clasped as if in prayer. Behind him, both the men charge him simultaneously. He ducks under the attack and brings his hands up on either side of the first operatives head, reversing his hands, he passes his hands past the second operatives waist, then jumps away, landing near us.

The first operative reaches up to his face as cuts appear along the length of his jawline, the second operative falls in two separate halves, something having sliced him cleanly in two. The first operative gurgles out a helpless scream as his face falls into his hands, shock cuts through him and he falls to the floor, the front part of his head removed, his brain clearly visible in the hole.

Todtmachter removes his gloves, placing them on the floor

“The cats cradle, several strips of monofilament wire attached between two gloves, one of the most lethal weapons in the operatives repertoire, however, if you don’t know what you’re doing with them, they can be just as dangerous to you as they are to your opponent”

He reaches into his pocket, withdrawing two more devices and advancing on the women. As he nears the first one, she lets out a war cry and tries to strike him with the sword she is carrying. Again with a deceptive lack of speed, todtmachter ducks under the sword, coming up directly in front of the woman. He slices upwards with one hand, his other hand moving too fast to follow. The woman stands for a second, unsure as to what has happened, then falls to the floor, the top of her head falling loose as she drops.

Todtmachter turns to us again, showing utter disdain for the other operatives. In his hand is a device about the size of a calculator.

“this is a copier, it takes all the information from a SLA finance chip and transfers it to the onboard memory, the problem with the copier is that the chip cannot be allowed to go cold, so you must get the chip out of the skull and into the copier before the chip runs out of power. You have around twenty seconds before the chip goes cold, a good sharp knife and a sure hand will always secure you your prize” He pauses, putting down the copier and taking a blade from his pocket.

He turns to the remaining three women, walking slowly towards them. All three of them are backing away now, none of them want to engage this killing machine in battle. He makes a sharp fake towards one of them, then spins and lightly stabs one of the others in the chest, wrenching the blade as he moves back out of range.

The woman is clutching at her chest, scrabbling frantically at the wound, as we watch, todtmacherter holds up the blade for us to see, the blade is short by about an inch from its original length. The woman is now panicking, the other two are holding her still, trying to stop the bleeding from the chest wound. There are a few seconds of soft grunting and coughing, and then the woman is still.

“this” says todtmacherter, holding up the blade “is a shatter blade, the weapon is a normal blade until you snap off the blade, at which point, the construction of the blade will cause the part that was snapped off to work its way deeper into the target, death will follow shortly as you have just seen”

He places the blade down on the table, next to the gloves and the copier. As he does so, the last two women scream incoherently and attack. With the speed of summer lightning, todtmacherter jumps high into the air, his foot smashing the first woman off her feet with the power of a battering ram. Whilst still in the air, he turns, lancing his hand at the last one. The first woman is down, her head caved in with the awful power of the blow that struck her, the second woman is stood still, shaking and feebly pushing at todtmacherter's arm. He pulls his hand back with a soft noise like jelly being pulled from the mould, blood covers his entire forearm, and there is something in his hand. The woman coughs blood and falls to the floor, her heart cleanly removed.

“Of course” finishes todtmacherter with a disarming smile “the old ways are often the best”

He bows to us once, then picks up his shirt and walks casually to the end of the arena. As he reaches the edge of the arena, he turns and raises one hand in salute

“I'll be watching, do not disappoint me, and we will see each other again”

As he leaves, a faint buzz of conversation starts up, all of us are in awe of what we have just seen. I had doubts, but for the life in me, I cannot remember what they were. This man is an example of what all of us could one day be, he is the promise of the future, and the ideal that we must be true to. I look down to the bodies of the fallen SLA operatives, one of ours against thirteen of theirs, and ours without a scratch upon him, how can we fail, after all, he is one of us, and We?

We are the people.