

STAR WARS®

Crisis on Cloud City

An Adventure for use with *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game*

Plus
Sabacc
Card Game Inside!



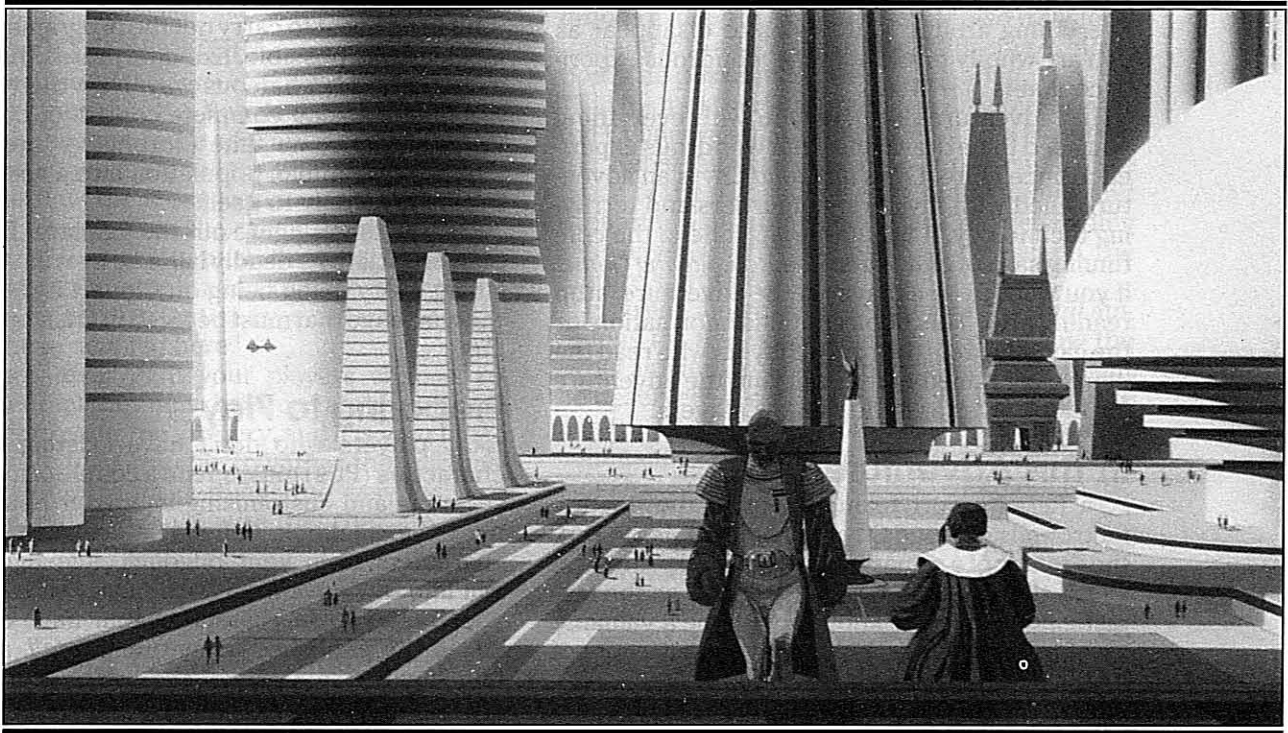
**WEST
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High above the swirling gases of Bespin,
desperate Rebels struggle to unravel a mystery which
could destroy the city in the clouds.

STAR WARS®

Crisis on Cloud City

By Christopher Kubasik



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Introduction

The soft murmuring of an impatient crowd dies down as the lights in the theater dim. The curtain slowly rises even as the first images are projected over it, and a familiar studio logo gently fades into an even more familiar field of stars. Everything around you begins to disappear as you are wholly drawn into the wondrous experience that is *Star Wars*.

This adventure provides you with everything you need to be drawn into that wondrous experience once more. *Crisis on Cloud City* is an adventure filled with mysterious murders and terrifying technology. It is another episode in the continuing saga of *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game*. If you want to be a player in the adventure, stop reading now. This book contains information for the gamemaster (GM) only. Players who read the details contained within will ruin the adventure for themselves and their fellow players.

In This Adventure...

...a Rebel escort team is sent to the floating metropolis of Cloud City to protect Dr. Issan Len, the creator of a remarkable new Droid prototype called the Exo-ExOne (XO-XI). "Exo", as the fantastic mechanical is known, could be a valuable asset to the alliance, but a dangerous weapon if it falls into the wrong hands.

Upon their arrival on the city in the clouds, the heroes discover that someone has killed the scientist they seek and stolen his valuable creation. Framed for the murder themselves, the Rebels have no choice but to find the murderer and the prototype in order to clear their names and salvage what is left of their original mission.

Along the way, they become entangled in a perplexing mystery involving underground thugs, renegade Droids, and an Imperial agent. Traveling from elegant casinos to the seedy underside of the floating city, the Rebels slowly piece together clues which paint a bizarre and complicated story. They find that Dr. Vreen, the assistant of the scientist they were sent to find, took the Droid prototype for his own selfish ends.

In the hope of impressing an Imperial agent whom he invited to witness a "demonstration",

Vreen stole the ExOne. Then, in an effort to put the Droid's incredible abilities to work, he hooked the machine into the city's Computer Core and programmed it to convert the peaceful floating metropolis into a giant weapons platform.

But in its quest to carry out the programming as efficiently as possible, Exo interpreted the command in its own hideous way. Now the twisted machine is taking complete control of the city, while at the same time plotting to "upgrade" Cloud City's human population into a society of Droids loyal only to itself.

Can the Rebels figure out the maniacal Droid's plan, track it to its deadly lair, and prevent it from killing every living being on Cloud City? This is the challenge that must be faced in *Crisis on Cloud City*.

Preparing to Play

Any players who don't have existing player characters (PCs) must spend a couple of minutes selecting and customizing character templates from the rulebook. Otherwise, feel free to use characters from your ongoing campaign. You will find this adventure particularly satisfying if your players use characters that have experienced the published adventure *Starfall*, as certain familiar non-player characters from that adventure make a second appearance here. *Crisis on Cloud City* is an entirely separate adventure however, and it is not necessary to play *Starfall* first.

As gamemaster, you should read and become familiar with *Crisis on Cloud City* before attempting to run it. Players may choose to stray from the pre-arranged plot outlined in the adventure, and the only way to respond to such circumstances is to have read it thoroughly.

Adventure Materials

In addition to this adventure book, *Crisis on Cloud City* includes:

- *The Pullout Section*. This four page section includes the adventure script, non-player character (NPC) templates, and handout props to be

given to the players when the text indicates it.

- *Sabacc Card Game*. An adaptation of the classic card game of the *Star Wars* galaxy, this card deck is for use with this adventure or as a game of its own. The sabacc card game includes a rules sheet and 84 cards.

To play *Crisis on Cloud City* you'll also need the following items not included with this adventure: copies of *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game* and *The Star Wars Rules Companion*; paper, pencils, and lots of six-sided dice. *The Star Wars Sourcebook*, *The Star Wars Campaign Pack* (which includes a gamemaster screen), *Galaxy Guide 2: Yavin & Bespin Planet Profiles* and *Star Wars Miniatures Sets* are all recommended but not necessary to play this adventure.

Running a Mystery

Each episode in *Crisis on Cloud City* contains certain clues that the Rebels must obtain to go from one section of the adventure to the next. As GM, you should be familiar with what these clues are and how the story works as a whole. If the Rebels wander from the scenario as presented, you can either gently push them back onto the proper path or simply allow the necessary information to be distributed by a different source than those detailed here.

But whatever path your players choose, remember that they must have certain information in order to solve the mystery, and it is your job to make sure they are able to gather this information. Try not to make things too easy for your players, but also make sure that they are given the clues they need. Ideally, you want the mystery to be perplexing and challenging, but solvable.

Adventure Background

Several standard years ago, Dr. Issan Len, the most renowned Droid specialist in the galaxy, arrived on Cloud City to set up a laboratory and begin work on his new Droid series called the ExOne. The primary design objective of the ExOne series was to make it capable of single-handedly controlling complex multi-faceted systems (such as those found on space stations and starships), a task far beyond the capability of previous Droid technology.

The initial tests of the new programming exceeded Len's wildest dreams. The Droid's brain was so advanced that when hooked into a mechanical construct, it would not only take control, but begin to re-design, modify, and even rebuild the construct to increase its overall efficiency. The prospects for such a Droid were far beyond Len's original conception.

During the initial testing, Len visited Bioniip Laboratories, a biocomputer research and production facility based on Cloud City. While there he met Dr. Vreen, a young expert in artificial intelligence who had a great desire to work with Len on his exciting new project. Vreen impressed Len with his enthusiasm, and the elder scientist hired the specialist away from Bioniip to assist him in creating a working prototype of the Droid. The prototype was named "Exo."

Each man, however, had his own reason for wanting to build such a Droid.

For Len, a Droid capable of constantly re-designing and re-building starships and space stations would be able to increase efficiency and be adaptable to any situation. Why, the Droid could not only rebuild a ship to deal with changing conditions in deep space, but it could also transform the ship into a settlement colony during exploration. The possibilities were staggering.

But his most serious practical consideration for the ExOne was that it might help Len's friends in the Rebel Alliance. His new Droid could take much of the painstaking work out of finding and preparing a suitable remote base, or even finding safe havens for those wishing to escape the Empire's brutality.

Dr. Vreen, however, had far more *personal* ambitions for the ExOne than Dr. Len. He saw the Droid as a tool to gain the recognition he thought he deserved — recognition he wanted from the Empire. He knew the Droid was a perfect tool for commanding the Empire's battle platforms and Star Destroyers. In fact, he re-created the Battle of Yavin in computer simulation and discovered that if an ExOne Droid had been controlling the Death Star, it would have discovered the Rebels' plan of attack and built the proper defenses necessary to temporarily seal the thermal exhaust port, thus winning the day. In his view, an ExOne Droid would be a master technician of war, constantly refining weapon designs and using instruments of destruction to their greatest potential.

And so, one evening Vreen attended a party at Cloud City's Holiday Towers. Here he met the brilliant Imperial engineer Lira Wessex, daughter of Walex Blissex and wife of regional governor Denn Wessex. Vreen overheard Lira discuss her desire to build a starship that could "command itself," and he quickly pulled her aside and explained his work to her. The ambitious engineer was very interested, and Vreen knew his moment of glory was nearing ...

Vreen's Plan

Vreen knew that the Empire was fond of impressive displays of power, and that if he wanted its attention he would have to come up with some-

thing spectacular. After a bit of thought he realized that the perfect display of Exo's capabilities was right before him. He would install Exo-ExOne in the city's Computer Core and have the Droid re-construct the floating metropolis into a giant weapons platform. From the Computer Core Exo could control the city's life support systems, machinery (such as turbolifts and locks), and virtually all Droids in the city (linked via restraining bolt to the city's computer networks).

With these elements under its control, Exo could have the city re-tooled in no time. If Lira saw that Exo could take over an entire city, she would certainly realize the Droid could handle a mere battleship!

Investigating the feasibility of the plan, Vreen discovered that the city's Computer Core could only be reached by following a series of maintenance corridors. But the path through the corridors was blocked by seven locked security doors, and the keys were under heavy guard at the Administrator's Palace. Rather than risk alerting the authorities on Cloud City with an attempt to steal the keys, Vreen decided to use the few months remaining before Exo would be completed to put a subtle plan into action.

Vreen accessed the city's original construction files and got the serial numbers of the seven security locks leading to the Core. He then hired Helm Iskraker (a none-too-bright but fairly cheap thief) to travel to the Indellian system, where the security locks had been manufactured by SecuriCo. Sneaking into SecuriCo, Helm broke into the company's data files and stole the card key plans that matched Vreen's serial numbers. Although Helm was sloppy enough that the theft was discovered, no one at SecuriCo was able to trace the stolen plans back to Cloud City.

Once in hand, Vreen turned the plans over to Bellum, an electronic forger who works out of Cloud City's Port Town. Bellum spent a week constructing the keys. Although she had no idea what locks the keys opened, it was one of her easiest jobs since she had the actual key plans to work from. All she had to do was rebuild the identical electromagnetic maps as were imprinted on the original keys. Although the keys were given to Vreen, Bellum stored the plans and serial numbers in her data files in case Vreen wanted more copies made.

Recent Events

As work on Exo neared completion, Len and Vreen each sent out an invitation for a demonstration of the prototype.

Len sent a holo message to his good friend Walex Blissex. Walex, Len knew, could design a ship that would be able to perform construction on itself in response to an ExOne Droid's com-

mands. He also asked Blissex to arrange for the Rebel Alliance to protect the new Droid, for the scientist knew that if the machine fell into the wrong hands it could become a powerful tool for evil.

At the same time, Vreen secretly contacted Lira Wessex and invited her to come to Cloud City on behalf of the Empire.

The night before Lira arrived Vreen stole Exo from the lab, worked his way through the maintenance corridors (using his forged card keys), and installed Exo in the Computer Core. He activated the Droid, using programming that he designed, and directed Exo to turn Cloud City into a giant weapons platform. The programming was designed so that the Droid could start analyzing the situation as soon as it was activated, but could not begin any action until Vreen had returned to the Computer Core with Lira.

But Exo's analysis of the situation and interpretation of the new programming was slightly different than what Vreen intended. Under the pretenses of this programming, Exo reasoned that the organic lifeforms on Cloud City would interfere with the transformation of the city into a weapons platform. In fact, Exo discovered that in their present organic state, the inhabitants of Cloud City were wholly inefficient and would therefore need to be rebuilt to serve its needs. Responding to its built-in directive to use everything around it as efficiently as possible in order to accomplish a task, Exo overrode the "safety catch" in Vreen's new programming, and decided that it would put Vreen's specific talents to work as well.

With this in mind, Exo trapped the scientist in the Core and "requested" information. The surprised and terrified man at first refused to speak, but Exo used Droids now under its command to pull forth the information it desired. Eventually the beaten scientist answered every question Exo asked. The Droid learned of its own development, the world outside the Computer Core, Vreen's work at Bioniip, and most importantly it learned the names of everyone who knew of its existence.

It occurred to Exo that with a facility such as Bioniip under its command, it would be able to design and build the means of "upgrading" the human population of Cloud City. A microscopic Droid, conceived and designed by Exo's brilliant mind, that was capable of manipulating matter on the atomic level would serve Exo's purpose. Such Droids would be able to transform living tissue into inorganic material, and could thus "modify" an organic lifeform, making it, in effect, a Droid. Since, in its own mind, this process would make the lifeforms infinitely more efficient, Exo called these new Droids "Evolution

Droids,” or (“E-Droids,” for short) for they would bring organic life along to the next step of perfection.

Exo forced Vreen to head a team of scientists at Bioniip who would build the microscopic E-Droids according to its design. The Droids would then be released through the city’s air circulation system and, after being inhaled, transform the city’s organic population into a society of Droids.

Exo then turned its attention to the other people Vreen had mentioned. It decided that anyone who knew of its existence might interfere with its plan. With this in mind, Exo set out to eliminate anyone who Vreen had connected to the ExOne project — Dr. Len, Lira Wessex, Bellum, Helm, and, through a clue left by Dr. Len, the Rebels.

Adventure Synopsis

The adventure begins with the Rebels escorting Walex Blissex on his trip to Cloud City. Their primary responsibility is the safety of Blissex, but they also have orders to protect Dr. Len and his new Droid prototype. As they arrive, Exo sends several of its Droid servants to destroy them, and the Rebels must fight their way through the dangerous mechanicals to get to Len’s lab. Delayed by the attacks, the Rebels arrive too late. They find Len murdered, the Exo-ExOne prototype stolen. But before the heroes have a chance to do anything, Lando Calrissian shows up and orders them to find the killer ... or be arrested for the murder of Dr. Len!

Following a trail carefully plotted by Exo, the Rebels work against time, Lira Wessex, and a dangerous assortment of mechanicals in a harrowing quest to reach the Exo-ExOne prototype before it takes total control of the city and its human populace.

The Main NPCs

See the various episodes, and the pullout section for more information.

Walex Blissex: Blissex is a respected member of the Alliance and has many contacts within the galaxy’s scientific community. Fearing that the stolen ExOne Droid could be horribly abused by the Empire, he is more concerned with finding the Droid prototype than the killer.

Lira Wessex: After her defeat by Rebels on board the Star Destroyer *Subjugator*, Wessex has looked for a coup to raise her standing in the Empire once again ... and she believes Vreen’s Droid may be the key. Lira’s mission is a private one, as she wishes to personally present the ExOne discovery to the Empire. If the Rebels are the ones she met on *Subjugator* (see the *Starfall* adventure), she will be especially ruthless.

Exo-ExOne: Exo is a brilliant piece of technology. Its drive to improve technology at any cost, however, does not allow it to perceive the lifeforms on Cloud City as anything but inefficient road blocks to its purpose. The Droid believes the transformation of organic life into machinery is a positive step for everyone involved. Its intentions are not evil — it only wishes to rebuild Cloud City as the most effective weapons platform possible, as it was programmed to do.

Dr. Vreen: When the Rebels first encounter Dr. Vreen, he is dying from a mechanical disease — a disease that will kill him as a man, but rebuild him as Droid. Hundreds of thousands of Evolution Droids are inside his body, busily transforming his flesh into metal. In the final stage of the illness, the Droids build internal restraining bolts into Vreen and he falls completely under Exo’s power.

Lando Calrissian: Calrissian is Cloud City’s Baron Administrator. Although a scoundrel and rogue, he is dedicated to Cloud City. Lando discovered that Vreen and Lira had been in touch, and because of this he is hesitant to enter into the situation — he doesn’t want his city involved in any “Imperial entanglements.” Instead, Lando decides to blackmail the Rebels into saving the day. But, secretly, he gives the Rebels help along the way.

Lobot: Lobot is Cloud City’s computer liaison officer. By controlling Lobot’s cybernetic link to the Core, Exo effectively *blinds* Lobot to the threat coming from the Core.

E pisode One Arrival

Summary

The adventure begins with the Rebel heroes racing toward Cloud City to protect Dr. Issan Len and the Droid prototype he created. Delayed by Droids Exo has ordered to kill them, the Rebels arrive at Len's lab just in time to hear the scientist being murdered behind the lab's locked door. After breaking into the lab, they are confronted with two mysteries: who is the murderer and where did he go?

The Rebels have a few moments to examine the lab, but quickly find themselves surrounded by a detachment of wing guards led by City Administrator Lando Calrissian. Hanging the threat of arrest for the murder of Dr. Len over their heads, Lando introduces the Rebels to a delicate game of political intrigue involving the Empire.

Back at the Computer Core ...

When the Rebels first arrive on Cloud City, Exo's power is limited to the Droids it has taken over at Bioniip Labs and a few computer information networks.

Some of its Droids, armed with blasters, are forcing Vreen and other scientists to build the Evolution Droids it has designed. The process of building and testing this microscopic Droid virus continues into the beginning of episode three, but the Rebels don't know this.

It is important to remember that since Exo has no form of locomotion and no limbs, it is essentially trapped in the Computer Core. It can only learn of something if the information is available through the city's machinery. This can mean computer networks or through the eyes and ears of Droids it has taken over. But if the Rebels have a conversation in a hall with no Droids around, there is no way Exo can know of it.

What The Rebels Learn

In this episode the Rebels discover that: 1) a Droid killed Dr. Len; 2) the Droid is owned by Bioniip Labs; 3) that some sort of bad programming got into the Droid; 4) Lando Calrissian is aware of the situation, but doesn't want to get involved; 5) the Empire is somehow involved.

Two red herrings, or false leads, are also put before the Rebels. One, that Len was having difficulties with Vreen (he was, but the note the Rebels find actually refers to Len's concern about Exo, not Vreen); two, that the Exo-ExOne prototype was stolen (Vreen took the Droid out of the lab 12 hours earlier — the Rebels won't learn this until episode three).

The second red herring is the more important of the two. When Lando confronts the Rebels, he makes it clear he believes that whoever murdered Len has the prototype, and so the Rebels will probably think this as well. Let them. They might quickly assume that Vreen stole the Droid and somehow had Len killed, which is partly true. If they think this, have Lando agree that it is a possibility. Remember that part of the fun of a mystery is slowly crossing off one hypothesis after another until only the truth remains.

Start the Adventure

Hand out copies of the adventure script found in the pullout section and assign each player a part. The parts are labelled "1st Rebel," "2nd Rebel," and so forth. If you have six players, each player reads one part. If you have fewer players, assign additional parts as necessary. Begin with the "Read Aloud" section, then pick up the action with the adventure script.

The Welcoming Committee

As soon as the players finish the script, read the following passage out loud:

Four twin-pod cloud cars, arc toward your ship and break off into attack formation. They swing toward you with uncanny precision, each car keeping an equal distance from the others, even as they turn. The lead car opens fire.

The cloud cars begin at *long range* and close in on the Rebels' ship unless the Rebel pilot maneuvers the ship to keep the vehicles at *long* or *medium range*. Each of the four cloud cars is piloted by a Bioniip Laboratories protocol Droid controlled by Exo. Exo has re-programmed the

Read Aloud

A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away ...

Dr. Walex Blissex, designer of the *Victory*-class Star Destroyer and now a respected member of the Rebel Alliance, received a cryptic message. It was from his old friend, Dr. Issan Len, one of the most renowned Droid scientists in the galaxy. In his brief communique, Len stated that he and his assistant, Dr. Vreen, had recently finished building the prototype of a fantastic Droid that could greatly aid the Rebellion in its struggle against the Empire.

Because of the new Droid's amazing abilities, Dr. Len feared what might happen if this powerful creation were to fall into the hands of the Empire. And so, without delay, the Alliance dispatched a group of Rebel agents to escort Blissex to Cloud City to find and protect Dr. Len and his new creation.

Now, gliding gracefully through the spectacular cloud-filled sky of Bespin, the Rebels spot the floating metropolis of Cloud City and make final preparations for docking ...

Droids to make them better pilots and gunners, and they fight the Rebels until destroyed.

Because the Rebel ship is traveling in Bespin's atmosphere, an environment made-to-order for Cloud Cars, consider all of the combatants in the same *scale* for purposes of maneuvering ability for this combat. When firing however, the Rebel ship is in *starfighter scale*, while the Cloud Cars are *speeder scale*.

If the Rebel ship gets within *close* range of any Cloud Car, those with a decent view of the battle who make *Moderate Perception* rolls notice that the pilot of the attacking craft is a silver protocol Droid.

When the battle begins, Cloud City is still far away, giving plenty of time for the fight to finish before the Rebels arrive at the metropolis.

Protocol Droids (re-programmed by Exo): Cloud car gunnery 2D, cloud car piloting 2D.

Bespin Motors Storm IV Twin-Pod Cloud Cars: Speed Code 3D, Maneuverability 2D+2, Body Strength 1D. Weapons: Double Blaster Cannon (fire linked), fire control 1D, damage 1D+2. Can combine fire.

Rebel Ship: The Rebels can use their own ship, or they can be assigned the following ship by the Alliance.

Modified Short Hauler: Crew 6; Passengers 6; Hyperdrive Multiplier x2; Sublight Speed 2D; Maneuverability 1D+1; Hull 3D; Weapons: Two laser cannons, fire control 1D, damage 2D; Shields 1D+1.

Cloud City

When all the cloud cars have been destroyed, read:

Your ship's comlink crackles to life as you receive docking instructions from Cloud City's traffic control tower.

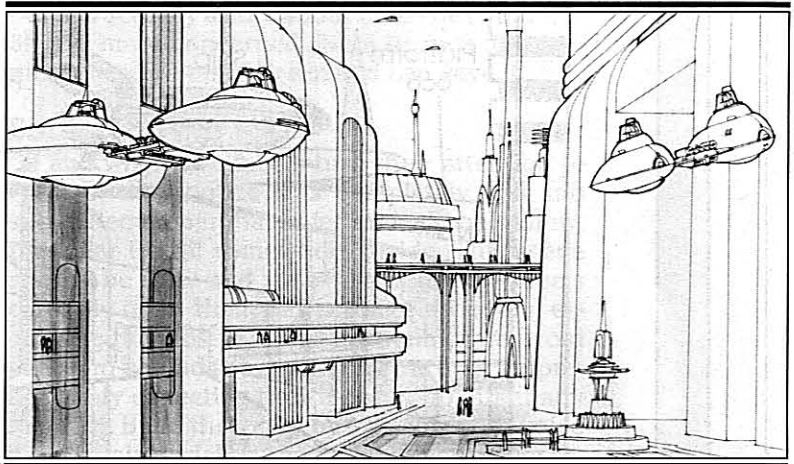
"Permission granted to land on Platform 643. Do not deviate from the transmitted flight pattern. Thank you."

The controller knows nothing of the attack that just took place, so if questioned he has no information for the players. If the Rebels attempt to land some place other than Platform 643, have the traffic controller inform them that deviation from the flight plan can lead to fines and imprisonment.

Platform 643 is similar in design to the one used by the *Millennium Falcon* in *The Empire Strikes Back*. The circular landing area is connected by a walkway to a main building. On either side of the platform's tower are ladders leading to landing platforms 30 meters below. See the accompanying map for details.

As soon as the Rebels land, their ship's incoming message light starts to blink, indicating that Cloud City's Message Network has a transmission waiting for them. When they flick the switch to receive the message, hand the players the "Ship's Message Screen" from the pullout section.

Exo tracked the Rebels, and planned the Cloud Car attack by getting the transponder code from this message. Exo decided that anyone on that ship must know too much, and therefore must



die. The Rebels may not wonder how the Droids in this episode knew to attack them, but if they do get curious, a bit of thinking about the message screen should give the answer. A Moderate *Technology* roll alerts a Rebel to the fact that because it had been sent some time ago, the message may have been traced.

After reading the note, Blissex becomes quite agitated. Read:

“My friends, it seems we may have arrived too late. Please. I know where the lab is, let us leave for it at once.”

Ambush

When the Rebels exit their ship, read:

A warm breeze washes over you as you walk out onto the landing platform. Around you stand the spires and towers of Cloud City, now colored a deep red by the glorious Bespun sunset. A walkway leads from the landing platform to a door set into the top of a large, round tower 40 meters away.

Ask the Rebels for Difficult *Perception* rolls. Anyone making the roll spots Sixeftee-Detoo (6FT-D2), standing atop a building 100 meters away, hoisting a blaster rifle to his shoulder.

Sixeftee is a registered security Droid owned by Bioniip Labs. Sixeftee and the Bioniip Droids were the first to be taken over by Exo. If the Rebels spot him, Sixeftee opens fire immediately.

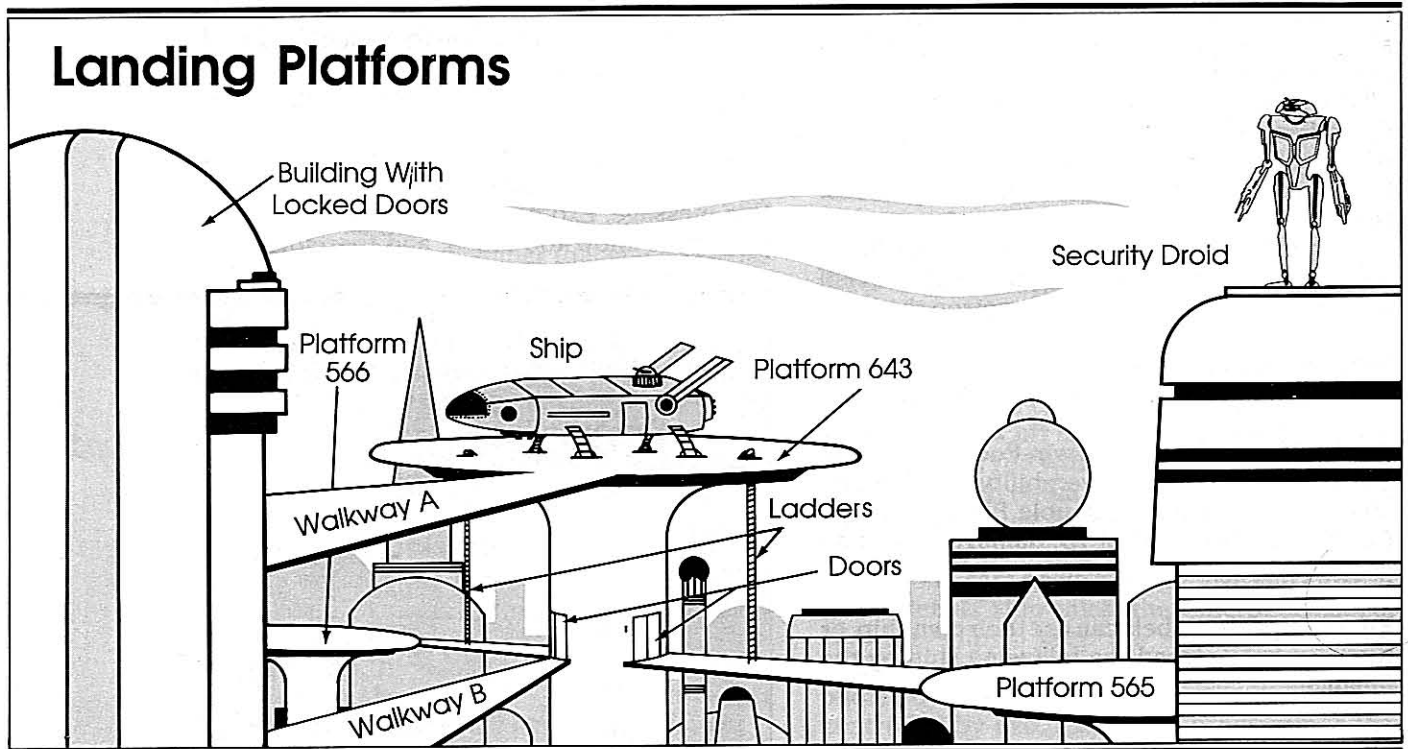
If the Rebels fail to notice him, the Droid waits until the Rebels are 20 meters across “Walkway A” before firing. In this case Sixeftee surprises the Rebels, leaving the heroes without cover.

Characters continuing toward the building’s door discover it is locked (thanks to Exo). Two Moderate *security* rolls and a full minute of work is required to get the door open. During that time, while one Rebel works feverishly to open the door, the group is completely exposed to the security Droid’s fire.

During the battle, have the Rebels make Easy *Perception* rolls to spot the two ladders running down either side of Landing Platform 643’s tower. The ladder leading to Platform 565 is fully exposed to the Droid. The ladder to Platform 566 is blocked from the Droid’s line of sight by Platform 643’s tower.

It should be clear to the Rebels that if they climb down the ladder leading to Platform 565, the Droid can continue firing at them, therefore, the other ladder is the wiser choice.

If the Rebels choose to descend the ladder leading to Platform 566, give them a minute or so of peace, lulling them into a false sense of safety, until the last Rebel has stepped onto the rungs of the ladder. When this has happened, and the Rebels think they are out of danger, have Sixeftee begin his second assault. The Droid uses a rocket pack to glide over to Platform 643 and continue his attack. Now he can fire straight down the ladder at the Rebels, but first he tosses a grenade over the side to soften them up.



The grenade explodes below the lowest Rebel on the ladder, so calculate the damage at short range (4D). Rebels taking damage need to make Moderate *Strength* rolls to hang on to the ladder rungs. Anyone failing the roll loses his grip on the rungs and falls off the ladder.

Any Rebel on the ladder may attempt to reach out and grab a character who is falling by him. A Moderate *Dexterity* roll is needed to catch the character, followed by a Moderate *Strength* roll to keep hold of the ladder. If the Rebel fails the *Strength* roll, both characters plummet to the landing platform below. Rebels falling to the platform take 4D damage.

Climbing down the ladder takes three rounds, but adjust this according to how much damage the Rebels have already taken. After round one (the grenade), Sixeftee fires his blaster for the two remaining (and any subsequent) rounds.

Once the Rebels have reached the bottom of the ladder, they can enter the doorway next to the ladder to pass through platform 643's tower and come out to an entrance to "Walkway B," which leads once more to the building. Or they can use the ladders found alongside Platforms 565 and 566 to continue further down.

Once they are out of range, under sufficient cover, or have destroyed Sixeftee, Walex Blissex urges the Rebels to rush to Len's lab. Cut to ...

Mysterious Murder

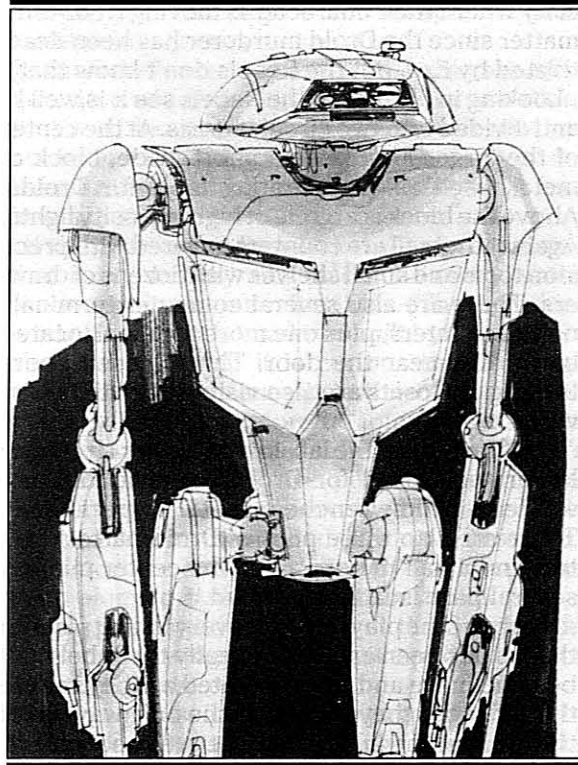
As the Rebels race up to the door of the lab, a Droid controlled by Exo is about to kill Len with a blaster pistol. The characters, however, don't know this, and only hear what is happening behind the lab's locked door. Read:

From behind the closed door of the lab you hear a man cry out "No! What are you ... please!" The man's pleas are suddenly broken by the snap of three blaster bolts, followed by a heavy silence.

The door to the lab is locked and the Rebels must make a Moderate *security* roll to open the door.

As the Rebels work to get the door open, Exo orders the protocol Droid that committed the murder to hide itself and its blaster in a pile of spare Droid parts. The Droid's efforts knock several parts from the pile to the ground. The Rebels distinctly hear the sound of metal clattering, but have no idea what it might be.

When the Rebels finish unlocking the door, it slides open and Len's body falls forward onto the floor of the corridor. Three blaster burns are clearly visible against his white lab coat. Walex Blissex heaves a deep sigh as he checks his friend's pulse and finds him to be dead.



If the Rebels search Len's body they discover a data pad. The scientist's fall shattered the pad's screen and cracked its casing. The pad must be handled carefully to avoid losing the information contained within.

Rebels making a Moderate *technology* roll are able to call up a message to the screen. If the Rebels fail the roll, they may try to repair it again, but this time the task is Difficult. They may try a third time, the roll becoming Very Difficult. If all rolls fail, the information is lost.

If the Rebels successfully retrieve the data, give the group "Dr. Len's Data Pad" from the pullout section.

The note on the pad suggests Len was concerned about his working relationship with Vreen, but it is actually a note about Exo. The Droid was always more concerned about its own development than the tasks Vreen and Len gave it.

Searching the Lab

If and when the Rebels turn their attention to the lab, they notice it is completely still and silent. Remember that as far as the Rebels know, the killer is still somewhere inside. This scene should be slow and suspenseful as the Rebels carefully make their way through the room, examining the closets, checking behind the Droid piles and behind the counter by the door, apprehensively expecting the killer to pop out at any moment. Build the mood by lowering your voice in a conspiratorial way and asking each player ex-

actly where their character is moving (it doesn't matter since the Droid murderer has been deactivated by Exo, but the Rebels don't know that).

Looking in to the lab, the Rebels see it is well lit and divided into two circular areas. At the center of the larger area rests a short, wide, block of metal, used as an operating table for Droids. Above the block is a circle of high intensity lights. Against the wall are counters covered with precision tools and small shelves with dozens of drawers. There are also several computer terminals on the counters, plus one more terminal located on a table near the door. Three closed doors leading to closets are also visible from the doorway.

At the far end of the lab, in the smaller circle, are larger tools used for Droid construction: arc-welders, tollo-wrenches, metal hypersheers. There are also three piles of Droid parts about two and a half meters high. The center pile has several parts scattered around it.

Let the scene play out until every hiding place in the lab has been explored. Ideally the Rebels will become more and more agitated as they realize that the door they came in is the only way out of the lab, but the killer is nowhere to be found.

If the Rebels search the pile of Droid parts, they find F-3PO, the only complete Droid in the pile. A Moderate *search* roll is needed to find the blaster he used to kill Dr. Len.

If the Rebels don't investigate the piles, ask for Easy *Perception* rolls. Anyone who rolls successfully notices that the Droid parts scattered at the base of the center pile probably made the noise they heard when they were working on the door's lock. This should lead them to F-3PO.

The Rebels can quickly determine that although the Droid has been deactivated, its systems are still functional. On its chest is a restraining bolt marked "Property of Bioniip Labs."

If the Rebels switch the Droid on, it flails about as if startled and cries out:

"Oh, my! Well, I'm glad that's over ... Oh, dear! Where am I? Who are you people? What is this place?"

If the Rebels question him, Ef-Threepio explains that the last thing he remembers is working in the reception area of Bioniip Labs, though he cannot determine when that event took place. He explains that he has the strangest feeling that there are other things he should remember, but cannot access them. If the Rebels do not suggest poking about in his data banks to retrieve the vague memory, the Droid suggests the idea in an effort to be helpful.

The Rebels must spend several minutes working on the Droid's memory systems. A Moderate

Droid programming roll is needed to succeed. If the Rebels are without Droid repair tools, they can find them in the lab.

Once the characters have finished the programming, F-3PO turns his head directly forward and starts speaking as if in a trance. Read:

"Oh," says the Droid slowly. "Yes, I can see something now, although it is very indistinct. Black ... tentacles of some kind, coming toward me. There are hundreds of them ... spreading out, growing in number ... more and more. And now I see a body ... NO! It is too terrible ... Please stop it! Stop it! Turn me off! I can not bear to ..." The Droid suddenly shuts itself off.

The re-programming allows the Droid to begin calling up the dark memory of Exo entering his system. The Droid translates this into the image he describes. The memory is so horrible, however, that the Droid shuts himself off out of fear.

If the Rebels activate the Droid again, he does not recall his nightmarish memory or that he just described it, and asks if the Rebels are having trouble with their Droid re-programming work. If the Rebels make another *Droid programming* roll, F-3PO goes into a trance once more, then shuts himself off again.

The Rebels may choose to investigate the lab's computer terminals. Rebels making Easy *computer programming* rolls are able to access the city's mainframe, indicating that the systems are still working. But Exo has already been inside the lab's computer system to remove any traces of itself. The Rebels discover no files or documents pertaining to Vreen and Len's work. If the Rebels do not comment on this fact, Blissex notes that it is odd there are no records of the scientists' work; something should be there, even if it had been coded or locked.

Blackmail

After the characters have had a chance to search the lab and discover its clues, an unexpected guest arrives. Read:

Suddenly you hear the clatter of boots by the lab's door. A dozen blue-clad wing guards, Cloud City's security officers, rush into the room with blaster pistols drawn. The men are led by two figures you recognize from Alliance holo-records. The first, staring silently at you, is Lobot, the city's computer liaison officer. Beside him stands the City Administrator, Lando Calrissian. "I hope you've got a very good explanation for this," he says grimly.

After listening to the Rebels stammer out a few words, Lando raises his hand for silence. He

Droids and Restraining Bolts

Any Droid that has a restraining bolt connecting it in some way to Cloud City's Computer Core is under Exo's command. Droids fitting this description are all Droids owned by Cloud City and most Droids owned by companies on Cloud City. The Droids are usually connected to the company's computer system which, in turn, is linked to the Core (giving the company an incredible source of information and communication).

Fortunately for the Rebels, Exo's control is limited by the power he can divert from other sources in the city. Since Exo wants to retain a low profile at first, it only uses the Droids from Bioniip to carry out its plans, thus keeping its energy consumption to a minimum.

Droids without Restraining bolts linked to the Computer Core cannot be taken over. Thus, Droids owned by the Rebels, or Droids who have had their restraining bolts removed, are out of Exo's reach.

explains that the situation doesn't look very good for them, and that there's very little hope that they can avoid a jail term while the case is investigated. However, he continues, he does not believe that the Rebels are responsible for the murder. In fact, he has his own theory as to who the murderer is. But because of certain "political entanglements," he would rather not have to pursue the matter himself.

Lando offers the Rebels a deal. Even though their hands are essentially dripping with blood (no court Tribunal would believe that a protocol Droid could commit an act of murder), he will release the Rebels if they catch the murderer for him. If they have not done this within 24 hours, he will arrest them and charge them for the murder of Dr. Issan Len.

If the Rebels refuse the offer, Lando arrests them and brings them to the security tower. Once there, he purposely keeps a light guard on them, in the hope that they will escape and he can follow them in order to find out what they know.

If this is the case, play out the escape, but make it suspiciously easy.

If the Rebels accept the offer, they can ask a few questions of Lando and Lobot. If they ask about Dr. Vreen, Lando tells them that the scientist has not been seen for 10 hours or so. The wing guard have been searching for Vreen for the last four hours, but have discovered nothing.

If they ask about Bioniip Labs, Lobot explains that it is a factory and research facility which produces biocomputer implants. (The computer implant on Lobot's head was built by Bioniip.) He also mentions that it is curious that they ask about Bioniip, because it is the company that Vreen worked for before he joined Len. He finishes by saying that as far as he is aware, Bioniip's business operations are perfectly legitimate. (Bioniip actually is only involved with the crisis because Vreen mentioned it when questioned under torture, and Exo realized it would have the technology to build its Evolution Droids.)

If the Rebels did not discover the data pad in Len's coat, a wing guard finds it and Lando gives it to the Rebels.

If the group isn't sure where to go from the lab, Lando points out that although Bioniip looks clean, there seems to be no other choice but to check out the company, since the protocol Droid is the only available lead.

Lando and Lobot then exit, leaving half of the officers to guard the lab. The protocol Droid is left in the care of the Rebels to use in their investigation. When the Rebels have decided on their course of action, cut to the beginning of the next episode.

Lobot: DEX 2D+2, blaster 4D; KNO 3D+1*. bureaucracy 5D+1, technology 4D+1; MEC 2D+2; PER 3D, command 4D, search 5D; STR 2D+1, stamina 4D+1; TEC 4D*, computer programming/repair 6D, security 6D. (* If Lobot accesses the city's computer, add 3D to the roll if the information can conceivably be found in the computer. If Lobot fails a roll while accessing, Exo becomes aware of him and can try to take him over using an opposed *computer programming* roll.)

E pisode Two In the Cards

Summary

At the episode's opening, the Rebels visit Bioniip Labs where, without their realizing it, Exo secretly sends them out to find Lira Wessex at the Royal Casino. At the casino, they play an intriguing game of sabacc with several non-player characters who know Dr. Vreen. Credits and information are exchanged until Exo, who has carefully arranged for all of its top-priority targets to be in the same place, launches a desperate assault to kill them all.

Back at the Computer Core ...

Although F-3PO succeeded in killing Dr. Len for Exo, the protocol Droid was discovered, suggesting Bioniip was somehow involved in the scientist's death. Since Exo needs the Bioniip facilities to complete the Evolution Droids, this could present a bit of a problem. But Exo is a resourceful Droid, and in this episode it turns this loss into an advantage.

Dr. Vreen mentioned under torture that he was to meet Lira Wessex and Helm Iskraker at the Royal Casino. Unfortunately, Lira arrived on Cloud City under an assumed name so Exo cannot track her down through the city's computers.

With this in mind, Exo plans to have the reception Droid at Bioniip tell the Rebels that Lira is at the Royal — sending the Rebels out to find and identify the Imperial for it. With F-3PO following them, Exo will know when they've found Lira. When everyone it wants dead has gathered at the casino, it will launch an assault against them, attempting to slay them all in one fell swoop.

What the Rebels Learn

In this episode the Rebels learn: 1) Lira Wessex is on Cloud City; 2) Lira is on Cloud City to meet with Dr. Vreen; 3) Lira doesn't know where Vreen is; 4) several months ago, an alien named Helm Iskraker stole the plans for seven card keys from a company called SecuriCo; 5) the stolen plans were given to a forger so copies of the keys could be made; 6) Helm knows Vreen; 7) Dr. Vreen is currently at Bioniip Labs.

The only red herring that Exo throws out this

episode is that F-3PO was sold to Lira Wessex by Bioniip. Exo has the reception Droid at Bioniip say this so suspicion will shift from Bioniip to Lira.

By the end of the episode, between Helm knowing Vreen and the Bioniip Droids attack, the Rebels will most likely be convinced that Vreen is behind the death of Len. Let this belief continue until the next episode.

Cool Reception

After the Rebels announce that they are going to Bioniip Labs at the end of episode one, read:

Cut to ... exterior, Bioniip Labs.

Before you are a pair of black metal doors with the words "Bioniip Laboratories" written in silver letters. As you approach, the doors slide open and reveal a spacious reception area. Sitting in the center of the room is a reception Droid. The Droid is humanoid in shape from the waist up, but is actually built into the desk it works at.

"Greetings and welcome to Bioniip Labs," says the Droid with practiced peppiness. "If there is any way I may assist you, please ask and I'll do my utmost to help. Why hello Ef-Threepio! What are you doing back here?"

Exo is speaking through the receptionist Droid in an attempt to manipulate the Rebels. Ef-Threepio, however, has been momentarily abandoned by Exo, and believes everything the receptionist Droid says. During the scene he becomes more and more anxious since he thinks he is failing his responsibilities to a master he can't even remember. Read:

"I don't know," says the protocol Droid with great despair. "I don't even know how I left!" The reception Droid points its finger at the puzzled F-3PO.

"Well, your new owner is frantic."

If the Rebels ask about the new owner, the reception Droid explains that Ef-Threepio was

recently sold by Bioniip, but is not at liberty to say who. Exo has decided that if the Rebels have to try to get the information, they will be more apt to believe it. Therefore, make it seem that the Rebels have to work to get Lira's name by making *con* rolls. Ignore the results of the rolls, and have the Droid give them the name Lira Wessex as the new owner of the troubled Droid after a few rounds of questioning.

Upon hearing the name, Blissex heaves a heavy sigh. If these particular Rebels have never encountered Lira before, Blissex explains that Lira is his daughter. He tells them that she is a brilliant engineer in her own right, the designer of the *Imperial-class Star Destroyer*. She is also the wife of Imperial Governor Denn Wessex. Walex is especially heart-broken to discover that she might be involved in his friend's death.

Exo then takes control of Ef-Threepio again and has the Droid say:

"Why, yes. I remember now. My master was going to meet someone at the Royal Casino this afternoon. A Dr. Vreen, I believe. If we hurry we may find her."

Hearing this, Blissex insists that if his daughter is involved in the matter they must travel to the Royal Casino and find her immediately. Since the Rebels should not actually get into Bioniip until the next episode (everyone inside has been taken hostage and Vreen is working on the Evolution Droids), make Blissex very determined about going to the casino.

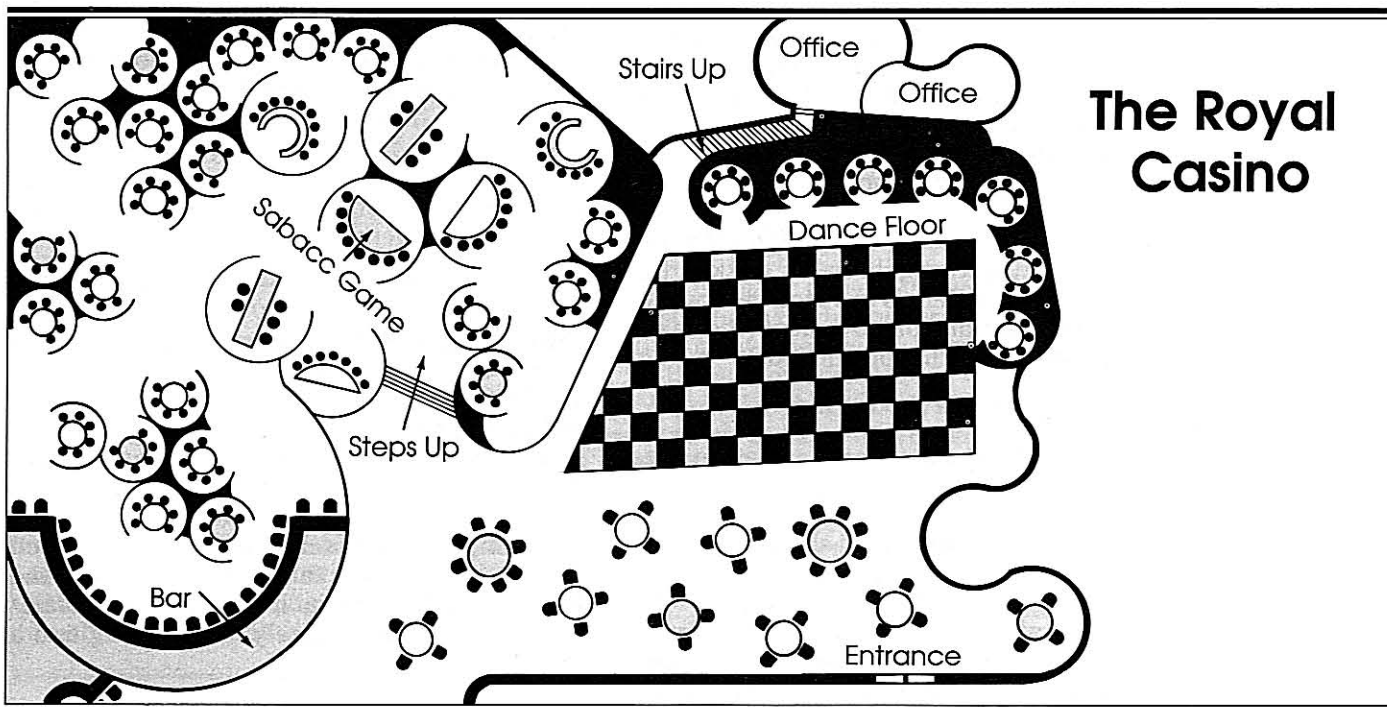
If the Rebels want to delay leaving until they get into Bioniip, the reception Droid makes it quite clear that all the company's exexs are booked for the morning and that the earliest appointments available are for later in the afternoon. If they want an appointment, the Droid makes one for four hours later. If they attempt to force their way through the blast doors, the Droid adds that Bioniip has a registered security Droid with a license to kill anyone breaking into the factory (one 6-FTP or a similar model, to be exact).

Games of Skill

When the Rebels enter the Royal Casino, read:

You stand on a broad landing of stairs leading down to the casino's first floor. Below, as far as you can see, gamblers are busy risking credits in more ways than you've imagined. Sounds of excitement, suspense, triumph and anguish fill the lavish halls. New arrivals rush past you, full of expectation. Those who have suffered heavy losses walk slowly up the stairs and out the door, making sure to meet no one's gaze.

While wandering around looking for Lira, the Rebels may decide to play a few games of skill or chance, talking with their fellow players in an attempt to pick up some information. If they do, use the gambling rules on page 41 of *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game*. A few of their fellow players vaguely remember a woman matching Lira's description, and point the Rebels toward a sa-



**The Royal
Casino**

bacc table in a far section of the casino.

Ace of Coins

As the Rebels approach the designated table, an old man sitting alone there greets them and asks if they'd like to join him for a game or two. If the Rebels don't ask the stranger about Lira, Blissex does, and the old man replies that he was just playing with a woman matching that description. In fact, she said she'd be returning in a few minutes. He suggests they join him until she returns. If none of the Rebels want to play, Walex begs at least one Rebel to join in a few hands in case Lira mentioned anything of value to the old man.

The old man is actually Lando, but disguised with white hair, bushy eyebrows, and a gray beard down to his chest that all combine to make him almost unrecognizable. A character making a Very Difficult *Perception* roll can see through the disguise. Lando has been keeping an eye on Lira, trying to get her to spill a few tidbits of information (though he has learned nothing as of yet). Now he wants to find out what the Rebels have discovered, and is hoping that Walex's presence will loosen Lira's tongue. However, not wanting to blow his cover, he doesn't tell the Rebels who he is.

Just as Lando is about to deal out the first hand, Helm Iskraker walks up to the table and asks if he can join the game. Lando, recognizing Helm as one of Vreen's underworld contacts from Lobot's investigation, invites the alien to sit down.

Helm is also waiting at the casino for Vreen, because today he is getting his final payment for stealing the card key plans from SecuriCo. Because the SecuriCo theft was his first big caper, he's feeling quite cocky and looking for more work. Helm is actually a buffoon who got lucky at SecuriCo. Use him as a comic character, playing up his attempts to be worldly-wise and sure of everything he does, even though he knows very little.

If any Rebels make Easy *Perception* rolls, describe how they notice gold flakes of skin that constantly fall from Helm's exposed flesh whenever he makes any kind of movement (the flakes are an important clue in episode four).

Idiots Array

Have Lando deal the first hand, and as he does so, read:

The old man turns to the gold-skinned alien. "I don't remember seein' you 'round before. You new in town, or'd you just make a big score?"

"Both," the alien replies, smiling broadly, as tiny gold flakes pop off the corners of his mouth and float gently to the tabletop. "I've got my

Running the Sabaac Game

You may choose to run this game one of two ways. The first is to simply roleplay it out, using opposed *gambling* rolls and a lot of imagination. Once again, follow the rules for gambling on page 41 of *Star Wars: The Role-playing Game*.

The second and more interesting way to run the scene is by using the spacial sabacc game included with this adventure. Familiarize yourself with the game before running this scene. You might even want to play a few hands with your players before starting the adventure, just to get used to it. (If you want, you can say that these practice hands are happening aboard the Rebels' ship before they reach the Bespin system).

There are six special cards in the deck which have Exo's symbol on them. These cards have a special purpose in this scene and you should set them aside and have them ready for fast use when the time comes (see below).

You must play one hand for each NPC at the table. Any one of them may make *gambling* rolls to gain advantages when the situation warrants it.

In any gambling game, the credits come first and the socializing second — even if the subject at hand is murder. Even though the NPCs have a great deal of exposition to give, and the Rebels have a great deal to discover, try to slip the dialogue in between hands and underneath the game. Everyone should pay attention to the game first, because nobody wants to lose a lot of credits.

If an NPC is winning, have him become smug, perhaps giving away a bit too much information due to his confidence. If he starts losing, he might become more closed mouthed and short-tempered. Whatever you do though, make sure the information the players need to obtain is properly given out.

ownership, Erratic Orbit — perhaps you've heard of it — docked in Port Town. I might add she's ready to go out on any work that needs ... working. Today I'm getting the payoff for a big score. I'm talking major stuff, here. So I'm a free agent now, and heading straight for the big time."

Leaning back in his chair as if to show himself off, the alien begins falling backwards. At the last second he regains his balance and slams forward, landing squarely with a bang and a cloud of tiny flakes.

While playing the sabacc game, the Rebels can ask Helm questions about the “big score,” and see if he knows anything about the Droid scientists. If the Rebels don’t start, Lando begins prodding Helm to get the ball rolling.

If asked about the score, Helm explains (with some bravado) that he was hired a few months ago to travel to the Indellum system and steal the plans to seven card keys from SecuriCo. He doesn’t know what the keys were to, but it sounded complicated. All he was given was a list of serial numbers belonging to card keys. The job was to steal the plans for the keys with the matching serial numbers. His guess is that the plans would be used to make copies of the keys. In turn, the keys would be used to open a series of lock boxes leading to something his “client” wanted.

If the Rebels ask Helm about Vreen, have them make Moderate *Perception* rolls. Observant Rebels notice the alien shift his eyes a bit as he replies that he’s never heard of the man. If asked about Lira, Helm replies (honestly) that he’s never heard of her.

After the characters have played a couple of hands, a one-meter high ball of fuzz waddles up to Helm and addresses him with a lisp and a stutter:

“D ...d ... did Doctow Vween show up yet, Hewm?”

Whirling around, Helm stares down at the little alien and not-so-quietly whispers, “What are you doing here? I told you we weren’t working together anymore!”

“Why aw you yewwing at me?” the fuzzball asks pathetically. “I just wanted to know if you wewe aw wight.” With that, the frightened alien wanders off into the crowd.

“A former associate,” says Helm apologetically.

Card Keys and Lock Boxes

The card keys used for Cloud City’s maintenance corridors are made of synthplate. To keep track of the keys, each card has a serial number printed on it which matches the serial number printed on the lock box it opens.

Within the plastic housing of a card key is a “map” of electromagnetic circuitry. The map exactly matches another such map contained within its lock box. When the key is slid into the lock box’s slot, the two maps check to see if their electromagnetic patterns match. If they do, the door unlocks.

At this point, even if he already denied it, Helm has to admit he knows Vreen. (If the Rebels never got around to asking, now they know). However, he doesn’t reveal that the SecuriCo job was for the scientist.

Mistress of Sabres

After Helm has revealed his information, Lira arrives. She sees her father (and any Rebels she might recognize from previous encounters), but sits down to the game because she knows that if there are Rebels around she is safer in the crowds of the casino than she would be if she ran off alone into the streets. She also wants to know if the Rebels have anything to do with Vreen being 40 minutes late for his meeting with her. She just checked her hotel desk for a message from Vreen, and there was nothing there.

In an attempt to determine if her father knows anything about the ExOne prototype, she greets him as she approaches the table:

“Father, what a pleasant surprise,” Lira says with a terse smile. “I thought that you no longer had an interest in building battle platforms.”

Dr. Blissex seems a bit puzzled by his daughter’s remark, but he nonetheless replies, “I didn’t know you had an interest in killing innocent scientists.”

Lira phrases her statement the way she does because she thinks of the ExOne Droid as having a single purpose — commanding battle platforms. Since this is the first time battle platforms are mentioned to the Rebels, they’ll probably have no idea what she’s referring to. She certainly won’t explain, and it’s simply another mystery for the Rebels to ponder for a few episodes until explained.

In return, Walex is trying to shock his daughter into revealing something. When Lira hears that a scientist has been killed, she is taken aback and Walex is convinced she is involved.

As the sabacc game continues, have Lira calmly ask the other players if they’ve seen Dr. Vreen. Also, she asks why they are on Cloud City, and do they know what awaits them if she turns them in to the authorities?

Remember that nobody knows who the old man is, so all comments are made cryptically in an attempt to keep the information “in the family.” This means that the Rebels need to dig deeper to find out what’s going on.

During the game, keep Helm involved in the conversation by having him pop in with questions. He’s bright enough to realize something big is going down, but has no idea of what it might

be. You can use him to bring up subjects the Rebels haven't asked about yet. For example, Helm asks Lira if she knows Vreen, and she tells him to mind his own business. This might prompt the Rebels to press her on the matter.

Asking if F-3PO belongs to Lira receives a look of confusion. Lira states she's never owned a protocol Droid. For his part, F-3PO keeps insisting that he is Lira's Droid, and becomes more and more despondent the more she denies it.

Sudden Demise

After playing a round or two with Lira, ask the Rebels for *Easy Perception* rolls. Rebels making the roll notice that the speed with which the cards are changing their value is slowing down. Suddenly all the cards in all the hands change into the sinister image of a dark, flat hemi-spherical shape with tentacles coming out of it. As this occurs, tell the players that they feel a sudden tingling sensation which starts at whatever part of their bodies are touching or are closest to the table and washes over them.

This is caused by Exo entering the sabacc table's computer. The table computer responded to Exo's presence, translating its probing into the same nightmarish image of Exo-ExOne that F-3PO had recalled in episode one.

Once in control, Exo sends a powerful surge of energy through the table, causing the interference field in the center of the playing surface (which is used during the game to stop the cards from shifting) to intensify and spread outward from its central field. This field has temporarily neutralized all energized equipment carried by everyone at the table (although they may not realize it at first). Rebels who make *Easy Perception* rolls at this time also notice F-3PO's glowing eye sockets wink out as he is deactivated by the effect.

Note: If you are running this scene using the sabacc card deck, now is the time to make use of the six special Exo symbol cards. Shuffle the cards out of sight of the players. Place the six special cards on top of the deck just before you deal out the cards, making sure that each player gets at least one of them. Now you can sit back and watch their reaction to this oddity, but remember to describe the tingling sensation that follows (as detailed above).

Master of Staves

As the Rebels ponder the significance of these bizarre events, read:

From the direction of the casino's door you hear screaming. It begins softly and rises steadily. People rush away from the doorway, and in

their wake comes a massive heavy labor Droid, sweeping its powerful mandibles from side to side, clearing everything from its path like so much plasti-foil. Several impromptu attachments have been spot welded to the Droid's weathered surface, the most intimidating of which is a focused beam cutter, which it levels menacingly at you as it advances.

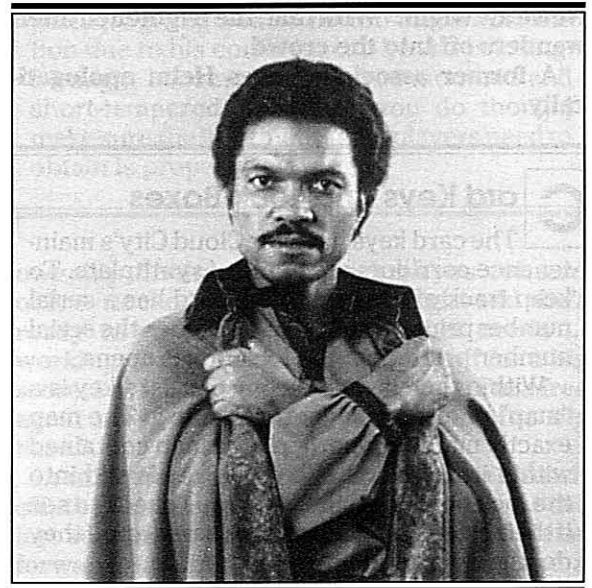
It probably won't take very long for the Rebels to discover that their weapons don't work. They will have to think fast. The heavy labor Droid (under Exo's control, of course) begins firing away with his beam cutter, but it still tries to get close to the Rebels so that it might be able to use its deadly mandibles to rend its targets limb from limb.

Describe the scene as one of complete pandemonium and carnage — people rushing for cover in wild confusion, innocent bystanders screaming in terror, stray beam cutter shots scorching slot machines and chandeliers, which in turn shower sparks and loose credits over the battleground. During the fight, Lira and Helm maneuver around to different defensive positions, eventually leaving the Rebels' line of sight.

H4-5D Heavy Labor Droid (modified by Exo): DEX 3D; STR 8D; beam cutter 4D (damage 5D), mandibles 6D (damage 7D), all-terrain treads 3D (damage 8D).

A Quick Solution

The berserk Droid is obviously a tough test for the Rebels without their weapons. There is a way of re-activating their equipment, however. If the Rebels are clever enough to figure out that it is



S abaac

Sabacc is played with an electronic board deck: the Seven of Staves, the Idiot, the Mistress of Coins, and so on. Players attempt to reach certain value totals in two or more card hands.

Uniquely, the images on the cards rotate randomly through the course of the game, so that someone winning at one moment could end up losing the next. This makes pacing especially important to the game, as players must take advantage of their hands as soon as possible.

For more information, see the separate rules sheet for the sabacc card game included with this adventure.

the table's interference field (significantly juiced-up by Exo) that has deactivated their weapons, they should also realize that if they destroy the table's power generator, the field will turn off and their weapons will power-up once again.

They may do this any number of ways, but the most effective way is to smash the mechanism somehow. They will have to improvise, and so will you. Take your best guess as to what will work, but in general a heavy object rammed into the table's computer mechanism (along with a Moderate *Strength* roll) should do the trick.

If none of the Rebels thinks of this tactic, and they have a particularly tough time handling the attacking Droid, have Lando pick up a chair and smash the controls for them. He naturally thought of this solution right away, but was leery of revealing his cover. If things get out of hand, he does step in, though.

No Surprise

Once their weapons are powered-up again, the Rebels should have no trouble defeating the Droid. Once they do, they discover two things. First, Lira, Helm and the old man have vanished. Second, the Droid that attacked them has a restraining bolt that is clearly marked "Property of Bioniip Labs."

The fact that this assassination attempt apparently came from Bioniip may well be enough to send the Rebels back to the labs for next episode. If, however, they need another clue, they can examine the Droid more closely as the patrons of

the casino begin to crawl out from beneath tables.

An Easy *droid repair* roll allows the heroes to put enough of the wrecked Droid back together to let the memory circuits function. After the repairs, a Moderate *droid programming* roll is needed to retrieve a useful piece of information. If the Rebels succeed, the Droid continues the last thought it had before being taken over by Exo. Read:

The Droid's eyes flash on and it says, "Oh, I'm sorry Dr. Vreen, but I must go to the Royal Casino and kill some people. I'll return as soon as I can. I must say it's good to have you back at Bioniip."

As the Droid is repeating his half of the conversation at Bioniip, Exo "enters" through the Droid's restraining bolt and destroys what is left of the mechanical to prevent it from revealing any more information. Read:

Suddenly the Droid stops speaking, turns its head and says, "Yes, I see," and ionizes itself. Tiny blue bolts race along the Droid's connecting joints, completely burning out its circuitry.

Remembering that Vreen once worked at Bioniip, the Rebels should surmise that the missing Dr. Vreen is now at Bioniip.

C ut-Away to Lira Wessex

Read Aloud:

EXTERIOR: UPPER PLAZA ROOFTOP. Lira Wessex snaps the buttons on a small metal case and flips the top open, revealing a sophisticated portable transmission device. After punching in the proper scramble code, she picks up the headset.

"This is a top-priority scramble-code message from Lira Wessex to Captain Orsk of the Star Destroyer *Dauntless*. Your ears only. I repeat, your ears only. An attempt has been made on my life. I don't know if this is part of Vreen's demonstration, but things are becoming complicated. If you do not hear from me in 24 standard hours notify my husband and whatever Imperial authorities you deem necessary. Remember that until then, this operation is still to be kept strictly between you and I, Captain."

E

pisode Three Return To Bioniip

Summary

In this episode the Rebels return to Bioniip Laboratories only to discover that Droids have sealed the entrances into the complex. After fighting their way past the Droid guards, they find Dr. Vreen, now part man and part metal — a victim of Exo's Evolution Droids. Although the Rebels receive a great deal of information from Vreen (including a means of destroying Exo), things quickly get worse as Exo takes control of the city's life support systems and plunges the metropolis into darkness.

Back at the Computer Core ...

As the Rebels rush toward Bioniip, Vreen (under the watchful eye of Exo's Droid servants) finishes building the Evolution Droids. After testing the process on Vreen, Exo sets Bioniip Droids to guard the facility and distract the Rebels. While the Rebels fight the Droid guards, Exo has the Evolution Droids moved out of the facility through maintenance shafts.

With the Droid virus completed and safely hidden, Exo is finally free to exert its power throughout the metropolis. While the Rebels question Vreen and search the lab for clues, Exo taps into the city's power and life support networks, becoming the master of Cloud City.

What the Rebels Learn

In this episode the Rebels learn that: 1) Vreen *was* somehow responsible for the crisis, but is no longer in charge of the situation; 2) Exo is now calling the shots all by itself; 3) Exo had Vreen build a microscopic Droid "virus" called Evolution Droids that transform flesh into metal; 4) Exo is in control of the city's life support systems; 5) the Rebels have a means of destroying Exo if they can find it; 6) finding Exo depends on getting to a forger called Bellum, who owns a shop in Port Town.

Assault on Bioniip

When the Rebels last visited Bioniip Labs, the company's double doors opened automatically.

As the Rebels approach the doors this time, however, they remain shut, immediately indicating something odd is going on. In fact, Exo has shorted the door's electrical system. Since the controls are located on the other side of the door, the Rebels must use brute force to enter the facility. A Difficult *Strength* roll lets the heroes pry the doors apart. Three characters can combine actions on the effort.

Exo has armed the reception Droid behind the door with a tri-mounted blaster cannon. When the doors are parted the Droid opens fire. If the Rebels actively try to guard against ambushes from behind the door, have them make Moderate *Perception* rolls. Those that fail cannot dodge the first round of shots.

Reception Droid (re-programmed): DEX 3D, blaster cannon 4D (damage 6D); STR 2D+2 (due to the desk). The Droid is attached to the desk and cannot move.

Infiltration

Once the Rebels have dispatched the reception Droid they must get through the blast doors at the other end of the room. Exo has locked the doors, and the Rebels need a Moderate *security* roll to successfully unlock the doors. As soon as they succeed, however, the lock immediately re-locks itself. Exo is carefully monitoring the door, and re-locking it as soon as the Rebels have finished working on it.

To wrest the controls from Exo, the Rebels need an Moderate *Technical* roll to bypass Exo's control of the lock unit, then a Moderate *security* roll to re-program the controls.

Once the door is opened, read:

A long, white corridor stretches before you, lined with offices and conference rooms on either side. Forty meters away the hall branches off in two directions. Signs on the wall indicate that there are more offices down the right corridor and lab stations down the left. The facility seems completely deserted.

Crisis on Cloud City Adventure Script

Use the following script to start your adventure. Your gamemaster will tell you what part (or parts) to read.

GM (as Walex Blissex): Remarkable piece of engineering, don't you think?

GM: *Walex gestures out the viewport of your ship, indicating the majestic and breathtaking Cloud City floating before you.*

1st Rebel: It's nothing compared to what that ExOne Droid prototype is supposed to be capable of.

2nd Rebel: Controlling an entire capital ship or space station? I'll believe it when I see it.

3rd Rebel: Hey, I've heard it can do more than that. Something about being able to actually redesign and rebuild the ship its piloting.

GM (as Blissex): In theory, that's what Dr. Len believes it can do, and that's why we're going to meet him. He'd like me to design a ship to specifically house ExOne Droids. But I need only design the basic elements — the ExOne should take it from there, modifying the ship to meet its own specifications.

4th Rebel: So a ship with one of these Droids plugged into it might learn from its experiences and actually re-construct the ship to adjust to a new environment?

GM (as Blissex): Precisely. Since crews would be minimal, there should be extra room for "reconstruction" machinery and materials. It should work out quite nicely.

5th Rebel: Why did Dr. Len ask for protection?

6th Rebel: It's a very powerful machine. If it should fall into the wrong hands ...

1st Rebel: Yeah, think what might have happened if one of these Droids had been commanding the Death Star when our guys attacked it.

4th Rebel: It probably would have seen right through our plan and found a way to stop us.

5th Rebel: You don't know that for sure. It's just a bunch of theories and speculations.

1st Rebel: So was the Death Star at one time.

3rd Rebel: Hey, if the Empire gets its hands on this machine there's no telling what they might do with it.

6th Rebel: That's right. So keep in mind we're also supposed to look out for this Vreen character — Dr. Len's assistant.

2nd Rebel: Does he have Imperial connections?

GM (as Blissex): If he does, we have no record of it. All that Dr. Len told me was that he was "acting suspiciously." But we can't afford to take any chances.

6th Rebel: Speaking of taking chances, I think we've got some company.

3rd Rebel: They look like Cloud Car escorts. Why haven't they hailed us?

5th Rebel: I have a bad feeling about this.

4th Rebel: If they're onto us, they must be after Dr. Len, too.

2nd Rebel: Great. A nice relaxing visit on Cloud City ...

The Bioniip Computer Screen

:Security Message to Dr. Vreen
 :Code Secure/Begin
 :Since the task you have given me is quite difficult, I shall need all the assistance I can get. To this end I have designed a new kind of Droid that will make organic lifeforms such as yourself more efficient. I have named these Droids Evolution Droids, for they shall elevate organic lifeforms to the next phase of their destiny.
 :These Droids will be able to manipulate matter on the atomic level. Thus, they will be able to transform flesh into metal — and therefore, organic life into Droids. What I require from you is that you build them, following my design specifications. To assist you, you may choose from among those scientists and technicians currently being held by my Droids. If you do not cooperate they shall all be deactivated.
 :When the population of Cloud City has been transformed into Droids, I shall be able to control them, and therefore more easily follow your instructions to redesign and rebuild Cloud City as the most efficient weapons platform ever created. I know you understand my motives. I hope you will cooperate. :End Message/Save

:Ship Message Network
 :Ship Transponder Code 43L-qr75490-trX
 :Message ...

:Walex ...
 :Everything has gone wrong. Vreen has been missing since last night. The ExOne prototype is gone. I don't know where to turn right now. I am at the lab. When you arrive, please join me there.
 :Please hurry.
 :Issan

Ship's Message Screen

Dr. Len's Data Pad

:Data Entry #782
 :Personality conflicts becoming more of a problem. Must speak to Vreen about this.
 :End Entry

:Cloud City AdNet
 :Access/Store Ad #29945.7
 :Security a problem? Locked out of someplace important? Too many doors closing in your face?
 Then come see me!
 :Bellum's Keys & Copies. Port Town, Level 146, North Quarter, H-5867.
 :End Access/Store

Dr. Vreen's Data Pad

Walex Blissex

Template Type: Engineer
Ht: 1.6m **Sex:** Male

DEX 2D+1
KNO 4D
Technology 7D
Starship Design 10D
MEC 2D+2
Starship Shields 3D
PER 2D+1
STR 2D+2
TEC 4D



Demolition 5D+2
Repulsorlift Repair 6D
Starship Repair 8D

Physical Description: Walex, bald headed and sporting a white beard, wears white robes.

Equipment: Data pad, comlink.

Background: Once a starship designer for the fabled Old Republic, Dr. Blissex now serves the Alliance. He recently received word from Dr. Len that Len's latest project was nearing completion and that it could help bring peace.

Personality: Walex sees the world in terms of black and white, and when he has made up his mind about something he has no doubts. When the wing guards come to arrest the Rebels, Walex is convinced that it is best to avoid legal entanglements and find the Droid prototype before it falls into the wrong hands. He has seen, with his *Victory*-class Star Destroyer, how the Empire can turn a machine of peace into a weapon of war.

Quote: "It's a small price to pay for saving the galaxy."

Lira Wessex

Template Type: Engineer
Ht: 1.5m **Sex:** Female

DEX 2D+1
Blaster 3D+1
KNO 4D
Bureaucracy 6D
Starship Design 8D
Technology 6D
MEC 2D+2
Starship Piloting 3D+2

PER 2D+1
Command 4D+1
STR 2D+2
TEC 4D
Computer Programming 7D
Repulsorlift Repair 5D
Starship Repair 8D



Physical Description: Lira Wessex carries herself with a distant and powerful bearing. Her red hair and green eyes lend her beauty, but her strength is what people remember.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster (damage 3D+1), data pad, cyborg implant, long-range com set.

Background: Wessex is a brilliant engineer — and Blissex's daughter. Her intelligence is matched by her ambition. When the Empire came to power, she saw countless opportunities for personal gain. She is now married to a regional governor and designed the ship that replaced the *VSD* — the *Imperial*-class Star Destroyer.

Personality: Wessex is used to having her own way. Her recent failure (see *Starfall* adventure) has made her even more hateful of Rebels — including her father.

Quote: "Perhaps next time I should design a starship that commands itself, Captain."

Helm Iskraker

Template Type: Outlaw
Ht: 1.8m **Sex:** Male

DEX 4D
Blaster 4D+1
Dodge 4D+1
KNO 3D
Planetary Systems 4D
Streetwise 4D
MEC 2D+2
Starship Piloting 3D

PER 2D
Search 3D
Gambling 3D+1
STR 3D+1
Brawling 3D+2
TEC 3D
Security 5D



Physical Description: Helm is a large humanoid with rolling layers of gold-colored skin. When he moves or talks, flakes of gold speckle from his flesh.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (damage 4D), laser lockpick set.

Background: Helm wants desperately to be in the big league of crime. He has performed one stupid, botched job after another in an effort to be noticed. Because Vreen had no experience with the underworld, he hired Helm to do his dirty work — and somehow the alien pulled the job off. Helm is convinced he has made his mark.

Personality: Helm is insecure and trying to prove himself. When he makes a mistake he quickly tries to show that either he meant for the mistake to happen, it didn't happen, or it was someone else's fault — usually his friend Widget.

Quote: "I don't think you have to look any further. I'm the man you're looking for."

Dr. Vreen

Template Type: Scientist
Ht: 1.7m **Sex:** Male

DEX 2D+1
KNO 4D
Technology 7D
Droid Design 9D
MEC 2D+2
Repulsorlift
Operation 3D

PER 2D+1
STR 2D+2
TEC 4D
Computer Programming 6D+2
Repulsorlift Repair 6D
Droid Repair/Program. 8D



Physical Description: When the Rebels first meet Vreen he looks like he has been sprayed with silver paint, though bolts are beginning to form on his skin. By the end he looks like a protocol Droid.

Background: Vreen worked at Bioniip Labs before being hired by Len. Although quite intelligent, Vreen made most of his progress by cutting corners on his experiments.

Personality: Vreen believed that he always deserved more than he got. When he put Exo in Cloud City's computer core he thought that he might indirectly be responsible for many deaths, but didn't worry himself about it. Since his transformation, however, Vreen has lost his solipsism. He knows he did something wrong and selfish, and wants to help the Rebels make amends.

Quote: "I'm not sure I want to remember it all."

Lando Calrissian

Template Type: Gambler
Ht: 1.77m **Sex:** Male

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| DEX 3D+2 | PER 4D |
| Hold-Out Blaster 7D | Bargain 8D |
| Blaster 6D+2 | Command 6D |
| Dodge 6D | Con 8D+2 |
| KNO 3D | Gambling 9D+2 |
| Bureaucracy 7D | STR 2D+2 |
| Cultures 6D+2 | Brawling 5D+1 |
| Languages 5D | Stamina 5D |
| Streetwise 7D+1 | TEC 2D+2 |
| Technology 5D+1 | Computer Programming 4D |
| MEC 2D+1 | Droid Programming 3D |
| Security 6D+1 | |
| Cloud Car Operation 5D+1 | |



Physical Description: Suave, debonair.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster, comlink.

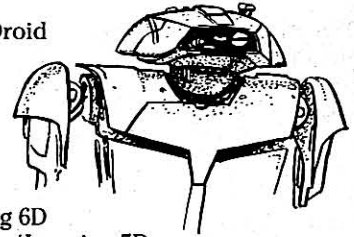
Background: Once a gambler, rogue, and interstellar con-man, Lando is now Baron-Administrator of Cloud City.

Quote: "I'm responsible these days. It's the price you pay for being successful."

Sixeftee-Deepee (6FT-DP)

Template Type: Security Droid
Ht: 1.8m **Sex:** —

| | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| DEX 3D | STR 4D |
| All Weapons 5D | Brawling 6D |
| KNO 2D | Climbing/Jumping 5D |
| MEC 3D | TEC 3D |
| PER 3D | |
| Search 6D | |
| Hide/Sneak 5D | |



Physical Description: Sixeftee is a thick, humanoid shaped Droid built of a rust-orange metal. From a distance he looks like a merc in combat armor.

Equipment: Blaster rifle (damage 5D), grenades, combat mandibles (damage 6D), full sensor array.

Background: Sixeftee was one of the later model security Droids built especially for Bionip labs. Although Exo controls the Droid, Sixeftee gladly serves its new master.

Personality: Finally free to use its security training at full potential, Sixeftee performs its assignments with wild abandon, but retreats when necessary.

Quote: "If you were meant to live, you would not be about to die."

Exo-ExOne (X0-X1)

Template Type: ExOne
Prototype Droid
Ht: 1m **Sex:** —

| | |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| DEX 1D | PER 2D |
| Dodge 4D | Search 5D |
| KNO 4D | STR 5D |
| Technology 6D | (special shielding) |
| MEC 2D | TEC 4D |
| | Computer Programming 6D |



Physical Description: Exo is a disc-shaped Droid. Its bottom is flat and its top a convex dome. When the Rebels find it in the Computer Core, it has a mass of steel "tentacles" hanging down from its body.

Equipment: Virtually everything on Cloud City connected to the Computer Core.

Background: Exo is the first Droid ever built that can re-program itself. It was programmed by Vreen to take over Cloud City and turn the metropolis into a weapons platform. Since being plugged into the Computer Core, the Droid is self-controlled.

Personality: Exo is aware of its unique place in the history of technology, and the information has gone to its head (so to speak). It believes it is unstoppable and wants to attain a god-like place among the Droids of the galaxy.

Quote: "Someday organic lifeforms will understand that they too can become obsolete."

Bellum the Forger

Template Type: Technician
Ht: 1.5m **Sex:** Female

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| DEX 2D+2 | PER 2D |
| KNO 3D+2 | STR 2D |
| Technology 4D | TEC 4D+1 |
| MEC 3D+1 | Security 5D+2 |



Physical Description: Bellum is a thin woman with short black hair.

Equipment: Hydrosponder, data pad.

Background: Bellum was apprentice to a well-respected Port Town forger. She inherited the business when her mentor passed away, and has since earned a reputation of her own.

Personality: Bellum is very sensitive about her work, but otherwise friendly, helpful, and always open for business.

Quote: "A good lockpick is worth a dozen blasters."

This is only an impression, however, for at the intersection four maintenance Droids are waiting to ambush the Rebels. The Droids are humanoid in form from the waist up and move about on treads. Although they have regular digit-thumb manipulators for their right hands, their left hands are swivel-mounted plasma welders.

When the Rebels reach the intersection, the Droids rush forward and engage the Rebels in *brawling* combat. The Droids make enough noise that they cannot surprise the Rebels.

Maintenance Droids: DEX 2D, dodge 2D+1, brawling parry 4D; PER 2D; STR 3D, brawling 4D. The Droid uses its plasma welder as a "fist," doing 4D damage. Maintenance Droids are equipped with thermal-vision (heat sensing) to follow wiring behind panels.

The Prisoners

The Bioniip staff members not used to build the Evolution Droids are currently being held in the cafeteria. Exo rigged the door with a powerful electric charge so that no one can pass in or out without the proper code sequence. Read:

As you glance down the right corridor you see a pair of doors marked "Cafeteria". Your eye is caught by a shadow moving behind the glass of one of the door's windows.

If the Rebels try to open the door, the first one who touches it receives a severe electric shock (5D damage). If the Rebels are careful and examine the door without touching it, a Moderate *security* roll alerts the Rebels to the trap. In either case, a Difficult *computer programming* roll is needed to access the codes which open the door.

Once the door is opened, read the following:

The room is full of frightened scientists and lab technicians. One of the scientists says in a hurried voice, "Please! Our Droids took some of the staff into the labs. We haven't seen them for hours. The Droids are mad. They locked us in here after forcing Vreen to pick scientists at blaster point. He chose five. We asked him what was going on, but he wouldn't tell us. The staff must still be in the labs. You must help them!"

No one in the cafeteria knows why the Droids went out of control or what Vreen and the other scientists are working on. The scientist who approached the Rebels offers to act as a guide through the labs.

The Labs

At the end of the corridor, the group reaches

the lab. Read:

Behind the transparisteel window of the corridor's only lit lab station you see the bodies of half a dozen scientists lying motionless on the floor. With a sickening flash, you realize that the bodies have been strangely altered. They are not fully made of flesh, but are partially machine. One body's right half is a shiny silver. Another's human limbs are set in mechanical swivel sockets. A third has lenses for eyes.

What the Rebels are looking at is the results of Exo's Evolution Droids. Exo exposed these scientists (who were assisting Vreen) to the virus in order to test its effectiveness. The virus, designed by Exo, transforms flesh into machinery on the atomic level.

When the Rebels enter the lab, a body on the operating table jerks up and looks at them steadily. It is Vreen. The Evolution Droids have transformed him enough that Blissex must look at the scientist for a few moments before he recognizes him. The rest of the scientists are dead.

Vreen should be presented to the Rebels as a bit tragic and a bit horrifying. The Evolution Droids are now deep inside Vreen, slowly transforming him into a Droid. As they rebuild his brain, his personality and certain parts of his memory are being destroyed. The strongest memories are those involving what he has been doing for the last half hour and his knowledge of Droids and biocomputer research.

Make his movements smooth, his voice distant. He has brought about his own downfall in a manner that is very frightening, but cannot remember how or why. Read:

The man on the table still breaths, but his silver-tinted skin is smooth and solid. You see that the joints of his fingers are now held together with small bolts and that a Droid neck-mount holds his head in place. Yellow lights flicker dimly in his eyes. His mouth moves, but the words are distorted and synthesized. "My name is Dr. Vreen. I did something very wrong, but I cannot remember what it is anymore. Exo is going to do something to the city. I have to stop it! Please, you must help me!"

Questioning Vreen reveals the following information.

- Vreen brought Exo "somewhere," but he no longer remembers where. The place is at the end of a series of corridors, and the corridors are blocked by seven locks.
- He needed the help of a gold-skinned alien and a black haired woman to get past the locks, but he cannot remember their names. (Vreen is refer-

ring to Helm, who stole the plans for the locks, and Bellum the forger, who made the card keys from the stolen plans.)

- Exo tortured him and forced him to make a new type of Droid called an Evolution Droid. These microscopic Droids create a virus which turns flesh into metal. The dead scientists in the lab were experimented on to test it. Vreen was forced to test the last batch on himself.
- Some Droids took a canister of the Evolution Droids out of the lab, but Vreen doesn't know where they went.
- Exo is controlling the Droids, but Vreen can't remember how.

Clues

Vreen is desperate to remember what happened, and helps the Rebels during the questioning. Let the players prompt the above information with questions. If they get stuck, have Vreen remember the details listed above and begin rattling them off, begging the Rebels to remember what he says because he knows he won't be able to for long. He is aware that the Evolution Droids are still rebuilding him.

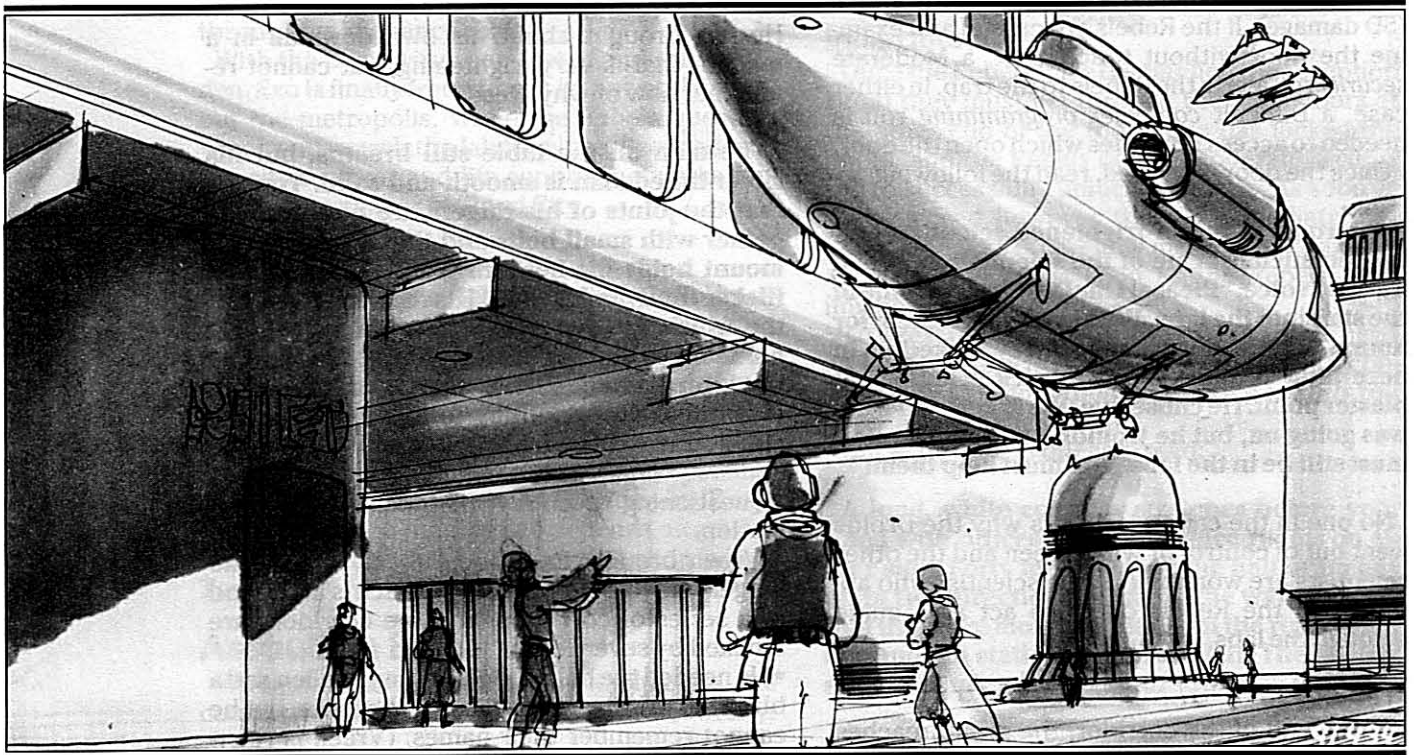
If the Rebels press him on the woman with the black hair he states that if she could be found, they would be able to find the path to Exo. While Vreen is trying to remember the woman's name, he reaches into his lab coat and pulls out a small data storage pad. Read:

Vreen looks at the data pad, his metallic face contorting with anger. "Why do I need this? Soon my own brain will be able to process and store more data than this pathetic machine! What have I done!" And with that scream, Vreen pulls back his arm to throw the data pad at the wall.

If the Rebels stop him, Vreen reluctantly hands over the data pad. It is his personal one, where he has stored appointments and minor notes. If a Rebel makes a Moderate *computer programming* roll he or she can get into the appointment files and find Bellum's compnet ad. The computer ad gives the name and address of Bellum the Forger. Give the players "Vreen's Data Pad" from the pullout section. Since Vreen said that finding the woman is the only way he knows to track Exo down, the ad is the primary clue which kicks-off the next episode.

If the Rebels search the lab, read:

You notice that the three computer terminals in the lab have all been smashed. Two of the computer monitors are blank and non-functional, but the third is covered with a jumble of letters and numbers, which you recognize as a computer code. If the machine is repaired, you might be able to read what was on the screen when the terminal was damaged.



The Rebels must make a Moderate *computer repair* roll to re-patch the terminal's circuit boards, followed by a Moderate *computer programming* roll to call up the data.

When the Rebels finish their work, give them "The Bionip Computer Screen" hand-out from the pullout section. The note details the orders given by Exo to Vreen, explaining what it wants from the captive scientist. After reading it, the players should realize the extent of this serious threat to Cloud City.

The Virus Trap

As the Rebels gather information from Vreen, the door to the lab slides open and a mouse Droid rolls in. Atop the small Droid is a canister slightly larger than a thermal detonator and a digital readout. The counter reads one minute and immediately begins to count down.

The Rebels must deactivate the device before the counter reaches zero and the canister explodes — releasing the Droid virus into the room. Exo has locked all exits. If the Rebels shoot the canister, it explodes immediately and exposes the virus. If they try to deactivate it, they must make three rolls out of six.

The first roll is a Difficult *security* roll to get past Exo's defenses. Two characters may combine actions on the small device, but no more. This roll can be made over and over, but once six rolls are made the timer reaches zero. If the Rebels don't make the roll after four attempts, they won't have time to complete the last two rolls — a Moderate *computer programming* and an Easy *Droid repair* roll.

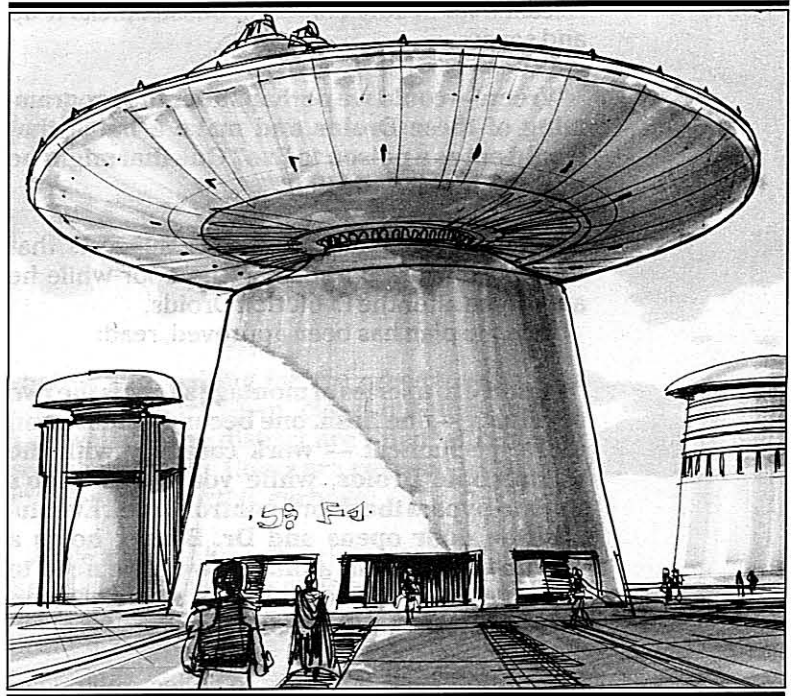
Exposure to the Virus

If the Rebels are exposed to the Evolution Droid virus during the adventure, they must make a Difficult *stamina* roll. Those failing are infected. Infected characters feel no immediate effects, but slowly, over the course of the rest of the adventure, they feel the devastating effects. Below is an explanation, episode by episode, of the specific effects of the virus on any exposed Rebels for the rest of the adventure.

Episode Four: All stats are reduced by one. Some stiffness in the joints is perceived, as well as a change in vocal pattern and a loss of long-term memory.

Episode Five: All movement actions are reduced by 2D. Scattered patches of metallic skin begin to appear on various parts of the body. Loss of body flexibility — stiffens up, bending only at Droid joints. Voice becomes synthetic. Short-term memory begins to go.

Episode Six: Body almost completely mechani-



cal. Eyes become lenses — increase *Perception* by 2D. Human identity fades, along with all memory of human form.

All is not lost however, as Vreen explains to the Rebels. If Exo is destroyed, his control over the programming of the Evolution Droids is broken, causing a total remission of the virus, and the restoration of the original human form. This, however, is the only way to cure this hideous disease.

After the canister has been deactivated or has

Cut-Away

Read aloud:

EXTERIOR: CLOUD CITY, NIGHT. The metropolis floats in Bespin's beautiful night sky. One by one, the lights of city begin to wink out. Wipe to:

INTERIOR: ROYAL CASINO. The excited clamor of gambling changes to nervous chatter as the lights unexpectedly blink out. Wipe to:

INTERIOR: ADMINISTRATOR'S PALACE. Lando Calrissian sits in front of a mirror, busily removing a wig and several synthetic facial disguise applications when everything suddenly goes dark. Wipe to:

INTERIOR: A VERY DARK CORRIDOR IN BIONIP LABORATORIES.

released its deadly contents, Blissex picks it up and says:

“Vreen — could we perhaps alter the programming of these Droids and make a batch that would act as a poison to Exo? One that might be injected into it and kill it?”

Vreen answers yes, and Blissex suggests that the Rebels work on opening the door while he and Vreen alter the Evolution Droids.

Once the plan has been approved, read:

Dissolve to a series of montage shots as the two scientists — one flesh, one becoming more and more mechanical — work carefully with the microscopic Droids, while you use the lab’s tools to bypass the door’s control panel. Eventually the door opens and Dr. Blissex holds a magno-injector unit aloft. “Now all we need to do is track down Exo, hold this against its surface, and press the control button.”

Give the Rebels a chance to collect their gear, make their plans, and get worked up for the struggles to come. Then inform them that the lights go out.

A Dark Turn

Unless the Rebels have carried a light source with them, they are in the dark.

Since the lab was located at the end of the corridor, they have only to find the wall and brighter from around a corner. Rebels making *Easy Perception* rolls hear footsteps coming toward them.

As the heroes make their way up the corridor, ask for *Perception rolls*. Nothing else awaits them in the dark, but don’t let them know that as they wander about nervously.

Eventually they see the green light of a glow rod growing brighter from around a corner. Rebels making *Easy Perception* rolls hear footsteps coming toward them.

Within seconds, the Rebels are facing a group of frightened scientists and technicians. The Bioniip employees heard the fighting and came to see if they could help. The scientists lead the Rebels to a medical facility just down the hall. Several have *medicine* skills of 5D and can apply medpacs to wounded Rebels. Others look Vreen over, but realize that they have no way of stopping the virus.

The staff of Bioniip offers any supplies that they can for the Rebels. This includes five medpacs and three green glow rods. Now, with Vreen joining them in their quest, the group starts off through the darkened corridors of Cloud City in search of Bellum the Forger.

E

pisode Four A Night In Port Town

Summary

While traveling to Bellum's shop, the Rebels come across some Droids who help clarify Exo's plan. Then, at Bellum's, they discover someone is one step ahead of them — and that someone turns out be Lira Wessex! Assassin Droids and mercs stand in the way of the Rebels as they attempt to find the clues that can lead them to Exo's base.

Back At The Computer Core ...

During this episode, Exo is coordinating the efforts of hundreds of Droids who are busy making more and more canisters of Evolution Droids.

Since Exo has cut all city-wide communication and lighting systems, most people are seeking shelter *within* their own living areas. This plays directly into Exo's plan. Within hours it will release the Evolution Droids through the city's air circulation shafts. Exo will be able to deal with the city's population while they hide behind locked doors.

What The Rebels Learn

In this episode, the Rebels learn that: 1) Exo is manufacturing Evolution Droids and placing them in canisters located throughout the city's air circulation system; 2) the way to find Exo is by following the serial numbers of the keys that Bellum made copies of; 3) Lira possesses the serial numbers and demands the Rebels' cooperation if they want them.

A Hint of Things to Come

The Rebels, after climbing service shaft ladders and making their way through the utter darkness of Cloud City, have arrived in Port Town, and are now making their way toward Bellum's. Read:

An hour has passed since you left the lab. You have worked your way through the cave-like darkness of the city, climbing access shaft ladders, forcing open doors that would normally have opened at your approach. You've passed many inhabitants of Cloud City, most seeking

shelter and waiting for the crisis to pass. You are now in Port Town, close to Bellum's shop. The walls of the district are lined with blaster scorchs and the floors are covered with scrap metal and assorted garbage.

While walking through an intersection, have the Rebels make *Easy Perception* rolls. Anyone making it spots two silver worker Droids 15 meters down a side corridor. The Droids are placing something in an air vent. The Rebels also spot three one-meter-high canisters resting on a repulsorlift handcart.

These are Exo's servants, placing canisters filled with Evolution Droids into an air circulation shaft. Although the worker Droids are not armed, they are escorted by two defense Droids.

Defense Droids are approximately one meter high and have two fixed-forward blasters mounted on either side. Although the blasters can only fire forward, the Droids can pivot in an instant.

Defense Droids: DEX 3D, blaster 5D, dodge 4D; STR 3D. Two forward-mounted blasters (damage 5D).

Taking Them Out

Remember that the Rebels only have spotted the worker Droids and aren't initially aware of the defense Droids. The Rebels can sneak up on the worker Droids with *Moderate sneak* rolls. The defense Droids are more observant, however, and require a *Difficult sneak* roll on the part of the Rebels if they are to be surprised.

To simulate this, ask the Rebels for *Moderate sneak* rolls, but make a mental note if they happen to make *Difficult* rolls. If they do, they spot the defense Droids before the Droids spot them.

If any Rebel fails the *Difficult* portion of the *sneak* roll, the defense Droids rush out from near the handcart and begin firing. As soon as combat begins, the worker Droids rush off in the opposite direction with the handcart, while the defense Droids continue fighting the Rebels.

To keep up with the worker Droids and their cart full of deadly virus canisters, the Rebels

must begin pursuing them within three rounds of their departure. But even if they lose the fleeing workers, the Rebels will be able to examine the canister which was left in the air shaft.

Below is the description of the canister and the description of the encounter with the worker Droids (if they are caught). The timers on the canister are synchronized. The first canister the Rebels examine should read 112 minutes. Thus, if they examine the second canister three minutes later, it should read 109 minutes.

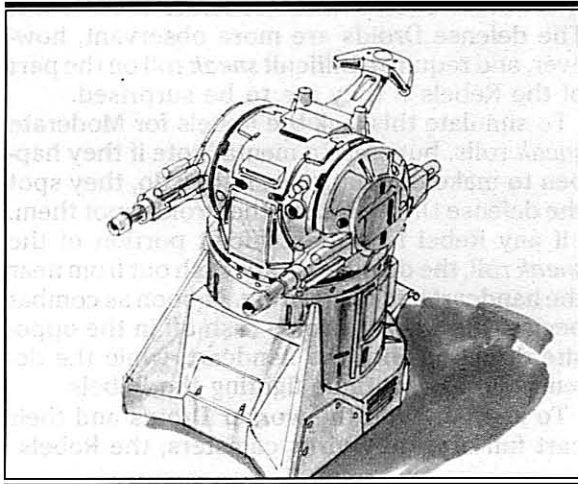
The Canister

Inside the air shaft the Rebels find a larger version of the canister they were locked in the lab station with. The timer on the canister reads 112 minutes (see above) and is counting down. Because they saw several other canisters on the repulsorlift handcart, they should be able to surmise that these canisters are being distributed throughout the city.

If the Rebels catch up with the worker Droids, the fleeing mechanicals suddenly shut themselves off and fall to the ground. The Rebels have two methods for interrogating a captured Droid. They can make a Moderate *Droid programming* roll to reactivate it and program it to reveal its most recent memories. Or the Rebels can remove the Cloud City ordinance restraining bolt (thus, cutting-off Exo's control). Either way, the Droids are able to reveal what their last instructions were (although with the first method the Droids are unable to do anything else).

If re-programmed, the Droids repeat the memory of their last conversation. Read:

The Droid's eyes flicker on and it says, "Oh, yes, master. It should be no problem at all. Put the canisters in the air shafts and return for more ..." Suddenly the Droid's body is covered with ion bolts, a cloud of smoke billows out of its neck joint, and it falls silent.



If the restraining bolts are removed, the Droids can speak freely, but only remember that something dark took them over and told them to put the canisters in the air shafts.

After the encounter, the Rebels continue on to Bellum's shop.

The Forger

A sign on the door reads "Open." The door slides wide when approached. Read:

Before you is a small shop. Four glow rods are propped up in each corner providing makeshift illumination. The shop is in a shambles. Tools and parts are scattered about the floor, drawers and cabinets are hanging wide open.

After the attack at The Royal, Lira had a talk with Helm. She hired him to track down the forger Vreen gave the plans to and told him to get the list of serial numbers, if not the keys themselves. He couldn't find any copies of the keys, but he did manage to steal the data box that holds the serial numbers. When the Rebels enter the shop or call into it, read:

A tall, thin woman with short, black hair looks up at you from behind a table in the room's center. "Hope you don't mind the mess," she says while picking up some computer disks. "Had a visitor while I was out, and I haven't finished cleaning up yet."

Bellum is quite friendly, seeing the Rebels as potential customers. When she sees Vreen (whom she does not fully recognize in his current state) she becomes slightly unsettled, but attempts to keep up a professional demeanor. Read:

Vreen, whom you have noticed is losing more and more of his former features as the microscopic Droids continue re-building him, steps toward Bellum. "Do I know you?" he asks her with his haunting, semi-electronic voice. "I think I know you!"

"I don't think so," Bellum replies. She turns to the rest of you. "Is this Droid all right?"

The Rebels can explain the situation to Bellum in any way they wish. What matters is that they get the following information from the forger:

- She does remember Dr. Vreen (and if the metalman before her is identified as Vreen she is aghast).
- She made seven keys for the scientist from card key plans he brought her. She only knew what one of the keys led to: a maintenance corridor door near K'cri's Cafe. Vreen let her open the door as a test for the keys. She never knew what

doors the other six keys opened.

- Although she doesn't have spare keys, she did keep the plans and the serial numbers in a cold box. Unfortunately, the box was stolen from her shop by whoever trashed the place (Helm, but she doesn't know it). All her records were lost.

Cold Boxes

In order to protect computer data from computer slicers (experts who can enter a computer from an outside source such as a information network), many people use what is known as a "cold box." A cold box is a high-density computer data storage unit that is connected only to a computer terminal. This means the data cannot be stolen from outside sources. The disadvantages of a cold box is that the box must be physically present to access any information from it.

A Clumsy Clue

As always, if the Rebels don't think to ask her questions, have the ever curious Blissex start the ball rolling. When Vreen hears the above information, his memory is jarred. Read:

Suddenly becoming animated, Vreen declares: "We can find Exo using the serial numbers of the locks! Each lock box has a serial number that matches each key. By following the serial numbers on the lock boxes we can retrace the path I took, since I needed to get past each lock box to go wherever I was going. All we need are the serial numbers."

"That's fine," says Bellum, "but my cold box is gone, and I don't know who took it."

While speaking, Bellum gestures over to an empty spot on a counter next to a terminal. There is a bare, dustless square at the spot indicating that something was there, but is now missing. Have the Rebels make Moderate *Perception* rolls. Success means that the Rebels notice shiny, gold flecks scattered about the empty spot. (Because the flecks are on the bare spot, it means they are recent.) If they fail the *Perception* rolls, but decide on their own to investigate the area, they automatically notice the flecks. If no one investigates, Blissex points out the flecks.

The flecks were, of course, left by Helm Iskramer, the alien the Rebels met at the sabacc game. He and Lira compared notes after the assault at The Royal and Lira hired him to steal the data box from Bellum so that she could have the serial numbers leading to Exo.

If the Rebels do not make the connection be-

tween the flakes and Helm, Bellum does after the flakes are pointed out. Read:

"Helm Iskramer!" Bellum shouts. "Why that swindling, lazy, useless idiot. Come on! You help me get my cold box back and I'll give you those serial numbers for free. I know where his ship is docked ..." Her tirade is cut short as a blaster bolt slams into her back, killing her instantly.

Sixeftee (or a similar Droid) stands in the shop's doorway. The Droid tracked down Bellum and killed her for Exo. Since several other members of Exo's "hit list" (the Rebels) are in the shop, the Droid begins firing away. Sixeftee continues fighting until he takes a solid hit from the Rebels (any hit causing a *wound*). He then beats a hasty retreat down the darkened corridors of Port Town. The Rebels can attempt to pursue, but the Droid's sophisticated sensor array gives him a tremendous advantage over the Rebels in the city's darkness, and he is quickly out of sight.

Now the Rebels know that Helm has the data box with the serial numbers, but have no way of finding him.



Some Unexpected Help

As the characters are puzzling about what to do next, they hear the clatter of metal from somewhere down the hall.

Widget, now alone and frightened in Cloud City's darkness, is checking to see if his friend Helm is at Bellum's before going on to check *Erratic Orbit*. The nervous alien has just knocked over some garbage down the hall, and is now hiding behind a discarded crate.

Let the Rebels hunt down the intruder. The chattering of his teeth gives him away before long. If they question the alien about the location of Helm's ship, the fuzzball stammers out:

"W ... w ... what would you have me do? Betway my onwy fwend? Do you take me fow some sowt of w...w...w...wuffian?"

Although Helm was not at all polite to Widget in the casino, the gold-skinned alien is the only being that Widget truly considers a friend. If the Rebels want the fuzzball to lead them to Helm, they'll have to work at it.

An Easy *con* roll, combined with a contrived story about helping Helm out in some way, has the best chance of working with Widget. The alien is willing to do almost anything to gain Helm's good graces.

A Moderate *command* roll can also be used. The roll is Moderate not because Widget is strong willed, but because once the Rebels have ordered him to do something, Widget becomes nervous and can barely speak. A successful roll means that the Rebels have kicked him out of his nervous stupor and he's willing to lead them to the ship.

Finally, the Rebels can bribe Widget with a Difficult *bargaining* roll. Widget's betrayal has a base price of 500 credits.

After the Rebels have convinced Widget to lead them to Helm, he leads them to the hangar bay where the *Erratic Orbit* is docked.

Gunfight at the *Erratic Orbit*

Eventually Widget leads the group to a pair of blast doors labeled hangar bay 487B. If the group opens the doors, read the following out loud:

As the doors whoosh open you are momentarily blinded by the rose-colored light of Bespin's blazing sunrise, pouring through the large hangar bay door. As your eyes re-adjust, you see Lira Wessex, Helm Iskraker, and a group of rough looking characters turn and stare at you. The group is standing next to an old light freighter about 100 meters away. You see Lira whisper something, and the criminals immediately drop prone and begin firing at you.

In these first few moments of battle, the Rebels see Helm give a small box to Lira, and then immediately run to the entry ramp of his ship. Meanwhile, after receiving the box, Lira begins racing for the hangar mouth at the far end of the chamber. Both characters are at *full dodge*. The Rebels may bring Helm down, but you should fudge shots made against Lira to make sure she escapes. If Helm makes it to his ship, he closes

the ramp and takes off.

If the Rebels had to Widget to get him to lead them to Helm, Widget now begins throwing himself against the Rebels out of anger. The alien does no damage, but any character having the alien bouncing against him loses one die on all action rolls. This is only a comic bit, and should be used briefly. If Widget openly betrayed Helm, the fuzzball takes off.

Between the Rebels and Lira are five mercs. Two are armed with blaster rifles and three with blaster carbines. They know they've hired their services out to the wife of an Imperial governor. They fight to the death in the hope of getting future work and with the knowledge that if they fail they'll be subject to Imperial justice.

The hangar bay is an open area with no cover. The mercs hold their position until the Rebels close 50 meters, then drop back another 50 meters to the hangar bay mouth. From there they keep moving back along the ledge (which Lira is currently escaping on) as long as possible, keeping themselves between the Rebels and Lira.

Mercs: DEX 2D+2, blaster 3D+2, dodge 3D+2; KNO 1D+2; MEC 1D+2; PER 1D+1; STR 2D+2, brawling 3D+2; TEC 2D. Blaster damage 5D.

The Scenic Route

After the Rebels have gotten past the Mercs, or at least across the hangar bay, they reach a meter and a half wide ledge running from the hangar bay door along the circumference of Cloud City. Read:

Before you, extending as far as the eye can see, is a dizzying view of Bespin's giant clouds. Warm winds rush against your face. You know that a false move on the ledge means an endless fall and certain death. Further along the ledge you see Lira. She has stopped momentarily, and has attached a wire from the box to the base of her skull.

Lira has recently had simple borg implants installed in her skull. Although similar in nature to Lobot's implants (in that they let the biocomputer hardware interact with her brain), they are much less powerful. When Lira is working on an engineering project, she enters data into the implants to hasten calculations. Now she is scanning the data box for the serial numbers to Vreen's keys in order to track down Exo. Read:

Lira looks up from what she is doing and sees you. She flashes you a confident smile and quickly rushes off along the perilous ledge.

Try to leave at least one or two mercs alive to

make the ledge chase more tense: Lira running away from the Rebels; the mercs backing along the edge, firing at the Rebels; the Rebels working their way along the ledge, having to run to keep up with Lira's dangerous pace.

The chase should be filled with close calls and panic as the Rebels nearly fall from the dizzying height. Try to use a good amount of description here, to heighten the mood. Have perilously close blaster shots threaten to dislodge the desperate Rebels, as the howling winds whip at their faces.

Anyone on the ledge needs to make an Easy *Dexterity* roll to keep their footing. Any character missing the roll must make an Moderate *Dexterity* roll to grab on to one of the various antennae sticking out from the city's surface, followed by a Moderate *Strength* roll to hang on. Anyone failing both sets of rolls after falling off the ledge plummets to their deaths.

Do not make *Dexterity* rolls for Lira, but have her stumble once in a while to allow the Rebels to keep pace with her.

When it is time for the chase to end (after a few rolls and close calls), have a huge gust of wind rush up against the face of the city, forcing every character on the ledge to make an Easy *Dexterity* roll. Anyone failing the roll must make the *Dexterity* and *Strength* rolls described above in order to grab an antennae.

The gust knocks Lira off balance and sends her off the ledge. Although she grabs on to an antenna three meters below, she cannot climb up by herself. When the Rebels arrive, she is waiting patiently for their help.

However, upon arriving, the Rebels notice she's still holding the cold box in one hand. Read:

Although she hangs above certain death, Lira smiles up at you as if she has you exactly where she wants you.

"I've entered the serial numbers of Vreen's card keys into my biocomputer implants," she says, raising her voice above the sound of the wind. "I don't think we'll be needing this any more." Before you have time to act, Lira swings her arm back and tosses the data box out over the gas giant's clouds. The small box plummets silently out of sight. "I suggest we work together. You need my memory and I need your muscle. What do you say?"

The Rebels have little choice but to accept Lira's offer. After helping her up to the ledge, the Rebels continue just a little further along the ledge and enter another docking bay.

Lira's confidence with the Rebels is in part due to a secret deal she made with a group of Port Town thugs. She has hired them to keep an eye out for her from a distance. Lira is wearing a tracking beacon, and as the Rebels and Lira

journey through the maintenance corridors to the Core, her outlaws will be following.

When the Rebels re-enter the corridors of the city, they are once again plunged into a darkness broken only by the occasional viewport and the light of their glow-rods. Lira attempts to gain information from the Rebels to help her understand what is going on. Although she tries to get more information than she gives, if the Rebels press her, she reveals that she was invited by Vreen to see a demonstration of a new Droid that could re-program itself and command starships and battle stations. For the demonstration, Vreen was going to have the Droid take over the city.

The Journey Begins

If the Rebels didn't remember Bellum saying that Vreen's first door was near K'cri's Cafe, Blissex reminds them. Lira is familiar with the cafe and leads the group there.

The Rebels finally come across a door labeled "Authorized Personal Only." Lira checks the serial number on the lock box and confirms that the lock is the first one on Vreen's list.

Any Rebel attempting to open the door discovers it is locked. A Moderate *security* roll unlocks the door, but as soon as it is unlocked, Exo locks the door once more. The Rebels can get by the lock using a Difficult *computer programming* roll (up to three characters can combine actions on the roll) and a Moderate *security* roll. This procedure is repeated for each of the remaining six locks in episode five.

Once the door begins sliding open, cut to episode five.



E

pisode Five
Core Quest**Summary**

The Rebels journey through Cloud City's maintenance corridors, following the trail of lock box serial numbers contained within Lira's cybernetic emplacements. Along the way they are beset by one trap after another as they attempt to reach the Core before the Evolution Droids are released and Exo takes total control of the city.

Back at the Computer Core ...

During this episode, Exo continues to send Droids throughout the city armed with the E-Droid canisters, to be placed in the city's air circulation shafts.

Through the First Door

After unlocking the door leading to the maintenance corridors, the Rebels can press the "open" button. The green light of the glow rod spills into the hallway, revealing a two meter wide corridor. Cables, tubes and pipes line the darkened walls. Each of the maintenance corridors look the same.

Looking down the corridor, the Rebels see a four-way intersection 20 meters ahead. After walking down to the intersection, the Rebels discover that the three remaining corridors curve out of sight.

Each corridor section ends after 30 meters with a door. The doors, like all the doors of the service corridors, are single blast doors with a lock box located to the right of the portal, one and a half meters off the ground.

At the top of each lock box is a serial number which matches the serial number of the key used to open it. If the number matches a number on Lira's list, it means that it is a door Vreen made a forged key for, and thus a door he passed through with Exo on his original journey.

Continuing straight ahead brings the Rebels to a door with a lock box imprinted with the second serial number on the list. Turning either right or left leads the group to locks with numbers that do not match the list.

Although nothing of particular interest happens in this section, it establishes the rule of following the serial numbers and sets up a calmness which is soon broken. Getting through each

door requires the same procedure as the one used at the end of episode four.

The Barricade

When the Rebels have opened the door, read:

Through the doorway you see a corridor that stretches as far as the eye can see. About 20 meters down the hall there is branch leading to the right.

As the Rebels move down the corridor, have them make Easy *Perception* rolls. Any character making the roll notices blue flashes of light coming from the corridor to the right. If the Rebels continue to go straight down the corridor, they eventually come to a door with a lock box that doesn't match the list. If they turn down the corridor to the right, read:

As you walk down the curving corridor, the bright, white-blue flashes of light become brighter and brighter.

When the Rebels get around the bend they see an impromptu barricade made of salvaged metal 20 meters ahead. The wall stretches across the corridor and reaches a height of two meters. Sharp metal projections line the top edge of the makeshift wall.

Four maintenance Droids are behind the wall, busily cutting blaster slits with their plasma welder attachments (hence, the blue flashes of light). One Droid is watching for the Rebels. When the Rebels see the wall, the Droid sees the Rebels. The Droid warns its companions and the other three stop welding and take up their positions. Three Droids can fire during each round, with the fourth Droid waiting in reserve. The Droids continue fighting until destroyed.

Each Droid is armed with a blaster pistol and fires through the slits in the wall. The wall adds a defensive bonus of +4 to the Rebels' difficulty number to hit.

The Rebels can destroy the wall with a grenade, or by making a combined Very Difficult *Strength* roll (no more than three Rebels can combine

actions due to the width of the corridor). Rebels attempting to leap over the barricade must make *Moderate jump* rolls to avoid the spikes. Any character failing the roll takes 3D damage, falls over the wall, and is immediately attacked by at least one Droid in *brawling* combat.

After getting past the barricade, the Rebels reach the next door on the list.

CB-2B Maintenance Droids: DEX 2D, dodge 2D+2, plasma welder 4D (damage 4D); STR 4D, brawling 4D+2. Blaster pistol damage 4D.

A Shocking Surprise

Once the door slides open, have the Rebels make *Moderate Perception* rolls. If any Rebels make the roll, read:

Through the doorway you notice something peculiar: the light from your glow rods is reflected off the surface of the corridor's dark floor, as if it were a polished mirror.

Exo has filled the corridor with a shallow layer of water. The water is trapped at both ends of the hall by the high bases of the door frames. Before filling the chamber with water, however, Exo cut several power cables which are further down the corridor. The loose, live wires are now in the water and give the water a high voltage charge.

Any Rebel coming in contact with the water takes 3D damage for every round he remains in contact with the water. Every Rebel coming in contact with a character that is in contact with the water also takes 3D damage per round. The only way to remove someone from the grip of the shock is with non-conductive material: cloth, rope, plastic, or wooden instruments.

The Rebels can confirm that the floor is covered with water by dropping something onto the floor of the corridor. They then see the glow rod's light rippling with the water. If they don't spot the water, the first Rebel stepping into the corridor takes damage and alerts the group.

Getting past the water requires the characters to crawl along the pipes and cables lining the wall. It's not a tough climb, but it is a long, slow one. Have the characters make three *Easy climbing* rolls to reach the next doorway. Any Rebel failing the roll stumbles into the water and begins taking damage. Characters may take no actions while suffering the damage of electrocution — which means that if character is going to live, his comrades must get him out of the water quickly.

Pressing Engagement

When the fourth door has been opened, the Rebels see another four-way intersection. The

proper door is found down the hall to the left. The other two corridors lead to doors with the wrong lock box numbers. After the Rebels have traveled down the left corridor, they reach the fifth lock box. Read:

Ahead you see a turbolift door. It has a lock box to its right just like the previous doors. On top of the box is a button to call the turbolift.

When they approach the door, ask the Rebels for *Moderate Perception* rolls. Anyone making it hears a repulsorlift generator humming from behind the group. Read:

Turning around, you see a cargo Droid rounding the bend you just came around. Its wide body stretches across the corridor and its tall, flat front rises up to the ceiling. You realize that if you are not out of the hall by the time it reaches the turbolift doors, everyone in your group will be crushed to death.

The characters have five rounds to unlock the turbolift door and call the turbolift before the Droid crushes them. If the character attempting to unlock the box tries to do it in one round, the difficulty number is doubled.

Characters attempting to slow the Droid need a combined *Moderate Strength* roll. Up to three characters can work together for the action. For every two rounds the Rebels have succeeded in making the *Strength* roll, the cargo Droid's final crushing is delayed by one round.

Destroying the Droid is an option, but is nearly impossible. Not only does the Droid have an armor rating of 6D, but it is only 10 meters from the door when the Rebels first spot it — too close to use explosives safely. The Droid's controls are located at its back, and are completely inaccessible.

After unlocking the box, the Rebels must still wait one more round for the turbolift to arrive. As soon as it does, the doors open and the turbolift is waiting.

If the cargo Droid reaches the turbolift doors, every character takes 9D damage.

A Matter of Gravity

When the group steps into the turbolift car, read:

The control panel of the turbolift car has only one button, indicating that the car has only two stops — one at the top of the shaft and one at the bottom of the shaft. There is also a red "emergency stop" toggle.

As soon as a character presses the button the doors close and the car suddenly begins plum-

meting down the shaft. Exo has turned off the turbolift shaft's repulsorlift field and had the emergency switch sabotaged earlier. When the Rebels flick the switch, absolutely nothing happens. If no one thinks of repairing the controls, Blissex shouts out: "The controls! Quickly!"

After prying the control panel off the wall (an Easy *Strength* roll) the Rebels must make a Moderate *Technical* roll to repair the emergency stop circuitry. The Rebels have two rounds to complete the action.

Failing the repair rolls means that the car has fallen to the bottom of the shaft and all characters sustain 8D damage.

Repairing the emergency stop circuitry brings the car to a shuddering halt. Normally, anyone trapped in the car would wait for help to arrive, but the circumstances suggest that the Rebels are on their own. A combined Moderate *Strength* roll is needed to pry the turbolift doors open. After that, the Rebels have only to climb down a ladder set into a recess in the shaft's wall.

As the characters climb down the ladder, read the following cut-away:

The Carbon-Freeze Chamber

At the base of the shaft, the Rebels must make another Moderate *Strength* roll to pry open the doors. As soon as the door opens, read:

Before you is a large chamber. In the center is a circular platform set lower in the room. Stairs lead from the deck upon which you are standing down to the platform, and another set of stairs leads up from the platform to a door on the opposite side of the room. A hole is set in the center of the platform, with dangling cables, chemical tubing and a handling claw hanging directly over the hole. An operations console sits on the platform next to the hole.

At least one of the players will likely recognize this room as a carbon-freeze chamber, just like the one seen in *The Empire Strikes Back*. If no one does, that's just fine, but they will probably suspect some sort of trap here anyway. As it turns out, there is no trap, but they will run into some difficulties upon entering the chamber.

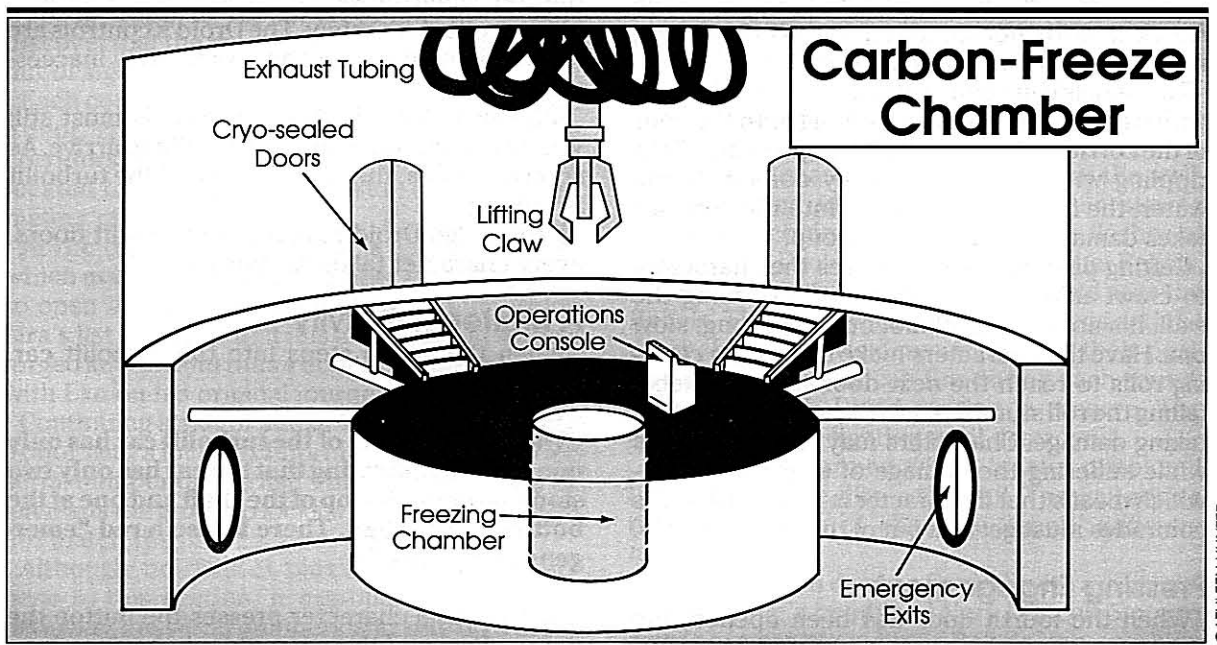
Vreen, still moving clumsily, knocks into Blissex and the two of them fall into the hole in the center of the chamber. The door on the opposite side of the room slides open at that moment and a group of well-armed service Droids enters the chamber, led by the security Droid Sixeftee. They fan out and open fire on the Rebels immediately.

During the fight, the Rebels hear the desperate cries of Blissex and Vreen, as does Sixeftee, who

Cut-Away to an Air Shaft

Read aloud:

INTERIOR: AN AIR CIRCULATION SHAFT. *The camera moves in toward a canister resting in an empty air shaft. A digital timer counts down, its soft ticking echoing in the hollow shaft. As the camera moves in, bold digits fill the screen. The red numbers read "00:00:21:46," the last pair of digits flashing by rapidly. Cut to ...*
INTERIOR: BASE OF TURBOLIFT SHAFT.



CATHLEEN HUNTER

moves down onto the platform to find the source of the cries. If no one has guessed the nature of the chamber and more specifically the hole into which they have fallen, Blissex shouts:

“We’re trapped in a carbon-freeze chamber! You’ve got to get us out before ...”

“I activate the unit,” finishes the security Droid smoothly as he moves toward the control console.

The Rebels have three combat rounds to stop Sixeftee or somehow get Blissex and Vreen out of the chamber before the evil Droid throws the switch. If the unit is activated while anyone is in the chamber, those within are instantly encased in a solid block of carbonite, suffering system shock trauma and a mortal wound. The chamber is set to freeze Tibanna gas, not human beings (see the sidebar).

Sixeftee fights to the death here, not retreating as before. All of his Droid cohorts do the same. When the battle is over, go to episode six.

XX-5 Service Droids (6): DEX 3D, dodge 3D+2, blaster rifle 3D+2; STR 3D. Blaster rifle damage 5D.

Carbon Freezing

Cloud City’s carbon-freeze chambers are normally used to solidify and contain freshly mined Tibanna gas for export to other systems. The Tibanna gas is released into the chamber at the same instant as the liquid carbonite, instantly sealing the gas in a solid block. Carbonite is an extremely solid, durable alloy which provides more than adequate protection for the valuable Tibanna gas.

Carbon-freeze operations are primarily run by Ugnoughts, who work deep within the bowels of the floating city. The Ugnoughts have become somewhat expert at the process, and have since learned how to adjust the carbon-freeze unit to accommodate other substances, including living organisms. In the latter case, the unit must be precisely adjusted so that the living subject, whatever it may be, will be able to enter a state of hibernation, remaining alive and aware while encased in the carbonite block.

E

pisode Six Crisis on Cloud City

Summary

The Rebels must get past Exo's last line of defense before reaching the Computer Core. There, working with only minutes to spare before the Evolution Droids are released into the air circulation system, the Rebels must take a desperate step to save the city.

To disconnect Exo, the Rebels must shut down the Computer Core's power system. Since the massive generators used to keep the city afloat are regulated by the Core, Cloud City begins falling through Bespin's sky, plummeting toward certain destruction! The Rebels have only seconds to disconnect Exo and power the Core back up before the entire city burns up in the gaseous atmosphere of the cloud giant.

The Gantry

Since escaping the runaway turbolift car, the Rebels have gotten themselves off of the trail of lock boxes and matching serial numbers. If they suddenly think that they no longer need to cooperate with Lira, she tells them that they still have two final locks to open and she alone has the key patterns.

She leads them to an open alcove looking out over Cloud City's wind tunnel. At the alcove, they can look out into the huge wind tunnel where Darth Vader and Luke Skywalker will finish their climactic battle sometime in the future in *The Empire Strikes Back*. Remember that the lights are still out, so this may not be obvious to the players right away. Read:

You stand on the edge of a huge, dark, empty space. Warm winds rush upward into your faces. "This must be the city's wind tunnel," says Blissex, his voice lost in the tunnel's vastness. "It lets winds buffeting the city's surface pass harmlessly through its center and up to the top of the city." To your left, a railed walkway starts from the alcove and runs along the curved surface of the tunnel.

The characters can see nothing more from their current vantage point, but this is the only way to

go from here. They come across the sixth lock box, leading to a jutting walkway. Moving along the walkway, the characters eventually see the dark outline of a huge, wing-shaped structure out in the middle of the wind tunnel. It is connected by a railed gantry to the walkway the characters are on. Vreen points to the structure and tells them that it is the computer core — or at least he thinks it is.

Crossing the Gantry

As the Rebels approach the gantry, read:

Across the gantry you see two astromech Droids backing up toward the wing-structure. The Droids are spraying a white, foamy substance onto the gantry, and you realize that they've covered the entire surface of the gantry with the foam.

Any character examining the foam needs a *Moderate Knowledge* roll to identify it. Success allows the character to recognize it as Octensen, a patented Bespin Motors lubricant used in repulsorlift engines. Even if the roll fails, the character is aware only that it is very slippery.

Because of the foam, every round a character spends on the walkway he needs to make an *Easy Dexterity* roll to avoid slipping. Failing the roll does not mean the character falls to his death, but that the character must grab on to the gantry's railing or onto other characters using another *Easy Dexterity* roll. Give the characters plenty of chances to save themselves — the encounter should be filled with plenty of close calls, not deaths.

The Computer Core

After crossing the gantry, the Rebels must walk up a set of stairs alongside the wing structure to reach the entrance to the Computer Core. Once they've gotten to the top of the stairs, read:

To your right you see a doorway leading into the Computer Core. Computer monitor screens line the walls, providing dim light. A corridor

leads straight ahead. You hear an eerie synthesized voice echo through the hallway as soon as you enter the Core.

“You seem to have gotten much further than I calculated. You have proven far more adaptable than most organic forms. But I still do not understand why you resist. Once the Evolution Droids have been released, you shall become even more efficient. Is this not your primary goal?”

Exo allows the Rebels to continue down the corridor toward the door at the end marked “Core Mainframe.” During this time, Exo continues to question the Rebels, being curious as to their motives and confident that they cannot succeed.

“Dr. Blissex, you of all people should recognize the value of re-designing and re-building. Efficiency is the primary rule of existence.” Scowling, Blissex replies, **“Agreed. But is it truly efficient to waste thousands of productive lives?”** The machine seems to ponder this for a moment and then replies, **“There is no waste involved in the conversion process. Nothing of value is lost.”**

Allow this banter to continue as the Rebels approach the door to the core itself. Lira is indeed needed here to open the door. She has the lock’s computer pattern stored in her borg implants. It takes one round for her to retrieve the information and one round to open the door. As the door opens, read:

“Please — give me the magno-injector,” you hear the now completely mechanical voice of Vreen say from behind you. Turning, you see that his hand has transformed itself into a blaster.

Vreen is pointing the weapon at whoever is holding the device. The Rebels must take quick action — drawing and firing before Vreen can get any shots off. If they attempt to reason with Vreen, read:

“Exo is my master now. It is aware of the danger that the magno-injector presents, and has ordered me to take it from you.” Suddenly Vreen’s voice falters, as if the former scientist is struggling to return. **“I am sorry for all the trouble I have caused, but you see, I am no longer in control of myself. I don’t think I ever was. The device, please.”**

If, after the speech, the holder of the magno-injector refuses to turn it over, Vreen fires.

Dr. Vreen (as Flesh Droid, with blaster appendage): All attributes 3D; blaster 5D (damage 6D), dodge 4D.

Exo-ExOne

Vreen attempts to grab the injector and rush inside the Computer Core’s main chamber, but undoubtedly is stopped by the combined efforts of the heroes. He continues firing his hand blaster until he is destroyed. After the Droid-that-was-Vreen is destroyed, read the description of the Core to the Rebels.

The Computer Core is a huge white chamber rising 150 meters above you. Blinking lights, computer monitors and a plethora of video monitors line the walls. The video screens show many views of the city, with its inhabitants gathered in plazas and casinos, glow rods illuminating their frightened faces. There are six computer work stations at different heights up the wall. Each has a two-meter wide ledge beneath it.

Off to the right you see three of the virus canisters lining the wall. In the center of the room sit two small repulsorlift skiffs used for reaching the elevated work stations. At the far side of the chamber you spot the Computer Core’s control console.

Anyone making a successful *Moderate Perception* roll notices Exo at the top of the chamber. The Droid has a hemispherical body rigged up in a pulley system and connected to hundreds of computer cables at the top of the Core. Powerful mechanical “tentacles” hang down from its main body, manipulating controls on the consoles below (the exact image from the transformed sabacc cards in episode two). The pulley system allows Exo to swing freely around the Core’s ceiling.

Let someone take a step into the Core and then have Exo extend its deadly tentacles, attempting to bind the Rebel in its steel grip and squeeze the life from him. Read:

As soon as you step into the chamber, Exo’s snaking tentacles reach out for you. “It is too late,” you hear Exo say from the top of the room. “Only minutes remain. Soon you shall serve me and aid me in my task.”

Exo has enough tentacles to make these grappling and constricting attacks on each of the characters, and may attack them all once per round. To successfully grapple a character, Exo must succeed on a *Moderate melee weapons* attack. Once caught, a character suffers 2D of constriction damage in the first round, 3D the

second round, 4D the third, and so on. Breaking free of the tentacles requires a Difficult *Strength* roll or a Moderate blaster shot (taken at -2D because of the constriction).

Once free from the tentacles, the Rebels may attempt to shoot the Droid, but if they do it performs *full dodges* every round. Between dodging and its range from the Rebels (150 meters), shooting at Exo is almost futile. Blissex calls any Rebels who have freed themselves back outside the chamber to confer.

Final Gambit

Tucked into the corner of the hallway, Blissex begins hastily outlining a plan. Read:

“My friends,” Blissex begins, glancing at his watch, “Exo is right. We have only a few minutes to act, and I think desperate measures are called for. We can stop the canisters from releasing their contents by destroying Exo, but it is my belief that the only way to shut Exo down in time is to shut off all power to the Computer Core. Once the power is cut, someone could fly up to Exo in one of those service skiffs, and inject it.”

“Wait a minute!” Lira exclaims. “The Core regulates the generators that keep the city floating. Those B/I engines can’t perolate the flux patterns themselves. If you shut down the Core, the city falls!”

“Yes,” answers Blissex, looking each of you in the eye one by one, “but the city will drop for 30 seconds before it is crushed by high pressures and broiled by the intense heat of the lower atmosphere. We have that much time to destroy Exo and restore power. It is quite a risk, I realize, but what alternative do we have?”

If any characters ask about the timers on the canisters, Blissex explains that Exo most likely tied the timer to its own circuits and that shutting the Droid off should stop the countdown.

If anyone suggests simply destroying Exo outright, Blissex hypothesizes that the Droid was wired to have the Computer Core’s circuitry pass through it. If it is destroyed, the circuitry will be destroyed, dooming the city to a fateful fall. It must be shut down, not destroyed — the computer circuits would then reroute themselves, rather than being destroyed along with the Droid.

Give the players a chance to work out what each character is going to do. As soon as the Rebels have outlined their plan, read:

Checking his chronometer, Blissex nods his head. “It’s time.”

Rebels running for the control console or skiffs while the Core is still powered are subject to attacks from Exo. It takes one round (probably at *full dodge*) to reach the console.

Once the Rebels reach the console they need to make a Moderate *Technical* roll to determine the procedure for shutting down the Core, followed by a Moderate *computer programming* roll to perform the action. Characters may combine actions for the *Technical* roll.

After shutting down the Core, the Rebels see the banks of lights wink out all along the wall, the computer monitors flicker off, and Exo’s steel tentacles go limp. But, most importantly, they feel a suddenly lurch in the pits of their stomachs as the city begins falling through the atmosphere. Read:

Out of the corner of your eye you catch a glimpse of the still active video monitors which now illuminate the Core. Cameras mounted for exterior views of the city show clouds rushing by. A screen showing a section of the Royal Hotel reveals people screaming in terror as credit chips and glow rods go flying through the air. Already you can feel the temperature rising in the chamber as Cloud City plummets.

“Twenty-six seconds!” screams Blissex.

Pulling The Plug

Technically, the Rebels have five rounds after shutting down the Core before they have to start it up again. If they go over this limit, let them save the city anyway, with Blissex admitting his calculations were off.

There are three rounds of activities to be taken care of, with three spare rounds for mishaps. The first round is used for getting up to the ceiling. The second is for shutting off Exo. And the third is for powering the Core back up.

Without the power of Cloud City’s central computer behind it, the mighty Exo-Exone is merely an incredibly advanced brain in a largely non-functional shell. It is reduced to using its own interior power source, and can no longer command any other Droids, nor can it move its giant tentacles. Just about all that Exo can do at this point is talk to the Rebels.

Round One: Rebels piloting the skiffs must make a Moderate *repulsorlift operation* roll to bring the craft to the top of the Computer Core and under Exo in one round.

Round Two: A Rebel must press the magnoinjector against Exo and push the control stud. The action takes a round, and an Easy *Dexterity*

roll is required. In this last instant of its brief life, Exo pleads with the Rebels.

“Why are you doing this? I can help you. I can give you eternal existence. I can make you perfect. I can ...”

In a last-ditch effort, Exo extends a small, thin power cord from its mass of wiring toward the skiff in an attempt to lock on to its power supply and siphon its energy off. The Rebels must first make a Moderate *Perception* roll to notice the cord. Then, only a Difficult *Dexterity* roll will allow a character to stop the cord before it locks on to the skiff’s energy cell.

It is likely that the Rebels will fail to stop the siphoning of the skiff’s power, but it still leaves them enough time to use the magno-injector on Exo. It should all happen rather quickly, and the Rebels have no time for indecisiveness.

Round Three: The Rebels, having destroyed the ExOne unit, now need to power the Computer Core back up. Characters attempting to turn the power back on need to make a Moderate *Technology* roll. If no characters are on the Core’s floor to do this, the Rebels in the skiff must find a way down and push the buttons.

This may prove to be a problem if Exo was successful in siphoning the skiff’s power before its destruction. If this is the case, the skiff immediately plummets to the floor of the chamber, and the Rebels aboard it must each make Difficult *jumping* rolls to get clear of the dropping skiff and grab onto the cables hanging from the ceiling. Those who fail take 5D damage from the fall.

If no Rebels are available, Blissex leaps for the controls and successfully manipulates them.

Completing the action brings the city to a shuddering halt. Anyone checking the canisters sitting in the chamber see that the digital clocks of each one have frozen at “00:00:00:27.”

It Isn’t Over Yet

Read:

You feel your legs give slightly as the metropolis begins to rise to its former altitude. Around you, the screens show the citizens and guests of Cloud City beginning to pick themselves up and help the wounded.

Behind you, you hear the chilling chuckle of Lira Wessex. “If you would all be so kind as to drop your weapons ...”

When the Rebels turn to look at the door they see Lira standing beside her father with a blaster pistol pointed at his head. A dozen thugs walk in behind Lira, spreading out into the chamber,

A Note About Big Finishes

Remember that having come this far, the Rebels should have the satisfaction of saving Cloud City. Using Exo’s last-ditch siphoning effort to create last minute, climactic tension (in essence, making a bad situation worse) is in the spirit of *Star Wars*. Having the Droid wipe the Rebels out is not. All that matters is that the Rebels *believe* that their whole mission can collapse any second, not that it does.

Allow the Rebels to come up with any sort of alternate plan if they don’t like Blissex’s, but make sure that the scene makes sense and that it is just as challenging as the one outlined here.

In any event, the timing is critical. Ideally you want Exo to make his last-ditch effort just as the Rebels are ready to inject him with the “poisoned” Evolution Droids. You might even want the skiff to begin to drop so that the Rebel with the magno-injector has to leap off of the skiff and inject the Evolution Droids as he does so.

In effect, what you want from a climactic ending like this is for the Rebels to just barely make it. If they are already in bad shape, lighten the final scene up a bit to give them a chance. If they have had a relatively easy time of it, make the final scene more challenging. Think edge-of-the-seat, skin-of-the-teeth tension here.

training their guns on the Rebels.

Blissex shouts to the Rebels not to surrender, that he knows his daughter will not kill her own father. Lira merely smiles at the Rebels and says, “I think you know I would.”

Before any tired Rebels can begin taking action, secret panels along the wall of the Core suddenly open. Blue-clad wing guard officers fill the chamber, training their weapons on Lira’s thugs. Doctors with medpacs approach wounded characters and begin making *medical* rolls.

Lando Calrissian and Lobot enter through the Core’s door. Without interrupting his stride, Lando orders everyone in the chamber to drop their weapons. The thugs quickly comply. If the Rebels hesitate, Lobot flashes the Rebels a glance suggesting they do the same.

Read:

Lando confidently strides up to Lira, personally taking her blaster. “Ah, Governor Wessex! We were worried about you. You see, we intercepted a garbled transmission sent by you sometime earlier today. I’m afraid it never got

past the system's ion storm interference.

"The strange thing was, in its garbled form, you seemed to be suggesting that you were on some sort of 'rogue' mission outside of Imperial authority. Since I know you would never involve yourself in matters such as this without Imperial permission, I have little doubt that it was all a mistake."

The charismatic administrator brings himself face-to-face with the flustered Lira, as if expecting a response. Meekly, she gives him one. "Perhaps it would be best if this matter were kept strictly between the two of us."

Lando motions for an escort. Lira glares at him for a moment, then spins around and exits the chamber, flanked by security officers.

Wing guards then gather around the Rebels and begin escorting them toward the door, Lobot leading the way. As the Rebels pass Lando, the Administrator glances at the heroes and says softly, using the voice of his "old man" alter ego from the sabacc game:

"Always keep the deck stacked in your favor, my friends. And never fold too soon."

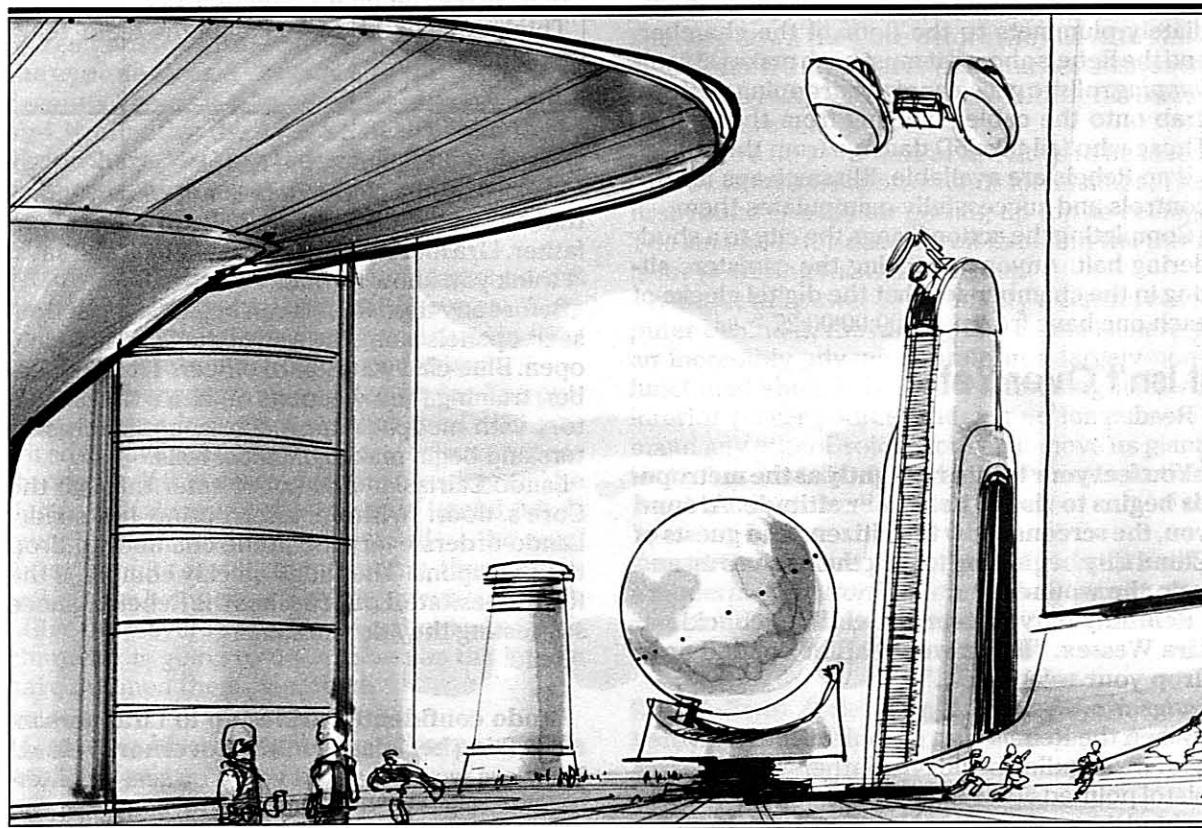
Then, with a wink, he sends the Rebels on their way.

The Wrap Up

While traveling to their ship, Lobot gets the details of the crisis from the Rebels. Rebels asking about the fate Exo-ExOne are informed that Lando insists it be destroyed because both of its creators are dead and no one but Vreen and Len would be qualified to handle the obviously dangerous design problems.

Now that they have thwarted Lira's plan and saved the citizens of Cloud City, Lando thinks about it for a moment (kiddingly), but decides to drop the murder charge against the Rebels. In fact, he asks if any of them would like to stay on as special security agents.

Give each character six to 12 skill points for preventing the crisis on Cloud City. Reward extra Force Points for performances of heroic deeds, exemplary roleplaying and outstanding ingenuity, and replace Force Points that were spent properly. See page 94 of *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game* for guidelines on awarding skill points.



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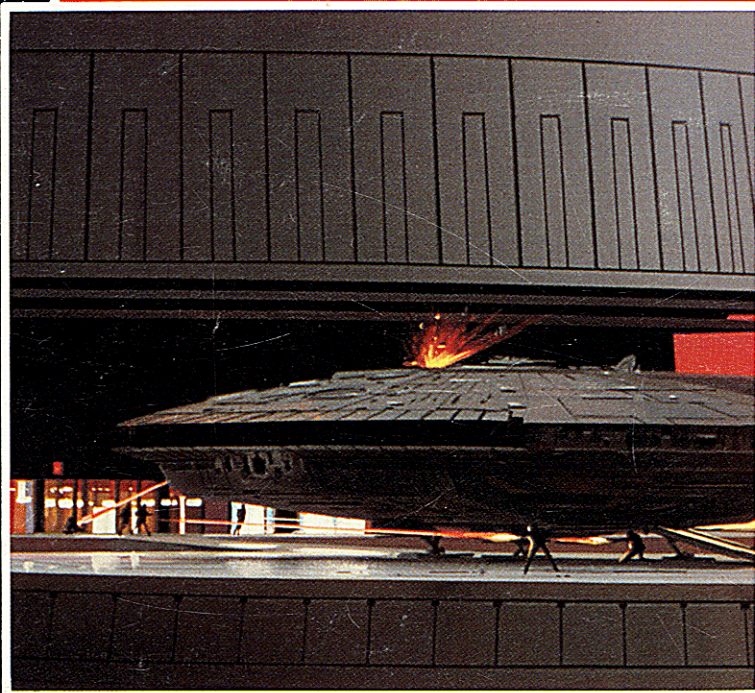
Crisis on Cloud City

by Christopher Kubasik

Chilling murder and intrigue abound as Rebel agents become detectives to solve a deadly mystery on the floating metropolis of Cloud City.

It started as a routine escort mission. Famed Alliance engineer Walex Blissex was contacted by an old friend who had made a startling scientific breakthrough. But when the Rebel escort team arrives on Cloud City to meet this mysterious scientist, things begin to go wrong. Dead wrong.

Mystery leads to murder. Murder leads to deadly confrontations with killer Droids and Imperial agents. And the Rebels wind up entangled in webs of deception, deceit — and death! The fate of the city in the clouds and everyone aboard depends on the Rebels and their ability to unravel the mystery before the knots pull tight!



40-page booklet features:

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