

The Shrouded

The Shrouded were originally a group of Zikari terrorists, smugglers, and resistance fighters that sought to overthrow their Serenites rulers, even before the war started. Following the expulsion of Seren's rule from Zikari, the Shrouded became an independent contract-based business specializing in the same things they specialized in before and during the war - assassinations, information brokering, sabotage, and smuggling. They operate as a for-profit para-intelligence business with many of the top leaders being former informants and guerrillas from the Zikari independence movement.

Though now independently owned and operated, there is still a strong anti-Seren sentiment throughout the organization. They are most active in northeastern Caxton and along the border of Seren, where they still have active operatives and connections with corrupt Serenite officials. The Shrouded work for the highest bidder, with the general exclusion of Serenites (though exceptions have been made). Their influence and reputation is spreading throughout most of Braelin, but they are already responsible for much of the trafficking of stolen military and Serenite goods as well as Zikari-grown performance enhancers. As the Shrouded expand their influence, they have frequent confrontations with established black market enterprises and law officials.

Advancement within the Shrouded is handled as a combination of military and business models – favoring experienced individuals who follow orders unquestioningly and those that bring in the most profit. The Shrouded actively recruit assassins, interrogators, smugglers, spies, and saboteurs. They are just now beginning to search for new opportunities and recruits in Stemma.

Advancement:

Asset (novice) – Individual is recognized to be someone who can be called upon to for assignment or information. Payment will be arranged per assignment, when assigned and paid when completed.

Associate (journeyman) – Assets who have proven themselves to be useful may be promoted to associates which receive regular assignments or are responsible for a consistent project. Associates are considered to be official employees of The Shrouded, but are still paid on a per assignment basis. They may negotiate terms of payment for a job, and typically receive partial payment up front and the rest upon completion.

Agent (master) – Agents are regular employees of the The Shrouded which are trusted with frequent assignments or continuous operations. They receive a regular wage and can also receive bonuses depending on their accomplishments. They are trusted to oversee larger operations and recruit and pay new *assets*.

Handler (grandmaster) – Handlers are promoted from agents who have had success organizing and carrying out large-scale operations. Handlers receive project grants up front which are meant to be used to conduct business, pay other members, and as personal compensation. The size of their grants depends upon their accomplishments and the quality of their ideas. Handlers are invited to The Shrouded's directors' meetings to discuss business operations and are eligible for advancement into the organization's command structure.