

# Scratching the Surface

EXT/3e/WHI - Department of Extraction

Support Shiver raid on Downtown market. Capture any subversives selling contraband under cover of the market. Interrogate suspects and follow up leads obtained. Termination warrants will be supplied retrospectively on production of evidence.

400c per operative, contact Captain Buford, precinct #

## The BPN

*SLA Info check:* Extraction? With Third Eye News oversight? Something's very wrong about this BPN. The Department of Extraction are one of the most retiring departments of the company, with reason: they get information in ways most other departments prefer not to think about, generally concerning matters that other departments would prefer not to know. They are literally the last stop before an overt Cloak team or worse comes calling looking for hard evidence of treachery, with a presumption of guilt.

If this is an Extraction job, Station Analysis should be screening any media. The fact that Third Eye are managing things instead suggests that someone wants to make a point, but there's no sponsor to give direction. Instead, the Shivers are calling the shots.

The remuneration is also right at the top of the scale for a white BPN.

*Streetwise check:* sending operatives to support a Shiver raid is crazy. As soon as those Shivers know there's going to be a raid, someone in on the operation will leak it and the news will be all over the sector. The Shivers will break some heads, catch a few small fry too stupid or desperate to lay low and generally make themselves unpopular for a few weeks. Operatives normally go in first to scope out any major villains and only call the Shivers in for crowd control once the snatch is made.

If pressed for results, the Shivers' own investigators can make suspects talk and any prisoners mixed up in anything serious attract Cloak (or operatives working on their behalf) like flies on fresh pig shit. It's also remarkable that the captain is personally handling things; no matter how important the case, operatives will rarely speak to anyone higher than one of the captain's lieutenants.

## The Briefing

The precinct house is surprisingly quiet, and any citizens there are remarkably subdued and even improbably respectful. The Shivers are however stern, even pent-up and if the squad give them any cause they will angrily shout without regard for rank before apologising. The squad are shown in to the captain's office.

Buford is old and overweight; he has a perpetually tired expression on his grizzled face and (*Streetwise check*) has clearly worked his way up through the ranks if those facial tattoos are any guide. *Streetwise or SLA Info check:* It's unusual for a self-made Shiver to rise above the rank of Lieutenant, so old Buford must be doing something right.

"Three days ago my best lieutenant, Lewis, was shot and killed just off New Street Market. Her sergeant, Murphy, is in Alexander Cross and they tell me he'll be lucky if he walks again. I lost five other officers, dead, and two more as badly injured as Murphy or worse. Look at the last page of her personnel file."

He pushes the dossier across his desk to the squad. The last item is his recommendation that Lewis replace him as captain of the precinct on his forthcoming retirement. If the players care to look at any earlier items in the dossier they will see the record of a young Shiver officer with a remarkable string of successes and commendations to her name.

"Lewis was remarkable; a straight arrow always prepared to put the service first and get the best out of any Shiver, good or bad. Her leadership was inspirational; the best officer I've seen in forty years of patrolling. Now she's dead, busting some half-kay [500u, or 50c] contraband racket."

"Well, we've got permission from Command to take that market apart and pull in anyone selling so much as a shoplifted FeelGood. I have six bordering precincts ready to take any overflow of suspects and a back-channel promise of a unit from Dispersal if the good citizenry think we don't have cause to swing the baton for once. Now Command send me you as reinforcements. What are they expecting? Thresher hiding in stolen barrels of yeast cake?"

As the matter is no more serious than the death of a Shiver officer and some contraband, it's evident that Buford has called in some personal favours to arrange all of this. If the squad reveal that they are working for Extraction rather than the SUO, Buford rolls his eyes. "Oh joy! Now I have Corporate crawling up our arses too. And they told you what you were supposed to extract from the losers we're going to bag as part of this little party? I thought not".

"We're deploying in four hours. Aside from the public area out front we're in lock-down so no-one leaves the station. That's not a problem as anyone who can come on this raid wants in. I've authorised free use of the evidence safe [weapons seized or confiscated in the course of investigations] so don't let me hear you giving my boys and girls any crap about unauthorised weapons."

"Here's the file on two scumbags we think might be involved in the deaths of Lewis and her patrol. You'll need to move fast to get them as most of us here would prefer them dead rather than alive. If it's that important to wring them out, take them over to 21<sup>st</sup> precinct and use their facilities. I'll speak to Rowley to lay out the red carpet for you; he still owes me over that cinema case."

He throws over sparse files including surveillance photographs of what would appear to be two Downtown drugs pushers: Leroy Nash and Joseph Coglan. Both are wanted for the supply of contraband including unlicensed drugs and weapons.

"Speak to Sergeant Reed about getting space in the point squad. Think up a better story for being there; you'll be displacing friends of the dead who will have already fought to be in those seats."

## **The Market**

New Street Market lies on one corner of New and Dingwall streets and forms the floor of a massive well going clear up to the surface, so it gets whatever weather is falling up top. The market consists of rows of stalls each separated by a wire mesh wall with a plastic tarpaulin over the top to keep the inevitable rain off and tempt in customers for a discreet look at whatever is being sold under the counter. The cage mesh is invariably hung with stock and posters to provide whatever degree of cover or visibility the stallholder feels best. The stalls are backed by a wall of parked vans, crates and spare wire mesh segments leading to a cluttered access driveway between the rows. Both the driveways and the walkways between rows are just a little bit too narrow for a Shiver APC.

The market covers nearly forty thousand square metres. At peak time it will have a population of 1,000 stallholders and around 9,000 visitors.

*Any appropriate CHA skill -2 when speaking to Shivers:* the market is notionally operated by a resident's committee drawn from the blocks overlooking the market. In practice the local Kiesta gang Los Tiburones police the market and pay the committee just enough to keep them quiet. If they paid less, the committee might risk calling in props to clean out the Kiestas and start afresh with another gang. Any suggestion that Monarch might police the market is laughed at.

*Streetwise check +3:* when not engaged in more serious crimes, Kiestas specialise in stolen goods and drug distribution. They are notoriously confrontational and violent when provoked, and will make an example of anyone who opposes them. A Kiesta who backs down in the face of superior firepower has taken offence and is typically thinking of some way to get back at you. It is possible to flatter Kiestas by treating them as more important than their actual street status.

*Two successful checks specifically to investigate:* neither Coglán nor Nash are Tiburones. At best they are affiliated to the Kiestas and more probably they are simple customers of the gang, supplying them or directly supplying traders in the marketplace.

## The Raid

Depending on how well the squad get on with a rather harried Reed, the squad are either fully aware of the following plan and are in the first APC that pulls up on the Dingwall entrance to the back of the market, or are blindly riding in some other APC.

Two columns of APCs will approach the market, one down Dingwall and the other down New Street. The lead vehicles will block off the back entrances to the market and the command APC with Buford will park at the corner of Dingwall and New. Teams from the lead vehicles will advance on foot to take up a position where the entrance roads meet at the far back of the market, commanding a view of both entrance roads. Checkpoints will close all roads leading to the market from neighbouring districts. Civilian vehicles that move within the quarantined area will be fired upon; the APC Reapers are live for this exercise. Teams will then advance on foot, sweeping the rows for contraband and known felons.

The deployment works. Shocked by the weight of the Shiver presence the stallholders make no protest and the first Tiburones the Shivers encounter surrender without resistance. However, the Shivers have a grudge and aren't too particular about how they settle it. Stalls are overturned, gang members are beaten to the ground and civilian customers brusquely dragged from the market place and searched before being expelled from the market. Screams, shouts and the crashing sound of broken crates fill the air. Eventually there is the sound of pistol fire as someone loses it and the tempo of violence rises. Los Tiburones begin to fight back and there is the sound of Reaper fire as someone tries to drive out of the cordon.

**Los Tiburones:** move 1/2/3.6, softie flak vest torso PV 2/4, 12 HP, damage +2, FEN 603, MAC Knife 3 act, Blade-1H\_2, Sneak\_2, Pistol\_3, Run\_2, Intimidate\_3, Detect\_3, Street\_4, Rival\_Info\_2

The block team covering the back entrances to the market will call in casualties. They are being bombarded with bits of masonry from the buildings. The APC Reapers can't elevate high enough to deal with those dropping the stones, and other squads trying to suppress the throwers with Browbeater fire are running low on ammunition. Bolder residents are incoherently cheering from the other balconies, throwing toilet rolls and lighting flares. It is impossible to tell if they are cheering the Shivers, the gang or the spectacle itself. If the block team is driven off of the back entrances, black marketeers will be able to escape from the trap and the entire raid will fail.

## Attack the Block

Most of the stones are coming from high up in 2 New Street, around the 20<sup>th</sup> floor. Inside the squad find no sign of the concierge. The lifts are all powered off. *Detect check -4 or Forensics*: a lack of rubbish directly in front of the lift doors suggests that they were recently in use.

The stairs are deserted, though once the squad are above the ground floor there are sounds of movement high above audible over the cacophony outside and the muted blare from televisions inside. Evidently a media team is at work somewhere in the market place as some residents are watching a raid happening outside their own windows on television.

*Navigation check*: above the fifth floor the signs in the lift vestibule on each floor have been removed. The building is built to a standard template so unless someone has been counting it will be impossible to tell exactly which floor the squad is on. It will be possible to break into an apartment, take a sighting of a building opposite and reckon from that but this will take time.

Breaking into apartments being used to attack Shivers is fine. Breaking into unallocated apartments is minor company property damage. Breaking into allocated apartments of those innocent of any crime can get a squad into trouble. Use the following encounters:

**Cody King** keeps fighting dogs who will attack anyone breaking down the door. He's wearing a metal face mask, obvious CAF Padquill torso and arm protection and kneepads and he also carries a club. He won't attack the squad, but under the circumstances the squad may jump to conclusions. *Innocent*

**Pit Dogs**: move 1/2/4.9, 3 act, mask head PV 2/5, 12 HP, damage +2, Teeth 2s  
Unarmed\_4, Track\_1, Intimidate\_2, Detect\_2

**Brandon and Bonnie Reedy**, ages 9 and 7, have been avidly throwing whatever they can down on the block team from their back room. When the front door goes down they will both dive under the bed, leaving the window to the balcony open. *Guilty*

**Joss McGruder**, SCL 10, is sitting asleep in front of the television after a hard night in The Pit, oblivious to the riot outside. He wakes up soon enough when the front door goes down, and his frother instincts take over: *Innocent*

move 1/2/5.2, 4 act, PP-8 PV 8/35, 24HP, damage +4, Gash Fist, Claymore, shotgun & 12.7mm UB  
Unarmed\_2, Blade-1H\_7, Blade-2H\_7, Gym\_5, Rifle\_2, Acrobat\_6, Run\_4, Climb\_5, Detect\_4

**Hugo Bean** actively recruits for Dark Night. He knows he's not supposed to actively confront oppressor forces except as part of a pre-planned operation, but when the squad come crashing through the door he thinks he's been exposed and goes for his DN74: *Coincidentally Guilty*

move 1/2/3.6, 3 act, concealed DN flak vest Torso PV 4/8, 14 HP, damage +1, DN74, civilian knife  
Blade-1H\_1, Sneak\_2, Pistol\_1, Run\_2, Persuade\_2, Bribe\_1, Streetwise\_1, SLA\_Info\_3, Navigate\_2

**Lucas Sullivan & Marley MacShane** (latter SCL 11) are too busy on Lucas's grimy sofa to notice that there is a riot in progress outside. PI drug ampoules litter the floor and ever the charmer, Lucas has ASC playing on the television. In flagrante delicto, neither are in any position to offer the squad any resistance, but if they don't leave at once Marley will have the presence of mind to note their squad details and a complaint will be raised. *Innocent*

**Stuart Gallagher, Gordon Patton & Mel Barrie** have all been throwing stones prised from Stuart's balcony which now has a bitten look to it. Cans of Beel litter the table in the apartment and it is evident that all three are riotously drunk (-6 to all actions). Suddenly confronted by armoured Shivers or operatives, they will surrender. *Guilty*

**Jerry Foland:** has a deal with the Tiburones – he buys their drugs and sells them elsewhere. His illegal equipment is stashed away in the apartment which he's carefully kept clean of drugs. He stays sufficiently cool to face down the squad over his citizen's rights. *Coincidentally Guilty*

move 1/2/4.2, no armour, 4 act, 13 HP, damage +2, (FEN-603, Jolt glove)  
Unarmed\_5, Blade-1H\_3, Sneak\_2, Pistol\_1, Motorcycle\_4, Run\_4, Haggle\_7, Persuade\_3, Detect\_5, Streetwise\_4, Evaluate\_Opponent\_3, Rival\_Info\_3, Navigate\_2

**Tiburones:** these four guys are off-duty and use this apartment as a crib to hang out in. They don't have the equipment of their brethren down in the market but once the raid started they've been doing their best to dislodge the Shiver block team and so let their compadres escape. Cornered in the apartment, they will go down shooting. *Guilty*

move 1/2/3.6, 2 act, none, 12 HP, damage +3, CAF P50, SLA Blade  
Blade-1H\_3, Sneak\_2, Pistol\_2, Run\_2, Intimidate\_3, Haggle\_2, Detect\_2, Streetwise\_2, Rival\_Info\_2

If the squad have engaged in any thuggery or misappropriation during the initial pass through the market place, have a TV in any of the raided apartments dissolve into static and then broadcast the following:

"Hi! I'm Lisa Foden, and here is another newsflash from Channel Resistance. Over in {sector} oppressor forces have moved in to brutally terrorise members of the public shopping at their local New Street market." The television shows pictures of Shivers overturning tables and beating stallholders, then zooms out to show green figures advancing through the market and the crowds surging to get away. "At the forefront of this outrageous attack on the people were media darlings {squad} showing their true colours." The picture changes to close-ups of the squad hard at work. "Heroes of the people? We think not. This is Lisa Foden, reporting for Channel Resistance."

## The Empty Apartment

There is a Tiburones fire team at the top landing equipped as per those in the market who will fight until half of their number are down, then flee along the top corridor to another stairwell at the opposite end of the building. The apartment door they were guarding is locked (as have been all the others) and there are no sounds from within.

Inside the apartment, most of the furnishings have been stripped out and the windows are bare. There is a chair in the centre of the room and a foul mattress that appears to have been salvaged from a dumpster on the floor. Tied to the chair is the corpse of a man in his underwear, missing his nails and teeth. Much of his lower jaw is mangled. On the mattress is another corpse, nude and face down. If it is turned over, the squad discover that it is another man with his eyeballs and genitals removed. What remains of his face is grey. There are no traces of any tools or body parts in the apartment but fresh blood has pooled on the mattress and a successful Forensics check will find tiny spatters of blood around the chair.

With the apartments above the block team secured, resistance collapses and the Shivers are able to complete their operation. The bodies are identified as Nash and Cogan. Unless the squad have managed to do something remarkably stupid, Buford signs off the BPN as complete.

## Extraction

The squad step out of 2 New Street and into the aftermath of the raid. It is fairly obvious that the Shivers will be engaged her for some time so unless the squad wants to ride with the next batch of prisoners they will need to get a cab. However, as they approach the perimeter of the Shiver cordon an APC pulls up. An operative in matt grey Crackshot gets out and walks up to the squad. His SCL 7 card announces that he is with Cloak division.

"Squad {name}? Your BPN's not complete. Get in."

*Check SLA Info or Streetwise:* there's something wrong here. Cloak don't come Downtown unless there's definitely a problem which is normally solved by Enforcement rather Cloak personnel themselves. To be here now, this operative would have to have been deployed many hours ago.

He clammers back into the troop compartment of the APC and waits until the squad are in and the door closed. The APC lurches into life and the operative identifies himself. "Simmons, on secondment from Cloak. That operation didn't go as well as might have been expected. With Nash and Cogan dead, our line of investigation has hit a brick wall."

If the squad saw the CR broadcast, he continues: "We also have a more immediate problem. How did a new squad like yours come to the attention of Dark Night? You didn't know where that raid was going to be until you walked into that Shiver station and yet Channel Resistance are able to spot you and name you in a near-live broadcast. Now some people say any publicity is good publicity, and some others think that if CR hate you then you must be going places. You wouldn't be the first squad to try to play that game. What do you say to that? You know the people I work for expect answers."

"I can give you a chance to fix that. We have too many leads to follow them up before they go cold. Buford might think that BPN was for his benefit but we know otherwise. Why don't you remind yourselves of the wording?"

"Now Buford arranged with Captain Rowley of the 20<sup>th</sup> precinct for you to have access to his share of the prisoners, so get over there and get us some information. Call me when you get something." He hands the nearest squad member a phone pay card with the name "Moore Fish" and a contact number. The APC judders to a halt and the rear doors open. The squad are outside the local subway station.

Should the squad check (*Computer Use*) they will find that many franchised fish and chip shops use this name. They are commercially independent beyond the franchise licence, and none use the number on the card. The card permits free use of any public telephone up to whatever balance is on the card. If the squad dial the number or use the card's dialling ability, a Downtown woman's voice answers:

*"Moore Fish – who'dya wanna speak ta?"*

*"I dunno – I just answer da phone. Yeah, which shop?"*

*"Pal, I got calls waitin'. Gimme a name or geddoft th' line."*

*"Simmons. Connecting you now, sir."*

Simmons won't have any interest in speaking to the players until they do have something to tell him.

## Precinct 20

The precinct house is full of lines of people, some injured, waiting to see a Shiver. Almost all are detainees from the raid. Use random citizen characters intermixed with some of the suspects (innocent and guilty) from 2 New Street. Have the players work through a series of gruelling interrogations until they come across Hugo. If the players missed Hugo Bean during the raid, assume that someone else pulled him in. If they killed him in the course of the raid, substitute one Douglas Quinn also caught with a DN74.

Bean or Quinn won't voluntarily give any information or admit that they are involved with Kiestas or Dark Night, so the operatives will need to employ Honesty or simply beat the information out of them. *Check Torture -2*. Once sufficiently motivated, they can give the Lower Downtown address of Direct Armaments.

If you want to torment your players with spurious leads, Cody King knows that four of his regular dog circuit venues are managed by soft company Firefight, the Reedy children have a make-believe friend who the players may mistake for a juvenile feral, the Gallagher party can finger dealers for Blood Burn, Neeto and Pod and the Tiburones will rat on Bean or Quinn if offered a deal but are otherwise -4 vs any interrogation technique. MacShane is trouble unless the squad didn't arrest her and make an effort to get her and Lucas out of Precinct 20.

If called, Simmons will impatiently tell the squad that they have probably been fed a line but as that is all they have extracted they had best go and check the lead out.

## Direct Armaments

Soft Companies face a paradox; they need staff but they also need to stay out of the reach of any SLA Industries enforcement. Most employ elaborate tiers of franchises, trans-shipping facilities and independent resellers to insulate their production facilities from any attempt to stem the flow of contraband. This is of course painstaking and time-consuming to set up, and significantly cuts into the profit margin. Direct Armaments have gone for the get-rich-quick option of locating themselves low enough to only employ a single tier of sales staff to supply Upper Downtown.

If the players have not been down to level 12 before, describe the conditions in detail. The air is unpleasant, and has a downright smoky texture that catches in the back of the throat. The gaudy, tawdry buzz of Upper Downtown is replaced by a subdued murmur in the busier junctions and elsewhere quiet broken only by footsteps and the intermittent faint buzz of a delivery bike. Larger vehicles are rare, but there is sound from the local air vents and industrial activity in the distance.

Direct Armaments are using Royston Recycling as a front, as it allows them to employ staff, run powered equipment and pay their utility bills without any questions being asked. Multiple entrances and a loading bay in an adjacent property allow them to conceal the full extent of their activity from casual observers, but gives their security team a big headache in the form of a long perimeter to secure. To fix that, they've bought in automated help from Tek Trex.

## Confrontation

Los Tiburones still want compensation for Direct Armaments' inept handling of the Shivers. The security detail of their "negotiation team" is now staring down the human props whilst the two sides meet to try to work a compromise out.

If the squad alert Direct Armaments security then the negotiating team take what's on the table and go. If they encounter the squad on their way out then they will try to fight their way clear, and any survivors who cannot escape will join the props as allies of convenience. The props will make one determined effort to pin and flank the squad. If that fails they will slip away, grabbing any loot and using the management escape tunnel.

One of the props is a Dark Night operative disguised as a prop working for Direct Armament. She will shoot any of the management team who have not been killed by the Tiburones, the operatives or the props and will also throw thermal grenades in the safe and the softie computer core.

**Los Tiburones negotiators:** move 1/2/3.6, DN985 Body Armour PV 5/12, 17 HP, damage +3  
DNAK 10mm HP, range 15m, ROF 5/1, -1 to hit on full auto, KK-20 12mm holdout, MAC Puma  
3 act, Blade-1H\_4, Sneak\_2, Pistol\_4, Rifle\_4, Auto\_2, Run\_2, Intimidate\_5, Detect\_5, Street\_4, Rival\_2

**Direct Armaments props:** move 1/2/3.6, Powercell PV 12/70, 17 HP, damage +2  
KK Rend AR, 12mm AP, range 35m, ROF 5/1, BLA Blitzler, Gash Chain Axe, DA101 "Blind" smoke bomb  
3 act, Unarmed\_4, Axe\_4, Gym\_5, Sneak\_3, Hide\_3, Pistol\_5, Rifle\_5, Auto\_3, Wrestle\_4, Run 2,  
Climb\_2, Throw\_4, Detect\_4, Street\_5, Evaluate\_Opponent\_6, Rival\_2, Navigate\_4

**DA management:** move 1/2/3, softie flack vest Torso PV 4/8, 12 HP, damage +2, BLA Blitzler, MAC knife  
3 act, Blade-1H\_2, Sneak\_2, Hide\_2, Pistol\_2, Haggle\_6, Persuade\_3, Detect\_4, Street\_6, Rival\_2

**Dark Night sleeper:** move 1/2/3.9, Powercell PV 12/70, 17 HP, damage +2  
KK Rend AR, 12mm AP, range 35m, ROF 5/1, Silenced FEN-603 10mm HESH, DN Paint Bomb  
3 act, Martial\_5, Sneak\_4, Hide\_4, Pistol\_6, Rifle\_6, Auto\_5, Run 3, Climb\_3, Persuade\_2, Demo\_2,  
Medic\_2, Tactics\_2, Track\_2, Lock Pick\_3, Elect\_Locks\_3, Read\_Lips\_3, Intimidate\_6, Detect\_6,  
Marksman\_6, Street\_5, Evaluate\_Opponent\_4, SLA\_Info\_3, Rival\_6, Navigate\_3

**Tek Trex Vito:** move 0.5/1/2m, PV 4/20. no melee, flood lamp  
TT 5mm SMG, ROF 10, range 12m, Auto\_4 to hit, 3AP, 200 round bin, allows Detect\_4

## Concluding the BPN

Shutting down Direct Armaments is a victory as far as Simmons is concerned. He'll cheerfully sign off any bonus for bringing down Tek Trex kit and any Kiestas, but the softies themselves were the targets of the BPN so don't qualify. They will earn the squad a healthy positive reputation with Cloak.

Serious bonuses (in terms of cash and reputation) will be earned if the squad can capture the DN agent or recover information indicating that this was a Dark Night-financed project. That means saving the papers or the contents of the Direct Armaments computer.



## Filling in the Blanks

*Lewis and her patrol stumbled across Coglan moving merchandise into the market with the aid of some props. She didn't take a hint to back down and the one-sided fight was over quickly. Coglan thought he'd despatched Murphy and the other survivors but botched the job and the props weren't inclined to clean up after him.*

*The Kiestas had a pretty good idea how Buford would react, and seized Coglan and Nash when it became plain that they weren't going to make any worthwhile recompense. Coglan was tortured for information about his supply line and then beaten to death. Nash was simply mutilated and then raped and suffocated. Any competent medical examiner is going to find the broken neck of a glass bottle in his rectum.*

*Coglan and Nash were salesmen for Direct Armaments, a soft company involved in the buying and selling of official SLA products on the Downtown black market. Both they and their stallholders were paying Los Tiburones for the privilege of selling contraband out of New Street Market, but that's as far as the deal went.*

*DA are financed by and act as major money spinners for Dark Night, who had Bean and Quinn partly in place to keep an eye on their investment. Local intelligence from Bean was sufficient for there to be a DN media squad already in place when the raid started.*

*Cloak suspected that Dark Night were involved in the New Street market but wanted more time to investigate the softie. Buford was not aware of this, but called in favours from parties antipathetic to Cloak's agenda and the raid was set to go ahead. Simmons had to salvage what he could by sending in a squad of operatives to pick up any leads.*

*Scratching the Surface is intended to be a gradual descent into Downtown. A successful operation against Direct Armaments could produce leads to the local Dark Night branch office, five levels further down in Lower Downtown.*