

The Sh'mr

(Pronounced ShIm-ear by Humans)

“The Sh'mr? What do you know of them? No... Not here.... Meet me in my office tomorrow morning, 8am sharp and we'll talk...”

Hans Lowry; Third Eye Station Monitor, setting up Op from 'Cold Front', Mort 903 SD.

The Sh'mr were named and first catalogued by the Shaktar. The name 'Sh'mr' is itself very hard for the Shaktar to pronounce, and reflects their ancient hatred of this diabolic race.

The Sh'mr first appear in Shaktar Legends at the time of the God Wars, where there is mention of them in the Q'wKln Texts. The priests of the Shintash clan apparently encountered them first; this may also confirm, by association, a suspicion long held by Dark Lament that the early Shaktar Priests may have had some form of 'Feral' Ebb use ability. If this could be proved, it would throw in to disarray everything the other races thought they knew about the Shaktar. Dark Lament have a number of undercover Operatives living on Kn'nth trying to detect any 'Feral' Ebb use by living Shaktar.

After the first, fatal mistakes made by the Shintash clan in trying to make allies of the Sh'mr, the Shaktar have learned their lesson. Sh'mr are killed on sight, or suspicion, and those that consort with or even speak of them with anything less than complete contempt, are declared Gk'tsh.

What is now known (by a very select few) is that they were originally sent by the Root Dogs in an effort to destabilise the God Wars and to force the continuing conflict to degenerate in to anarchy and chaos. Some Shaktar still believe the Sh'mr are agents of Doktetcomast (an obscure, ancient lesser God), sent to punish the other God's followers for the banishing of Cunder, the only ally Doktetcomast had during the Wars.

“Our ancestors were foolish. We will not make the same mistakes. No Shaktar will. The Sh'mr are to be hunted and destroyed by all, from whatever Clan.”

Rkt Jnll, Shaktar Operative (Shintash Clan) with 'No Fear', Mort 903 SD.

Sh'mr Race History

The Sh'mr began life as Ebons, sent to the Black Stump by Slayer to seek out and report on the activities of Mandrake and the Black Church.

28 Ebons entered the Black Stump aboard the Foldship Scythe, 12 were killed in the encounter with the Root Dogs (destroyed utterly), and the remaining 16 were captured.

The Foldship was sent back, on a collision course with New Paris, only to be intercepted and destroyed by the Necanthrope Union Myne.

“The Scythe? Destroyed, all crew killed. Myne? You don't need to know. You don't want to know. I strongly suggest you forget whatever you think you know.”

Burn, SCL 6 Brain Waster solo Op, over-heard in the Pit, Mort 903 SD.

All 28 Ebons were listed as 'presumed dead' by SLA. Dark Lament sent scouts to the edge of the Black Stump to 'feel' for their Flux presence, and when none was detected, they reported back to SLA, who closed the file on the Scythe and all it's crew.

Each of the Ebons chosen for the Scythe was a powerful Ebb-user in their own right, being selected by Slayer for their high Formulae and knowledge of the Ebb; most were close to turning, some were already on White Noise.

The Root Dogs twisted the captured Ebons beyond all recognition of their former selves, infecting them with a chaotic DNA mutating virus.

The Ebons natural Flux use, and their understanding of the Ebb, allowed them to offer some resistance, and to control the greater excesses of the change. What emerged from the Root Dog's tanks were monsters, but monsters with the inner soul of an Ebon.

The Root Dogs split their mutated subjects in to two groups of 8, sending them to Kn'nth and Polo. The tortured Ebons could do nothing but obey their new masters, their will's broken and their bodies twisted out of their control. The newly created Sh'mr knew nothing of their creators intentions, but they soon realised they were a curse within the WoP that was destined to spread like a disease.

Little, if anything, is known of the Polo Sh'mr, though it is suspected (by Dark Lament), that they haunt the swamp regions of the Myran Wastes on Yuran, where the flow of the Ebb is concentrated on Polo. If this is the case, they may be the creatures the Wraith Raiders know (and hunt) as the Prriss (pron.: p'reece). The Prriss are bestial, showing little if any real intelligence, their limited flux use is thought of by Wraith Raiders as no more extraordinary than that of the Qwc (reptilian flyer from Kn'nth).

"I hunted the Prriss back in '89. Very tough hunt. Lost two companions, nearly got killed myself. The Prriss make you see what you want, make you forget why you want to kill them. Then they tear your head open and you remember."

Farien, Wraith Raider guide, Polo 902 SD.

Another possibility (and that assumed by Dark Lament), is that the Sh'mr hunt the Prriss, maybe even living among them as cover. This would explain why the Polo Sh'mr seem to have either disappeared completely or somehow 'regressed' to the level of the Prriss.

It is only on Kn'nth that the Sh'mr appear to have evolved and developed socially. The Sh'mr of Kn'nth live in family groups of seven; never any larger or smaller (presumably developed from the contact with the Shaktar psyche and their reverence for the number seven). If a family member dies, the Sh'mr 'create' a new one.

Elsewhere in the WoP, the Sh'mr live in family groups of four. This seems to be the optimum number for the Sh'mr, who find it hard to maintain links in larger groups outside Kn'nth.

Sh'mr Race Characteristics

The Sh'mr are very long lived, they can reach an age of 900 years old. They are limited in number by their twisted nature, which will never allow more than 28,000 Sh'mr to exist at any one time in the WoP. The Root Dogs instigated the upper limit on the Sh'mr race, for their own secret, degenerate purposes, which have yet to be uncovered by SLA.

"I suspect it has something to do with the Sh'mr actually carrying a piece of the Root Dogs inside them; something to do with race consciousness. Or

it's part of the chaotic nature of the beasts creation, nothing more than dumb luck."

Dr Chrya Hyko, Dark Lament Dept. Head, internal report to Cartharsis (Division of Stygmartyr), Mort 903 SD.

The Sh'mr do not 'breed' as 'normal' races, and have absolutely no sexual desires or needs.

"I live because I have the will. I have the desire to survive. I am not driven by the pathetic needs you people have. I am stronger than that. My family will always survive, when you kill me, they will replace me. You cannot defeat us. You will all die. You will all die...."

Excerpt from interview with suspected Sh'mr, shortly before execution, Kn'nth 901 SD. Interview not for re-broadcast.

Sh'mr live in family groups and can not stand to be alone (away from other Sh'mr) for any length of time; ranging between one and three weeks. If they are kept separated for longer than this, they will try to 'create' a new family member, which will be doomed to failure if there are already 28,000 Sh'mr in existence. After a few failed attempts, the lonely Sh'mr will die, apparently of heart failure (despair?).

Sh'mr stand between 1.5 and 2.5 metres tall, weighing anything from 90 kg to 180 kg. They always have black hair (on their head only), and their eyes are always either Emerald Green (predominantly in 'females') or Pale Blue (mainly in 'males'). Sh'mr grow no bodily hair and have very smooth, silk like skin that appears to be slightly wet at all times. Sh'mr can easily pass as human.

"It's in their eyes man, just don't look into their fucking eyes. I would have cut my own arm off if she had of asked me.... Just don't look in to the eyes.... Not the eyes...."

Frankie 'FlyBoy' Finnigan, SCL 8 Frother Scout with 'OffSpring', Psyche Evaluation (failed) Mort 903 SD.

All Sh'mr are lithe and wiry, with taut, muscular athletic frames. They usually have very long fingers and thin necks. Sh'mr move with a definite economy of movement, resembling a coiled spring when they do strike.

Those with experience in evaluating their opponents would do well to take note of the gangly stranger they somehow feel threatened by, Sh'mr often cause the 'hairs on the back of the neck' syndrome in those with particularly high skills in evaluating the opposition.

Personality and Attitudes

By their very nature, Sh'mr are secretive and paranoid. They need to be extremely careful in their dealings with everyone in the WoP.

Sh'mr neither fear or 'like' anyone, their bestial nature of a dedicated hunter/killer prevents them from understanding 'friendship' in any of it's forms. Their close family ties and bonds are born from necessity and loneliness, only another Sh'mr could be trusted and only another Sh'mr could possibly understand the tortured loneliness of their existence.

"Ask a Wraith Raider about friendship. Come to think of it, the Sh'mr and the Chilly's ain't that far apart. Except you've maybe got a chance with a psychotic Chilly...."

'Boots' Morgan, SCL 8 Human Pilot seconded to Kn'nth Defence Fleet, Kn'nth 901 SD.

As part of their survival instinct, Sh'mr have learned to fake the outward appearance of emotions that make them seem more 'human' to those around them; it is easy for them to pass as simply sociopathic humans.

To conceal themselves, Sh'mr often live in secluded areas, away from all other people.

Sh'mr have an intense dislike, bordering on physical discomfort, of strong sunlight and UV, this stems from their creation by the Root Dogs and is universally present in all Sh'mr. Strobe lighting can cause a Sh'mr to 'fit' uncontrollably, effectively 'deflating' them until they are clear of it's sight.

"The subject seems unable to control their reactions to the strobe and UV light, the latter causing them to tear their own eyes out with the pain towards the end of the second day. By the end of the fifth day, they were fully recovered. We have yet to see any mutilation or injury the subject could not recover from."

Seth Caulkin, Dark Lament technician, DarkNight leaked report, Mort 901 SD.

Sh'mr awaken each new day with a randomised set of minor phobias; Each day, roll 1D10 and add that many ranks of phobias (randomised) from the list in the main rulebook. The GM decides the dice rolled for the random selection of phobias, the player allocates Ranks, no more than 2 in each.

"Don't try to understand them. They are insane. They are disorder personified. The Sh'mr will transform from one day to the next; always a monster, always a killer. There is no reasoning with them, you will never deal with the same Sh'mr twice. Do not try to understand them. They are insane. Just Kill them. Kill them all...."

Veneer, SCL 7 Ebon Operative with 'BloodRoot', Mort 902 SD.

Characteristic Ranges

If generating as a PC, generate using 'normal' rules, but with a starting total of 200 points. Sh'mr start with 0 Flux and 1 Formulae.

STR 5-10 Normal Range. 1-5 Deflated.
11-20 Boosted.

DEX 5-10 Normal Range. 11-16 Boosted.

PHYS (STR + DEX) Div2 Normal Range /
Deflated / Boosted.

CONC 5-8 Normal Range. 1-5 Deflated.

DIA 5-10 Normal Range. 1-5 Deflated.
10-13 Boosted.

KNOW (CONC + DIA) Div2 Normal Range /
Deflated / Boosted.

CHA 3-8 Normal Range. 9-13 Boosted.

COOL 5-15 Normal Range. 16-20 Boosted.

Formulae Range 1-20.

Normal Range: This is the 'usual' range of characteristics, bought and paid for at character generation. The Sh'mr operates within this range unless it is Deflated or Boosted.

Deflated: This range is used when a Sh'mr runs low on Flux, or has it's HP reduced to below it's 'Threshold'. A Sh'mr is said to be 'low on flux', when it's current Flux level falls below it's Formulae, when this happens, the Sh'mr applies the range for each characteristic that has a 'Deflated' range.

Boosted: This range is used when a Sh'mr pumps Flux to it's Ebb ability to alter it's physical or mental being.

All Skills Ratings (maximums) are affected by the Sh'mr's current governing Statistic.

"He seemed to just go limp, like he ran out of power, just doubled over and legged it. He would have killed me for sure if he'd have stuck around. He was weak but moving like a Chilly on Blaze, no way I could have caught him.... Deflated? Well, maybe, I wouldn't have survived if he'd stuck around, 'deflated' or not.... "

Floyd 'Moose' Klowse, interview with Cloak Operative, Mort 903 SD. (Not for media use).

Threshold: A Sh'mr has a constantly changing body; it's internal cellular structure is inherently unstable. When their Hit Points (HP's) fall below their Stored Flux, they are below the point where they can control this shifting DNA chaos, and are said to be below their 'Threshold'. When this occurs, they become 'Deflated', using the set range of each of the Characteristics that can 'Deflate'.

The 'Deflated' Range: Once the Sh'mr is in a state where it needs to generate a 'Deflated' range of characteristics, they do so by rolling a D10 as a D5; i.e. 1-2 = 1, 3-4 = 2, etc. The number (rolled once for all) is the number that ALL their Deflated characteristics act at for the duration of the 'Deflation'.

The Deflated state lasts until the circumstances that brought it about change, and either the Flux or HP of the Sh'mr go above the total necessary for Deflation. Deflation lasts a minimum of: minutes = number rolled for Deflation Range for stat., i.e. if 3 rolled on D5, all stats/ subject to Deflation are at '3' for 3 minutes.

The Boosted Range: Once the Sh'mr has used it's Ebb Ability (Boost) to start the Boosting process, they must spend two Flux per point per stat. they wish to Boost. The Sh'mr remains in a Boosted state for a number of minutes equal to their Formulae.

"They can pull strength from nowhere. You may think you can beat them, looking as puny as they do; but you can't. They just get bigger and stronger.... "

Sid, SCL 5 313 Operative with 'DredLuck', Mort 903 SD.

Regeneration

The Sh'mr have an ability to regenerate their chaotically changing bodies far in excess of anything that Karma have been able to (so far) engineer.

The Sh'mr do not need to regenerate wounds before hits; they regenerate one wound and four hits in the fourth phase of every round.

"I shot him. Then I hit him. Then I shot him some more. I bit him and clawed him. I ripped his eyes out, tore a hole in his stomach big enough to park a Calaharvey in and the fucker still managed to get away. Don't ask me how. Gives me a headache just trying to remember what the slippery fucker looked like."

Toots, 313 Stormer Operative with 'Knight & Daze', Mort 902 SD.

Ebb Abilities

Sh'mr have access to a random range of Ebb Abilities, which shift from day to day. At the beginning of each day (25 hour period), roll 1D10 on the following table for the Ebb Ability the Sh'mr has access to for the next 25 hour period. Sh'mr roll 1D10 for each 4 Formulae they possess (A Sh'mr with Formulae 9, would roll 2D10). Any duplicate rolls allow the Sh'mr to choose an ability in lieu of the duplicated number (Sh'mr with Formulae 9 rolls 2D10 and gets two 3's, they have Communication and may choose another ability group.)

- 1) Blast - Force Ebb Kinetic
- 2) Blue Thermal - Glacial Ebb
- 3) Communication - Voice of the Ebb
- 4) Detect - Ebb Awareness
- 5) Healing - Art of Healing & Purification
- 6) Illumination - Ebb Illumination
- 7) Reality folding - Ebb Manipulation
- 8) Red Thermal - Inferno Ebb
- 9) Senses - Sense Perception
- 10) Telekinesis - Force Focus

Like Feral Ebons, Sh'mr can use any ability from the Ebb Ability group that they have the Flux to pay for, they are not limited by the abilities 'rank'. As an alternative 'games rule', you could allow the Sh'mr abilities up to their Formulae in rank.

"They are NOT Ebons! Anyone who says they are can spend some time 'discussing' the matter with the Teeth."

Stone, SCL 5 Ebon Instructor at Meny, Mort 903 SD. (Pupil asking questions later 'withdrawn' from training, last known whereabouts; Dante.)

Sh'mr Core Ebb Abilities

As well as the randomised Ebb abilities, the Sh'mr has access to a set of Core abilities that they can use as long as they have the Flux to pay for them. These core abilities have been assigned Core 'ranks' and 'categories', as one of the Ebb Abilities, for teaching/learning purposes by other Ebb users. The Sh'mr Core Abilities may be taught by some Necanthropes, though they will choose their pupils carefully as they are keenly aware of the powerful nature of these Core abilities.

- 1) Boost - (Enhancement: Augmentation of Ebon Energies)
- 2) Mesmerise - (Communication: Voice of the Ebb)
- 3) Mirror - (Senses: Sense Perception)
- 4) Assimilate - (Reality Folding: Ebb Manipulation)
- 5) Flux Drain - (Healing: Art of Healing & Purification)
- 6) Infect - (Gore Cannon: Celrydread)

"Their understanding of the Ebb interests me. They have developed very specialised abilities. I want to know more, where they got the 'spark' from, how it all started, where their evolution will take them.... but I'm not yet bored enough with life to try and find out."

Mire, SCL 6 Ebon Operative with 'Force 5', seconded to Dark Lament as body guards to 'field researchers', Kn'nth, 903 SD.

Enhancement: Augmentation of Ebon Energies

RANK 9: Boost.

This ability allows the Sh'mr to 'boost' one of their characteristics by 1 per 1 Flux spent, up to the maximums indicated under 'Race Characteristics'. The stat. Remains boosted for a number of minutes equal to the Sh'mr's Formulae.

Sh'mr Use: Primarily used to deal with situations or enemies that may be outside the Sh'mr's usual range.

"I had him. Then he had me."

Dying words of Fornost, Brain waster from 'DaD' (Down and Dirty), Sector 320 Shiver Medical Facility, Mort 903 SD.

Communication: Voice of the Ebb

RANK 10: Mesmerise.

The Sh'mr can create in their targets mind the impression that the Sh'mr is a very close friend, or even family. The target will treat the Sh'mr with complete trust, accepting the Sh'mr's suggestions and ideas as if they were the most logical, sensible, worthwhile things in the world. The target can not be persuaded to harm themselves or their immediate family, though the Sh'mr will be treated with preference over anyone except next of kin.

The Mesmerism lasts for a total of the Sh'mr's CONC in minutes, +1 minute per rank of Formulae the Sh'mr possesses..

Mesmerism costs the Sh'mr 10 Flux to use.

The target for the Mesmerism gets an 'Ebb Save' against being Mesmerised; victim's CONC (as a skill) with a -10 Rank Modifier. The Sh'mr may 'pump' extra Flux in to the Mesmerism to reduce the Ebb Save even further; for every 2 extra points of Flux they use, the target receives a -1 modifier to their Ebb Save.

Sh'mr Use: Typically, the Sh'mr use this ability to get close to their targets, to allow them to either strike or drain Flux from them. It also prevents the Sh'mr from having their true natures revealed, as the target will readily believe they are a 'normal' person.

"Hey back off! This here's my friend! Mess with him, mess with me! You want a fight, you got one buddy...."

Jake McClusky, SCL 10 Frother trainee, encountered by Shaktar in Downtown market, Sector 480, Mort 903 SD.

Senses: Sense Perception

RANK 10: Mirror.

This ability allows the Sh'mr to trick those within his range in to thinking it's appearance is completely different. The Sh'mr can 'mirror' the appearance of any person or animal within 10 meters of itself. The Sh'mr's range for 'projecting' this ability is their CONC in meters. All targets within the Sh'mr's range are affected, and each must make an Ebb Save to avoid being fooled (use

Rank as minus modifier, i.e. -10) by the Sh'mr. The mirror image is perfect, as it is in the targets mind not in 'physical' form. It will move, react and have all five sensual perceptions of the 'original'. If a target talks to the mirror image, they will get the answers/conversation they expect, as it is their own mind that is fuelling the deception and their knowledge that holds it in their own mind.

Mirror costs 12 Flux to use. The 'mirror' lasts for 1 minute, and can be extended by the Sh'mr at the cost of 2 Flux per 5 minutes after the first.

Sh'mr Use: Sh'mr use this ability to confuse their pursuers and to conceal themselves within herds or packs of animals and in crowds.

"It was just too weird for words. Ebon shit I guess. The thing just seemed to disappear in to the crowd, then I notice people changing, like right in front of my eyes, then it's like I'm not sure. I know it's in there, but it seems to be tripping from place to place, and no one cares, no-one thinks this is weird. Like the world is suddenly full of twins and no-one's noticed. Maybe I'm just getting too slow, maybe it's time to move on...."

Oliver Stein, Third Eye Camera-Op, filming with Shaktar 'hunter', Downtown Sector 480, Mort 903 SD.

Reality Folding: Ebb Manipulation

RANK 12: Assimilate.

One of the Sh'mr's most powerful abilities and the direct result of the Root Dog creation. Possibly the reason the Root Dogs created the Sh'mr, to 'play' with developing this ability.

This ability allows the Sh'mr to 'absorb' all of the targets DNA patterns and thought processes. The Sh'mr, to all intents and purposes, 'becomes' the target, with all knowledge, memories, skills and physical traits intact.

The 'target' (victim) must make an initial save against being physically stunned by the assimilation, using their PHYS as a skill, with a -12 (Rank modifier). If they succeed, they suffer no ill effects, if they fail, they are 'stunned' for (20 - PHYS) minutes, after which they are fully recovered and remember nothing of the assimilation.

The Sh'mr retains a dual personality, allowing it to reassert it's own form at will or when the Flux

powering the assimilation is used up. The assimilation is partly real/physical and partly illusion, if the Sh'mr differs wildly in their body mass from the target (target is over 60% bigger than Sh'mr), they will appear to be the same, though in reality they will remain at their body mass. Any targets below 60% of the Sh'mr's mass will also be part illusion.

Assimilate costs 15 Flux to use. The Sh'mr retains the assimilation for it's DIA in minutes. Non-Ebb user targets receives no Ebb Save and are unaffected by the assimilation. Ebb users receive an Ebb Save of their Formulae (as a skill); success means they resist completely. Failure means the assimilation is successful and is 'powered' by the targets Flux, i.e. paid for from their Flux pool, if the target has not got enough Flux to pay for the assimilation, they pay the difference in Hit Points (torso).

Sh'mr Use: Often used to gain access to resources otherwise unavailable to the Sh'mr. Ebon targets are selected when a particular Ebb ability or skill may be needed. The Sh'mr has access to any skill (Ebon or 'mundane') that their 'target' has; Ebb abilities must be paid for as normal using their own Flux. Sh'mr do not need to formulate, when using a targets Ebb skills, they act like 'Feral' Ebons.

"This has never happened. You are fine. I was never here. Do you understand?"

Cloak de-brief of 'assimilated' Op, Mort Central, 903 SD.

Healing: Art of Healing & Purification

RANK 11: Flux Drain.

This ability allows the Sh'mr to drain Flux from a Flux Store, this can either be in an Ebb User or 'artefact' (such as an Ebb Medi-kit).

The drain has drastic physical and mental affects for the target and is, perhaps, the most hideous of the Sh'mr Ebb abilities.

The Sh'mr has to touch it's target, the target receives no Ebb Save.

The Sh'mr needs to make a Formulae roll (as a skill) using the targets Formulae as a negative modifier. If successful the drain takes place (cost for drain deducted from Flux drained, then Sh'mr), if they fail the Sh'mr loses the flux to pay for the drain but gains nothing. If the Sh'mr fails their roll, the victim is completely unaware that anything has been attempted.

The victim of a successful Flux Drain suffers the affects of a 'PsychoVirus', as if they had been contacted by a Rank 9 - Psychovirus 2. This gives the victim a -1 to their COOL for each point of Flux the Sh'mr spent in the drain. The COOL loss lasts for a number of days equal to the victims DIA (the more they understand, the more frightened they are). After this period in days, they regain their COOL at the rate of 1 point per day.

Flux Drain costs 5 Flux to use, plus an additional Flux for each Formulae rank the target has.

Sh'mr Use: Sh'mr use the Drain to gain Flux and to power their encounters with Ebb Users. Sh'mr need Flux just to survive, so the Flux Drain is essential for their continued existence.

"This is why there is so much fear surrounding the Sh'mr. This is why Dark Lament want them so bad. This is why they will ultimately be hunted down and killed. This is why I am afraid of them. Everything else is just window dressing."

Shyft, SCL 9 Ebon Operative, working as liaison with Shaktar 'hunter' squad, Kn'nth 902 SD.

Gore Cannon: Celrydreadhad
RANK 9: Infect.

The Sh'mr can use this ability to infect the target with a destabilising virus from it's own DNA strain.

The target will lose one point from their Hit points each day after the Infection has taken place; these points cannot be regained or healed by either natural or Ebb means. Their bodies are literally falling to pieces as their DNA structure is broken down and attacked by the infection. When their bodies reach zero hit points, they effectively 'die' and are reborn 1-20 days later as Sh'mr.

Their former physical characteristics are replaced by those of a Sh'mr. If the infected cannot rise again as Sh'mr, due to their limited numbering in the WoP, they simply die.

The only known cure for the infection comes from the Necanthrope Gore Cannon ability; Drain 2 (RANK 18). This allows the Necanthrope to drain the infection from the target and to 'fire' it out of their system through their Gore Cannon. It costs the Necanthrope 5 Flux per (original) PHYS of the target to perform.

Infect costs 20 Flux to use. There is no Ebb Save against Infect.

Sh'mr Use: The Sh'mr use Infect to create more of their kind.

"Head Office knows they're here. No one will admit to anything, everyone is scared. Talk to anyone and they'll tell you nothing. You can't even mention the 'Black Stump' without getting... <BLAM!>"

Interview terminated with Human SCL 9 Op Chase Willoughby by Frank Weiss, Cloak sanctioned, Mort 903 SD.

Sh'mr and the Flow of the Ebb

Flux Gathering / Use

Sh'mr gather Flux at a rate of 1D10+10 points per day (25 hour period). They can 'store' up to (Formulae X CONC) Flux.

Sh'mr do not need to 'formulate' their abilities or the Ebb Abilities they gain access to on a daily basis. They simply 'unleash' them. The ability takes affect one phase after it is unleashed, the Flux is paid in the turn it is unleashed.

All Sh'mr need to expend 1D20 Flux per day simply to survive. They must roll at the start of the day (25 hour period), they must 'pay' this Flux before the end of the day or they will die that night.

"Sh'mr. Ferals. Same shit, different name. They all go down under enough burn."

Lava, SCL 5 Brain Waster, contracted to Dark Lament, Mort 903 SD.

"They feel the same as the Ferals, their Flux tastes similar. I can not say whether they are related, not because I'm not allowed; because I don't know. I think not though, there is something about them that feels 'wrong' for Ferals. I feel a chaos in them that is not present in Ferals. And I wasn't allowed to say that."

BlueFire, BrainWaster 'hunter', assigned to Dark Lament, Mort 903 SD.

Sh'mr increase in Formulae like all Ebb users. Their understanding allows them greater access to their 'daily' skills, offering some control (via duplicated rolls).

When a Sh'mr's Formulae reaches 12 they begin to hear the call of their Masters; the Root Dogs. For every point above 12, the Sh'mr classes it as a 'skill level' (Formulae 15 would be the equivalent of skill level 3) in a trait known as 'Gathering'.

Gathering

Once their Formulae is over 12, they feel the need to travel to the Black Stump to join with their creators. They must roll against their Gathering trait (as a skill) once every three months (90 consecutive daily periods). If they 'succeed' (achieve 15+), they must make their way to the Black Stump by the most direct means possible. Once they have started their journey, any delay causes them to weaken and if they delay too long, they will die. Each week they are away from the Black Stump after they have succumbed to the calling, the Sh'mr loses one point from a randomly chosen Stat. This loss can not be regenerated and may affect other Stats. or skill use. If *any* Stat. reaches zero, the Sh'mr dies.

Sh'mr can never 'turn'. They do not seek to enter the White, they have no desire to become Necanthrope. Once they reach the Black Stump, their Root Dog creators and masters have their own, dark, sinister uses for their chaotic off-spring.

SLA Industries and the Sh'mr

There are very few people within SLA who know of the existence of the Sh'mr, and few of those will ever talk about them.

Most of the information on the SLA Database is held in Dark Lament files, and most of these are classified SCL 4+. SLA do not want the Sh'mr to become common knowledge; their connection to the Root Dogs could lead to other connections being made and more of the truth being uncovered, and this, of course, must not be allowed to happen. Dark Lament occasionally hire a select few to hunt the Sh'mr, usually Brain Wasters or Wraith Raiders. The Shaktar send forth their Holy Warriors when they hear of a suspected Sh'mr appearance; Shaktar hate the Sh'mr more than any other race.

"The Sh'mr? Just a fairy tale monster to scare Shaktar kids. You think you know any different and you may end up knowing too much."

Harque, Ebon Dark Lament technician, Mort 903 SD.

"They are here. They are evil and bring chaos. They will eat your soul and destroy your civilisation. They must be stopped. If you are not here to help me, you are here to stop me, and I can't let that happen."

R'zt Qwk'N, Shaktar Operative with 'EvenFlow', Mort 903 SD.

Sh'mr in the WoP

The Sh'mr are creatures of chaos and disorder. Their inner nature means they try to cling to emotional security through their 'family groups'. Other than this, the Sh'mr care for and respect no one.

The Root Dogs knew that the Sh'mr's nature and their unique abilities would allow them to cause the most havoc in a society where the individuals actions could have consequences for the whole group / social order. Hence the decision to send them initially to Polo and Kn'nth.

Since their creation, the Sh'mr have spread through the WoP, though they are extremely rare outside Polo and Kn'nth.

The Shaktar treat the Sh'mr as a traditional enemy, recognising them as a bestial foe from the dark mists of their past. Wraith Raiders treat them as any other prey, acknowledging their status as worthy adversaries.

The other races in the WoP have been largely shielded from the Sh'mr and know little if anything of their existence.

"They come from the Black Stump, sent by the Root Dogs to undermine our society. They feed on Flux, they can only survive by draining Ebons of their life force. The abilities they possess are known to some of our Necanthrope Elders but can never be taught to our Brother Ebons. All anyone needs to know is that they do exist and that they must be destroyed wherever they are encountered, cut from our society like a cancerous growth. Sh'mr can not be reasoned with, they are like animals, like a virus, like a disease. Anyone who has had contact with them must be cleansed. None of this took place, you heard nothing and I was never here. Do you understand? No? Good."

Chalice, Necanthrope Operative with 'Veil' Union, Mort, 903 SD.

Games System Stuff

A good introduction to Sh'mr in the WoP would be to have one of the Op's unknowingly encounter one on Mort, and then be visited by a Shaktar Kn'tkt (Holy Warrior) acting as a 'Sh'mr Hunter'. The Shaktar will ask for the Op's help, if they are not forthcoming, then the Kn'tkt may become insistent....

Sh'mr may be played as Player Characters, but only by very experienced players, and those who are willing to sacrifice some of the stability associated with other character types. The Sh'mr will only work in a group or squad if the Sh'mr can drain Flux from at least one other Ebb user without being noticed. A Sh'mr would work well in an all Ebon squad.

As NPC's they should be rare and alluded to rather than encountered.

A powerful Sh'mr could easily become the Nemesis of a squad.

Essentially they are beasts of chaos; malignant hunters roaming the WoP, struggling to come to terms with their curse, forced to kill to live. They will always be the most hated of outsiders and must live secretive, furtive lives.

SLA will keep their existence a well guarded secret, only those who absolutely have to will know of them and their powers.

The Sh'mr may appear to be full of contradictions and inconsistencies, both in their background and their character make up; this is intentional. The emphasis is on keeping them chaotic and unpredictable, driven by needs that humans can barely perceive, let alone understand.