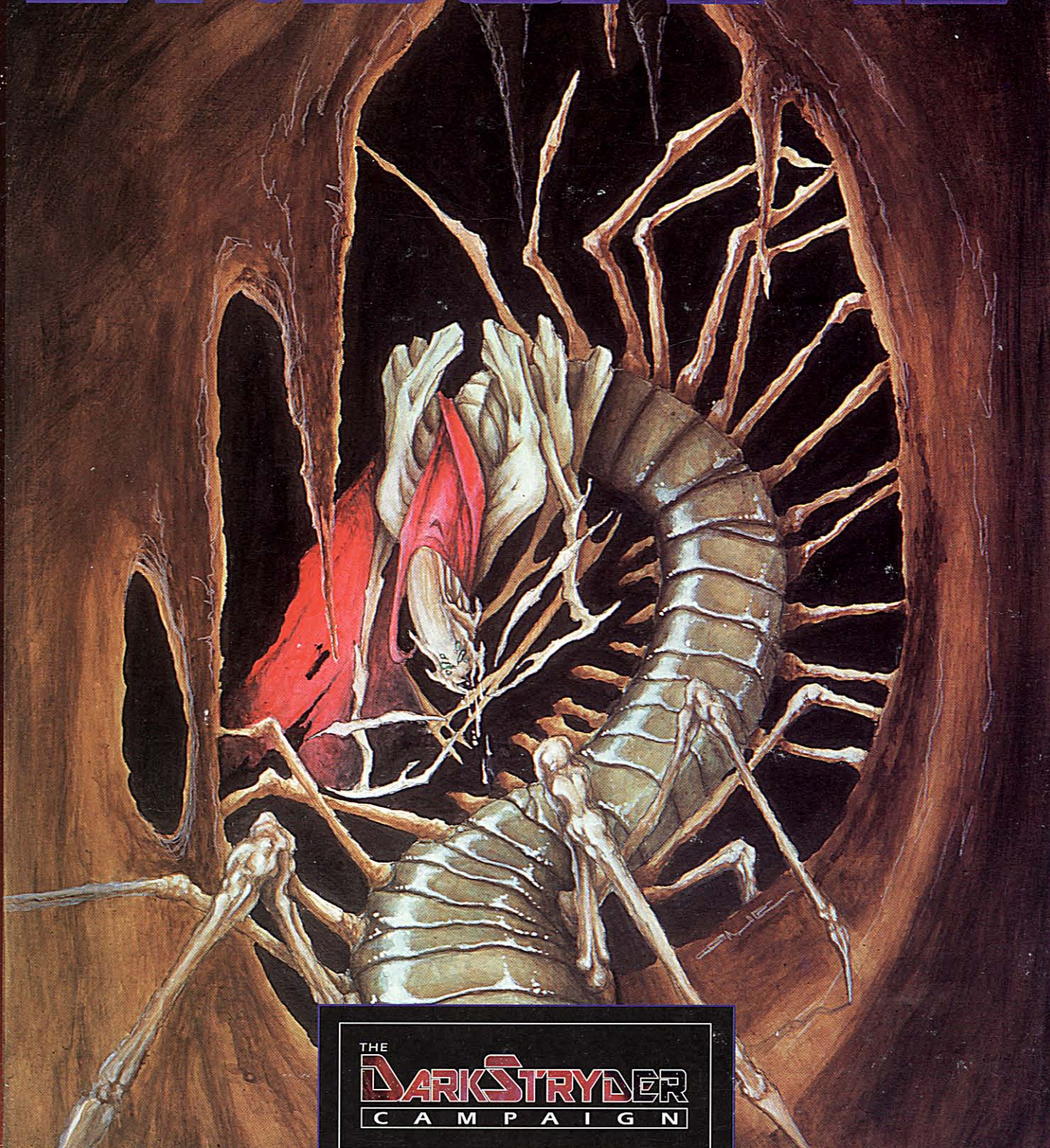


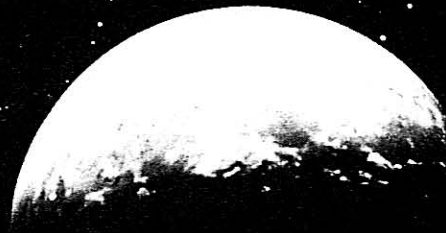
**STAR WARS®**

# ENDGAME



THE  
**DARKSTRYDER**  
C A M P A I G N

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



**The *FarStar* has reached the end of its journey. After countless weeks spent crossing the empty void of the Kathol Outback, navigating the harrowing corridors of the Kathol Rift and battling the forces of the Empire at virtually every turn, the *FarStar*'s mission nears its completion: Moff Sarne has been located.**

**But this last step in the crew's mission is the most perilous. Sarne is moving to implement his plan to destroy the New Republic and reclaim the Empire by unleashing a horrifying power that is centuries old. And waiting, plotting and planning in the shadows, lies Sarne's benefactor: DarkStryder ...**

# ENDGAME

by Timothy O'Brien, George Strayton and Eric S. Trautmann

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and

To Timothy Zahn, for constant inspiration, for pushing us to greater heights of excellence, and for generally going above and beyond the call of duty.

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# CAMPAIGN UPDATE

## THE STORY SO FAR...

Four years after the Battle of Endor, the New Republic continues its war against the Empire. Dispatching a task force to the distant Kathol sector, the Katarn Commandoes, under the leadership of Lieutenant Page, launch a devastating assault on the Imperial sector capital, Kal'Shebbol.

As Kal'Shebbol fell, Kentor Sarne (the Imperial Moff in charge of the sector) fled, enacting a massive computer failsafe that rendered the entire region's computer records faulty ... covering his tracks and ensuring chaos in his wake.

At the last minute, just as New Republic troops were on the verge of capturing the renegade Moff, he used a previously unknown form of alien technology — a technology that rendered his pursuers unconscious and allowed his escape.

And the only clue left behind after his flight was a single word in the main data banks of his fortress: "DarkStryder."

After capturing one of the Moff's own ships and crewing it with a team of scoundrels and soldiers, Page ordered a pursuit mission. The *FarStar*, under the command of Captain Keleman Ciro, launched for the unknown reaches of the Kathol Outback.

Early in the mission, Ciro was captured.

As the *FarStar* continued to gather clues concerning the whereabouts of Sarne and his forces, the New Republic team encountered hazards they never dreamed they'd face: lost colonies, Imperial and Old Republic exiles, shadowy scien-

tists experimenting with organic technology, even a species of alien mystics that rammed their vessels into unsuspecting ship traffic for no readily apparent reason.

As the *FarStar* moved further into the unknown, it encountered the Kathol Rift, an ancient energy field that has long held a reputation for being cursed or haunted.

Captain Kaiya Adrimetrum, the *FarStar*'s acting commanding officer, ordered her ship into this "seething cauldron of galactic power."

Inside the Rift, the *FarStar* crew experienced bizarre hallucinations, visions of long-dead species, Old Republic Jedi, and even stranger things. Encountering an Imperial "re-education camp," weathering a mutiny, even exploring an alien space station of unknown origin, Adrimetrum pursued her quarry relentlessly.

And now, she — and the crew of the *FarStar* — face their greatest challenge yet: Moff Sarne, and his mysterious benefactor ...

... someone known only as "DarkStryder."



## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

*Endgame* is the final chapter in the *DarkStryder Campaign*. The storyline began in the *DarkStryder Campaign* Boxed Set and continued in the adventure supplements *The Kathol Outback* and *The Kathol Rift*. If you have not already played through those supplements, it is strongly recommended that you do so before using the information in this book.



# THE SAGA NEARS IT'S END

BY GEORGE STRAYTON

Sarne sat at his desk staring out the viewport, his ready room lit by nothing more than dim starlight tinged with the blood-red of the Rift's trailing tentacles, long appendages that seemed to reach out into the nothingness of space to snare any objects that happened too close. To Sarne it seemed a fitting symbol for his own trap, a ploy that was about to envelop the Rebels and tear them apart.

A click alerted him that the holocomm had come on.

"Sir," First Officer Jav Remlyn said, his familiar voice filtered by the comm system into a thin imitation of its normally full tonality. Moff Kentor Sarne watched as Remlyn's three-dimensional image sputtered, threatening to disappear in a shower of static.

"— some kind of interference from the Rift," Remlyn's voice suddenly broke in as his image re-solidified. "We've been having trouble maintaining our systems. Yesterday the aft engine ionized and we had to —"

"I did not request a log of your recent inconveniences, Lieutenant," Sarne said, somewhat irritated by Remlyn's inability to grasp the importance of his mission. "Where are the Rebels?"

Remlyn straightened, intimidated even across a quarter-parsec of space. At least the man had not lost his fear of his superior, Sarne noted. "Sorry, sir. I beg your forgiveness for my —"

"Just get on with it, Lieutenant," Sarne said. He usually enjoyed such displays of subordination, but right now more urgent matters occupied his mind.



Christopher Trevas

“Yes, sir. The *FarStar* left NCW-86 — the planet they have termed ‘Demonsgate’ — thirty-five minutes ago.” Sarne nodded, recognizing the survey number from his last trip through the Rift. The Empire’s scouting protocols for such “non-cataloged worlds” was to gather data on the planet and, upon returning to Imperial space, transmit the information to the scout service’s central databank. Sarne preferred not to bother with full planetary scans, though he found the naming conventions useful for identification purposes, despite the fact that he had no intention of sharing his navigational data with *any* outside agency.

“Its general trajectory puts it on a vector for our benefactor’s homeworld,” Remlyn continued, snapping Sarne from his brief reverie. “Our latest estimates have the *FarStar* exiting the Rift in approximately seventy-one hours. Of course, the Rift channels cannot be counted on to allow a direct route — ”

“I take it by your decision to explain the nature of the Rift that you believe the subject eludes me.” He let the statement hang for a moment, allowing its full weight to settle on the insolent officer. “Must I remind you that I was the first to

cross it? That I was the one who guided this fleet through it with inconsequential losses?” Unfortunately for Remlyn, he had struck a particularly sensitive nerve. Sarne would not tolerate any insinuations of incompetence. His crewmen had to have unflinching, unquestioning faith in his ability to lead. If even one man thought for just a fleeting moment that Sarne lacked skill in any way, the renegade warlord’s entire military structure could fall into jeopardy.

Lieutenant Remlyn stood silently, apparently unsure of how he should respond. Even in the grainy holographic reproduction of Remlyn’s figure, Sarne could see the beads of sweat perched atop his brow. The man seemed to be suitably redressed — for now.

Sarne realized he had leaned in close to the hologram. His face would seem large and imposing in the duplicate holoprojector on the *Eradicator*. Slowly he moved back. “I want you to follow the *FarStar*, and report your status every hour.”

Lieutenant Remlyn’s mouth opened, but he said nothing. He seemed gripped in an unvoiced argument with himself, his eyes darting off to the side as if seeking some elusive answer. But his indecision lasted only a moment, and he re-

turned his gaze forward. “Ah, sir. Might I *respectfully* remind you that the instability of the Rift’s passageways makes it extremely difficult to follow another vessel through?”

“I am well aware of that, Lieutenant. Now I expect you to carry out my orders immediately or I will have you escorted out the nearest airlock. Do I make myself clear?”

“Yes, sir!” Remlyn said, snapping to attention.

Sarne ended the transmission, and the holographic image flickered into static and then disappeared. He leaned back into the contours of his desk chair.

Seventy-one hours. Good, everything was proceeding well. It seemed incredible that the Rebels could fall into his trap so easily. But they had, and in doing so they had sealed their fate — and that of the entire Rebel Alliance.

Sarne stopped himself, remembering that the Rebels had changed the name of their traitorous government to the “New Republic”. Such arrogant, treasonous scum, comparing themselves to the glorious Old Republic. The might of that ancient government had surpassed all that had come before it. Of the entire Senate, only Palpatine had recognized the slow decay that had rotted the roots of the dying institution. Only he had foreseen its eventual destruction and taken steps to save it. But the Rebels had fought him at every step, shouting cries of tyranny and oppression. Palpatine’s New Order would have restored the Republic to its former prominence, would have ensured the continuance of the mightiest government of all — under the guise of the Empire.

But Palpatine had become overconfident, had underestimated this rag-tag group of “freedom fighters.” That mistake had cost him his life — and had cost the galaxy a blossoming new dynasty that would have reigned unchallenged for millennia, much like the Old Republic before it.

Sarne would never make such a miscalculation. His plan would turn the Rebel’s strengths against them, destroying the traitors at the core, filling them with fear and killing their last shreds of hope. And he held no doubts about his success, for unlike Palpatine, he had one overwhelming advantage.

DarkStryder.

It was all occurring exactly as he had foreseen. And now he needed to return to the planet and ensure that the future proceeded just as well.

He reached over, selected a channel, and keyed the intercom. “Captain Talahon, bring us about and return to our benefactor’s homeworld.” He cut the connection before Talahon had a chance to acknowledge the order.

Things had fallen into place rather well; better than he had expected, in fact. Only a few more matters required his attention before the *FarStar* arrived.

And then, in seventy-one hours, his ascendancy would begin.



Jav Remlyn remained silent for a moment after his holographic meeting with Moff Sarne had ended. Over the past few months he had watched Sarne slowly change from a focused, disciplined leader into an obsessive madman with little regard for his subordinates. Nothing seemed to matter to him now other than this DarkStryder person, or thing, or whatever it was — Sarne had never bothered to offer even a hint of its true nature to anyone — but he was apparently willing to sacrifice anything and anyone to reach it.

Why he wanted the *FarStar* to succeed in reaching DarkStryder’s homeworld puzzled Remlyn further. And the elaborate facade Sarne had created to trick the Rebels into believing that his forces had expended every resource to stop them perplexed him even more. None of it seemed to make any sense.

Yet Sarne expected Remlyn and the others aboard the *Eradicator* to risk their lives following the *FarStar* through the constantly shifting passageways of the Rift. Already two Imperial vessels had been yanked into the roiling morass of protoplasm and instantly ripped apart, scattered and absorbed into the nebula before their crews even realized their ships had made a slight course miscalculation. As far as Remlyn was concerned, Sarne might as well have ordered him to fly the *Eradicator* into the core of a star.

But Remlyn had learned to temper his fears about Sarne’s mad quest with the knowledge that the Moff had *always* acted erratically and had been successful at every turn. Neither the Rebels nor the Empire itself had ever bested Moff Kentor Sarne — at least, not as far as Remlyn knew. Even the rout at Kal’Shebbol had been labeled a strategic withdrawal, and a victory at that. Apparently Sarne had considered the planet a temporary base of operations from the start. His true objective had always been the DarkStryder homeworld.

Remlyn hadn’t decided whether or not he wanted to know what lay in wait on that mysterious planet. Whatever it was had to hold great power — a power that Sarne obviously believed he could take for himself. All Remlyn knew for certain was that it had to be dangerous.



Chris Trevas

“Lieutenant?” came a voice from behind him. He turned to confront the *Eradicator*’s current captain, Thulian Merast.

Remlyn regrouped himself, straightened his half-jacket, and turned to face the captain. “Our orders are to pursue the *FarStar* through the Rift and report in hourly.”

Merast’s eyes widened. “But Lieutenant — ”

“Those are our orders, Captain. Shall I inform Moff Sarne that you refuse to follow them?”

That was all Remlyn needed to say. Captain Merast saluted the young intelligence officer, spun on his heel, and relayed the order to the *Eradicator*’s navigator.

The sleek Imperial vessel emerged from its hiding place at Demongate’s southern pole and headed after the *FarStar*, slipping into the already changing passageway the Rebel ship had entered less than an hour before. Remlyn stepped down from the holocomm platform and faced the main viewport. As the boiling energy-swirls of the Rift

moved to engulf the *Eradicator*, he realized he was holding his breath.

*At least I know I won’t feel anything if the Rift takes us.*

Somehow, though, the thought served little to slow his suddenly quickened heartbeat.



Velst Nay’sro shook his head. “That is not an option, ’kij.”

Across the room Bem Lyu’kij stroked his long chin whiskers down to the tight braid that bound the strands together. It was his usual habit when matters of a more covert nature came into play. “You forget the Bothan Way, sir: there are *always* options.”

Though Velst usually found himself spurred on by his immediate subordinate’s playful expression, in this case he felt his hands were tied. “No. It simply cannot happen. That is not our mission.”



Bem's grin disappeared as the fur framing his face rippled, a telltale sign of frustration that most Bothans displayed. He was obviously searching for another tack.

But Velst had made his decision and he would not be persuaded otherwise — not this time. He'd already suffered the consequences of listening to Bem; that was why he'd gotten this clan-forsaken duty in the first place.

He decided to silence his first officer before the conversation turned into another argument. "We have gone to great lengths to ensure that our friend does not give us away to the New Republic. His last message suggests that the final confrontation may occur at any moment. We can't risk exposing ourselves now."

Bem Lyu'kij tugged at his chin braid. Either he grudgingly agreed with Velst's assessment or he was desperately searching for a counter argument. It didn't matter either way, Velst supposed. His tactic had worked: Bem was confounded for the moment.

"Well," Velst said, satisfied that the discussion had not erupted into a test of wills, "let's go to

silent-run and get underway. I think we've given up enough distance to safely follow them." He walked toward the briefing room's exit and clicked the door release. With a hydraulic hush the durasteel rectangle slid into the ceiling. But just as he was about to step into the access-way he noticed that Bem was still half-sitting, half-leaning on the table in the middle of the room, again playing with his interwoven hair.

"If that braid distracts you, I'm sure we can have it removed."

Bem Lyu'kij stopped toying with his braid and looked to Velst with a peculiar expression. "There won't be a mission."

Velst pinched the cartilage between his eyes and sighed. He almost managed to suppress the question, but something made him ask. "What are you talking about?"

"If we don't take action now, *there will not be a mission*. That ship is dangerous. We can't let it reach the other side of the Rift."

"That makes no sense. We've tracked that ship for several days and it hasn't made a single aggressive move. There's no reason to suspect it will change its tactics."



Chris Trevas

Bem stood up straight as if propelled forward by his argument. “And we’ve no reason to suspect it *won’t*. Tell me this, Captain, are you willing to take that chance? We’ve had a successful mission so far — ”

“And I want to keep it that way. You show me where in our orders it says to attack unknown vessels, and I might reconsider. But for now we’re just shadowing it, nothing more.” Though he and Bem had been friends since they had left Bothawui together on their first mission, Velst was beginning to become annoyed with Bem’s lack of respect. Their relationship in this instance could not be more clear: Velst was the superior, Bem the subordinate. It seemed simple enough. But apparently Bem was still having trouble with the idea.

“I will obey your order, Captain Nay’sro. But I do so under protest. I will include such a statement in my report.”

“That is your right, ‘kij,” Velst said, walking slowly toward his first officer. “Just remember that my clan holds a high position on the Council.” He continued moving forward until Bem’s face was only a hand’s width away from his own. “I would hate to see you transferred to a less *prestigious* duty.”

Velst’s meaning was obviously not lost on Bem. The two had come to know each other well enough to pick up on even the most subtle of insinuations — which this most definitely was not.

Bem remained silent for a moment, and Velst could hear only the overlapping rasp of their breathing and the bass thud of his own heart.

“Yes, sir,” Bem finally said, his voice empty of the strength it had possessed only seconds before. He stared at an upward angle to avoid Velst’s gaze, and for a moment Velst felt a twinge of regret for treating his friend so harshly.

But the moment quickly passed, and he reassured himself that it was his duty to remain in control at all times. Having subordinates question orders could only lead to failure.

“Good,” was all he said as he turned for the exit. “I’ll expect to be underway within fifteen minutes.” Without another word he headed for the bridge.

Ten minutes later he was sitting in the captain’s chair watching as his crew readied the ship for silent running. Bem Lyu’kij had evidently carried out his orders quickly and efficiently, and Velst had no doubt that the vessel would be underway within the time he had allotted.

“Captain Nay’sro,” the communications officer said, calling Velst’s attention. “I’ve picked up another transmission.”

“Of what sort?”

“It appears to be a communications signal, but its wavelength seems to have decayed and then been amplified, like it’s been routed through some type of relay system.”

“The Lifeline,” Velst said under his breath. Brandis Turgah had mentioned in a previous message that the *FarStar* had begun to set up a series of modified probe droids that would keep the lines of communication open between the ship and the New Republic — or so they thought. “Yes, it should be from a human named Turgah, crewman. Route it to my — ”

“Actually, sir,” the comm officer broke in. “It’s written in the Vaathkree Trade Language but it has also been run through a pretty common slaver encrypt as well. Translating now.” He clicked forward a series of switches and then typed into the station’s keypad. “It appears to be a message from someone named ‘Loh’khar,’ and its coding indicates it is intended for someone called ‘Khzam.’”

Velst had never heard the name before, although Turgah had said he was experiencing some difficulties with his superiors. It could mean that he had been discovered and that the *FarStar* was now trying to surreptitiously contact the New Republic fleet at Kal’Shebbol.

“Fine, crewman. Route it to my station.”

He listened in silence as he read the message, his spirits falling with each word. Things aboard the *FarStar* were not proceeding as well as he had thought, and according to the communication, time was already running out. He turned to Bem, who had just entered the bridge.

“Take us out at maximum speed and reroute all available power to the forward batteries.” He watched Lyu’kij intently for a moment to make sure his first officer did not display any outward signs of pleasure at the sudden change in orders. Luckily for Bem, he managed to maintain his stoic expression.

Within minutes the Bothan cruiser slipped past the fiery planet below and headed into one of the Rift’s passageways, passing a bulbous, metallic satellite hanging suspended in space. Velst had the object scanned and classified, and his suspicions were quickly confirmed: it was one of the *FarStar*’s modified probe droids.

He sat back in his captain’s chair and started to wonder what duty in the entire Bothan spynet could possibly be worse than this — he didn’t want to be surprised when he received his transfer. He leaned his head in Bem’s direction. “You realize, of course, that you’re coming with me,” he whispered.

Bem gave his captain a puzzled look as the navigation officer counted down to the first micro-jump.



"Report!" Captain Kaiya Adrimetrum shouted over the din of the blaring emergency klaxons. Before anyone could reply, the *FarStar* bucked a second time, tossing everyone in cee-cee across their consoles. Most managed to grab on to something solid, holding themselves in their seats. But the two security officers stationed near the command center's entrance flew forward and slammed into the deck plates several meters away. Adrimetrum herself had latched on to one of the large R3 units that handled the *FarStar's* navigational programming.

The ship's inertial compensators finally kicked in, and the *FarStar* righted itself. Adrimetrum rushed to Thyte's station. "What in space was that, Lieutenant?"

Thyte's prosthetic had been ripped out of its computer jack during the last hit, and he now had to rely on the less efficient method of viciously poking at the keypad. "I'm not sure, Captain. We were hit by some kind of shock waves from the Rift."

Adrimetrum pondered. "A lightstorm at the Rift's edge?"

Thyte shook his head as he continued to manipulate the station's controls. "No, the lightstorms have been relatively stable phenomena so far. This was more like something exploded. I'm not sure what could've caused —" He fell silent as he adjusted a knob at the center of the console.

When Thyte didn't say anything else, Adrimetrum leaned in over his shoulder. "What is it, Lieutenant?"

"It looks like ..." He turned to meet her gaze. "There's another shock wave coming in, and it's ten times bigger than the last two — combined!"

The captain stood up straight. "Get us out of here, crewman!" she yelled to the jowled Sullustan at the *FarStar's* navigational controls. The navigator focused on his station and started frantically pushing buttons.

"There's no time!" Thyte said. "We can't outrun it."

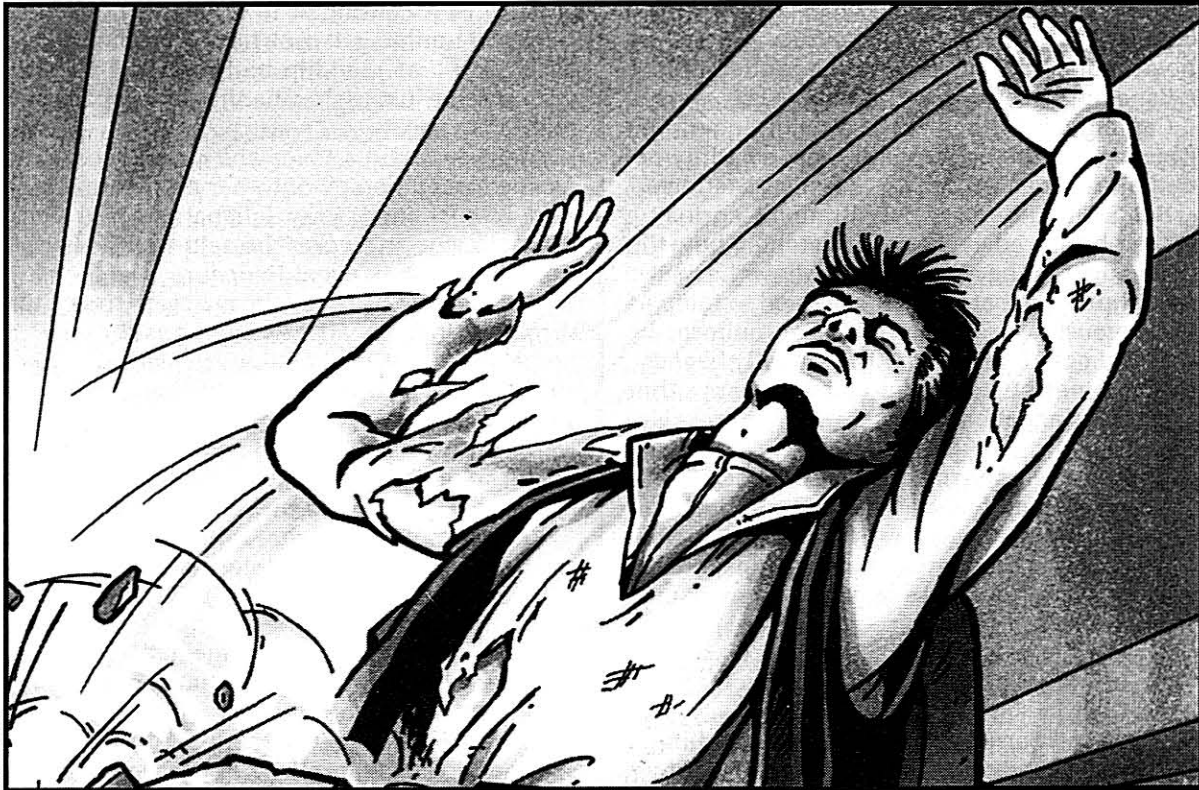
Adrimetrum spun about. "Maximum deflectors aft! Now!" As quickly as he could, the Mon Cal shield operator spun a pair of dials with his webbed fingers.

"Here it comes ..." Thyte said, already locking his prosthetic pincer onto a durasteel strut under his station.

Adrimetrum headed for an R3 unit to brace herself against the impact. "Everyone lock yourselves down!"



Chris Trevas



As she wrapped an arm around the droid's clear dome, she noticed that the two security officers were still sprawled across the deck plates next to the communications console. They'd apparently been knocked out when they'd hit. If they were thrown again ... "How much time before the wave —"

"Three seconds!" Thyte shouted before she could finish her sentence.

Without a moment to think, Adrimetrum rushed toward the men. As she reached them she glanced around for some way to tie them down.

"Two seconds!"

Her eyes fell on the communications console. She grabbed a restraint from the station's empty seat, and clipped it to one officer's belt.

"One second!"

Quickly she pulled the second seat restraint toward the other officer, but was jerked to a halt a hand's width away.

The strap was too short.

The klaxons continued to pulse as everyone in cee-cee awaited the impact. Adrimetrum yanked at the man's belt, trying to bring him closer to the restraint latch, but he was too heavy to move. She realized then that she wasn't going to be able to save him.

As the shock wave hit, she hooked the latch around her own belt.

The impact knocked the *FarStar* forward, flipping it along an oblique axis. The ship shook, and Adrimetrum thought it would tear itself apart under the stress. But she had no time to consider the matter. She found herself dangling in mid-air from the seat restraint as the *FarStar* tumbled over itself. In the next second, she slammed into the deck, the air in her lungs punched out by the collision.

As the ship shuddered around her, patterns of colors, like interlocking pieces of an elaborate, ever-changing puzzle, filled her vision, and she fell into unconsciousness.



Sarne quietly read the scandoc Captain Brannij had brought. It took him a moment to maneuver through the bureaucratic jargon and the blameless wording to the heart of the document — an ability he had mastered in long-ago days when he had done nothing but cycle and recycle reports.

So, another ship had been lost. He might have cared at an earlier time, before the *FarStar* had crossed the Rift. But now it did not matter. His plans had come to an unstoppable momentum,

and such minor setbacks could not affect the imminent culmination of his efforts. He tossed the scandoc onto his desk and it landed on the polished plasteel with a clatter.

Captain Brannij remained at attention on the other side of the desk, hands clasped stiffly behind his back as he awaited Sarne's reaction.

But Sarne did not satisfy Brannij's curiosity. Instead he stared at the man, watching how the light caught in the oil on his skin, how the white, bristly mustache atop his lip seemed to jump as he nervously pursed his lips. The uniform he wore did not fit him perfectly — mostly because he had gained bulk since his enlisted years — but it was clean and it had creases in the appropriate places.

Over the years Sarne had come to the conclusion that Brannij had no ambition, no desire to move ahead, no need to wrest power away from others. He was content with his station, and had no thoughts about pursuing any other course through the end of his career.

And that was good, for Sarne had no use for such an individual. Not when so much was at stake.

"Captain," Sarne said warmly, as if greeting an old friend. "Ready my shuttle. We're going down to the surface."

Brannij saluted and turned on his heel.

"Oh, and Captain," Sarne called, his voice still calm and soft. "I realize this recent news must upset you. As I recall, you had taken Lieutenant Remlyn under your wing."

Brannij had stopped in mid-stride, but hadn't turned back.

"Don't worry, Captain. You will have your revenge," Sarne said, his voice falling to a seductive whisper. "I will allow you to personally destroy the *FarStar* when it arrives."

Brannij gave a curt nod to indicate his thanks, and exited Sarne's ready room without a word.

Sarne watched the man go, and then sat back in his chair, bracing his elbows on the armrests and steepling his fingers in front of his chest. He glanced at the square chronometer sitting on his desk next to the scandoc that reported the *Eradicator's* disappearance.

Fifty-seven hours. Only fifty-seven more hours before the New Republic began its journey into oblivion. Sarne could not remember a more satisfying and exhilarating occasion.



What seemed like hours later, Captain Adrimetrum struggled back to awareness. Her head throbbed, her right shoulder ached, and

her stomach continued to flip as if the *FarStar* were still tumbling. It took her only a moment to determine that the ship had regained a stable attitude. She just wished her internal organs had realized it, too.

"Captain," said a voice she didn't recognize. As she forced herself onto her elbows, a medic clad in a stained, gray labcoat hurried over. "Captain, you're awake," he said as if he hadn't expected such an event to occur.

"Obviously," Adrimetrum managed to say, the throbbing in her head intensifying as she pushed herself into a sitting position. She saw then that she was on an examination table in the *FarStar's* sick bay.

"How do you feel?" the medic asked. He was a young man, and she knew she had seen him before, but she couldn't recall his name.

"Terrible. What did you think?" The moment she heard the words aloud she realized she might have spoken them with a bit too much annoyance. But right now she didn't have time to double-think every stray thought that crossed her mind. She had to find out what had happened to the ship and to her crew.

The medic moved his mouth as if to speak, but said nothing. Apparently her assessment of her curt reply had been correct.

She dropped her legs over the side of the exam table and slid herself to the edge. "What were the damage reports?"

"I'm not sure about the ship itself, but we've had at least two dozen crewers come through here."

"Fatalities?"

"Two. One in engineering — hit by a strut that tore away from a bulkhead during the impact."

"And the second?" Adrimetrum asked, suddenly afraid of what the response might be.

"Crewman Vyson, security. He was thrown across cee-cee and broke his —"

"That's enough," she said, a cascade of despair and anger washing over her. She'd lost so many since she'd taken command, and though she was responsible for all of those deaths, she was even more responsible for Vyson's. If she'd acted just a moment sooner ...

As the wave of emotion settled, she cursed herself for worrying about her own feelings. Whatever she felt meant nothing. The ship, its crew, and the mission came first — must always come first. Her own petty problems fell at the bottom of a very long list.

She rubbed her eyes, massaging away the pain, both physical and emotional. She had no time for either right now. With a shove, she slipped off the table and stood up. She had a lot

to do and probably no time to do it in. Lost in thought, she headed for the exit.

As she reached the door, she suddenly stopped and turned back. She thought hard for a half-second, pushing past the throbbing to get at old memories, and then said, "Thank you, Lieutenant Arac."

A grin tugged at the medic's lips, and he seemed to stand up just that much straighter. At least she could make someone else feel a bit better in the chaos of this all-but-failed mission.

Without another word she left sick bay and headed into the access-way.

Less than twenty minutes later she was standing in the middle of the officer's lounge surrounded by her senior staff, who sat or stood in silence waiting for her to speak. As she thought about how she wanted to begin, she slowly traced her gaze around the room.

She realized how badly each of them looked: hair unkempt, faces thin and tinged with a sickly pallor, uniforms torn, stained, and scorched. The Rebellion had never worried much about dress and grooming — there hadn't been time for such concerns during the war. But these people were obviously worn down, exhausted, demoralized, homesick. This problem went much deeper than mere surface presentation, and there was no way their work wouldn't suffer for it.

The mission had been much more difficult than any of them — including Adrimetrum herself — had guessed. It seemed like they had encountered a problem at every turn, whether it was with the engines, the food supply, the water reserves, the Rift, aggressive aliens, or Sarne's forces. Each difficulty had drained more and more from the crew, not to mention the *FarStar* itself, and Adrimetrum — and most of the others, she imagined — had started to wonder whether they should give up and turn back before they all lost their lives.

She knew that none of these people, especially her senior staff, took such a consideration lightly, for they all knew they had a mission to carry out. But that mission seemed impossible to accomplish now, leaving them all to ponder one question: Was there any point in trying?

What made it worse for Adrimetrum was the knowledge that, even though she could point to an outside cause for each catastrophe that had struck the *FarStar*, it was she who was ultimately responsible. As Page had always told her, such was the price of command. She was responsible for the crew and the mission, and it was her job to manage a balance between the survival of the two. Save the crew and abandon the mission;

complete the mission and destroy the crew. There was no way she could win. She could hear Page now: "You finally understand what it means to lead." Funny, she thought, understanding didn't seem to make it any easier.

But still, she had a decision to make. She couldn't waste anymore time debating the issue. And that was why she had called this meeting in the first place — at least, that was what she had told herself. But something in the recesses of her mind wanted to reject that belief, telling her that her decision had already been made, that this meeting had some other ulterior purpose.

She realized she was staring off into space, and turned her eyes forward. Everyone was looking to her expectantly, waiting patiently to hear the words of their leader. The whole room seemed frozen in an unreal moment, the depression they each held mingling together and casting a gloom upon them all; she could not let a continued silence deepen that sense of despair any further.

"We have come to a crossroads in our journey. For those of you who don't know the full extent of the damage, we're down to half power on sublight, we've lost starboard maneuvering thrusters, and two more of our crew are dead." Dozens of thoughts about Vyson's death erupted in her mind, but she managed to push them away and continue.

"But we've come a long way. We've taken a haphazardly modified ship and an inexperienced crew, and chased Sarne through one of the most deadly phenomena in the Known Galaxy. You all know what we've gone through to get here, and what we still have left to accomplish. I don't know how much more punishment this ship can take — and I don't know how much more punishment you're willing to take — but ... we have to ..." She trailed off, shaking her head.

This wasn't going the way she had planned. She wanted to say so much, but for some reason she felt that she couldn't, or wasn't supposed to. It wasn't what captains did, at least not the captains she had reported to during her career.

But somehow, this situation was different. These people meant more to her than a normal crew. She herself hated sentimentality, knew that it could only interfere with tactical decisions, but the feelings were there, and she didn't know what to do with them.

"Look," she said finally, absently rubbing at her aching shoulder. "We're all in this together, and I don't feel it's my place to make this decision without your input. We haven't yet caught up to Sarne, and we can only estimate the size of his force — there's no telling what other secrets he

managed to hide from the New Republic and the Empire before that. And we still don't have an explanation for this new technology he's discovered, or even know how much of it he has in his possession.

"Based on what we've learned from the worlds we've visited, he can't be too far ahead of us. We're close — but can we survive an encounter with him?"

She noticed that Lieutenant Thyte was staring at his prosthetic, nodding, and Ranna Gorjaye was nervously kneading her hands. The rest were focused on Adrimetrum, Scoryn especially.

"So, we seem to have several choices. We can turn back now. We can send an urgent message for help through the lifeline and wait for the fleet to arrive. Or we can continue onward and complete the mission the New Republic has charged us with. I would like to hear what each of you —"

Ranna suddenly stood up, so forcefully that she knocked her chair over backward. "How can you do this?" she half-shouted, her face turning a shade darker than her flaming hair. "This isn't a democracy! You're supposed to be in command. You can't ask us to make your decisions for you. You can't push your responsibilities off onto us." She looked as if she had more to say, but she apparently decided against it.

Adrimetrum had pulled backward as if struck, wondering what had prompted Gorjaye's outburst. The two of them had not gotten along well since the mission had begun, but recently they seemed to have come to some kind of resolution. Evidently she had misjudged that change in their relationship.

But as much as she wanted to, she couldn't blame Ranna for her attitude. They were all tired and dispirited, their will all but broken. She could understand that feeling, and she could dismiss Ranna's eruption because of it — but Gorjaye had gone one step too far.

Adrimetrum straightened up, brought her full confidence to bear for once in a long while. "Don't speak to me about responsibility, Lieutenant. I know more about it than you ever will." She felt repressed emotion begin to stir in her chest and she decided not to push that line of thought any further, instead turning her attention to the rest of the assembled staff.

"I'm not asking any of you to make this decision for me. I'm just giving you a chance to be heard. If you think I've shirked my duty, well, then, I can't do anything about that. But know this," she jabbed a finger into the table, "I don't give up easily. We're going after Sarne, have no

doubt about that. But I would've liked to have had my crew as eager as I am to pursue that goal, and I wanted to give you the opportunity to say so without knowing what I had already decided." Only after she had spoken the words did she realize that that had been her goal for this assembly in the first place. Unfortunately, there seemed no point to it now. She exhaled a breath and tried to think of something to say.

"We've taken more losses than I care to recall at the moment, and I won't —" She had to stop talking, for a rush of anger had suddenly arisen within her. She didn't know at what or at whom the anger was directed, but it was there nonetheless, strong and fiery.

Silence fell upon the officer's lounge. As Adrimetrum looked around she saw that most of the room's other occupants were staring idly at their hands or at the wall or at the table. She knew they were all angry and frustrated, but like her own fury, it seemed to be focused on nothing in particular. To her dismay, this assembly had made her staff more dejected and depressed than they had been before — if that were even possible.

She wanted to say something, wanted to break the grip of shadow in which they were all held, but not a single word came to her mind. The silence dragged on.

Then suddenly the intercom buzzed, startling everyone. "Captain," a voice — Taska Rorn's — said, "we're picking up something strange on the long-range sensors. You might want to come and see this." The intercom clicked off.

"The meeting is over," was all she said as she turned toward the lounge's exit. It was an abrupt end to a pointless meeting, and she almost wished it had never happened.

When she reached the doorway something told her that Ranna Gorjaye was staring after her. But she didn't glance back to confirm the feeling; she wouldn't give Gorjaye the satisfaction.

By the time she entered the command center, her head had cleared and her emotions had settled, allowing her to slowly return, for the most part, to her usual self.

Cee-cee looked empty as she stepped onto the Captain's station. She had ordered all available personnel to assist in repairing the ship for the next twelve hours — they could not afford to be caught by Sarne in such a state, especially since she had no way of knowing how close he was — so most of the bridge crew had been temporarily reassigned. But not all of them ...

In her peripheral vision she caught a glimpse of the single security officer stationed at the

doorway. Without warning, a jet of anger flared within her as the feelings she had carefully stowed away were shaken loose again.

Enough, she told herself. Enough. What had happened to her? She remembered the vibrant, decisive woman she had once been. Although her actions had always been fueled by the events of her past, she had never allowed that past to interfere with her duty.

Now that time seemed so long ago, that person so much different than the woman she had become. She just wished it would all end so she could go back to being that old, comfortable self. But the voice in her mind that had plagued her recently spoke up once more, telling her that that desire would never find fulfillment. Her mood turned again, for the third or fourth time in as many hours.

She glanced over to see Taska Rorn sitting at the sensor station, adjusting the controls in slow, precise increments.

"What is it you've found, Taska?" she asked.

Taska called up an image on her console's screen. It looked like a band of randomly sized and randomly shaped objects tumbling gently through space. Adrimetrum recognized it as one of the two asteroid belts that surrounded the binary system they had entered upon leaving the Rift.

"At first glance," Rorn said as Adrimetrum looked on, "everything seems normal. But then I noticed something strange. Look at these three asteroids." She indicated the trio with her index finger.

Adrimetrum did as instructed. Rorn had pointed out three asteroids moving along with the rest. But other than their small size, Adrimetrum didn't notice anything out of the ordinary.

After a moment, Rorn looked up at her. "They're not rotating," she said. "Every other asteroid is rotating about its own axis, except these three."

Adrimetrum leaned in closer and saw that Rorn was right. The three asteroids moved along in the same slow flow as the rest, but did not spin like the others surrounding them. It was physically impossible for an object to retain its relative attitude in space, which meant that some artificial method was preventing these three from spinning around their center of gravity.

She looked back to Rorn. "I assume you've come to the same conclusion as I have."

Taska met her gaze and nodded. "Ships."

Adrimetrum did her best to hide the feeling of despondency that came over her. The ship repairs alone had been enough to deal with; throw-

ing in an unknown force to monitor and potentially defend against made matters just that much worse. The crew — and Adrimetrum herself — didn't need another concern to add to their already overflowing collection.

"Can you access their transponder codes?"

Taska shook her head. "I already tried. Either we're too far away, or the transponders have been tampered with, or we're getting interference from the Rift or from some combination of radioactive elements in the asteroid belt. Whichever it is, I don't like it."

"Neither do I," Adrimetrum said quietly as she turned back to the sensor screen. The three "asteroids" continued to gently drift across the monitor, and she had the sudden feeling that their captains were even now laughing over the *FarStar's* apparent ignorance of their presence. She wanted to do something to stifle that laughter, and she wanted to use their overconfidence against them, but so far she didn't have enough information to figure out how.

"Can you get any sensor data?" she finally asked.

"I haven't been able to yet," Taska said, returning to the sensor controls and adjusting the focus of the sensing beam. "But if I — wait." She jabbed a series of buttons along the side of the screen. "Captain, it looks like they're moving out of the asteroid belt."

Adrimetrum spun away from Taska's station on her way to one of the ship intercoms. But as she turned, she saw that Ranna Gorjaye, Lieutenant Thyte, Scoryn, and the other officers she had just addressed were standing at the entrance to cee-cee.

"Captain," Ranna said, stepping forward out of the group. "I just wanted to say — for all of us — that we're behind you in your decision. We were just —"

"There's no time for making up right now, Lieutenant. We've got potential hostiles coming about. I'd rather have you at the controls of an X-wing instead of here giving a speech when we go into battle."

Ranna at first seemed put off by Adrimetrum's dismissal, but the more important matter of the enemy vessels appeared to force away any retort. "Yes, Captain," she said as she headed out of the command center.

The remainder of the assembled officers rushed to their own stations as Adrimetrum clicked open the intercom channel. "What's our sublight status?" she asked into the black grid that protected the microphone and speaker system.



A filtered voice replied. "Still at half speed sublight, Captain. Should have it operating at normal levels within the hour."

She almost berated the engineering officer who had happened to answer the comm, but she stopped herself, realizing it couldn't possibly help. "Maneuvering thrusters?"

"At full power."

Well, at least they could maneuver. "Good. Prepare for engagement." She clicked off the intercom and stepped up onto the Captain's station. "Full alert. I want deflectors in a uniform distribution, all evasive sequences loaded into core memory, and the turbolaser turrets focused forward." She felt the familiar tingle of adrenaline breaking through her depression. At least in battle she knew she could excel, and so her confidence had started to return.

Cee-cee was a flurry of activity as the crew carried out her orders.

"Captain," Taska Rorn called from the sensor station. Lieutenant Thyte was standing at her shoulder. "They're moving off."

"What vector?"

Taska turned her attention back to her screen for a moment. "They're heading through the asteroid belt toward the center of the system."

Adrimetrum felt her heart thumping in her chest as she took a moment to consider. Why would three ships who thought they were invisible to their enemy suddenly sneak off?

Unfortunately, she could think of only one answer: they were scouts for a much larger force. They must have taken all the readings they required and were now returning to their fleet to ready for a full-scale battle, a battle the *FarStar* would have no chance of surviving in its current condition.

Adrimetrum visibly deflated. Just when she had started to feel like her old, confident self, Sarne had cast her back into reality — as he had done repeatedly since the assault on Kal'Shebbol.

She would not let him do it again, she decided. She would do everything in her power to find and destroy him for all the pain he had caused, for all the lives he had stolen. It would be her unshakable obsession from this moment on.

She wanted to go after him now while her anger — and a half-dozen other wild emotions — still festered in her mind and in her heart. But she knew enough to wait — more to give herself time to calm down than to get the *FarStar's* repairs completed. If Ciro and Page had taught her one thing it was that a captain lost in her passions would only get herself and her crew killed. And while capturing Sarne meant more to her now

than it ever had, it was not worth that price ... at least, not yet.

And so she waited.

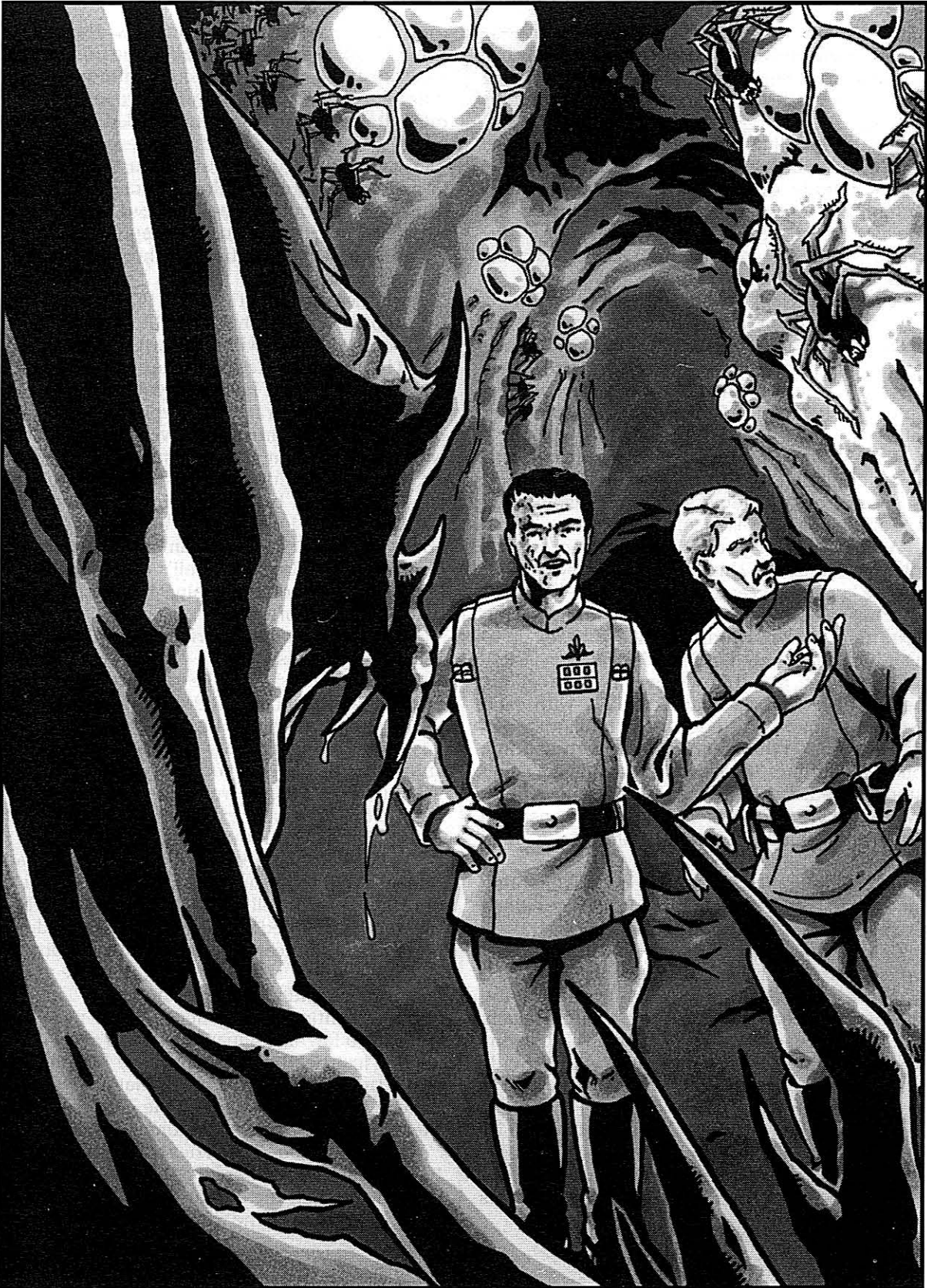


Moff Sarne marched relentlessly forward, his aide, Captain Brannij, in tow. The tunnel they walked through rose up and around them, enclosing them in a shaft of darkness that was broken only by small globes of hazy green illumination spaced just far enough apart to create areas of deep shadow. The source of the muted light seemed to sit within the walls themselves, but even after close inspection, Sarne hadn't been able to determine exactly what was causing the radiance — and DarkStryder had not been very forthcoming about the palace's strange technology when Sarne had asked about it on his first visit, now more than a decade past.

A chitter erupted suddenly from the darkness, no more than a quarter-meter away from Sarne and his companion. Captain Brannij instinctively dodged as if the shrill noise were instead the sound of a blaster shot.

Sarne pressed on, ignoring both the concealed creature and his aide's reflexive movement, his thoughts focusing on the coming meeting. It had taken so long to reach this point — so many concessions, so many intrigues, so many lives. As he looked back on it all, it seemed like a hundred years had slipped away since he had first discovered DarkStryder. In a single instant so long ago, he had created a timeline that had brought him to this moment, the eve of his ultimate success. And how ironic it was that it had been his erroneous decision to defy the Emperor's New Order that had brought him here. Had he allowed his companions to destroy DarkStryder then, his plans would never have come alive.

Over the years DarkStryder had provided Sarne with thousands of polyhedral constructs filled with an inexplicable energy — even Sarne's best scientists had not been able to determine how the technology functioned. In exchange for the devices, DarkStryder had asked for hyperspace engines so that it — Sarne had never referred to the creature as a he or a she, considering it no better than any other contemptuous alien animal — might escape the world that was its cage. If Sarne understood DarkStryder's history correctly, the beings it called the "Old Ones" — and occasionally, "The Kathol" — had stranded the creature here millennia ago, leaving it behind to guard the last shreds of a dead civilization. But DarkStryder had tired of its duty and now wished



Chris Trevas

to escape its confines, and Sarne had agreed to help in that effort. Of course, he had hedged, placated, and outright lied since he had made his promise, all along exploiting the opportunity by stealing the witless alien's knowledge and weapons.

Though the dimness of the tunnel hid its true width, Sarne sensed that the walls and ceiling had suddenly dropped away. Both his and Brannij's syncopated footfalls became hollower, the air around them seemed to grow more saturated, and he knew they had reached DarkStryder's abode.

Sarne could feel the collected beads of sweat hanging tenuously on his brow, could hear the clicks of the insectoid creatures DarkStryder kept as pets surrounding them. Brannij had edged closer to Sarne — he had never been as comfortable as Sarne with the DarkStryder creature or its lair.

A hiss issued from the darkness ahead, and Sarne motioned for Brannij to stop. They stood peering into the shadow, watching for some sign of DarkStryder's presence.

A sick, squishing sound slithered across the chamber, sending a shiver through Sarne's spine, and he knew the creature had arrived. He could now hear its slow, airy breathing and the ticking of its long, armored body as it heaved itself up — as it had during each of Sarne's previous visits.

High above, a cold glow grew out of the ceiling, becoming a brighter shade of violet with each passing moment. The edge of the radiance eventually fell upon the creature, silhouetting it in a purplish outline. Sarne heard Brannij take a half step backward as DarkStryder's enormous body came into view, dozens of its spindly arms waving in an intricate graceful and undeniably alien dance.

The illumination strengthened, highlighting sinewy skin, collecting in organic crevices along DarkStryder's body.

"Sarne-One returns," it said in its deep, sibilant voice. "Where is hyperspace device?"

Sarne had played this game once too often and he knew the creature would not stand for it again. He had to tread carefully. "In orbit. I'm having some modifications made that will provide enough power to take you wherever you wish to go. I need only a few more —"

"No more time!" it hissed, drawing itself up, its head now more than a half-dozen meters above Sarne and Brannij. For a moment, Sarne thought he could hear the captain's heart thumping in his own head.

"Please forgive me for the delay, my benefactor," Sarne said finally, bowing low. He had to allow DarkStryder to put itself into a position of superiority — so that Sarne could more easily hide his deceit. "Our journey has proven more ... difficult than we had anticipated. I beg your mercy."

The creature postured, slowly turning its head in one direction and its long, thick body in another. Sarne could do nothing but wait to see whether DarkStryder would accept his plea.

"The vessel will be brought here within one hour," it said.

Sarne needed more time than that to complete his preparations, but he had to be careful. "Have no doubt, your ship will arrive within that time." He let his acquiescence set in the creature's mind for a moment. "But I thought you might like to learn how to operate the hyperspace device before you take control of the vessel. And that is why I have brought you a present."

Sarne reached over and grabbed Brannij by the shoulder, bringing him forward for DarkStryder to inspect. "My aide knows more about hyperspace travel than any of my crew." He leaned in close to Brannij's ear. "And it will take several hours to explain," he whispered to his stunned subordinate.

"This is acceptable," DarkStryder said with an accompanying hiss.

Sarne decided to take advantage of the creature's agreeable mood. "We have only one problem. The marauder fleet I mentioned before has arrived in-system. My spies tell me they are still set on destroying you and your world, and with all the difficulties we've encountered bringing you the hyperspace technology, I'm not sure if my ships can stop them."

DarkStryder flapped a vestigial wing that had remained hidden against its skin until now. Black, crawling shapes spilled out of the crevice that the wing had created between it and DarkStryder's body, and Sarne heard Brannij take a quick breath as the creatures scurried out of the pale violet light's reach and into the darkness.

Sarne continued, satisfied that his ploy had worked so far. "But I may be able to send them away. I just need a slight bit more information about the gate construct. With that knowledge I believe I can lure them into the gate and vault them into the Unknown Regions."

This was it, the last barrier to his success. He had played DarkStryder for a fool thus far, and he prayed now that the creature would fall for one more ruse. If not, Sarne would be stymied, halted

on the brink of complete power — he could not even let his thoughts entertain that eventuality. He had no other recourse. His years of scheming hinged on this single moment.

DarkStryder's head suddenly darted forward, striking toward Sarne and Brannij.

Just as Sarne thought the creature would slam into his companion, it stopped, hovering less than a human-arm's length from Brannij's face. The captain wobbled as if the blood had suddenly drained from his legs.

DarkStryder's mouth opened, violet light fall-

ing on a row of sharp protrusions.

"It is good," it said.

Sarne's heart leapt, whether from relief or sheer joy he did not know — more likely a mixture of the two, he supposed. With three words DarkStryder had just ensured the destruction of the New Republic traitors. Knowledge of the orbiting gate's technology would make Sarne the most powerful man in the galaxy ... and no living creature would ever be able to resist him ...

**AND SO IT CONCLUDES ...**

# GAMEMASTER CREW NOTES

*The DarkStryder Campaign* has had an evolving storyline, and several of the characters introduced in the Boxed Set have played key roles in the stories involvement.

As in prior supplements, several characters have mysterious agendas that are not always in the best interests of the *FarStar's* mission. Gamemasters can use the information in this system to help steer the characters towards the conclusion of the campaign.

Please note, however, that most characters in the series have already filled their various, pre-planned roles. The gamemaster has a much freer hand in deciding the fate of the hosts of characters than before, though this will mean some additional "legwork" to keep track of who is doing what.

Information in this section is broken down into three categories:

**Player Guidelines:** This information is intended to help the player "get in character."

**Directed Development:** These entries provide hints, suggestions and specific directives for developing a character and keeping that character wedded to the campaign plotline. As this is the last of the *DarkStryder Campaign* supplements, these entries will be fairly specific, and gamemasters be careful about what information is revealed to players before play.

**Suggested Development:** This section contains suggestion on how to develop characters and how to integrate these developments into the ongoing campaign. Note that these are not *required* for play; rather, they are intended as springboards for optional background story ele-

ments that gamemasters and players can use to round out the *DarkStryder Campaign*.

## KAIYA ADRIMETRUM

**Player Guidelines:** Kaiya is extremely nervous about facing down Sarne on his home turf; she knows he probably has superior forces lying in wait for her and her crew, but she doesn't feel she can turn back, either. The fact that Keleman Ciro passed away from his wounds shortly before the *FarStar* neared the so-called "DarkStryder" system has not helped her mood any, either. She is likely to be a bit more aggressive than is usual for her (and she is pretty aggressive in most cases).

**Directed Development:** At this point, the gamemaster has free reign to develop Adrimetrum as desired; however, it is strongly recommended that Adrimetrum take part in one of the early landing parties during the adventure, and that she be cut off from the *FarStar* during the episode entitled, "Ambush!" (See page 77 for more information.)

**Suggested Development:** It is likely that Adrimetrum will begin the adventure viewing Sarne as the primary threat, though after learning more about the mysterious "DarkStryder," she may grow to view the despotic alien as worse than Sarne.

## LIEUTENANT DARRYN THYTE

**Player Guidelines:** Thyte is growing more and more comfortable with his role aboard the *FarStar*, though his relationship with Gorjaye has been tempestuous at times. Still, his rough edges have

smoothed away considerably. Of particular concern to him is the matter of Loh'khar and the intercepted coded message that the *FarStar* received near Demonsgate (see *The Kathol Rift* for more details). While his attitude towards most of the crew has improved immeasurably, Loh'khar's and Thyte's mutual dislike has grown exponentially.

**Directed Development:** Thyte will want to keep an eye on Loh'khar, and will volunteer to accompany the landing mission to the planet if Loh'khar appears to be going to the surface. He is extremely distrustful of the Twi'lek, and is going to great lengths to keep tabs on him.

**Suggested Development:** It is a good idea to keep Thyte and Loh'khar near each other; not only does this raise some entertaining roleplaying possibilities, it also sets the stage for an interesting betrayal plot, if the gamemaster so desires.

## LIEUTENANT JESSA DAJUS

**Player Guidelines:** Jessa has become increasingly distanced from the crew after former-first officer Gorak Khzam revealed her former Imperial rank: Colonel. Obviously she was more than she claimed.

In fact, Jessa was one of Sarne's primary intelligence assets, specializing in blackmail (particularly against political rivals of Sarne).

While Jessa still harbors something of a desire for power, she has grown to appreciate the tenacity of people like Captain Adrimetrum.

**Directed Development:** As she nears DarkStryder, Jessa will become more and more adamant about heading to the surface of the planet and confronting her tormenter. Jessa should survive the encounters on the planet and make it through the adventure relatively unscathed; her primary tests during the events of the *DarkStryder Campaign* are emotional, not physical.

**Suggested Development:** Jessa wants to confront DarkStryder, mostly to stop the horrible nightmares that have plagued her for weeks, but also because she still covets power. She will be sorely tempted to co-opt the DarkStryder technology if the opportunity presents itself. Whether her loyalty to the Empire or her growing respect for Adrimetrum wins out in the end is up to the player and the gamemaster.

## LOH'KHAR THE FINDER

**Player Guidelines:** Loh'khar is very tense these days; he knows Khzam is coming and he has to be ready. He also knows that Thyte is becoming

increasingly suspicious of the Twi'lek's activities; Loh'khar feels that "steps" may have to be taken to ensure his safety. Precisely what those steps will be is entirely up to the player.

**Directed Development:** Loh'khar is waiting for the first available moment to jump ship and head for the surface, preferably with the captured Corellian YT-1300 transport the *FarStar* has acquired. The best time for this to occur is during the main space battle in the adventure, when he can slip away unnoticed and lose himself in the confusion.

However, he may choose to jump ship when Khzam and his Skandrei Bandits arrive and begin attacking. Loh'khar (and his Turazza assistants) can then set down on the planet and begin hunting for the DarkStryder artifacts on their own.

**Suggested Development:** Loh'khar and Khzam can conceivably make an appearance anytime during the adventure, though a good moment to have them arrive is during the final showdown with DarkStryder. After DarkStryder is defeated, the player characters will have access to some DarkStryder devices, and the outlaw duo may appear with some Skandrei heavies to "liberate" the devices from the New Republic troops. Once the pair possess some of the artifacts, they will head out of system and try and sell them in Minos Cluster to an emissary of BlackSun. (The fact that the artifacts don't work very reliably much past the Rift won't be immediately known to them, though it will probably annoy the crimelord who purchases the artifacts considerably.)

## LIEUTENANT RANNA "WING-RIPPER" GORJAYE

**Player Guidelines:** Provided that she has survived thus far during the events of the campaign, Gorjaye and Thyte have been growing more and more attached, though she invariably gets annoyed with his somewhat dour attitude and he is equally disturbed by her (as he puts it) "reckless disregard for her own safety" when she's in her X-wing. This can make for some interesting "discussions" during downtime.

**Suggested Development:** At this point, the player and gamemaster are free to develop Gorjaye as appropriate.

## KL'AAL

**Player Guidelines:** Kl'aal is eager for the chance to get on the ground and start fighting a battle the way he knows how, rather than skulking aboard a starship. He is particularly tired of

giving and taking orders, and will be happy to run any scouting missions that are offered to him.

**Suggested Development:** At this point, the player and gamemaster are free to develop Kl'aal as appropriate. The Defel crewer would make a logical choice for any landing missions, particularly given the fact that the *FarStar* will likely be setting down in Imperial-held territory.

## SERGEANT BROPHAR TOFARAIN

**Player Notes:** Brophar hasn't changed much during the mission ... he's still boisterous, loud and extroverted. He has been much happier since the work on the *Muvon II* has been completed, though he's a bit annoyed with Loh'khar; the Twi'lek thinks the ship belongs to him, not to the guy who had to patch it back together.

**Suggested Development:** At this point, the player and gamemaster are free to develop Brophar as appropriate. However, when Loh'khar steals the *Muvon II*, Brophar may be angry enough to actually give chase, and may even want to volunteer for a landing mission, just to recover his new freighter.

## LOFRYYHN

**Player Notes:** If and when Lofryyhn finds out that Khzam and Loh'khar are allies, he will be furious. Beyond that, he's only interested in fulfilling the mission, as the constant pressure is beginning to tell on him.

**Suggested Development:** Lofryyhn will — upon hearing of Loh'khar's treachery — be very anxious to find the Twi'lek and "discuss" the matter with him. The Wookiee hatred of slavers is well-documented, and Loh'khar is in for a very rough time if Lofryyhn catches him. However, players and characters are free to develop Lofryyhn as appropriate.

## DASHA DEFANO

**Player Notes:** Defano will face a real challenge in the coming battle — if anything happens to Gorjaye, she's next in line for command of the *FarStar's* fighter contingent. She's still cool under fire, but she has growing apprehension about the coming battle, due largely to the influence of Thanis Gul-Rah.

**Suggested Development:** Gul-Rah and Defano have had a casual friendship developing over the last few months, though her trust in the bounty hunter was undermined by his position during a mutiny attempt in the Kathol Rift. Still, his views of Adrimetrum have colored her perceptions

somewhat and she may not agree with the captain as readily as she once might have. Aside from that, players and gamemasters are free to develop Defano as appropriate.

## COBB UNSER

**Suggested Development:** Gamemasters are free to develop Cobb as they see fit. His rudimentary piloting skills may come in handy during the approaching space battle, though ships are somewhat scarce. It is likely that he will be killed or captured in the coming battle.

## KRUDAR

**Suggested Development:** Players and gamemasters are free to develop Krudar as appropriate. It is likely that Krudar will go down with the *FarStar* during the space battle, though he may come in handy during the ground battle as well.

## BOOM

**Suggested Development:** Gamemasters and players are free to develop Boom as appropriate.

## RIZZAL AND VIZZAL

**Directed Development:** The two remaining Turazza will bolt with Loh'khar at the appropriate time — possibly sabotaging the ship on their way out. Once free of the *FarStar*, players and gamemasters can develop Rizzal and Vizzal as appropriate.

## BRANDIS TURGAH

**Player Information:** Turgah — imprisoned for sending an unauthorized comm transmission through the *FarStar's* communications array — is in a quandary. He hopes that his message to the Bothans got through to his employers, but he's not sure if the information penetrated the Rift. Accused of being an Imperial collaborator, he is forced to use a catspaw to contact the Bothans for his scheduled comm check-in.

**Directed Development:** Turgah should attempt to convince the only person on board he *knows* has pro-Imperial sentiments to send his check-in message with the *FarStar's* current coordinates: Tanner Carzyn. The gullible youth visits Turgah in the brig quite often, believing that Turgah is in fact an Imperial. Turgah will reveal the location of a hidden encryption computer in his old quarters, and will try and dictate a message to the youth in hopes that he will patch into the comm array and transmit it to the Bothans.

(He will attempt this just as the *FarStar* approaches the DarkStryder system.)

## TANNER CARZYN

**Directed Development:** Delighted that someone aboard the *FarStar* sees that the Empire “isn’t as bad as everyone thinks it is,” Tanner has taken a liking to Brandis Turgah (who has been imprisoned for being an “Imperial collaborator”). He will be anxious to help Turgah transmit his message to the “Imperials” but will be very nervous about patching into the comm system. Turgah will have to successfully *persuade* Carzyn to send the message. If convinced, Carzyn will transmit the coordinates to a nearby Bothan armada shortly before the *FarStar* moves into the nearby binary system.

## SCORYN

**Suggested Development:** The private feud between Gul-Rah and Scoryn may come to a head on the planet’s surface, as the new first officer of the *FarStar* has antagonized Gul-Rah mercilessly. During the events on the planet’s surface, Gul-Rah and Scoryn may have a final showdown, though the final development of Scoryn is open to the gamemaster’s and player’s wishes.

## GENNA SEEDAR

**Suggested Development:** Gamemasters and players have free reign to develop Seedar as appropriate.

## VEGATH TIST

**Directed Development:** Tist should join the landing party to the planet’s surface. His presence will awe several of the indigenous species who believe he is a new and superior product of DarkStryder’s genetics program.

**Suggested Development:** After the events of the adventure, Tist may elect to remain behind as an honored guest of the Yapi tribes. While on the

planet, he hopes to learn a Ta-Ree ability that will cure him of his addiction to salt.

## THANIS GUL-RAH

**Player Information:** Gul-Rah is angry. He’s angry at Scoryn, for constantly giving him lousy assignments and generally making sure his life is difficult. He’s angry at Adrimetrum, for promoting Scoryn. He’s angry at himself for his complicity in the murder of Adrimetrum’s husband on Siluria III so many years ago. And on the surface of the planet below, he’s going to do something about it, once and for all.

**Suggested Development:** Gul-Rah has finally snapped under the weight of guilt he’s been carrying, and he mistakenly blames Scoryn for it. Given a few quiet moments and a secluded spot, he plans to settle up with Scoryn once and for all, and to blaze with the consequences. Otherwise, players and gamemasters have free reign to develop Thanis Gul-Rah as appropriate.

## GAELIN

**Suggested Development:** Gaelin may also assist Turgah in his scheme to send a message to the Bothans. He may even participate in the attempt to dupe the youth into thinking Turgah is an Imperial. Otherwise, gamemasters and players may develop Gaelin as appropriate.

## BRESLIN DRAKE

**Suggested Development:** Gamemasters are free to develop Drake as appropriate. Please note his combat skills and savvy will be extremely useful in the battle against DarkStryder, particularly in the planning of ambushes and raids.

## CAPTAIN KELEMAN CIRO

**Directed Development:** Shortly before the *FarStar* exits hyperspace near the system that Sarne may be hiding in, Captain Ciro — who has been catatonic since his rescue from Imperial captivity — succumbs to his wounds and dies.



# THE DARKSTRYDER PLANET

## INTRODUCTION

The following information on the so-called “DarkStryder” planet is not strictly necessary for gamemasters who are running the adventure in this book. Instead, it is intended to act as a springboard for adventures set on this planet after the events of *Endgame*.

The planet’s real name is “Kathol,” named for the ancient species that once flourished in this remote part of the galaxy, though characters participating in the events of the *DarkStryder Campaign* will not be aware of this at first.

## HISTORY OF THE DARKSTRYDER PLANET

The Kathol — often referred to as “the Precursors” in the time of the New Republic — were a species of scientists, specializing in the construction of biomechanical machines. Kathol technology was almost entirely organic, including construction material, computers, and space-

### SCENARIO HOOKS

The adventure hooks included in this chapter are intended for use by gamemasters who are interested in setting future adventures on the DarkStryder planet. The suggested events in these scenario hooks take place after the adventure in this book — Sarne and DarkStryder will no longer be a factor. Note that any species mentioned in a scenario hook is described in detail at the end of this chapter.

craft. The Kathol flourished in an area now called “Kathol sector,” thousands of years prior to the rise of the Empire.

At some point during their history, the Kathol constructed a device called “the Codex,” a device that could detect, quantify — and in some cases manipulate — the Force. The Kathol had no overwhelming desire to harness the power of the Force; rather they simply hoped to learn more about the mystical energy field. The species’ overwhelming character trait was simple curiosity.

The activation of the Codex caught the attention of a dark Jedi of the era. This evil Force user realized that the impressive biotech of the Kathol could be useful in his quest for power. Travelling into the unknown, the dark Jedi arrived in the Kathol home system and promptly enslaved the ancient species.

A small contingent of Jedi Knights journey to Kathol system, hoping to free the ancient species from the grip of the dark Jedi that held them. A massive battle ensued, and in the resulting conflagration, the Kathol disappeared.

### THE RIFT DISASTER

The Kathol possessed an unusual form of space travel, quite unlike the conventional hyperdrives used in other parts of the galaxy. A unique “launch vehicle” was created (or *grown*, more specifically). This launcher worked much like an old-style railgun, propelling a space vehicle and its payload into hyperspace. These vehicles would emerge from hyperspace when the energy that propelled them was expended.

The launch gates were massive circular constructs that had been bio-engineered over centu-

ries; the Kathol used a pair of these gates to spread throughout much of Kathol sector (hence the alien temples that are scattered throughout the region.) These devices — huge, disk-shaped structures with slightly concave bottoms — were ringed with a series of tremendous towers. These towers channeled the gate’s energy, opening the passage into hyperspace, and allowing colony ships to pass through.

During the battle with the dark Jedi, one of the Kathol launch gates was activated and then overloaded, creating a massive explosion that actually warped the fabric of hyperspace and the tremendous energy anomaly that dominates the far end of Kathol Sector — the Kathol Rift — was formed. The dark Jedi who was involved in the uprising was killed in the explosion, though — like the dark side cave on Dagobah — the region was forever tainted by the dark side of the Force.

One “gate” remains, in orbit over the DarkStryder planet, though it has been severely damaged as well, probably during the energy surge created by the Rift Disaster.

The Kathol — sensing the massive energy surge thrown off by the Rift would wreak untold destruction on their home planet — activated an ancient contingency plan. Their machines — much like Ssi-ruuvi entechment apparatus — could actually store their “life essences” and intellect in a massive receptacle (called the “Lifewell”). Only a small portion of the Precursors actually made it into the receptacle; the majority of their people were killed when the launch gate blew.

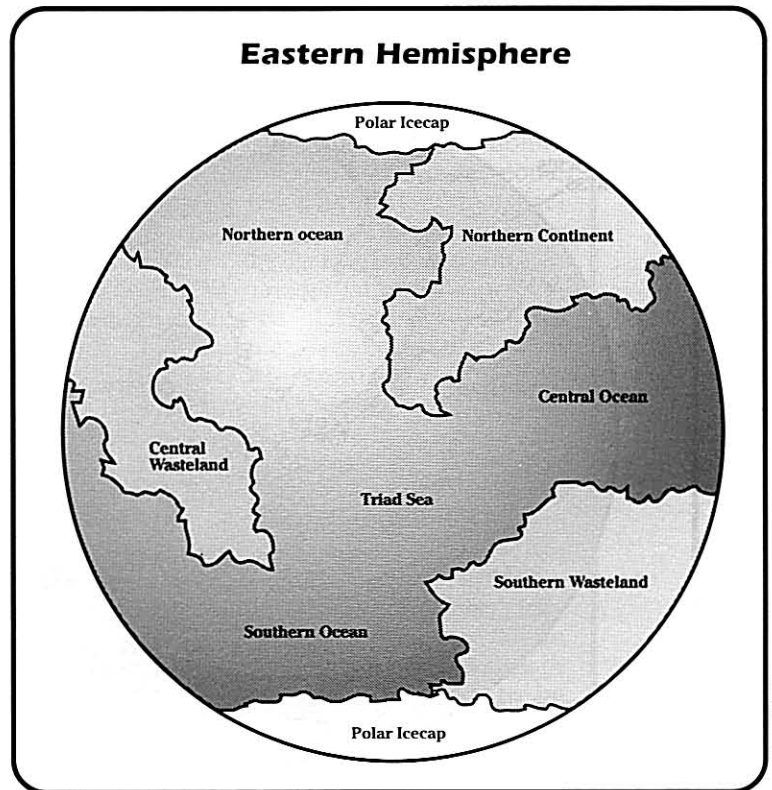
Leaving behind a single caretaker who had been genetically engineered to live for centuries, the Kathol planned to exist in the receptacle until the danger passed. Their guardian was supposed to release them after a period of time, but the creature instead decided it preferred to rule, rather than serve.

The guardian was capable of learning, and spent centuries studying Kathol technology, eventually learning how to tap the energy stored in the Lifewell to power the Kathol machines.

Over time, the Kathol trapped within the receptacle learned that they can sense mostly on the same level as the Force and can even manipulate it, though the passage of time has reduced their mental faculties.

## ■ Kathol

**Type:** Post-Disaster Terrestrial  
**Temperature:** Temperate  
**Atmosphere:** Type I (Breathable)  
**Hydrosphere:** Moderate  
**Gravity:** Standard  
**Terrain:** Chaotic



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**Length of Day:** 26 standard hours

**Length of Year:** 362 local days

**Sentient Species:** Charr Ontee, Fiery Ones, Krakai, Maoi, Segmi, Yapi, Yimi, Zizimaak

**Starport:** None

**Population:** Unknown

**Planet Function:** Kathol Homeworld; DarkStryder’s Fortress

**Government:** Dictatorship

**Tech Level:** Precursor (in DarkStryder’s Fortress), stone in outlying settlements

**Capsule:** The Kathol System is a mess — binary yellow suns, one planet, and the debris of others arranged in two main asteroid belts. Meteor showers routinely burn up in the atmosphere, and larger chunks of debris hit the surface yearly.

The surface of the planet was laid waste in the Rift Disaster, and the yearly pounding combined with DarkStryder’s ongoing experimentation has led to an uneven recovery — broken, chaotic terrain patchworks across the planet. Groves of woodland border wasteland, Kathol city blocks stand covered by shifting desert sand on one side and jungle on the other.

The assorted sentients of Kathol squabble over the ruins, some serving DarkStryder, some resisting him, others simply staying away from the ongoing conflict.

**Western Hemisphere**



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**TA-REE**

The unique energy signature of the Kathol trapped in the Lifewell has had a peculiar effect on the Force. The Lifewell acts as a massive amplifier, blending the energy-signature of the trapped Kathol with that of the Force, making it behave in unexpected ways. Virtually anyone who sets foot on the planet can learn Jedi-like abilities, though the range of these “spells” are considerably shorter than an average Force ability. (Ta-Ree powers are covered in detail on pages 40–63.)

**THE RUINED PLANET**

The Charr Ontee — originally created to assist the Precursors in their agricultural programs — have continued their work for centuries. Unfortunately, with no guidance from a central planning organization, the results have been somewhat ... chaotic. The Charr Ontee no longer have a distinct plan from which to work and their instinctive terraforming activities have led to a haphazard, seemingly random collection of terrain that plays havoc with weather patterns and changes with the insect-creatures whims.

**THE POLAR ICECAPS**

The polar regions of the planet are possibly the only logical terrain type on Kathol. Huge glacial plains stretch for hundreds of kilometers, and snow and icy gales constantly blow through the area.

The southern polar region is sparsely inhabited; only a rogue tribe of Yapi — a vaguely canine species — live in caves hollowed out of the glaciers. These Yapi care nothing for the other tribes and are interested only in their own survival. Any outsiders will be met with considerable distrust.

**THE NORTHERN CONTINENT**

The northern continent is the most habitable region of Kathol, though the majority of the area is covered in the skeletal ruins of a massive city. The city was apparently “grown,” not altogether surprising given the Precursor’s emphasis on biotechnology. All that remains are the riblike “skeletons” of long-dead, organic skyscrapers.

Patches of the northern continent have been terraformed by the Charr Ontee, though the terrain is a haphazard mix of plains, deserts and jungle.

DarkStryder’s fortress, an organic “building” grown specifically to be the creature’s retreat, is located on this continent.

**SCENARIO HOOK**

An expedition to the southern polar region to investigate unusual geothermal fluctuations encounters the exiled arctic Yapi.

The expedition is met with distrust and hostility, and the scouts must manage to communicate with the Yapi, warning them that underground portions of the icecap are suddenly becoming volcanically active.

If successful, the players must evacuate the Yapi settlers and investigate to discover the cause of the instability: the Segmi.

Several tunnels burrowed by the worm-like Segmi are connecting with a number of underground lava flows; the Segmi attempt to cap the flows was unsuccessful, triggering a series of small volcanoes that will ultimately spill tons of hot ash and lava into the Yapi caves.

## SCENARIO HOOK

DarkStryder's fortress is in ruins after a major ground battle. However, several pieces of Precursor biotech can still be found inside. A team of New Republic scouts is sent inside the ruins to search for these items.

As the team explores the fortress, they discover that — while the northern and southern wings are completely destroyed — some of the lower levels (particularly those near "the Lifewell" are starting to grow. As they move deeper, the fortress considers the team a threat, dispatching several blob-like creatures to act as antibodies.

The player characters must escape from the fortress, battling the relentless Maoi — the "antibodies" — before the fortress finally expires, killing them in its death throes.

## THE CENTRAL WASTELAND

The central wasteland continent is dominated by bare rock, with a few isolated ruins scattered throughout the southern coast. This continent is dominated by Segmi and Zizimaak, one a worm-like tunneling species, the other an airborne species.

## THE SOUTHERN WASTELAND

The southern wasteland is completely devoid of life save for a Charr Ontee enclave that is studiously terraforming the region in its usual

## SCENARIO HOOK

The player characters are exploring Segmi tunnels in the central wasteland when they stumble across an ancient Precursor installation, similar to the Lifewell.

The installation may have been a backup to the Lifewell that was used during the Rift disaster, and several pieces of abandoned biotech can be found here.

As the player characters explore the underground complex, they stumble onto a huge pool of a semi-transparent, gelatinous substance: a Maoi colony.

The player characters must race to escape the Maoi, or attempt to communicate with the fierce species in order to grab some of the biotech still present.

## SCENARIO HOOK

In the mountains of the southern wasteland, a team of scouts uncovers a "hive" of Fiery Ones, possibly their central home. The Fiery Ones are friendly and courteous, communicating more freely here than elsewhere, even offering to teach the scouts some rudimentary Ta-Ree powers.

However, as the negotiations commence, a small contingent of Precursors — still bound to the planet — become angry with the player characters and convince the Fiery Ones to turn on them.

The player characters must negotiate with the alien creatures and placate the angry Precursors.

The Precursors are angry over the number of their brethren still trapped within DarkStryder modules. The player characters must return with a number of these modules (as determined by the gamemaster) within a specified amount of time, or the Fiery Ones will cease to be friendly to the New Republic.

haphazard fashion. Ruins are considerably rarer here than on the other continents.

## THE ZIZIMAAK ARCHIPELAGO

This large chain of islands stretches across the central ocean of the planet's western hemisphere. The islands are volcanic in nature, with spires thrust as high as a kilometer into the air, making climbing virtually impossible. The Zizimaak prefer to live in this warm, sunny region, particularly since few species can climb the spires they call home.

## SCENARIO HOOK

A New Republic scout ship has crashed in the Zizimaak Archipelago, and the player characters must mount a rescue mission to recover the downed pilots. However, the Zizimaak are fiercely protective of this island chain, reacting much more aggressively here than they normally do.

As the player characters arrive in the region, they are attacked by the Zizimaak, and must survive long enough to rescue the crashed pilots.

## DARKSTRYDER AND DARKSTRYDER TECHNOLOGY

The creature now known as “DarkStryder” is not an actual Precursor; it is the Precursor equivalent of a clone/supercomputer hybrid — a sort of a biotech android. (The term “DarkStryder” was coined by Moff Sarne as the creature’s true name is unpronounceable.) DarkStryder is self-aware, and has been crafted from the same kind of biotech that was used in the Codex and other such Kathol artifacts.

The Precursors designed DarkStryder to be highly intelligent, in order to deal with unforeseen problems that could arise in their absence. Since the primary threat to the Precursors was a dark Jedi, they incorporated some of the technology used in the Codex into DarkStryder; it can unconsciously sense the proximity of other Force users and transmit rudimentary messages to Force sensitives light-years away (hence Jessa Dajus’ horrifying nightmares since entering the Kathol Outback).

Roughly two decades ago, a young Imperial Lieutenant, Kentor Sarne, set down on the planet with a scouting team that had penetrated the Rift. Sarne stumbled onto DarkStryder’s fortress, and, fascinated by the technology at the creature’s disposal, attempted to learn as much as possible about the history of the region.

DarkStryder could only give Sarne a partial history of the region, as its memory is faulty; it has forgotten the details of the Rift Disaster. Sarne eventually left, promising to return and help DarkStryder leave the planet, something the alien creature desperately wants.

DarkStryder has no ships with hyperdrive capability; while it is capable of learning, this particular gap in his knowledge has crippled the creature — he cannot leave the system. Without an actual hyperdrive to study, he is unable to build his own. The process of growing a new launch gate will take uncounted centuries, and the creature has lost the necessary knowledge to construct such a device.

Sarne promised to return and share knowledge with DarkStryder, knowledge that could free him from his perceived prison on this distant planet. DarkStryder agreed, exchanging DarkStryder artifacts for ships with sublight drives, most which the creature’s minions have already crashed or dismantled.

### ■ DarkStryder

**Type:** Kathol Bio-construct

**DEXTERITY 4D**

Brawling parry 7D, dodge 7D+1, melee combat 8D, melee parry 7D+1, running 6D+2, thrown weapons 4D+2

**KNOWLEDGE 4D**

(A) Bio-engineering 4D, cultures 5D, intimidation 9D, willpower 11D

**MECHANICAL 4D**

**PERCEPTION 4D**

Command 9D, hide 6D, persuasion 5D, search 5D, sneak 6D

**STRENGTH 4D**

Brawling 7D, stamina 6D

**TECHNICAL 4D**

(A) Bio-construct repair 4D+1, first aid 6D, flash-imprinting 6D, (A) medicine 4D,

**This character is Force-sensitive.**

**Force Points: 12**

**Dark Side Points: 14**

**Character Points: 36**

**Move: 12**

**Equipment:** Tattered Precursor robes, five mindwarper DarkStryder modules\* (requires a Moderate willpower check to activate, all characters within 20 meters must make a Very Difficult *willpower* check or fall immediately unconscious for one hour; can only be awakened by vigorous shaking requiring a Moderate *Strength* roll), five lightning modules\* (fires lightning bolt at a single target, 3–7/25/50, 7D damage, uses willpower skill), five firespray modules\* (launches a fan of green flame at a single target, 3–4/8/12, 3D damage each round until fire is extinguished, uses willpower skill).

\* **Note:** All DarkStryder modules are good for one use only.

## DARKSTRYDER ARTIFACTS

DarkStryder artifacts (the unique, dangerous technology that prompted New Republic pursuit of Moff Sarne) is extremely difficult to use off-planet. The devices are powered by energy siphoned off from Precursors trapped in the Lifewell; in essence, an embryonic “piece” of Precursor energy is placed in the artifact, and that energy is expended after the device is used. The use of DarkStryder artifacts is essentially deadly to Precursors, killing a bit at a time.

There are three common types of DarkStryder artifacts, though it is possible — indeed, even *likely* — that DarkStryder created many other kinds of modules and has simply forgotten them.

### ■ Mindwarper Modules

**Type:** DarkStryder artifact

**Scale:** Character

**Skill:** Willpower

**Cost:** Not available for sale

**Availability:** 4

**Range:** 20 meters

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Game Notes:** This device takes one round to activate. All characters within 20 meters must make a Very Difficult *willpower* check or fall immediately unconscious for one hour; can only be awakened by vigorous shaking requiring a Moderate *Strength* roll.

**Capsule:** The “mindwarper” device is the same type that Sarne used to escape from New Republic ground forces at Kal’Shebbol.

### ■ Lightning Module

**Type:** DarkStryder artifact

**Scale:** Character

**Skill:** Willpower

**Cost:** Not available for sale

**Availability:** 4

**Range:** 3–7/25/50

**Game Notes:** This module fires a lightning bolt at a single target. The lightning module uses the *willpower* skill to determine hits, lightning bolt does 7D damage.

## ■ Firespray Module

**Type:** DarkStryder artifact

**Scale:** Character

**Skill:** Willpower

**Cost:** Not available for sale

**Availability:** 4

**Range:** 3–4/8/12

**Game Notes:** This module launches a fan of green flame at a single target. The flame does 3D damage each round until it is extinguished.

To use a DarkStryder artifact, a player character must use the *willpower* skill. When using a mindwarper module, the character must make a Moderate *willpower* roll to activate the device. When using the lightning and firespray modules, the *willpower* roll is used to determine if a target is hit; *willpower* acts like the *blaster* skill when using a DarkStryder artifact.

DarkStryder used the life-energy of the Precursors trapped in the Lifewell to power his alien devices, devices he traded to Moff Sarne. However, the further away from the Lifewell that the devices are located, the more likely it is that the artifacts will “misfire,” exploding like a 10D thermal detonator. (Sarne’s use of an artifact on Kal’Shebbol was an extremely risky maneuver; the Moff simply was very lucky.)

Use the following guidelines for determining how well a DarkStryder artifact works when taken off planet (note that all distances are calculated for a x1 hyperdrive traveling in a straight line):

- If a DarkStryder artifact is used on Kathol, the device only misfires on a roll of 1 on the Wild Die.
- If a DarkStryder artifact is used in the Kathol System, it misfires on a roll of 1–2 on the Wild Die.
- If a DarkStryder artifact is used in the Kathol Rift (or equally distant point, roughly three weeks’ hyperspace travel distant), the device misfires on a roll of 1–3 on the Wild Die.
- If a DarkStryder artifact is used in the Kathol Outback (or equally distant point, roughly four weeks’ hyperspace travel distant), the device misfires on a roll of 1–4 on the Wild Die.
- If a DarkStryder artifact is used within five weeks’ hyperspace travel from Kathol, the device misfires on roll of 1–5 on the Wild Die.
- If a DarkStryder artifact is used beyond five weeks’ travel from Kathol, the device automatically detonates.

## NATIVES OF KATHOL

DarkStryder, to alleviate the boredom of the centuries, has managed to relearn some of the lost bio-engineering techniques the Kathol perfected. Creating a handful of species to suit its whims of the moment, DarkStryder eventually tired of many of its “children” and turned many of its unstable creations out into the wastelands of the planet.

Most of these exile species survived, some even thriving, and virtually all bear a fierce hatred for their creator.

### THE CHARR ONTEE

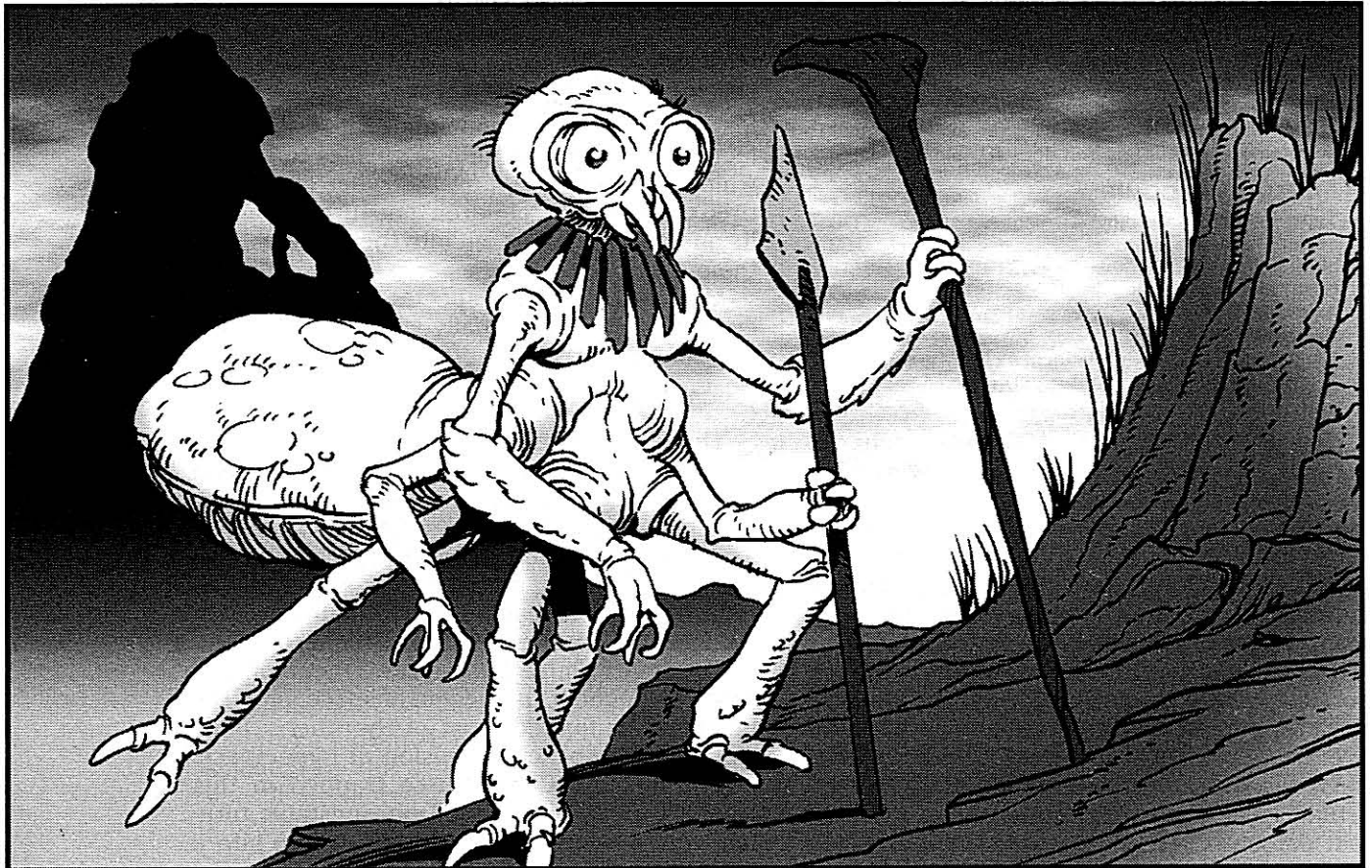
The Charr Ontee were originally genetically engineered by the Kathol millennia ago. Designed to be a servitor species, the Charr Ontee specialized in harvesting and agricultural processes. The Charr Ontee served as workers for the Precursor civilization, not merely as slaves, but as helpmates and colleagues, and the Kathol treated the insectoid species with great respect.

The Charr Ontee tended the Precursor outposts throughout this region of space, until the Rift disaster flipped most of the Charr Ontee ships into a pocket dimension of hyperspace. Over time, the Charr Ontee trapped in this “otherspace” grew more and more unstable, turning from a peaceful agricultural people into a hostile, warlike species.

Most of the Charr Ontee left on Kathol during the Rift Disaster were killed, and the few that remained were left purposeless when the Precursors fled into the Lifewell. For a while, the Charr Ontee assisted DarkStryder in his task, but DarkStryder drove them away when the Charr Ontee began to speak of re-awakening their masters. DarkStryder and the Charr Ontee have been deadly enemies ever since.

A Charr Ontee civilization developed over the millennia, and as the Charr Ontee culture grew, their genetic structure degenerated without Precursor maintenance. Charr Ontee technology is based on Precursor technology, although it’s not as finely developed as DarkStryder’s. The loss of the Charr Ontee led DarkStryder to develop replacement worker-species, and the Charr Ontee consider themselves superior to all the DarkStryder-developed lifeforms, although they don’t automatically consider them enemies. Most of the other Kathol species hold the Charr Ontee in great awe and regard them almost with great reverence.

Over the centuries, the Charr Ontee learned how to use the mysterious Ta-Ree energy that permeates Kathol. The following Ta-Ree spells



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are commonly used by Charr Ontee (although individuals of the species may know others at varying levels of proficiency): *Awaken 4D*, *battle mastery 3D*, *battle sense 2D*, *block pain 4D*, *boost attribute 3D*, *energy blade 4D*, *entangle 4D*, *lessen injury 3D*, *psychokinesis 5D*, *speed healing 4D*, *stay conscious 5D*. (For information of Ta-Ree powers, see pages 40–63.)

### ■ Charr Ontee

**Attribute Dice:** 12D  
**DEXTERITY:** 1D/5D  
**KNOWLEDGE:** 1D/5D  
**MECHANICAL:** 1D/3D  
**PERCEPTION:** 3D/5D  
**STRENGTH:** 2D/5D  
**TECHNICAL:** 1D/5D

#### Special Abilities:

**Spinnerets:** The Charr Ontee possess spinnerets which allow them to produce sticky fibers in which they can trap their opponents (*web Strength 4D*).

**Claws:** The two larger of the Charr Ontee's four arms end in heavy claws which are capable of doing *STR+1D+2* damage.

**Story Factors:** The Charr Ontee are arrogant and haughty, and consider themselves superior to the DarkStryder-engineered species of Kathol. They are willing to consider non-engineered species roughly equal to themselves, and are always interested in studying and cultivating new species.

**Gamemaster Note:** The Kathol Charr Ontee have 4 fewer attribute dice than their distant cousins, the Charon. The Charr Ontee have been slowly degenerating for centuries. These Charr Ontee don't divide themselves into the bio-scientist and warrior classes; they have remained a generalist species. These Charr Ontee have no Void Cult (a development of the Charon), and actually consider themselves to have a duty to protect other sentient lifeforms, especially bio-engineered species. (See *Galaxy Guide 4: Alien Races* and the adventures *Otherspace* and *Otherspace II* for more information on the Charon.)

**Move:** 10/12

**Size:** 2–2.5 meters tall

## THE FIERY ONES

The Fiery Ones are a mysterious species of energy creature that appeared shortly after the Rift disaster. The Charr Ontee have no record of them prior to the disaster and first noticed them after DarkStryder drove them into the wastelands.

The Fiery Ones are apparently intelligent, can communicate simple thoughts empathically (these messages consist of only a few words), and can deliver a single deadly energy discharge, though this discharge kills it the sender as the target. They seem to be completely composed of energy: they can travel at any speed they desire



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and pass through solid matter without appreciable effect.

The Fiery Ones are known all over Kathol for mysteriously appearing and giving aid to those in danger (usually consisting of short bits of information). The Charr Ontee believe they are somehow connected with the Precursors; the Yapi regard them as benign spirits.

Any attempts to initiate empathic communication with these unusual creatures are generally unsuccessful; the Fiery Ones simply do not have emotions or thought patterns analogous to humans or similar non-humans. In addition, they often give off a sense of purpose when communicating with other species, as if their actions are all part of some grand scheme or design. What that plan actually is remains to be seen, though the Fiery Ones seem to take an inordinate interest in the Yapi.

The Fiery Ones also possess Ta-Ree abilities, and at fairly advanced levels, though they never use these powers for aggressive acts, instead relying on their other traits for defense. The Fiery Ones commonly use the following powers (though they may possess others at varying levels of

proficiency): *Blindness 4D, block pain 6D, boost senses 8D, cloak presence 5D, darkness 5D, detect life 5D, detect Ta-Ree 7D, duplicate 8D, projective empathy 10D, psychokinesis 15D, pyrospray 5D, receptive empathy 10D, reduce another's pain 6D, sense life 5D, trance 5D.* (For more information on Ta-Ree powers, see pages 40–63.)

## ■ The Fiery Ones

**Attribute Dice:** 12D  
**DEXTERITY:** 3D/5D  
**KNOWLEDGE:** 3D/5D  
**MECHANICAL:** 0D  
**PERCEPTION:** 3D/5D  
**STRENGTH:** 0D  
**TECHNICAL:** 0D

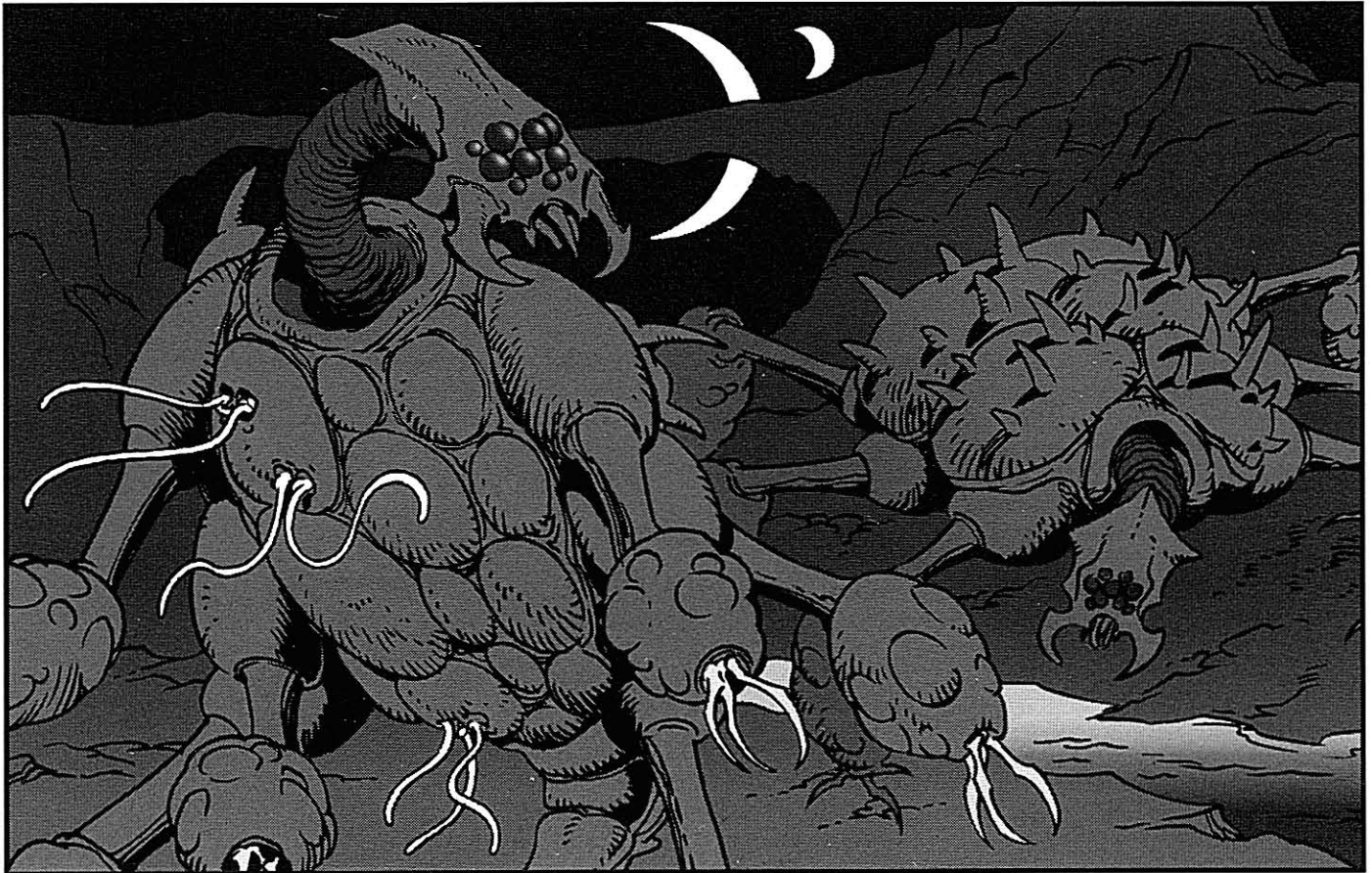
### Special Abilities:

**Energy Form:** The Fiery Ones have no physical form, and thus no *Mechanical*, *Strength*, or *Technical* attributes. They appear to be fairly intangible and are capable of moving through solid objects — even other species — without harming themselves or the object they are passing through.

**Energy Discharge:** A Fiery One can administer a powerful energy shock that will straightforwardly kill a target. This is the last thing the creature does; the discharge seems to destroy the Fiery One and is accordingly very rarely used.

**Communication:** The Fiery Ones communicate simple thoughts and emotions by mental transmission. These messages should not exceed three words.





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**Story Factors:** The Fiery Ones want the imprisoned Precursors freed, for unknown reasons.  
**Move:** Can move any speed up to 1,000 meters per second.  
**Size:** Varies widely; typically 0.25–0.5 meter radius

## THE KRAKAI

The Krakai are hulking, insectile creatures with a black, chitinous carapace and fairly long, armored legs. Krakai possess a collection of pod-sacs that run ventrally along the long axis of their segmented bodies. The pod-sacs on their undersides burst to reveal a collection of slimy tentacles, which they use to manipulate objects and controls. These sacs are constantly growing, and if a sac isn't used it eventually bursts, leaving a slimy trail of translucent, rotting tentacles behind.

The Krakai are another worker species DarkStryder engineered centuries ago. This species was designed to operate and maintain the fortresses machinery — an experiment that was a great success, as the Krakai turned out to be highly intelligent and able to repair and improve the machinery, and even design new equipment. Furthermore, DarkStryder was able to imprint loyalty into the Krakai, and they not only serve,

but they enjoy their servitude. The Krakai operate in swarms, and form the bulk of the internal fortress guards and technicians.

The Krakai have — to DarkStryder's consternation — managed to harness some Ta-Ree abilities, though the single-minded loyalty the creatures possess keeps them from turning these powers on their master. Krakai generally possess the following Ta-Ree spells (though individual Krakai may possess others and at varying levels of proficiency): *Battle mastery 5D*, *battle sense 4D*, *boost senses 3D*, *darkness 4D*, *deadly touch 3D*, *detect life 5D*, *light 4D*, *sense danger 3D*, *psychokinesis 6D*, *sense life 5D*, *wall 5D*, *withstand stun 3D*. (For more information on Ta-Ree powers, see pages 40–63.)

### ■ Krakai

**Attribute Dice:** 12  
**DEXTERITY:** 1D/2D  
**KNOWLEDGE:** 1D/3D  
**MECHANICAL:** 2D+1/5D  
**PERCEPTION:** 2D/4D  
**STRENGTH:** 2D/4D  
**TECHNICAL:** 2D/4D

#### Special Abilities:

*Short flight:* The Krakai have a limited ability to fly for short distances (up to 50 meters, using their vestigial wings).

They must land for a round between these hops.

**Tough:** Between their armored shells and primitive nervous system, the Krakai add +2D to *Strength* resist all damage.

**Move:** 8 (crawling), 12 (flying)

**Size:** 1 meter long

## THE MAOI

The Maoi are amorphous, amoral, and aggressive beings who regard all other life as food. They generally attack by invading the prey's mouth, diving down its throat, and consuming it from the inside. It takes two rounds to enter the victim. The victim is alive for the first few minutes of this, in excruciating pain. If the mouth is protected, they attempt to physically strangle the victim. If this fails, or the prey uses weapons, the Maoi resort to Ta-Ree spells. Maoi prefer not to kill the victim before eating; to them, live prey tastes better.

The Maoi are the product of an experiment with the Long Ones. DarkStryder discovered they were too self-centered and uncommunicative to be useful, so he tossed them into a charnel pit in the lowest levels of labyrinth, where they multiplied and spread everywhere the Segmi tunnels and underground pipelines of the Kathol led

them.

The Maoi — like many natives of Kathol — can use Ta-Ree spells, preferring to cast them while in the process of ingesting their prey, in effect using the hapless victim as a shield. Since the Maoi do not possess sight organs, they are exempt from the line-of-sight restrictions of many Ta-Ree spells. Most Maoi know the following Ta-Ree spells (though individual Maoi may know others and at varying levels of proficiency): *Blindness 3D*, *cloak presence 3D*, *detect life 6D*, *detect Ta-Ree 5D*, *generate lightning 5D*, *light 5D*, *psychokinesis 6D*, *sense life 5D*, *sleep 3D*, *trance 5D*. (For more information on Ta-Ree spells, see pages 40–63.)

### ■ Maoi

**Attribute Dice:** 12D

**DEXTERITY:** 2D/4D

**KNOWLEDGE:** 2D/4D

**MECHANICAL:** 0D

**PERCEPTION:** 2D/5D

**STRENGTH:** 2D/4D+2

**TECHNICAL:** 0D

**Special Abilities:**

*Amorphous:* The Maoi can flow through openings up to five centimeters wide.

*Ta-Ree:* The Maoi are naturally adept with Ta-Ree but



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generally only use these abilities to defend their colonies.  
*Decentralized nervous system:* The Maoi have a highly decentralized nervous system, and can absorb more damage than an equivalently sized creature: +2D to *Strength* to resist all damage.

*Alien thoughts:* Their thought processes are radically alien, and their minds cannot be read by other species; any attempt to do so registers only deep hunger.

*Internal devouring attack:* The Maoi usually consume a victim from inside. This attack ignores all armor. Successfully resisting the attack (rolling higher than the Maoi) indicates that the alien is ejected.

**Story Factors:** Maoi attack anything that enters their territory, and are universally hated, feared, and avoided by the other Kathol sentient species.

**Move:** 12

**Size:** Varies widely; typically one meter radius, 10 cm thick

### THE SEGMI

After driving off the Charr Ontee, DarkStryder realized it needed to engineer a species to perform the building duties that the insectile terraformers had performed. The Segmi were an early success: segmented worms that spun resin and were happy to build the complex into a fortress. After he was satisfied with the fortress, the Segmi wandered away and developed their

own culture. Recently, DarkStryder decided to expand the fortress again, and recaptured some Segmi to do the work. This time, the Segmi are less pleased to do the job, but while they have no particular love for DarkStryder, they find the work interesting.

The subterranean Segmi civilization extends for hundreds of miles in all directions. They are familiar with the Precursor piping systems and DarkStryder's labyrinth, as well as the intricate maze of tunnels they have constructed throughout much of the main continent. The worm-like species occasionally speak of ancient Segmi that live in "the deep tunnels" that are thousands of years old and measuring hundreds of meters in length. These Old Segmi have never been seen, though their smaller cousins swear that such creatures exist.

Segmi often know the following Ta-Ree spells (though individual Segmi may know other powers at varying levels of proficiency): *Boost senses 4D, cloak presence 5D, darkness 5D, detect life 3D, detect Ta-Ree 5D, heat 5D, trance 5D, psychokinesis 6D, wall 6D.* (For more information on Ta-Ree spells, see pages 40–63.)

## ■ Segmi

Attribute Dice: 12D  
 DEXTERITY: 2D/4D  
 KNOWLEDGE: 2D/3D  
 MECHANICAL: 0D  
 PERCEPTION: 2D/5D  
 STRENGTH: 2D/4D  
 TECHNICAL: 2D/4D

### Special Abilities:

*Tunnelling:* The Segmi can burrow through hard earth (but not rock) with a Move of 8.

*Resin:* The Segmi secrete a lightweight, resilient resin that they use as a building material. This resin is shaped by using the *Technical* attribute.

*No digits:* The Segmi lack hands or other manipulatory digits. They cannot handle controls and cannot gain skills that require tools.

**Story Factors:** DarkStryder has captured a number of Segmi to expand its fortress with their resin building abilities.

**Move:** 8 (tunnelling), 4 (crawling)

**Size:** 2-3 meters long, 0.5 meters across

## THE SSAMB

DarkStryder's favorite pets, Ssamb accompany the despot everywhere it goes. Although not particularly intelligent or handy, they obey their master in everything, happily flinging themselves into walls of blaster fire if DarkStryder so desires. They often ride on their master and crawl everywhere along the walls and ceiling of the despot's fortress.

They are extremely quiet, and their dark color makes them very difficult to spot until they are very close. Their most striking feature, however, is their fangs, a series of independently moving teeth that retract and extend in an eerie, random pattern.

When not actually accompanying their master, Ssamb move quietly throughout DarkStryder's fortress, acting as sentries. When and if they discover an intruder, they hide in nearby crevices and shadows and drop or jump on their victims as they pass by. Unsuspecting interlopers may find it easy to deal with a single Ssamb, but the fearsome creatures travel in swarms numbering in the hundreds; when surprising by a victim, swarms of Ssamb can often devour prey in minutes.

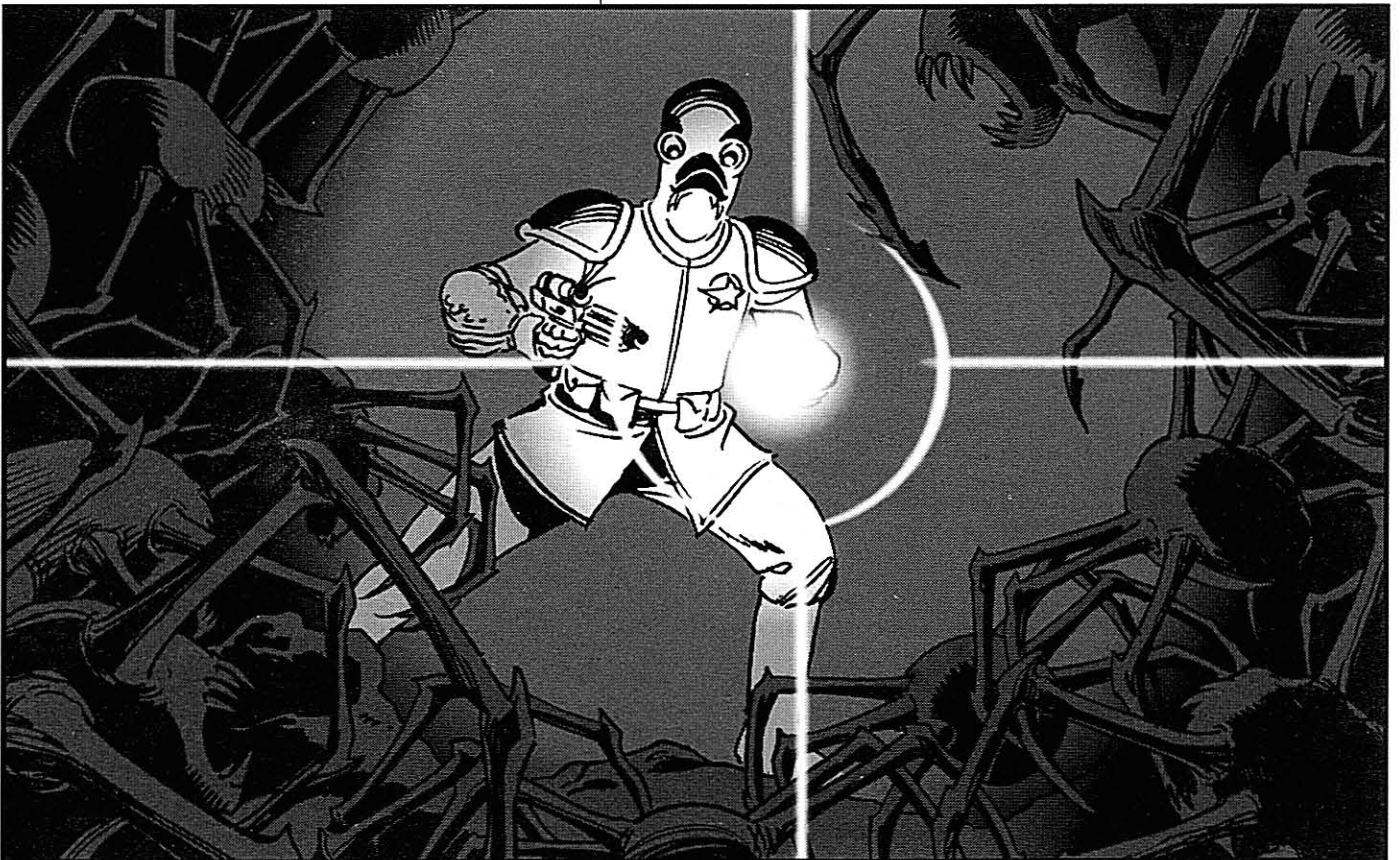
The Ssamb do not possess any Ta-Ree powers, nor do they seem capable of learning these abilities.

## ■ Ssamb

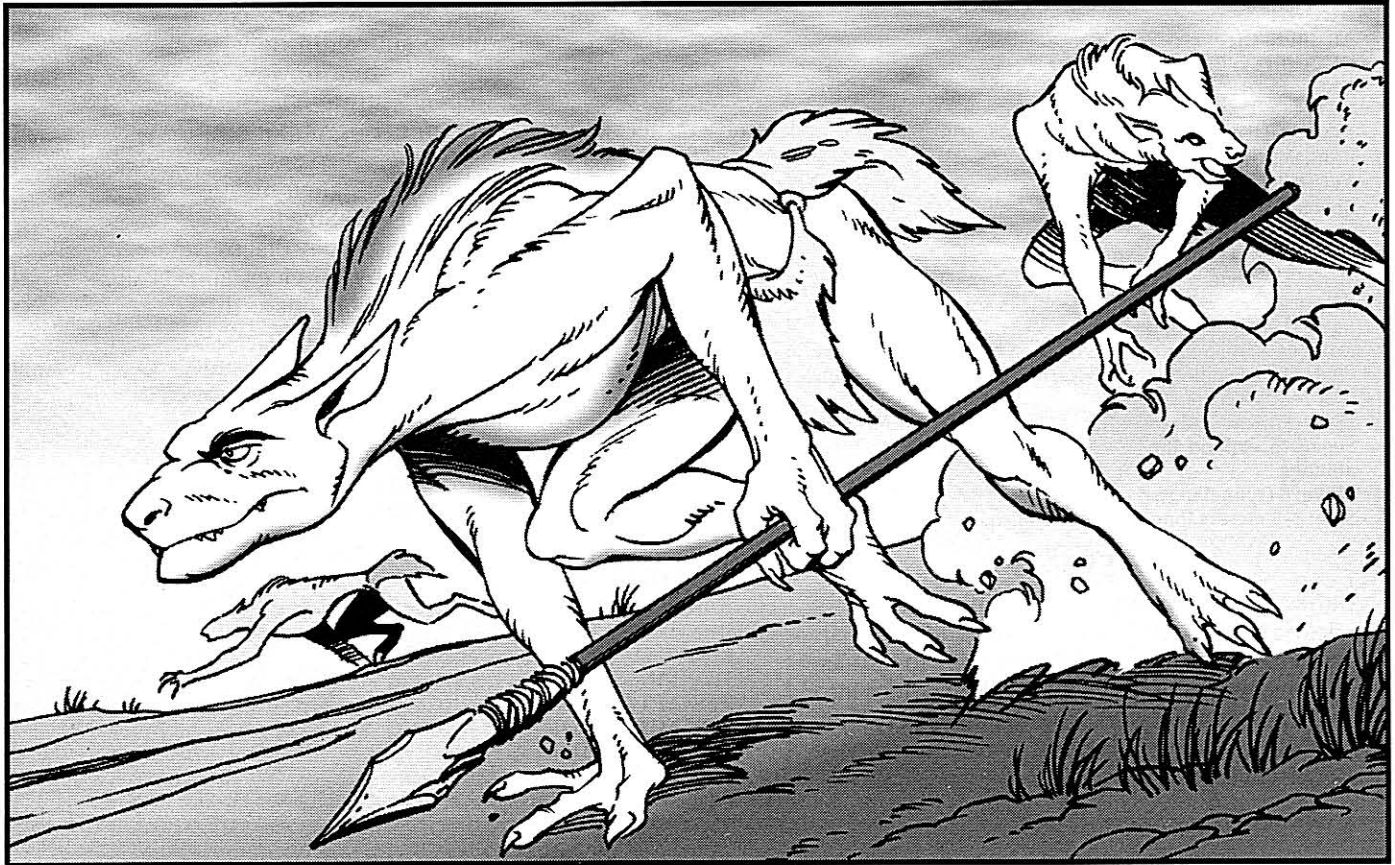
Attribute Dice: 12D  
 DEXTERITY: 3D/5D  
 KNOWLEDGE: 1D/2D  
 MECHANICAL: 1D/2D  
 PERCEPTION: 2D/4D  
 STRENGTH: 2D/4D  
 TECHNICAL: 1D/3D

### Special Abilities:

*Fangs:* The Ssamb attack with large fangs, which do STR+2D



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damage.

*Cling:* The Ssamb can cling to almost any surface without requiring a *climbing/jumping roll*.

*Charge:* Although they ordinarily crawl fairly slowly, the Ssamb can charge at triple rate for one round, after which they may only crawl (or attack) for a round.

**Move:** 5 (crawling)

**Size:** 0.25 meter radius

## THE YAPI

One of DarkStryder's more successful attempts at a warrior species, these canine sentients are infinitely divided against each other. The Yapi socialize in small clan-based tribes, under a dominant male and female. Each group is in a constant low intensity conflict with all the others; alliances are constantly shifting. A few tribes work for DarkStryder, as warriors inside and outside the fortress; these Yapi are exiles with no Ta-Ree abilities and are universally reviled by the main Yapi clans.

The Yapi either hate or fear DarkStryder, even his own warrior tribes. Those tribes that do serve him do so temporarily, for the advantage it gives them over their rival tribes. Every decade or so DarkStryder has to upgrade Yapi weapons; this keeps the Yapi at each other's throats, and

ensures a constant turnover of fresh tribes to serve him. The current DarkStryder tribes are armed with breechloading firearms. The most advanced Yapi weaponry available away from the fortress are muzzleloading firearms.

The Yapi do enjoy periods of peace: every spring, the tribes gather for trading of goods, to form new tribes from the young, divide tribes that have grown too large (the Yapi instinctively keep the tribes under thirty), form and break alliances, make new enemies, and swap mate-pairs. In this way, the technology DarkStryder allows to trickle out to his servants spreads among the tribes. The arrival of the *FarStar* radically shifts the local balance of power.

The Yapi are highly superstitious, with good cause: every Yapi can perform some simple Ta-Ree, and all but the smallest tribes have a shaman, with more advanced skills. A shaman uses Ta-Ree powers to heal, defend and aid in attacks against enemy tribes. (For more information on Ta-Ree spells, see pages 40–63.)

### ■ Yapi

Attribute Dice: 12

DEXTERITY: 2D+1/4D

KNOWLEDGE: 1D/3D

**MECHANICAL:** 1D/2D  
**PERCEPTION:** 2D+2/5D  
**STRENGTH:** 3D/4D  
**TECHNICAL:** 1D/2D

**Special Abilities:**

*Sharp senses:* The Yapi are superior trackers and hunters, and add +1D to all *search* attempts.

*Claws:* Do *Strength*+1D damage

*Teeth:* Do *Strength*+1D damage

**Story Factors:** The Yapi are a fierce and proud people who do not abide ridicule: anyone who laughs at or makes fun of one of them is instantly challenged to a duel to be fought to the death.

**Move:** 11

**Size:** 0.8–1.4 meters

## THE YIMI

The Yimi (also called Servants) are one of DarkStryder's median successes — and perhaps the saddest of the alien despot's creations. Short humanoids with large heads, these sluggish creatures are highly versatile, since they can be bio-mechanically "flash-imprinted" with a wide range of skills and obedience, but are limited by their inability to learn in other ways. What makes them seem to radiate sadness is their genetic template — they are horribly mutated versions of the original Kathol, now bred to be slaves of DarkStryder.

The Servants have a very limited culture; few

amusements and very little art. They do believe that one day they will be free of DarkStryder, and tend to work slowly to vex the ancient creature. All of the Servants on Kathol work for DarkStryder.

## ■ The Yimi

**Attribute Dice:** 10D

**DEXTERITY:** 1D/3D

**KNOWLEDGE:** 1D/2D

**MECHANICAL:** 1D/3D

**PERCEPTION:** 1D/2D

**STRENGTH:** 2D/4D

**TECHNICAL:** 2D/4D

**Special Abilities:**

*Malaise:* The Servants are congenitally sluggish, and cannot improve skills, although they can be flash-imprinted (see below).

*Flash-Imprint Skills:* The Servants, although not very bright, can be taught any skill by a "flash-imprinting" technique used by DarkStryder. Using the technique tends to scramble whatever other skills they already possess and redistributes their skill dice as DarkStryder desires. The flash-imprint process takes one Kathol day.

*Obedience:* The Servants are routinely flash-imprinted to obey DarkStryder. They are not willingly loyal: they just obey reflexively.

*No Ta-Ree:* The Yimi are unable to use Ta-Ree.

**Story Factors:** The Servants hate DarkStryder. Although they must obey the despot, as per their imprinting, they don't have to interpret its orders as it wishes, or aid it without specific instructions.

**Move:** 10

**Size:** 1 meter tall



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## THE ZIZIMAAK

One of DarkStryder's less useful experiments, the Zizimaak are a hybrid species of insectoid avians. At first DarkStryder thought they would serve as scouts, but given the chance at freedom, the Zizimaak simply fled the confines of the fortress.

After acquiring their freedom, the Zizimaak settled into the treetops of a jungle several hundred kilometers south of the fortress, and developed a well ordered and peaceful society. They still avoid trouble as much as possible. They get along fairly well with the Yapi and Charr Ontee, prey on Segmi, and flee from any of DarkStryder's servants.

In general, Zizimaak possess no offensive Ta-Ree abilities, relying instead on powers like *shield*. Since the Zizimaak prefer to flee rather than fight, however, it is rare that they will be encountered using these powers. In the Zizimaak Archipelago, a small cadre of the species acts as a defense force. These Zizimaak often possess the following powers (though it possible that individuals

may know others at varying levels of proficiency): *Battle sense* 5D, *blindness* 5D, *detect life* 5D, *generate lightning* 6D, *generate wind* 5D, *psychokinesis* 6D, *sense danger* 3D, *sense life* 5D. (For more information on Ta-Ree magic, see pages 40–63.)

### ■ The Zizimaak

**Attribute Dice:** 12D  
**DEXTERITY:** 2D/4D  
**KNOWLEDGE:** 1D/3D  
**MECHANICAL:** 1D/2D  
**PERCEPTION:** 3D/5D  
**STRENGTH:** 1D/3D  
**TECHNICAL:** 1D/3D

#### Special Abilities:

**Flight:** The Zizimaak are powerful and agile fliers, able to hover and travel great distances, up to an altitude of several hundred meters.

**Stingers:** If forced to defend themselves, the Zizimaak can stab with a powerful stinger, which does STR+2D damage.

**Story Factors:** The Zizimaak are a flighty species that prefer to flee threats than stay and get hurt.

**Move:** 8 (walking), 12 (flying)

**Size:** 1–1.5 meters tall

## **THE PRECURSORS AFTER THE FALL OF DARKSTRYDER**

After the events of the adventure in this book, the Precursors have been freed from the Lifewell, something the energy-beings have sought for centuries.

However, the Precursors' freedom is not exactly what they had hoped: they are now completely attuned to the planet, largely because their energy signature has become linked to Kathol's magnetic field. Even though the Lifewell has been destroyed, they are still unable to leave the planet.

Hundreds of the Precursors allow themselves to dissipate after the events of *Endgame*, though a small contingent of energy beings have remained on Kathol.

These energy beings do not all cooperate; in fact, most have their own ideas about how the planet should be rebuilt. The Precursors begin communicating with tribes of Yapi, Charr Ontee, and the other natives of the planet, often granting them additional Ta-Ree powers when the tribes appease them, and causing spells to "misfire" when angered.

Not all of the Precursors are benign; often they work to undermine the efforts of the other Kathol, and the indigenous species of the planet are caught in the crossfire.

Some of the more primitive tribes — specifically the Yapi and the Yimi — treat the Precursor "spirits" as deities or religious figures. Gamemasters who run adventures on Kathol after the fall of DarkStryder can use the Precursors as a storytelling device in order to send player characters on "quests" — for artifacts, for lost knowledge, or other such exotica — to appease these unpredictable energy beings.

One possible scenario could involve a tribe of Yapi and a New Republic survey team learning of the true nature of DarkStryder artifacts; the Precursors that have "adopted" this particular Yapi clan demand that such devices be brought to them so that the trapped Precursor energy inside them can be freed.

However, a group of Segmi has taken a liking to the totems and has hoarded dozens of the devices in the deepest reaches of Segmi land. The player characters must enter the tunnels and try and recover as many of the devices as they can, returning them to the Precursors. Until the energy beings are satisfied, they will disrupt local weather patterns, damaging crop harvests and endangering the Yapi clan.



# TA-REE MAGIC

## INTRODUCTION

The term “Ta-Ree” refers to the near-magical abilities that sentient beings on the DarkStryder planet are capable of. Ta-Ree powers (often referred to as “spells”) are on a par with many Jedi abilities, but are intimately bound to Kathol itself; Ta-Ree abilities can not be used anywhere except this ancient planet.

## WHAT IS TA-REE?

The Ta-Ree is a quasi-mystical energy field that is similar to the Force in some respects ... and *very* different in others. When the Precursors placed themselves into the Lifewell, they were altered into an energy form — an energy form that was still alive, and therefore, still linked to the Force. Because of this link — and because the Precursors are now essentially an energy field as well — the Force has been subtly altered on the planet that houses the Lifewell.

The energy signature created by the hybrid of the Force and the presence of the Precursors has acted as a sort of magnifying lens; The Precursors have focussed the Force over a limited area — the DarkStryder planet — thereby increasing the strength of the Force’s effects. However, this increased focus has severely limited the range of Force effects on the planet, as well as altering the “flow of the Force” in the region. Standard Jedi Force abilities still operate normally, but sentient beings on the DarkStryder planet can also access “magical” abilities. These abilities are often similar to Jedi abilities, but can manifest

themselves in ways very different than the Force. These abilities are collectively referred to as “Ta-Ree” by the planet’s inhabitants, a term that loosely translates as “Spirit Energy.”

## TA-REE USERS

While virtually any sentient being can access Ta-Ree abilities on the DarkStryder planet, there are those who have achieved extremely high levels of proficiency in the use of this “magic.” Skilled Ta-Ree users are referred to as *goshoree* (which translates as “Ascendants”).

Ascendants often possess a multitude of Ta-Ree powers with fairly advanced die codes (usually between 5D and 10D). The majority of these Ascendants have risen to prominence among their own people, often acting as a shaman or chieftain who is accorded great respect among his or her people. These chieftains occasionally others in their respective “tribes” to use some Ta-Ree abilities, but to a lesser extent.

## TA-REE AND DARK SIDE POINTS

Some Ta-Ree powers are similar to Force powers that automatically deliver Dark Side Points to Jedi that use them. However, many Ta-Ree “spells” do not carry this penalty; if these powers are used in self-defense or the defense of others, there is no Dark Side Point given. Please note that certain Ta-Ree powers still carry a stiff penalty for their use; some of these magical abilities are inherently evil.

## LEARNING TA-REE MAGIC

Ta-Ree magic has one major difference from the Force; where Jedi and other Force-users must have the *control*, *sense* or *alter* skills before they can learn Force powers, Ta-Ree Ascendants do not. Individual Ta-Ree powers each have a die code, just like other skills in the *Star Wars* roleplaying game.

Like a Jedi apprentice, a Ta-Ree student requires a teacher in order to utilize these powerful abilities. However, since the entire planet is literally bathed in Ta-Ree energy, learning these skills does not require special sensitivity in the Force. In addition, learning these abilities is considerably easier than learning Jedi powers; the base training time for learning a Ta-Ree spell is 10 weeks. Player characters must spend 20 Character Points to gain 1D in an individual power; each additional Character Point spent during training reduces training time by one day.

During the training period, the student must have total concentration; aside from eating and sleeping, the trainee's time is pretty much accounted for. If the student breaks away from the training, the attempt to learn the power is unsuccessful. Another 20 Character Points (and 10 weeks) must be spent to learn the power; obvi-

ously, Ta-Ree adepts must be serious about learning these powers and cannot run off in the middle of training without penalties.

**Example:** *George's character (a bounty hunter named Creed) wants to learn the Ta-Ree power block pain. Creed is learning the power from a Yapi shaman who has agreed to teach the human the power. Creed spends 20 Character Points, and studies at the feet of the Yapi Ascendant; 10 weeks later, Creed gains block pain at 1D.*

Once the initial 1D in a Ta-Ree power has been learned, the student no longer needs an instructor to advance that power. In fact, most Ta-Ree teachers insist the pupil refine the power on his or her own. Ta-Ree powers advance exactly like normal skills; to advance a spell by one pip, a character must spend the number of Character Points equal to the number before the "D" in that spell.

**Example:** *Creed wants to improve his block pain power, which is currently 1D. By spending one Character Point, the power's die code increases to 1D+1. By spending an additional character point, the power's die code increases to 1D+2, and so forth.*



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## SPEEDING UP THE LEARNING PROCESS

It is possible to learn and use a Ta-Ree ability more quickly, though — like the Force — power attained too quickly can be *very* dangerous. Player characters can elect to learn a Ta-Ree spell in *one hour*. The character *must* declare that they are speeding up their training in this manner, prior to spending Character Points. This decision can not be reversed, and if the training is interrupted during this hour, the Character Points are forfeited and the attempt to learn the power is unsuccessful.

The Character Point cost for learning the power remains the same, and training time can not be reduced below one hour. However, the use of the new power is extremely dangerous — possibly even deadly — unless the player character is extremely lucky.

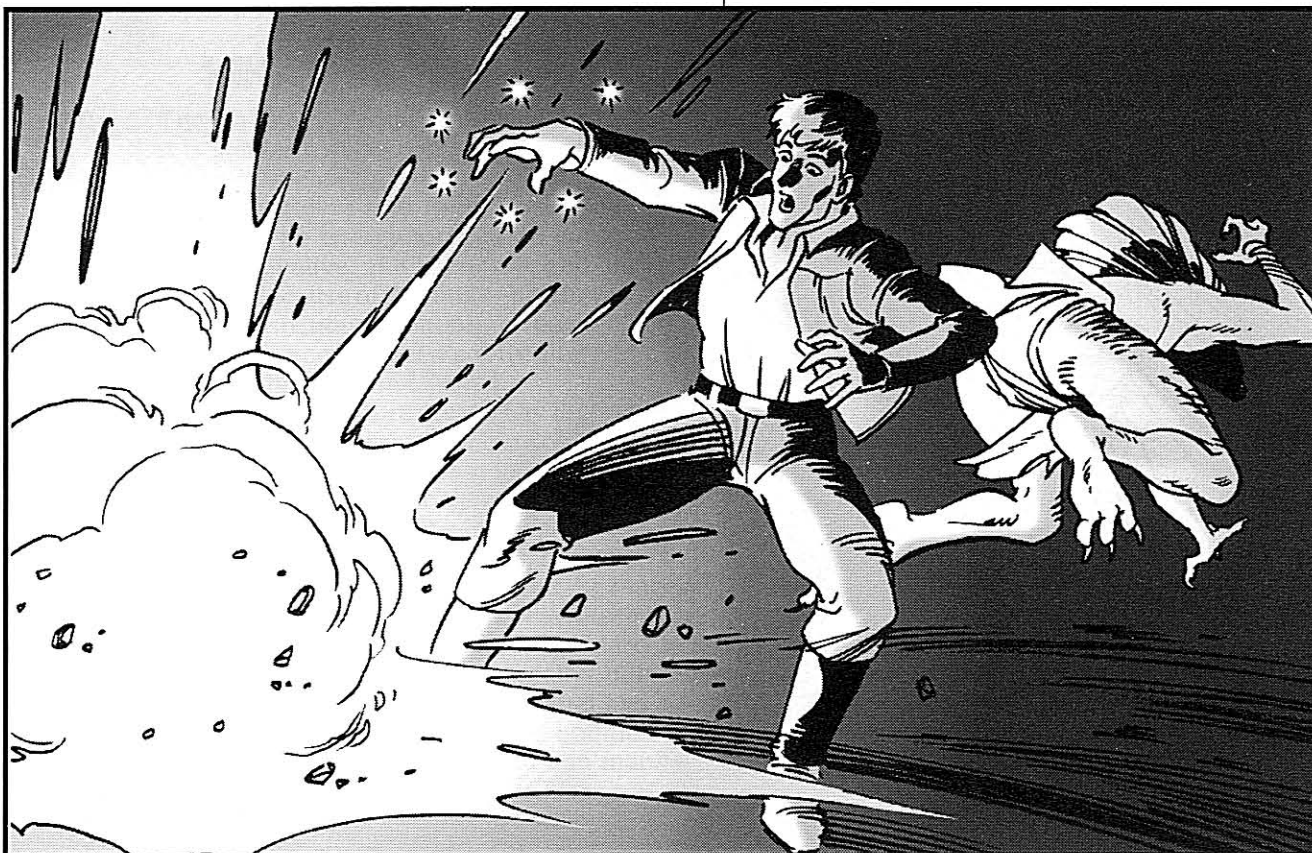
The first time a Ta-Ree student uses this new power, that character *must* roll a six on the Wild Die; the second time the spell is cast, the character must roll a five or six; the third time, a four, five or six is needed; the fourth time the power is used, a three, four, five or six is needed; and the fifth time the power is used, a two, three, four, five or six is required. After these initial rolls have been completed — either successfully or un-

successfully — these Wild Die requirements are fulfilled; only a one on the Wild Die carries penalties hereafter.

Failure to make the required Wild Die roll indicates that the spell either failed totally, or has backfired in a way that is potentially harmful to the character casting the “spell.” (The severity of the backfire is left to the gamemaster’s discretion.)

Power Used For:	Required Wild Die Roll
First time	6
Second time	5-6
Third time	4-6
Fourth time	3-6
Fifth time	2-6

**Example:** *Creed wants to learn the boost attribute power, but does not want to spend the full 10 weeks in training. Prior to spending the 20 Character Points required to learn a new Ta-Ree power, George announces he is speeding the learning process up. The gamemaster agrees and training begins. After an hour has passed and the Character Point cost has been paid, Creed gains boost attribute at 1D but is subject to the Ta-Ree’s Wild Die requirements.*



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The first time Creed uses boost attribute, he must roll a "6" on the Wild Die; failure to make this roll indicates that not only did the spell fail, but there is also a very dangerous side effect to the spell. Creed rolls his 1D (the Wild Die) to cast the spell.

Creed attempts to boost his Strength attribute and rolls a 3, which means that the attempt automatically fails. The gamemaster decides that not only is Creed's Strength attribute not enhanced, it actually drops by -1D for the next round.

The following round, Creed attempts to boost his Strength attribute again; on this roll he needs a "5" or "6" on the Wild Die. He rolls a "6" — there is no catastrophic failure, and he can roll again and add the roll to his overall total. He rolls a 4, for a total of 10.

## TA-REE MODIFIERS

Like the Force, some Ta-Ree powers are affected by the Ascendant's relationship or proximity to the target. Use the following modifiers to adjust the difficulty number for using Ta-Ree spells:

### RELATIONSHIP DIFFICULTY MODIFIERS

User and target are:	Adjust Difficulty
Close relatives (married, siblings, parent and child, etc.)	-1D
Close friends	-2
Friends	-1
Acquaintances	—
Slight acquaintances	+1
Met once	+2
Never met, but know each other by reputation	+5
Complete strangers	+7
Complete strangers and not of the same species	+10

### PROXIMITY DIFFICULTY MODIFIERS

User and target are:	Adjust difficulty by:
Touching	—
Line of sight	+2
1–10 meters	+5
11–20 meters	+7
21–30 meters	+10
31–40 meters	+15
41–50 meters	+20
50+ meters	+30

## SUSTAINING POWERS

An Ascendant may elect to keep some powers "active" — that is, operating constantly without having to make a new power roll every round. If the power can be kept active, the power description will state this; otherwise the power can only be activated for the round in which it is used.

If a player wishes to keep a power active, it must be announced when the power is activated. If the power roll is successful, the power operates continuously until the player's character either decides to drop the power or suffers damage. If a character is stunned or worse, all active powers are automatically dropped.

A character who is keeping a power active is effectively performing multiple actions, and faces the normal number of die code penalties.

## REQUIRED POWERS

Like the Force powers of the Jedi Knights, several Ta-Ree spells require the Ascendant to possess *other* powers in order to successfully cast them. However, Ta-Ree spells — unlike Jedi powers — also require the Ascendant to possess these powers at a specified level of proficiency.

For example, the required power for the Ta-Ree spell *awaken* is *stay conscious* 5D. Not only must the Ascendant possess the spell *stay conscious*, she must also have at least 5D in the power in order to successfully cast *awaken*. If an Ascendant does not possess all required powers (at the required die code level) for a given spell, it is impossible to cast the spell successfully.

The following table gives a list of Ta-Ree spells, their required powers (and required die codes) and if the spell can be kept "active." (Spells that can remain active are similar to Force powers that can be kept "up.")

### OPTIONAL RULE: ELIMINATING REQUIRED POWERS

Many Ta-Ree powers require one or more prerequisites in order to allow the Ascendant to cast the spell. This rule helps restrict the use of potentially game-imbaling abilities, but it also requires additional fact-checking and record-keeping.

One option to replace this rule revolves around a **learning difficulty**. To learn any Ta-Ree power, an Ascendant must succeed in a *willpower* roll against the power's learning difficulty. Failure means that the character must wait at least one month before making another attempt to acquire the power (or that he may never learn the power thereafter, at the gamemaster's discretion). The character also loses the Character Points needed

Power	Required Powers and Die Code	Active?	Power	Required Powers and Die Code	Active?
Awaken	Stay Conscious 5D	No	Light	—	Special
Battle Mastery	Battle Sense 2D	Yes	Manipulate Flame	—	No
Battle Sense	Detect Life 5D, Sense Danger 3D	Special	Memory Enhancement	Trance 7D	Special
Blindness	—	No	Nullify Toxin	—	No
Block Pain	—	Yes	Nullify Toxin In Another	Block Pain 5D, Heal 4D, Lessen Another's Pain 5D, Nullify Toxin 3D, Speed Healing 3D	No
Boost Attribute	—	Special	Predict Weather	Boost Senses 5D	Yes
Boost Senses	—	Yes	Projective Empathy	Receptive Empathy 4D	Yes
Cloak Presence	Trance 5D	No	Psychokinesis	—	Yes
Darkness	—	No	Psychokinetic Attack	Block Pain 4D, Deadly Touch 6D, Inflict Pain 5D, Psychokinesis 8D, Sense Life 6D	No
Deadly Touch	Sense Life 5D	No	Pyrospray	Psychokinesis 3D, Light 4D	No
Deafness	—	No	Receptive Empathy	Sense Life 3D	Yes
Detect Life	—	Yes	Sense Danger	Detect Life 2D	Yes
Detect Ta-Ree	—	No	Sense Life	Detect Life 4D	Yes
Duplicate	Block Pain 6D, Boost Senses 8D, Cloak Presence 8D, Detect Life 9D, Detect Ta-Ree 7D, Lessen Another's Pain 6D, Psychokinesis 15D, Projective Empathy 10D, Receptive Empathy 10D, Sense Life 8D	Yes	Sense Ta-Ree	—	No
Energy Blade	—	Yes	Shadowstrike	Psychokinesis 9D, Sense Life 5D,	No
Entangle	Psychokinesis 4D	Yes	Shield	Boost Senses 3D, Psychokinesis 6D	Yes
Escape	Block Pain 4D, Boost Attribute 3D	No	Shift Perceptions	Boost Senses 6D	Yes
Generate Lightning	Psychokinesis 6D, Sense Life 5D, Detect Life 5D	No	Sleep	Detect Life 2D, Sense Life 3D	No
Generate Wind	Detect Life 3D, Sense Life 3D	Yes	Slow	Detect Life 3D, Psychokinesis 4D	No
Heal	Lessen Another's Pain 3D	No	Speed Healing	—	No
Heat	Psychokinesis 5D	Yes	Stay Conscious	Block Pain 3D	No
Lessen Another's Fatigue	Block Pain 5D, Heal 3D, Lessen Another's Pain 5D, Lessen Fatigue 5D, Speed Healing 3D	No	Stumble	Psychokinesis 4D	No
Lessen Another's Pain	Block Pain 4D	No	Trance	—	Yes
Lessen Fatigue	Block Pain 2D, Speed Healing 3D	Yes	Translate	Projective Empathy 5D, Receptive Empathy 5D	Yes
Lessen Injury	Block Pain 5D	No	Wall	Psychokinesis 6D	No
			Web	Entangle 6D	No
			Withstand Stun	—	Yes

to obtain the power (or does not receive a new power if it was to be awarded "free" for improving or learning a skill) no matter whether he succeeds or fails in his learning attempt.

As a general rule, Force powers without prerequisites have a learning difficulty of five. Increase that value by five for each prerequisite power. For example, *boost senses*, which has no prerequisites, has a learning difficulty of five. *Cloak presence*, which has one prerequisite powers (*trance 5D*) has a learning difficulty of 10.

In addition, if the gamemaster finds that the rapid advancement of Ta-Ree spell ability is destabilizing game play, it is possible to increase

learning difficulty even more. For each die of a required power that is necessary to use a Ta-Ree spell, increase the difficulty by +1. For example, *cloak presence* has a base learning difficulty of five, with an additional five added for the required power *trance* (increasing the difficulty to 10). Finally, the required die code level for *trance* is 5D; add +1 to the difficulty for each die of the required power (in this case, an additional +5). Using this method, the difficulty for learning *cloak presence* is 15.

## T A-REE SPELLS

### AWAKEN

**Required Power:** *Stay conscious 5D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate for *incapacitated* characters; Difficult for *mortally wounded* characters. Modified by relationship.

**Time To Use:** One minute.

**Effect:** The target returns to consciousness. The target has the same restrictions as imposed by the *stay conscious* power. The Ascendant attempting to use *awaken* must be touching the target in order to use this power successfully. This power can counteract the effects of the Ta-Ree spell *sleep*.

### BATTLE MASTERY

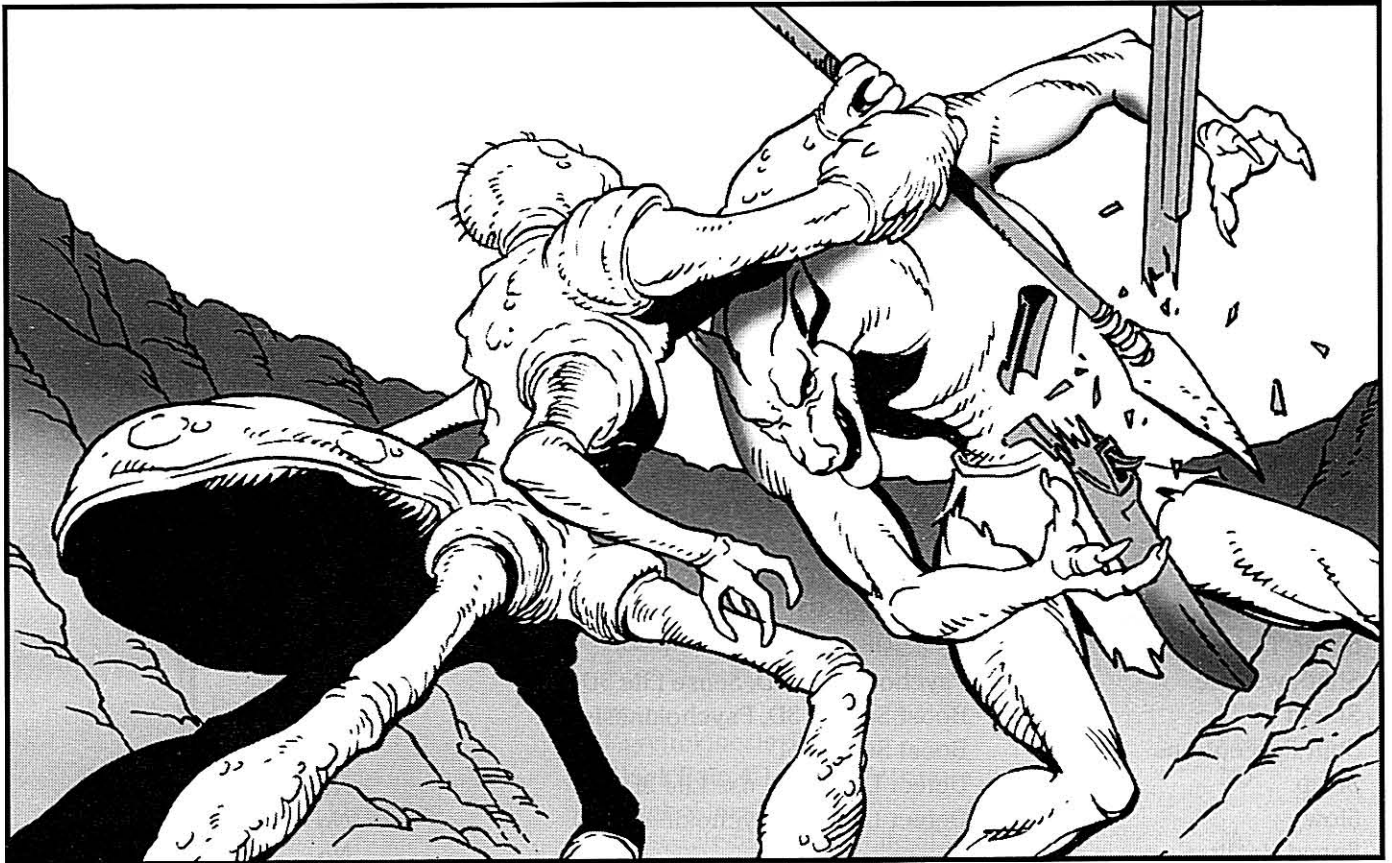
*This power can be kept "active."*  
**Required Power:** *Battle sense 2D*  
**Difficulty:** Moderate+opponent's willpower or Perception.

**Time To Use:** One round.

**Effect:** An Ascendant can learn this power to better use a hand weapon more effectively.

This power is called upon at the start of a battle and remains active until the Ascendant is stunned or injured; an Ascendant who has been injured or stunned may attempt to re-activate the power as long as he or she remains conscious.

If the Ascendant is successful in using this power, she adds her *battle mastery* dice to her



*melee combat* skill roll when trying to strike a target or parry an attack. This spell does not increase the damage of the weapon, however.

If the Ascendant fails the power roll, she must use the weapon with only her *melee combat* dice to hit in combat and cannot attempt to use the power again for the duration of the combat.

An Ascendant may also use this power in conjunction with *energy blade* in order to parry blaster bolts. To do this, the character must declare that he is parrying that round, using his *melee combat* skill as normal.

The Ascendant may also attempt to control where deflected blaster bolts go, although this counts as an additional action. The spellcaster must declare which specific shot is being directed. Then, once the roll is made to see if the blaster bolt was parried, the Ascendant makes a *melee combat* roll, with the difficulty being his new target's *dodge* or the range (figured from the Ascendant to the target).

## BATTLE SENSE

**Required Powers:** *Detect life* 5D, *sense danger* 3D

**Difficulty:** Moderate for one opponent, modi-

fied by +3 for every additional opponent an Ascendant wishes to defend against.

**Effect:** *Battle sense* helps an Ascendant concentrate on a combat situation. All targets of this power become mentally "highlighted" in the Ascendant's mind, making it easier to attack them or defend against them. In game terms, by focusing on nearby opponents, an Ascendant gains certain important advantages.

First, the Ascendant can decide when to act during a round — no initiative rolls are necessary while the power is in effect. (In the case of one Ascendant using this power against another, whoever rolled highest when invoking *battle sense* determines when to act.)

Second, the Ascendant's attack and defense rolls are increased by +2D. *Battle sense* lasts for ten combat rounds and doesn't count as a "skill use" for determining die code penalties.

## BLINDNESS

**Difficulty:** Special (see below).

**Time To Use:** One combat round.

**Effect:** *Blindness* allows an Ascendant to eliminate a target's sense of sight, reducing visibility to a gray blur. The Ascendant can use this power

on a number of targets equal to his or her blindness die code. (For example, an Ascendant with *blindness* 4D can blind four targets; an Ascendant with *blindness* 6D can blind six targets, and so forth.)

The target may use the *willpower* skill to withstand the attack, rolling versus the Ascendant's initial *blindness* roll.

**Blindness roll is  $\geq$  target's willpower roll      Result**

0-5	Target's vision-based skill and attribute checks are at -1D for one round
6-10	Target's vision-based skill and attribute checks are at -2D for two rounds
11-15	Target's vision-based skill and attribute checks are at -2D for three rounds
16-20	Target's vision-based skill and attribute checks are at -3D for one round
21-25	Target's vision-based skill and attribute checks are at -3D for two rounds
26-30	Target's vision-based skill and attribute checks are at -3D for three rounds
31+	Target is permanently blinded.

The power is not without its disadvantages, however. If the willpower of the target is stronger than the Ascendant's spell-casting abilities, the power can be turned back against its caster.

**Target's willpower roll  $\geq$  Ascendant's blindness roll      Result**

0-5	Ascendant's vision-based skill and attribute checks are at -1D for one round
6-10	Ascendant's vision-based skill and attribute checks are at -2D for two rounds
11-15	Ascendant's vision-based skill and attribute checks are at -2D for three rounds
16-20	Ascendant's vision-based skill and attribute checks are at -3D for one round
21-25	Ascendant's vision-based skill and attribute checks are at -3D for two rounds
26-30	Ascendant's vision-based skill and attribute checks are at -3D for three rounds
31+	Ascendant is permanently blinded.

## BLOCK PAIN

*This power may be kept "active."*

**Difficulty:** Easy for *wounded* or *stunned* characters; Moderate for *incapacitated*; Difficult for *mortally wounded* characters.

**Time To Use:** One round.

**Effect:** A character can use *block pain* to ignore the effects of wounds. The character's wound is not actually healed, but the penalties of being *wounded* no longer apply: a *wounded* Ascendant does not lose 1D from all actions; an *incapacitated* character can still act normally, as can a *mortally wounded* character. This power can also be used to shrug off stun results. The *block pain* power takes effect the round after the power roll has been made.

The power can be kept "active," so the character can ignore the pain of injuries for a long period of time. However, whenever the character is injured again, he or she must make a new *block pain* roll, using the difficulty levels indicated above. Note that the character is still injured, and these wounds can worsen. For example, a *wounded* character who is *wounded* a second time would still become *incapacitated*. If a character is *mortally wounded* while using this power, it is still necessary to roll 2D at the end of each round to determine if he or she dies. (See page 62 of *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game, Second Edition*.)

**Notes:** *Block pain* is similar to the Jedi ability *control pain*. However, Ta-Ree Ascendants must use a simple series of chants and incantations to activate this spell. The Ascendant must continue to chant as long as he or she desires to keep the power "active." It is not necessary to shout these incantations; merely whispering the proper mantra is sufficient. However, in situations where stealth and secrecy are required, this facet of the power can prove dangerous.

## BOOST ATTRIBUTE

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Time To Use:** One round

**Effect:** An Ascendant can use this power to increase a single attribute for a limited period of time. (An increased attribute can help a character jump higher, shoot better, see farther and so on.) All skills governed by the enhanced attribute increase by the same amount for as long as the power remains in effect.

An attribute increased in this manner remains enhanced for the duration listed below. Duration and attribute increases are determined by how much a character's *boost attribute* roll exceeds the difficulty number. Duration can be extended through the use of character points — for every



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character point an Ascendant spends, the duration is increased by one combat round. The points can be spent at any time before the powers' effects fade.

An Ascendant can only increase one attribute at a time; any attempts to increase a second attribute while this power is already active causes the power to fade entirely for the duration of the round.

Roll exceeds difficulty by:	Attribute increases by:	Duration:
0-5	+1D	1 round
6-10	+2D	2 rounds
11-15	+3D	3 rounds
16-20	+3D	5 rounds
21+	+3D	7 rounds

**Notes:** This power is similar to the Jedi ability *enhance attribute*. When Ta-Ree Ascendants activate this power, it produces an unusual visual manifestation: a bright, flame-like swirl of light surrounds the using the power. This "flame" does no damage to anyone it touches, although in low-light conditions, it makes the Ascendant extremely visible.

In addition, the energy-flame changes color

depending on which attribute is being boosted. The "behavior" of the energy swirls also changes from attribute to attribute.

Attribute boosted	Visible effects
<i>Dexterity</i>	Sparkling blue-white discharge, similar to lightning; covers Ascendant's entire body
<i>Knowledge</i>	Red-yellow glow, similar to mist or fog; concentrated on Ascendant's head
<i>Mechanical</i>	Purple-blue aura, flickers rapidly; concentrated on Ascendant's hands
<i>Perception</i>	Orange-red glow, strobes brightly; emanates from eyes
<i>Strength</i>	Green-yellow glow; surrounds Ascendant's entire body
<i>Technical</i>	Yellow-white "speckle" pattern, similar to visual static; surrounds Ascendant's entire body



## BOOST SENSES

*This power can be kept "active."*

**Difficulty:** Very Easy. Modified by proximity.

**Time To Use:** One round.

**Effect:** This power allows an Ascendant to increase the effectiveness of his or her *normal* senses to perceive things that otherwise would be impossible without artificial aids. *Boost senses* makes it possible to identify scents and odors that are normally too faint for the human olfactory system. However, characters that use this power cannot detect sounds, scents or objects that would be beyond the range of their normal senses; humans cannot use this power to hear ultrasonic frequencies, or see in the infrared spectrum, for example.

## CLOAK PRESENCE

**Required Power:** *Trance 5D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Effect:** An Ascendant can use Ta-Ree to shield his or her "presence" from outside observation. The character seems to be in deep meditation, and is oblivious to his or her surroundings. A character using the *cloak presence* power may not move or take any action except to try to disengage from the effects of the spell.

When using *cloak presence*, a character is difficult to sense or affect with the Force or Ta-Ree abilities. When another character attempts to use a Ta-Ree power on the character casting *cloak presence*, add the meditating character's *cloak presence* roll to the difficulty for the other character's *sense Ta-Ree*, *sense*, or *control* rolls.

If a Force user is attempting to find the *cloaked* character, this affects only *sense* rolls; if the power being used to seek out the Ascendant doesn't use the *sense* skill, add the difficulty to the *control* roll). This difficulty is added regardless of whether or not the *cloaked* character would willingly receive the power's effect.

Once the character comes out of *cloak presence*, the character gets a +6 bonus modifier to all Ta-Ree power rolls for a period of time equal to the amount of time the character spent in *cloak presence*. This bonus is reduced by one for each Dark Side Point that the character has.

When in *cloak presence*, characters dehydrate and hunger normally — some initiates have died because they lacked enough control of Ta-Ree to bring themselves out of the *cloak*.

When the character activates *cloak presence*, the player must state for how long the character will be in meditation. A character must make a Difficult *cloak presence* roll to awaken; the character may attempt to deactivate *cloak presence* under the following circumstances:

- When a stated time has elapsed.
- Once each hour beyond the original time limit.
- The character's body takes any damage more serious than *stun* damage.

## DARKNESS

**Difficulty:** Moderate

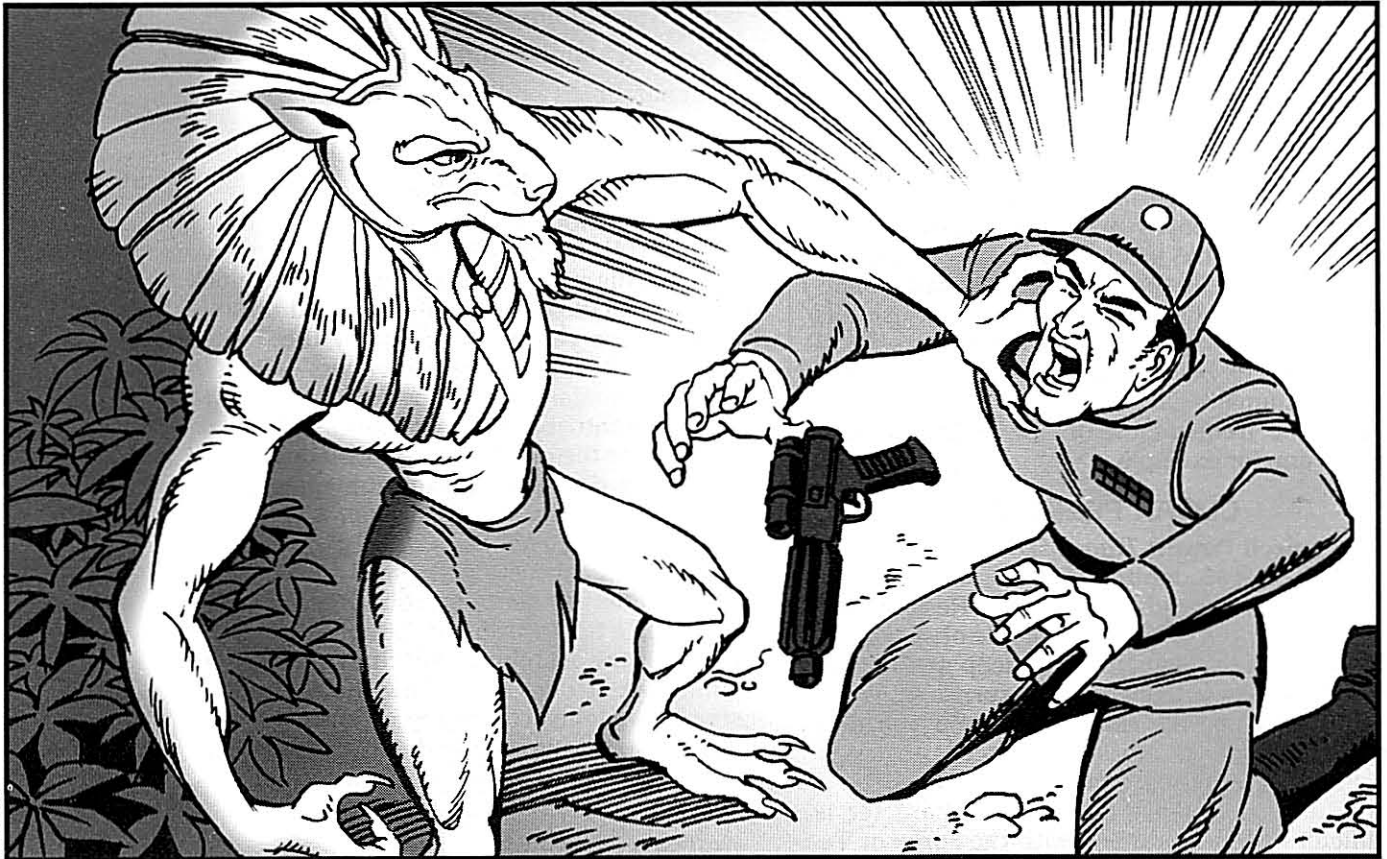
**Time To Use:** One round

**Effect:** This spell allows an Ascendant to cloak an area in shadow for a limited period of time. This darkness can be dispelled by the Ta-Ree power *light*. All characters in *darkness* — including the Ascendant — suffer a -2D penalty to vision-based attribute and skill checks. The darkness lasts for the number of rounds equal to the Ascendant's die code. (For example, an Ascendant with *darkness 4D* can project a sphere of darkness for four rounds.)

The Ascendant casting this spell must make at least a Moderate *darkness* roll to activate the power. Once the location of the sphere is determined (see the accompanying chart), the sphere is immobile; it does not follow the Ascendant, instead remaining in a fixed position.

Use the following chart to determine the spell's result:

<b>Ascendant's <i>darkness</i> roll exceeds difficulty number by:</b>	<b>Result:</b>
0-3	10 meter sphere of darkness appears with Ascendant directly at its center
4-7	10 meter sphere of darkness appears; Ascendant can choose the location of the sphere's center up to 10 meters away.
8-11	15 meter sphere of darkness appears with Ascendant directly at its center
12-15	15 meter sphere of light darkness; Ascendant can choose the location of the sphere's center, up to 15 meters away.
16-19	20 meter sphere of darkness appears with Ascendant directly at its center
20-23	20 meter sphere of darkness appears; Ascendant can choose the location of the sphere's center, up to 20 meters away



- 24-27      25 meter sphere of darkness appears with Ascendant directly at its center.
- 28-31      25 meter sphere of darkness appears; Ascendant can choose the location of the sphere's center, up to 25 meters away.
- 32+        30 meter sphere of darkness appears; Ascendant can choose the location of the sphere's center up to 50 meters away.

**DEADLY TOUCH**

**Required Power:** *Sense life* 5D  
**Difficulty:** Target's *control* or *Perception* roll.  
**Effect:** An attacker must be touching the target to use this power. In combat, this means making a successful *brawling* attack in the same round that the power is to be used.

When the power is activated, the user makes one roll. If he rolls higher than the character's resisting *control* or *Perception* total, figure damage as if the power roll was a damage total and the

*control* or *Perception* roll was a *Strength* roll to resist damage.

**DEAFNESS**

**Difficulty:** Moderate  
**Time To Use:** One round  
**Effect:** This power allows an Ascendant to cause a target character to lose the sense of hearing. Target's that have been rendered deaf must make Heroic rolls to succeed at all hearing-based attribute and skill checks. The target may make a single attempt to shrug off the effects of *deafness*, which requires a Moderate *willpower* check.

The Ascendant may deafen the number of targets equal to his or her *deafness* die code; for example, an Ascendant with *deafness* of 6D may target six characters.

Consult the following chart to determine the spell's effects:

<b>Deafness roll ≥ difficulty number by:</b>	<b>Result:</b>
1-5	Target deafened by 1D rounds

6-10	Target deafened by 2D rounds
11-15	Target deafened by 3D rounds
16-29	Target deafened by 1D hours
30+	Target is permanently deafened

**Notes:** An Ascendant who rolls a “one” on the Wild Die when casting this spell suffers the full brunt of *deafness*’ effects; determine the “success” of the spell with the accompanying chart and apply the results to the Ascendant.

### DETECT LIFE

*This power can be kept “active.”*

**Difficulty:** Easy if the subject has Ta-Ree powers; Moderate if the subject has Force skills, Difficult if the subject possesses no Ta-Ree or Force abilities. Modified by relationship.

**Effect:** This power allows an Ascendant to detect sentient beings who might otherwise remain hidden from their normal senses. When the power is successfully activated, the Ascendant knows the location of all sentients within 10 meters. If the power is kept active, the Ascendant can detect a sentient within 10 meters.

When an Ascendant nears sentient creatures, roll the appropriate *detect life* dice. Each creature within 10 meters makes an opposed *Perception* roll to avoid detection. (Jedi — or other, more “traditional” Force users — can use *control* dice to oppose this roll if they so desire.) Both rolls are “free” actions and do not count as a power use. If the Ascendant ties or rolls higher than the target, the target is detected.

If the Ascendant beats the target’s roll by 10 or more points, the Ascendant uses Ta-Ree to “read” the target. The Ascendant can instantly determine if the target possesses Ta-Ree abilities (or is Force-sensitive), if the target is someone that the Ascendant has encountered before, and if so, the target’s identity.

**Notes:** This power has one unusual side effect on human and near-human species. (Non-humans and natives of the DarkStryder planet do not experience this side effect.) When a target has been detected, the player character must make a Moderate *stamina* check or become extremely nauseated; this nausea lasts for the number of rounds equal to the amount that the character failed the stamina check by. Nauseated characters face a -1D penalty to all attribute and skill checks for the duration of the discomfort. Medpacs or other healing attempts do not alleviate the discomfort.

**Example:** Creed successfully detects a target nearby. The gamemaster asks Creed to roll his stamina, which has a die code of 4D. Creed rolls a 3,1,2 and a 1 on the Wild Die. The gamemaster takes away the “1” and the “3” — leaving Creed with a total of 3. Since the difficulty number is Moderate (11-15; the gamemaster has decided the difficulty number was 13), Creed has missed his stamina check by a total of 10. Creed experiences nausea for the next 10 rounds.

### DETECT TA-REE

**Difficulty:** Moderate for the immediate area; Difficult for probing for details or specific objects within the immediate area. Modified by proximity.

**Effect:** This power is used to sense the ambient Ta-Ree energy within a specified location. It cannot be used to detect sentient beings.

*Detect Ta-Ree* will tell a character the rough magnitude of Ta-Ree “presence” in an area or object.

*Detect Ta-Ree* can also tell a character about the rough magnitude of *Force* use in an area or object. However, the Ascendant must indicate that the Force is actively being sought, and the difficulty for such a search increases by one level.

### DUPLICATE

*This power must be kept “active.”*

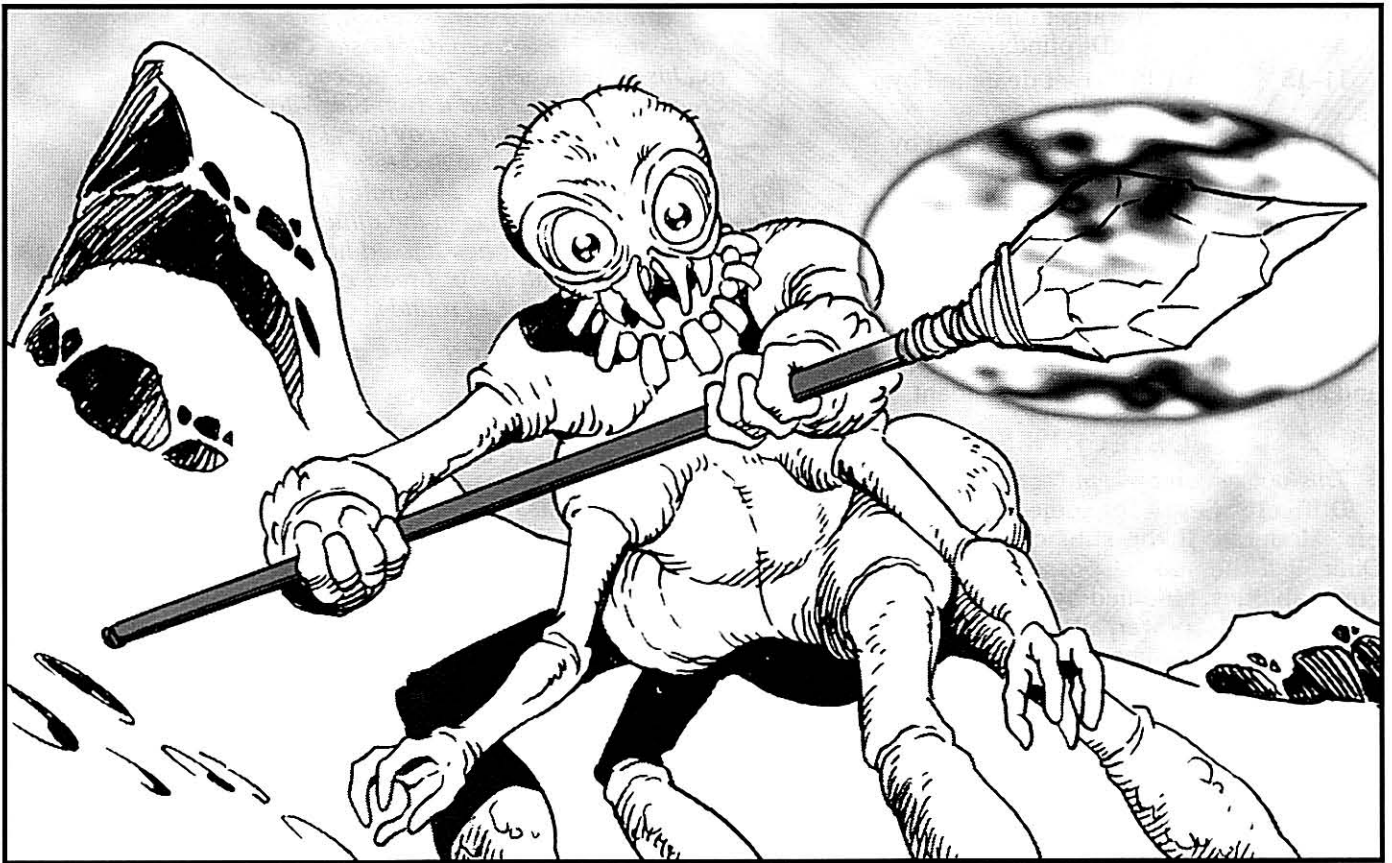
**Required Powers:** *Block pain* 6D, *boost senses* 8D, *cloak presence* 8D, *detect life* 9D, *detect Ta-Ree* 7D, *lessen another’s pain* 6D, *psychokinesis* 15D, *projective empathy* 10D, *receptive empathy* 10D, *sense life* 8D,

**Difficulty:** Very Difficult. Modified by proximity.

**Time To Use:** Ten minutes

**Effect:** This power create a mirror image of the Ascendant. This image is an illusion, but to those who interact with it, it seems real. The user can experience the duplicates full range of normal senses and the duplicate seems to have form and substance. These duplicates register as normal on all droid sensors and those present with the double believe it to be a real person. The duplicate acts with half the skill dice of the person using the power.

An Ascendant using the creation must make a *duplicate* roll once every 10 minutes to maintain the illusion; if the Ascendant stops using the power or the double is fatally injured, it simply fades into nonexistence.



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## ENERGY BLADE

*This power may be kept "active."*

**Difficulty:** Difficult

**Time To Use:** One combat round

**Effect:** This power allows a character to affect the damage a melee weapon can inflict. This power only applies to melee weapons; projectile weapons of any type are not affected.

When using energy blade, the Ascendant uses the die code of the power for the damage code of a given melee weapon, up to a maximum of 10D. (For example, a Yapi warrior with energy blade of 7D can alter the damage code of his spear to 7D.) Affected weapons can be used to parry lightsabers and deflect blaster bolts.

**Notes:** This spell is used only by Yapi shamans; they will not teach the power to outsiders without a show of bravery or the promise of some kind of gain. When *energy blade* is used, a melee weapon glows brightly, and hums as it moves through the air, much like a lightsaber. This power can only affect one melee weapon at a time.

## ENTANGLE

*This power may be kept "active."*

**Required Power:** Psychokinesis 4D

**Difficulty:** Moderate, modified by proximity.

**Time To Use:** One round

**Effect:** The Ascendant can use this power to cause nearby plant life to snare an unsuspecting target. If there is no plant life of sufficient size (vines, branches, and so forth) this spell will not work. This spell only works on one target at a time and these targets may attempt to dodge the snares. If successful at entangling target characters, the snares have a *Strength* equal to the Ascendant's *entangle* die code. For example, an Ascendant with entangle of 6D rolls 6D to see if the target is ensnared, and the vines and branches used to catch the target have 6D to resist damage.

Entangled characters who attempt to break free must make an opposed *Strength* roll versus the snare or remain captured for the duration of the spell.

**Notes:** This spell remains active for the number or rounds equal to the Ascendant's *entangle* die code; if the Ascendant has *entangle* of 5D, the

spell may be kept active for five rounds. Ignore pips when determining spell duration.

## ESCAPE

**Required Powers:** *Block pain 4D, boost attribute 3D*

**Difficulty:** Very Easy for loose bonds; Easy for hand binders; Moderate for serious restraints; Difficult to Heroic for maximum security (varies at gamemaster's discretion, depending on security measures)

**Effect:** The character escapes bonds by contorting in painful and difficult (but physically possible) ways. By dislocating joints and the like, an Ascendant can escape almost any physical restraining device. While this is indeed a painful procedure, it is possible to block out the pain and focus on the task at hand.

## GENERATE LIGHTNING

**Required Powers:** *Detect life 5D, psychokinesis 6D, sense life 5D*

**Difficulty:** Difficult, modified by proximity.

**Effect:** This power produces bolts of energy that fly from the user's fingertips, causing painful wounds. This power can be deflected by the Ta-Ree spell *shield*, (or the Force power *dissipate energy*).

Ta-Ree lightning can also be dodged, though all *dodge* attempts are at -2D; it is very difficult to predict where the lightning will strike. *Generate lightning* causes 1D of damage for every 2D of the power that the Ascendant possesses (round down: a character with *generate lightning* of 5D would cause 2D damage).

This power can be used for a variety of purposes at sufficient strength; Ascendant's can use this power to fell damaged trees, blast entrance into cave-ins, and so forth; while it is similar to the dark side Force power *Force lightning*, Dark Side Points are not automatically awarded to Ascendants using *generate lightning*. This power may be used in self-defense, in defense of others, or for constructive purposes with no penalty. However, blatantly evil use of this power (attacking unarmed opponents, for example) still earns the Ascendant a Dark Side Point.

## GENERATE WIND

**Required Powers:** *Detect life 3D, sense life 3D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Time To Use:** Two rounds

**Effect:** The Ascendant can generate a gust of wind when desired. Consult the following chart to determine how strong the wind is:

**Power roll exceeds difficulty by**

Power roll exceeds difficulty by	Result
0-5	Slight breeze generated, 1-5 kph
6-10	Strong breeze, 6-10 kph
11-15	Strong wind, 11-20 kph
16-20	Gale, 21-50 kph
21+	Strong gale, 50-80 kph

**Notes:** Ascendants can use this power to suit a number of purposes: the wind generated can be used to kick up a cloud of dust to hide in or to blind opponents, or to put out a fire or blow smoke away from an encampment, even to knock targets to the ground. The gamemaster should encourage the player characters to experiment with this power (with varying degrees of success). The Ascendant can determine the direction that the wind blows, though this may have long-term effects on the weather patterns of the region.

## HEAL

**Required Power:** *Lessen another's pain 3D*

**Difficulty:** Easy. Modified by proximity and relationship.

**Time To Use:** One minute

**Effect:** The target is allowed to make extra healing rolls, as outlined in *speed healing*. The Ascendant must be touching the character whenever he attempts a healing roll.

## HEAT

*This power may be kept "active."*

**Required Power:** *Psychokinesis 5D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate, modified by proximity.

**Time To Use:** One round

**Effect:** This power allows an Ascendant to speed the vibration of molecules in most solid objects, increasing the object's ambient heat. This is particularly effective on hand weapons and armor; heated objects inflict damage until the spell expires, or until the heated items are dropped. This power may only be used on a single target. The spell does damage equal to the Ascendant's *heat* die code. Consult the following chart to determine *heat's* effects:

**Power roll exceeds**

Power roll exceeds difficulty by	Effect
0-5	Item heated for 1 round
6-10	Item heated for 2 round
11-15	Item heated for 1D rounds
16-20	Item heated for 2D rounds
21-25	Item heated for 3D rounds
26-30	Item heated for 4D rounds
31+	Item melted/incinerated

**Notes:** An Ascendant who rolls a “one” on the Wild Die when casting this spell takes the brunt of the damage. Calculate the result as indicated above and apply it to the Ascendant.

## LESSEN ANOTHER’S FATIGUE

**Required Powers:** *Block pain 5D, heal 3D, lessen another’s pain 5D, lessen fatigue 5D, speed healing 3D.*

**Difficulty:** Moderate. Modified by proximity and relationship.

**Effect:** This power allows the Ascendant to remove the effects of fatigue in another. However, unlike the basic power, the Ascendant must wait until the target is actually fatigued, before offering assistance. Hence the penalties for failing a *stamina* check can be counteracted, but must be addressed as they occur.

## LESSEN ANOTHER’S PAIN

**Required Power:** *Block pain 4D*

**Difficulty:** Easy for wounded characters; Moderate for incapacitated characters; Difficult for mortally wounded characters. Modified by proximity and relationship.

**Effect:** This power has the same effect on the target that *block pain* does on its user.

## LESSEN FATIGUE

*This power can be kept “active.”*

**Required Powers:** *Block pain 2D, speed healing 3D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Effect:** The character uses this power to combat the effects of strenuous work. The Ascendant causes bodily toxins to be ejected much more efficiently, thus allowing for greater stamina. While kept up, the Ascendant must make a *stamina* check once per day. While using this power, an Ascendant must fail two *stamina* checks before he or she is fatigued. The character still has to eat and drink normally. If the Ascendant does fail two *stamina* checks and becomes fatigued, a -1D penalty is applied to all attributes and skills for 1D hours.

## LESSEN INJURY

**Required Power:** *Block pain 5D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate for *incapacitated* characters, Difficult for *mortally wounded* characters, Very Difficult for dead characters.

**Effect:** By using this power, an Ascendant may use Ta-Ree energy to reduce the amount of injury he or she suffers; this power is normally only used in desperation because of its long-term repercussions.

When the power is successfully used, the As-

pendant loses a Force Point; if the Ascendant has no Force Points, 20 Character Points can be substituted. Any injury that is suffered is reduced to *wounded*. If the original injury would have killed the character, he or she suffers a permanent injury of some kind.

## LIGHT

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Time To Use:** One round

**Effect:** This spell allows an Ascendant to bathe an area in bright light for a limited period of time. The effects of *light* are easily spotted at night — any characters attempting to visually *search* for the Ascendant gain a +2D bonus after dark.

*Light* can be dispelled by the Ta-Ree power *darkness*. All characters in *light* suffer no penalties to vision-based attribute and skill checks at night, as a sphere of illumination as bright as normal daylight surrounds them. The light lasts for the number of rounds equal to the Ascendant’s *light* die code (For example, an Ascendant with *light* of 4D can project a sphere of illumination for four rounds.)

The Ascendant casting this spell must make at least a Moderate *light* roll to activate the power. Once the location of the sphere is determined (see the chart below), the sphere is immobile; it does not follow the Ascendant, instead remaining in a fixed position.

Use the following chart to determine the spell’s result.

### Ascendant’s *darkness* roll exceeds difficulty number by:

	<b>Result:</b>
0–3	10 meter sphere of light appears with Ascendant directly at its center
4–7	10 meter sphere of light appears; Ascendant can choose the location of the sphere’s center up to 10 meters away.
8–11	15 meter sphere of light appears with Ascendant directly at its center
12–15	15 meter sphere of light appears; Ascendant can choose the location of the sphere’s center, up to 15 meters away.
16–19	20 meter sphere of light

20–23	appears with Ascendant directly at its center 20 meter sphere of light appears; Ascendant can choose the location of the sphere's center, up to 20 meters away
24–27	25 meter sphere of light appears with Ascendant directly at its center.
28–31	25 meter sphere of light appears; Ascendant can choose the location of the sphere's center, up to 25 meters away.
32+	30 meter sphere of light appears; Ascendant can choose the location of the sphere's center up to 50 meters away.

### MANIPULATE FLAME

**Difficulty:** Easy for small flames (torches); Moderate for normal fires (campfire); Difficult for large fires (bonfire, fires with a 10-meter radius); Heroic for conflagrations (structure fires, fires larger than 10 meters). Modified by proximity.

**Time To Use:** Two rounds.

**Effect:** *Manipulate flame* allows an Ascendant to alter the brightness of a nearby source of flame. While this spell affects normal fires (such as torches or campfires) it has no effect at all on Ta-Ree generated flames; the flame-like manifestations of *boost attribute* cannot be dimmed or brightened, for example. Also, this spell has no effect on a fire's damage value or fuel consumption.

*Manipulate flame* can either increase or decrease the brightness of a target flame, though the flame *must* be within the Ascendant's line of sight. When this spell is activated, the Ascendant can choose one of the following effects:

- **Spike brightness.** The Ascendant can make the fire flash like a strobe for one combat round, after which the fire is extinguished. Unprepared bystanders near the flame may be blinded by the strobe and must make a Moderate *Perception* check or be blinded for 1D rounds. Characters that fail the *Perception* check become disoriented and the difficulty for all vision based at-

tribute and skill checks increase by +2 for the duration of the blindness. These penalties are cumulative.

- **Extinguish fire.** The Ascendant can also extinguish the flame. The night vision of those nearby will take a moment to adjust to sudden darkness. Unprepared bystanders must make a Moderate *Perception* roll or the difficulty for all vision-based attribute and skill checks increase by +2 for one round.

- **Vary brightness.** The Ascendant can alter the brightness of the flame. This spell can either halve or double the area illuminated by the fire; the Ascendant must declare which effect is desired prior to casting the spell.

### MEMORY ENHANCEMENT

**Required Power:** *Trance 7D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Effect:** When an Ascendant uses this power, he or she can replay recent events in order to more carefully examine images and peripheral occurrences. Using the power, an Ascendant can recall details that were seen but not consciously registered at the time of observation.

In game terms, this power can be used to alert an Ascendant to information, items, other characters, or anything else that he or she has observed within a specific span of time. In addition, if a gamemaster provided clues or leads to clues that the players originally missed or ignored, this power can be used to recall them. When players get stuck on a puzzle or mystery within an adventure, this power can alert them to possible solutions, if those solutions were observed earlier in the adventure.

How far back an Ascendant can remember depends on the success of the power roll.

Skill Roll Exceeds Difficulty By	Memory Extends Back
0–8	Through current episode
9–20	Through last episode
21+	Through last two episodes

### NULLIFY TOXIN

**Difficulty:** Very Easy for a very mild poison; Easy for a mild poison; Moderate for an average poison; Difficult for a virulent poison; Very Difficult to Heroic for a neurotoxin.

**Time To Use:** Five minutes

**Effect:** This power allows an Ascendant to detoxify or eject poisons that have entered his body. If the Ascendant makes the power roll, the poison has no effect.

**NULLIFY TOXIN IN ANOTHER**

**Required Powers:** *Block pain 5D, heal 4D, lessen another's pain 5D, nullify toxin 3D, speed healing 3D*

**Difficulty:** Very Easy for very mild toxin (such as alcohol); Easy for a mild toxin; Moderate for an average toxin; Difficult for a virulent toxin; Very Difficult to Heroic for a neurotoxin. Modified by relationship.

**Time To Use:** 5 minutes

**Effect:** This power allows an Ascendant to remove or nullify toxin from a patient's body faster than is normally possible. While using this power, the Ascendant must remain in physical contact with the patient. As long as the Ascendant is in contact with the target, that person is considered immune to the effects of the toxin. Failure to make the required difficulty check or breaking physical contact during the use of the power causes the patient a wound.

**Notes:** This power can also be used to remove a *Maoi* from a target character. The difficulty for this procedure is Moderate modified by the *Maoi*'s *willpower* roll.

**PREDICT WEATHER**

*This power may be kept "active."*

**Required Power:** *Boost senses 5D*

**Difficulty:** Easy if the Ascendant has lived in the area for more than a year; Moderate if the Ascendant has lived in the area between six and twelve months; Difficult if the Ascendant has lived in the area between one and six months; Very Difficult if the Ascendant has lived in the area less than one month. Modified for proximity and local meteorological conditions.

**Effect:** This power allows the Ascendant to attune himself to the workings of local weather patterns. By sensing the movements of clouds, winds, tides, and solar bodies, he can discern patterns in the weather, and so make limited predictions regarding the behavior of atmospheric phenomenon.

The power does not lend itself to quick predictions, however. It takes weeks for an Ascendant to so acclimate himself to local weather patterns and become familiar with unique features of the local topography that he can obtain accurate readings.

The prediction is effective for four hours. The difficulty increases if the Ascendant wishes to make more extended forecasts.

**PROJECTIVE EMPATHY**

*This power may be kept "active."*

**Required Power:** *Receptive empathy 4D*

**Difficulty:** Very Easy. Increase difficulty by +5

to +10 if the Ascendant cannot verbalize the thoughts that are transmitted (i.e. the character is gagged, doesn't want to make a sound, etc). If the target is unfriendly or unwilling, increase difficulty by the same amount as the target's *willpower* roll. Modified by proximity and relationship

**Time To Use:** One round

**Effect:** If the Ascendant successfully projects thoughts, the target "hears" the thoughts and "feels" the accompanying emotions. The target understands that the thoughts and feelings he or she is experiencing are from "outside" and that they belong to the user of the power. If the Ascendant doesn't "verbally" identify himself, the target doesn't know who is projecting thoughts. This power can only be used to communicate with other minds, not control them.

**PSYCHOKINESIS**

*This power may be kept "active."*

**Difficulty:** Very Easy for objects weighing one kilogram or less; Easy for objects weighting one to ten kilograms; Moderate for objects 11 to 100 kilograms; Difficult for 101 kilograms to one metric ton; Very Difficult for 1,001 kilograms to ten metric tons; Heroic for objects weighing 10,001 kilograms to 100 metric tons.

Object may be moved at 10 meters per round; add +5 per additional 10 meters per round. The target must be in sight of the Ascendant.

Increased difficulty if object isn't moving in simple, straight-line movement:

+1 to +5 for gentle turns

+ 6 to +10 for easy maneuvers

+11 to +25 or more for complex maneuvers, such as using a levitated lightsaber to attack

Modified by proximity.

**Effect:** This power allows the Ascendant to levitate and move objects with the power of his mind alone. If used successfully, the object moves as the Ascendant desires.

An Ascendant can levitate several objects simultaneously, but each additional object requires the Ascendant to make a new power roll.

This power can be used to levitate oneself or others. It can be used as a primitive space drive in emergencies.

When used to levitate someone against their will, the target may resist by adding their *willpower* roll to the difficulty number.

Levitated objects can be used to attack other characters. Such objects do 1D damage if under a kilogram, 2D if one to ten kilos, 4D if 11 to 100 kilos, 3D Speeder-scale damage if 101 kilos to one metric ton, 3D Starfighter-scale damage if one to





ten tons and 5D Starfighter-scale damage if 11 to 100 metric tons.

Such attacks would require an additional *psychokinesis* roll by the Ascendant, which would be the “to hit” roll against the target’s *dodge*. If the character doesn’t dodge the attack, the difficulty to hit is Easy.

## PSYCHOKINETIC ATTACK

**Difficulty:** Moderate, modified by proximity and relationship

**Required Powers:** *Block pain 4D, deadly touch 6D, inflict pain 5D, sense life 6D, psychokinesis 8D*

**Effect:** This power is used to psychokinetically injure or kill a target. When the user makes the psychokinetic attack, roll against the target character’s *willpower* total to determine damage. The exact method used to kill the target varies: collapse the trachea, stir the brain, squeeze the heart, or any number of other methods. In addition, the Ascendant may elect to render the character unconscious — if a kill result is achieved, the spell caster may “pull back” the attack, rendering the target unconscious. This power may only be used on a single target at a time.

## PYROSPRAY

**Required Powers:** *Light 4D, psychokinesis 3D*

**Difficulty:** Modified by proximity

**Time To Use:** Three rounds

**Effect:** Pyrospray allows the caster to project a spray of colorful lights and sparks, accompanied by a rumbling, staccato burst of noise. The Ascendant can conjure this display up to 50 meters away and does not require a line of sight view of the target; for example, it is possible for the player character to cast pyrotechnics inside the mouth of a cave, even if he or she cannot see inside.

The pyrotechnics are very loud and very startling. Characters within 10 meters of the display must make a Very Difficult *willpower* check or be startled into inactivity; if this roll is not successful, affected characters may not take any action for the remainder of that round.

**Notes:** An Ascendant who rolls a “one” on the Wild Die when casting *pyrotechnics* is immediately engulfed by the brilliant display. Any characters actively *searching* for the Ascendant immediately gain a +2D bonus because of the sudden commotion. In addition, the Ascendant is automatically startled into inactivity and may

take no further actions for the duration of the pyrotechnics display.

## RECEPTIVE EMPATHY

*This power may be kept "active" (if the target is willing and the proximity modifier doesn't increase).*

**Required Power:** *Sense life 3D*

**Difficulty:** Very Easy for friendly, non-resisting targets. If target resists, he makes a *willpower* roll to determine the difficulty. Modified by proximity and relationship.

**Effect:** The Ascendant gains the ability to read the surface thoughts and emotions of a target. The caster can hear what the target is thinking, but cannot probe for deeper information.

When the Ascendant uses the power on another player character, the gamemaster and appropriate player must determine if the target is a willing participant to determine difficulty.

If the skill roll is double the difficulty, the Ascendant can sift through any memories up to 24 hours old. An Ascendant cannot sift through memories in the same round that contact is made — this process takes a full round.

An Ascendant can read the minds of more than one person at a time, but each additional person counts as an additional action, with separate rolls and multiple skill use penalties.

This power may be used on creatures and other sentient species, although it cannot be used on droids. In addition, if used on the Maoi, the only result — no matter the success of the skill roll — is the discovery that the amorphous creatures radiate deep, ancient hunger ... and nothing else.

## SENSE DANGER

*This power can be kept "active."*

**Required Power:** *Detect life 2D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate or attacker's *willpower* roll

**Effect:** *Sense danger* allows an Ascendant to extend his or her senses like protective sensors, creating an early warning system for as long as the power remains in effect.

When this power is used, the Ascendant detects any attacks the round before they are made. This gives the Ascendant a round to decide how to react to the danger.

In game terms, if any character plans to attack the Ascendant on the next round, she must declare her action the round before. Attacking characters with Force skills may roll their *control* skill to increase the difficulty of using this power. Otherwise, characters may use the *willpower* skill to increase the Ascendant's *sense danger* difficulty.

## SENSE LIFE

*This power may be kept "active" to track a target.*

**Required Power:** *Detect life 4D*

**Difficulty:** Very Easy. Modified by proximity and relationship.

**Effect:** The user can sense the presence and identity of a specific person for whom he searches. The user can sense how badly wounded, diseased or otherwise physically disturbed the target is.

A target may use the *willpower* skill to hide his identity from the Ascendant using *sense life*. The target's character *willpower* skill roll is added to the senser's difficulty.

## SENSE TA-REE

**Difficulty:** Moderate for an area; Difficult for sensing details or specific objects within the area. Any attempts to use this power to detect the Force are automatically Very Difficult. Modified by proximity.

**Effect:** This power is used to sense the ambient Ta-Ree energy within a place. It cannot be used to detect sentient beings, but there are many forms of life on Kathol that are intertwined with the Ta-Ree which can be sensed with this power.

*Sense Ta-Ree* will tell a character the rough magnitude of Ta-Ree "concentration" in an area or object, as well as detecting the presence of nearby Precursors.

## SHADOWSTRIKE

**Required Powers:** *Psychokinesis 9D, sense life 5D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate, modified by proximity.

**Time To Use:** One combat round.

**Effect:** *Shadowstrike* gives the Ascendant the ability to "transmit" blows, using his or her own physical strength to inflict damage. After successfully using the power, the Ascendant must make an Easy *brawling* skill roll.

If attacking a Force-sensitive, the target may use the *brawling parry* skill to avoid the attack. Otherwise, the target cannot dodge the Ascendant's blows. If the *brawling* roll is successful, the Ascendant rolls his or her full *Strength* versus the targets *Strength*. The Ascendant may target a specific portion of the body, but must subtract an additional -1D from his *brawling* skill (see *Star Wars, Second Edition*, page 63). Be sure to add any *shield* bonuses that the target may have.



This power can be kept active as long as the distance between the Ascendant and the target remains the same. Should the target move significantly or the Ascendant wish to select a new target, the power must be re-rolled.

## SHIELD

*This power can be kept "active."*

**Required Powers:** Boost senses 3D, psychokinesis 6D

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Effect:** This power allows the Ascendant to surround his body with a Ta-Ree-generated shield. The shield can be used to repel energy and physical matter away from the Ascendant's body, down to the molecular level and can counter the effects of several Ta-Ree spells (such as *shadowstrike*).

The shield acts as armor to all energy and physical attacks made against the Ascendant, including non-directional attacks such as gas clouds and grenade blasts. The shield is not particularly strong, but can sometimes be just enough to protect the Ascendant from serious injury. The Strength code of the shield is equal to the Ascendant's *shield* die code.

**Notes:** *Shield* has a very distinctive visual component. The character casting *shield* appears to be encased in topaz-colored crystal. The "crystal" flows and moves with the character and glows a reddish-orange color. (If used at night, other characters gain a +1D to *search* to spot the shield.)

## SHIFT PERCEPTIONS

*This power can be kept "active."*

**Required Power:** Boost senses 6D

**Difficulty:** Moderate for simple phenomena (such as heat or simple scents); Difficult for more uncommon phenomena (such as comm frequencies, infrared radiation); Very Difficult for specific, complex phenomena (such as setting olfactory nerves to detect the presence of tibanna gas).

**Effect:** The character may shift his or her senses as to detect phenomena of a different type than normal; shifting eyesight to the infrared spectrum, setting olfactory nerves to detect specific chemical combinations, or hearing frequencies above or below normal range for his or her species. This power counts as a "skill use" for determining die code penalties.

Please note that this power is exceptionally useful in some aspects, but fairly limited in others. For example, an Ascendant may detect comm frequencies, but that does not mean the Ascendant can listen in on the transmission. The Ascendant will be able to detect that a transmission is present, but may not necessarily be able to locate the signal's source, and certainly will not be able to decode the information carried by the transmission.

## SLEEP

**Required Powers:** *Detect life 2D, sense life 3D*,  
**Difficulty:** Moderate, modified by proximity and relationship

**Time To Use:** Two rounds

**Effect:** This power allows an Ascendant to cause target characters to fall asleep for short periods of time. The target character must be within line of sight.

The Ascendant must make a Moderate *sleep* roll (modified by proximity and relationship) to use this power. *Sleep* affects the number of targets equal to the power's die code; an Ascendant with 6D in *sleep* can affect six targets. Ignore pips when determining the number of targets that can be affected.

Affected characters may make a single attempt to withstand the effects of *sleep*, which requires a Very Difficult *willpower* roll.

Consult the following chart to determine the spell's effects; these effects are applied to all target characters who fail the *willpower* roll:

**Ascendant's *sleep***

**roll exceeds**

**difficulty by:**

**Result:**

0-5	Target falls asleep for one round
6-10	Target falls asleep for 1D rounds
11-15	Target falls asleep for 2D rounds
16-20	Target falls asleep for 3D rounds
21-25	Target falls asleep for 1D hours
26-30	Target falls asleep for 2D hours
31+	Target falls asleep for 3D hours

**Notes:** An Ascendant that rolls a "one" on the Wild Die suffers a mishap when casting the spell; the spell effects the Ascendant and the appropriate number of targets within five meters (generally the Ascendant's companions). The nearby

characters may make a willpower check to shrug off the spell's effects, but the Ascendant may not and automatically falls asleep.

## SLOW

**Required Powers:** *Detect life 3D, psychokinesis 4D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate, modified by proximity and relationship

**Time To Use:** One round

**Effect:** *Slow* allows a spell caster to reduce the movement rate of a target character. The target feels as if the very air has thickened, making movement extremely difficult. All movement rates are halved for the duration of the spell's effect. The target must be in line of sight of the Ascendant.

This power remains active for the number of rounds equal to the Ascendant's *slow* die code; a character with *slow 4D* can keep this power active for four rounds. In addition, this power can be used on the number of targets equal to the power's die code; a character with *slow 5D* can cast the power on five targets for a total of five rounds (ignore pips when determining the number of targets affected).

A target character can make a *Strength* roll to overcome the effects of the spell. A Very Difficult or Heroic result allows the target to shrug off the effects of the spell. This roll can only be attempted once; if failed, the target suffers the slowed movement for the appropriate duration.

**Notes:** If the Ascendant rolls a "one" on the Wild Die when casting this power, the effects are reversed. In this case, *slow* causes the target's movement rates to *double* for the spell's normal duration.

## SPEED HEALING

**Difficulty:** Easy for *wounded* characters, Moderate for *incapacitated* characters, Difficult for *mortally wounded* characters.

**Time To Use:** One minute

**Effect:** If an Ascendant uses this power successfully, he or she may make two natural healing rolls for the current day regardless of injury. The Ascendant also receives a +2 bonus for both rolls.

## STAY CONSCIOUS

**Required Power:** *Block pain 3D*

**Difficulty:** Easy for *stunned* characters, Moderate for *incapacitated* characters, Difficult for *mortally wounded* characters.

**Effect:** *Stay conscious* allows an Ascendant to stay conscious even when suffering from injuries which would cause unconsciousness. In game

terms, when a character with this power suffers this kind of injury, all of that character's actions are lost for the rest of the round, but he or she is still conscious; characters that do not use this power would automatically pass out in this case. On the next round, the character may attempt to activate the power — this must be the first action of that round; the Ascendant cannot even *dodge* or *parry*.

If the roll is unsuccessful, the character falls unconscious immediately. If the roll is successful, the Ascendant can do any one other action that he or she has declared for that round — often the character will attempt to *block pain* so that he will be able to stay conscious. After that other action has been completed, the Ascendant will lapse into unconsciousness, unless he has activated *block pain* or done something else that will keep the character conscious.

## STUMBLE

**Required Power:** *Psychokinesis 4D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate, modified by proximity and relationship

**Time To Use:** One combat round

**Effect:** *Stumble* causes a nearby character to lose balance and fall. The target character must be within the Ascendant's line of sight up to a distance of 50 meters. When activated, the power causes the target to misperceive where obstacles (such as fallen branches, stones, steps and so forth) lie, causing the target to stumble and fall.

*Stumble* does not automatically make the target fall; a Difficult *Dexterity* check allows the target to remain standing. This power can only be used on a single target at a time.

## TRANCE

*This power can be kept "active."*

**Difficulty:** Difficult.

**Effect:** This power allows an Ascendant to fall into a deep trance, slowing all body functions. The Ascendant falls unconscious, the heart-beat slows, and breathing drops to barely perceptible levels.

When an Ascendant enters a *trance*, the character must declare under what circumstances the character will awaken: after a specific amount of time, or what stimuli needs to be present (noise, someone else's touch, and so forth). An Ascendant can heal while in a *trance*, but the character may not use skills, Ta-Ree powers or Force abilities in this unconscious state.

*Trance* serves two purposes. It allows an Ascendant to "play dead." It can be used to survive when food or air supplies are low. A character in *trance* uses only about a tenth as much air as

someone who is sleeping — it is possible to remain in this state for one week in a dry climate or up to one month in a wet climate before dying from lack of water.

An Ascendant in *trance* appears to be dead, unless a more thorough investigation is attempted. Another Ascendant with the *detect life* power will be able to determine that the entranced individual is alive. The Force power *life detection* will accomplish the same result.

## TRANSLATE

*This power can be kept "active."*

**Required Powers:** *Projective empathy 5D, receptive empathy 5D,*

**Difficulty:** Moderate for humans or aliens, Difficult for droids. If the target is being purposely cryptic, add +5 to the difficulty. Attempts to translate written material are Very Difficult.

**Effect:** This power allows the character to translate a language and speak it in kind. The Ascendant may decipher body language, explore the spoken word, or translate ancient Precursor glyphs.

In order for this power to work, the character must first hear the target speak, or see the words in written form (such as an ancient text or document). This power, though similar to telepathy, has many advantages.

First, it takes only one application of this power to "understand" a language. As long as they all speak the same language and the power is kept active, the character need not roll for each individual talking.

Also, because they also "speak" using beeps and whistles, droids may be communicated with using this power.

Finally, the Ascendant can translate ancient texts, even if the language has long since vanished from the galaxy.

Note that the character does not really *know* the language. Once this power is no longer in use, the Ascendant is once again unable to decipher the target language.

## WALL

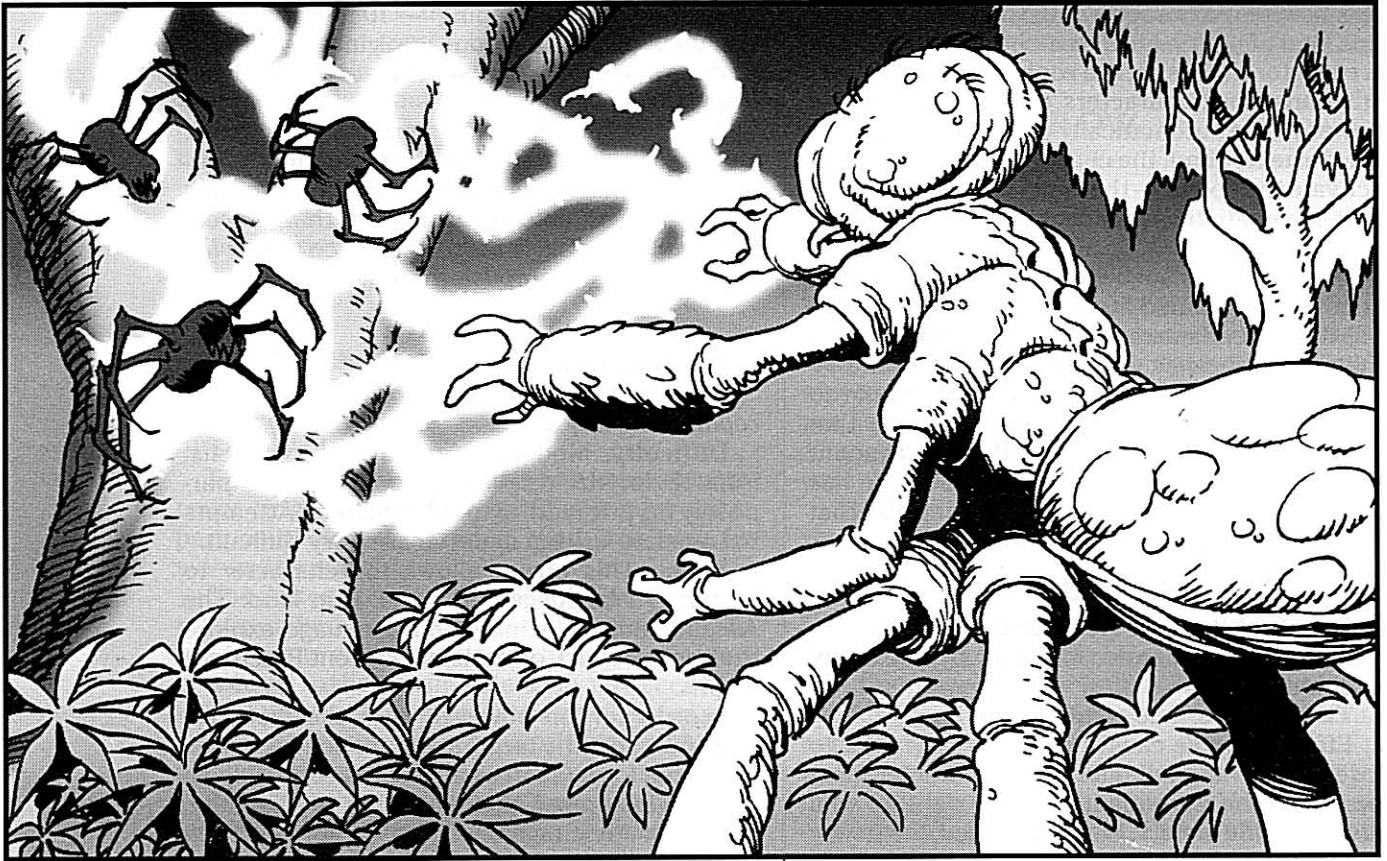
**Required Power:** *Psychokinesis 6D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Time To Use:** Three rounds

**Effect:** *Wall* allows an Ascendant to "build" a barrier out of dirt, ice, stone or other solid material that is present in the general area. The wall has a Strength equal to the Ascendant's *wall* die code to resist damage.

The conjured wall must be crafted from materials within 10 meters of the Ascendant; stone, dirt or ice work the best. Water, fire, sand and



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other materials are less effective. If using water, fire or sand as base material, the conjured wall only lasts a single round and the difficulty to cast *wall* increases to Very Difficult.

The Ascendant must maintain concentration for the three rounds needed to cast this spell; if the character is disturbed or interrupted during the casting stages of this spell, the power automatically fails. (A Very Difficult *willpower* roll allows the Ascendant to maintain his or her concentration if there is a disturbance.)

## WEB

**Required Power:** *Entangle 6D*

**Difficulty:** Moderate, modified by proximity

**Time To Use:** One round

**Effect:** The Ascendant can conjure a "web" of tough, adhesive fibers that snare and restrain a target. The web has Strength equal to the Ascendant's *web* die code for the purpose of resisting damage. The web does no damage to a target character, but due to its "sticky" texture and thin, self-regenerating fibers, is extremely difficult to cut. Attempts to cut through such a

web with a standard melee weapon are at -1D. Energy weapons (such as lightsabers) or vibroweapons suffer no penalty when used against a web.

*Web* can be used on characters up to 50 meters away.

## WITHSTAND STUN

*This power can be kept "active."*

**Difficulty:** Moderate.

**Time To Use:** One minute

**Effect:** *Withstand stun* allows the Ascendant to prepare his or her body to resist the effects of stun damage. The power must be activated before the character has suffered any damage.

A successful result allows the Ascendant to resist all stun results except for *unconscious* and normal injuries. An *unconscious* result forces the Ascendant to drop the power, and the character is considered *stunned*. Other injury results (*wounded, incapacitated, mortally wounded and killed*) are treated normally.

## CREATING NEW TA-REE POWERS

The “spell list” in this chapter is only the building blocks of Ta-Ree mastery; players will likely want to create special powers of their own, and gamemasters are encouraged to allow this.

Since the Ta-Ree powers currently used on Kathol are the result of thousands of years without any outside interference, the presence of off-worlders (namely the player characters) may have odd effects on Ta-Ree spells. For example, a player character who has learned the power *generate lightning* has infuriated his teacher — he

can only generate *fire*. The spell effects are the same, but the visual manifestation is different.

In addition, the players can “experiment” with various effects, though gamemasters can require prerequisite powers at a specified level before new spells are effective.

If players begin destabilizing game balance by developing hugely powerful spells, the gamemaster has a final option — the Precursors. The Kathol — annoyed by the huge ripples in the Ta-Ree field created by these spells — have begun to take an interest in the player characters, manipulating Ta-Ree energy to make all the characters’ spells unpredictable and even dangerous.



## ENDGAME

### ADVENTURE INTRODUCTION

The *FarStar* has reached the hidden lair of Moff Sarne and his benefactor, DarkStryder. The *FarStar* crew must carefully plan their path into the system, slipping past the numerous sensor drones and perimeter patrols. Unbeknownst to the crew, however, Sarne already knows their *exact* position, and is moving to spring his final trap.

### SARNE'S PLAN

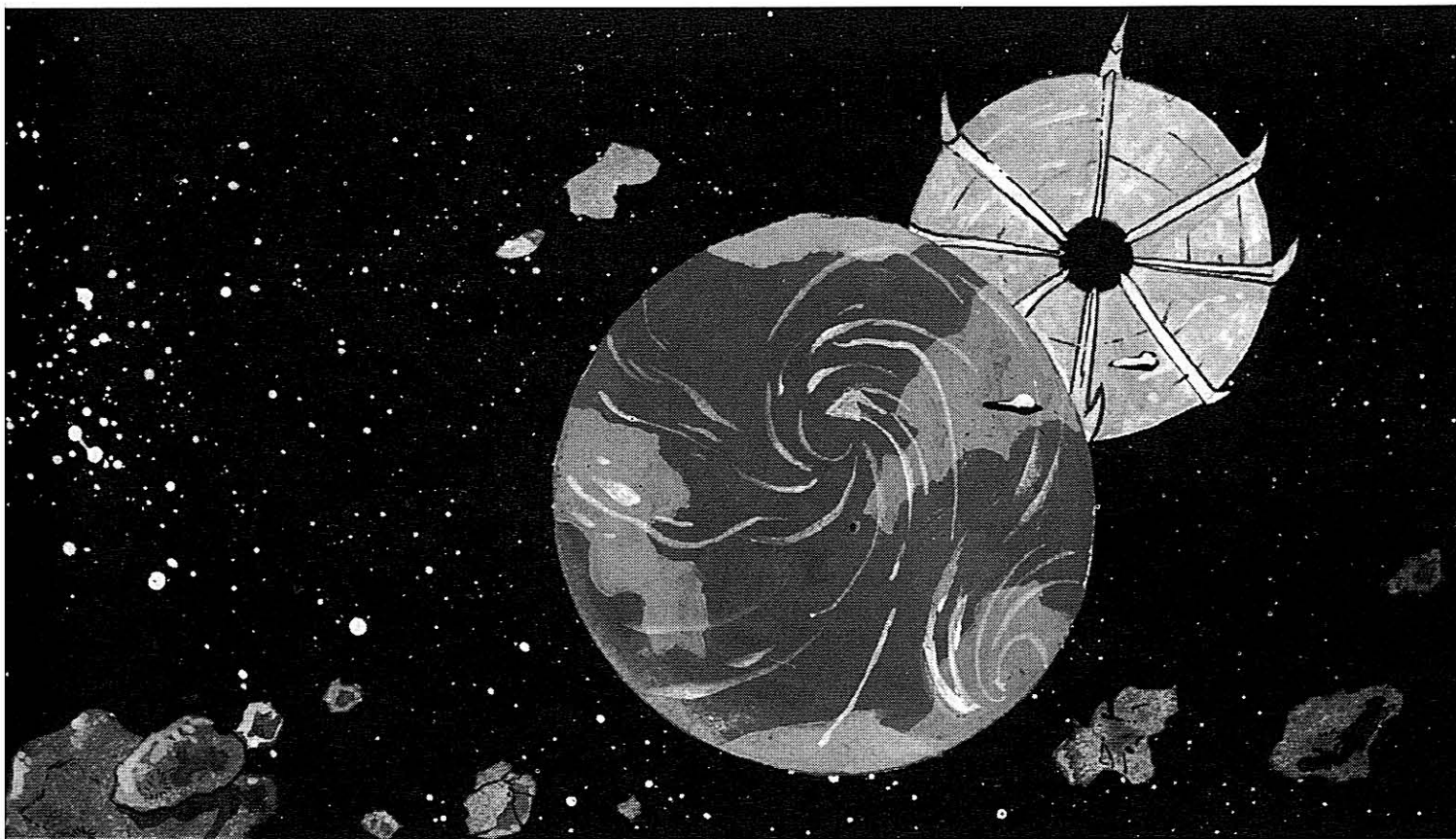
In the coming conflict, Sarne has the following goals:

**1. Capture Technology.** Sarne wants unlimited access to DarkStryder technology, including DarkStryder modules, and bio-engineering techniques. He will use this technology to exert abso-

lute control over Kathol sector. DarkStryder will be allowed to survive as long as the creature is useful to Sarne's ambitions and has more to offer. Once Sarne has all of DarkStryder's knowledge, DarkStryder is slated to die.

**2. Cripple New Republic Forces.** Wipe out the New Republic forces in the sector. He has allowed the *FarStar* to track him to the Kathol system, predicting that a New Republic fleet to eventually follow. Sarne expects that this fleet will contain the bulk of available New Republic forces in the sector: by the time they're counted missing by the Republic, Sarne expects to be back in power on Kal'Shebbol, more entrenched than ever. While he could probably have taken the capital back with the forces at his disposal, he wants to eliminate the New Republic forces in one stroke, without endangering his military forces.





Storn Cook

## CAVEAT

This adventure makes certain assumptions about the *FarStar*, its current crew, condition and supplies. Individual campaigns and player groups may vary widely, and it is impossible to say how a particular group may have augmented the *FarStar*, what sorts of other characters have been introduced, or any of dozens of other variables. This adventure charts a middle path, and assumes a combination of daring and cunning on the part of the player characters. Gamemasters who have strayed from the directed character development of the *FarStar* crew may have to do some tinkering to integrate this adventure into their campaign.

## EPISODE ONE: ENTERING THE SYSTEM

Adrimetrum orders the *FarStar* to exit hyperspace at the extreme edge of the unknown system ahead, and has a probe droid sent ahead (if

there are any left after initiating the Lifeline Project; otherwise, the *FarStar* will have to move in as close as possible and begin scanning) to scout out the system. The *FarStar* can use long range sensors to chart the area, but any enemy ships scanned will certainly become aware of the *FarStar*'s presence.

- A Very Easy or Easy *sensors* roll reveals that the system has two suns — one a white dwarf, the other a yellow star. In addition, the system is ringed by twin asteroid belts, with a modest gap between them. A single planet in a stable orbit around the suns is the only world in the system.
- A Moderate *sensors* roll reveals that there is only a single planet in the system. The large planet is orbited by a massive circular construct of indeterminate purpose and unknown origin, though each of the titanic tower-columns ringing the object is large enough to park a Star Destroyer on.

In addition, the outer asteroid ring is comprised largely of heavy metals, making sensor readings extremely difficult. Any sensor sweeps of the outer asteroid belt increase by one difficulty level as the *FarStar* moves closer.

Finally, sensors also detect sporadic meteor activity near the planet, as chunks of debris occasionally impact in the asteroid fields and fall into the world's gravity well.

- A Difficult or Very difficult *sensors* roll reveals that there are three anomalies in the gap between the inner and outer asteroid belts. There are three objects that are ostensibly asteroids, moving slowly at a distance of roughly three kilometers from the inner belt. However, these asteroids are *not spinning* and are maintaining position relative to each other — clearly these are disguised scoutships of some kind. Regardless of whether or not they are detected, the disguised patrol ships break cover and move back towards the planet as soon as the *FarStar* approaches the outer asteroid belt.
- A Heroic *sensors* roll reveals that there are a number of other ship in the system: a picket line — four small ships and two larger triangular vessels — are patrolling the planet in a polar orbit, and two other similar picket lines are stationed near the planet.

Sensors can not identify the ships, although it estimates that the triangular ships are Star Destroyers — though whether or not they are *Victory*-, *Imperial*- or *Imperial II*-class ships is unknown — and that each attack line has a Nebulon-B escort frigate.

The Imperial orbit pattern leaves a hole along the planet's orbital track: a capital ship sits at each pole, a patrol of four small ships orbit opposite the space station, and the two attack lines stand off on either side of the planet. The space station is avoided by the Imperial ships. Thyte speculates that if the *FarStar* micro-jumps close to the asteroid belt, quietly works its way to

### OTHER CRAFTY PLANS

Alternately, the *FarStar* could sneak close to the planet, drop off the Aegis shuttle, and hide in the belt while a landing party investigates the planet. This has the advantage of being sneakier (the shuttle is harder to detect than the comparatively large *FarStar*), theoretically safer for the ship, and allows a landing party of up to forty, depending on the party's configuration and what vehicles they take.

In this case, the *FarStar* is ambushed and flushed out of their hiding place at the appropriate moment, and the landing party receives an alert that the ship is under attack — then the signal is jammed.

the planet, and uses the derelict station to cover a run for the surface, the patrol ships can be avoided.

The gamemaster might want the players to get caught by a picket patrol while preparing to land. This is a little more exciting in the short run, but may dissipate the tension and limit surprises later on. An encounter with a pair of blastboats on patrol should work well for this; the *FarStar* should be able to destroy them with comparative ease. After the fight, Adrimetrum decides to immediately land and assumes the patrol got a message off.

**Skipray Blastboats.** Capital, *capital ship gunnery 5D, capital ship piloting 5D, capital ship shields 4D.* Maneuverability 1D+2, space 8, hull 2D+1, shields 2D. Weapons: 3 medium ion cannons (fire-linked, fire control 3D, space range 1-3/12/25, atmosphere range 100-300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 4D), 2 laser cannons (starfighter scale, fire-linked, fire control 1D, space range 1-3/12/25 atmosphere range 100-300/1.2/2.5 damage 5D), proton torpedo launcher (starfighter scale, fire control 2D, space range 1/3/7, atmosphere range 50-100/300/700, damage 9D), concussion missile launcher (starfighter scale, fire control 1D, space range 1/3/7, atmosphere range 1-50/100/250 damage 6D).

### PLANETFALL

Adrimetrum decides to risk landing the *FarStar*: the battered starship can't take a prolonged space engagement with Sarne's forces, so a more subtle

### WHAT IF THEY RUN?

It's possible that the players will collect their data, size up the opposition, and decide that discretion is the better part of valor. (Dajus is completely against this, but she has been more and more unpredictable as the campaign progresses; she might well be completely ignored.) This is obviously a major Imperial base, or at least a main grouping of Sarne's forces. It does make a certain amount of sense to not bravely jump into the jaws of an Imperial fleet. If the *FarStar* heads off to gather up a New Republic task force, they find one — early. They run directly into the arms of the Bothans, at Yvara, who analyze their data, agree that they did the right thing by reporting back, and order them to return to the unnamed system to make a scouting run as outlined in "Planetfall," while the Bothan force stands by.

approach is necessitated.

The ideal time to attempt the landing run is when the derelict alien construct passes by in its orbit — the Imperial patrol will be on the far side of the planet, and the ship can glide by using the station's mass to hide their passage from the other Imperial ships. Astrogation also notes that the station is massive enough to pull asteroids into the planet's gravity field — Thyte recommends that they nudge a few small asteroids along, to enhance the illusion that there's a meteor shower in progress.

Thyte (or, if necessary one of the support characters, such as Breslin Drake) also recommends that the *FarStar* fall into the gravity well without using her engines until the last minute; then, the ship can make a powered landing. This gives the *FarStar* eight hours to prepare for the landing.

Adrimetrum decides that this is a good plan (unless the players can come up with something better), and orders preparations be made to carry out the maneuver. Parties of technicians venture out into the asteroid field and set timed detonite charges on several medium sized asteroids to blast them toward the planet.

Player characters can be among these technicians, if the gamemaster wants to run the scene. Boom and Vegath Tist both have the *demolitions* skill; Boom in particular is happy to help — he's so excited about handling detonite that the players should become *very* nervous about the diminutive menace handling explosives. Maneuvering in the asteroid field with a standard utility spacesuit requires an *Easy powersuit operation* or *Mechanical* check, and setting the prepped charges is a *Moderate demolitions* task.

Whether the *FarStar* or Aegis shuttle goes down, read aloud:

**Meanwhile, the rest of the crew is prepping for action — checking hand weapons, balancing the shields, tuning sensors, and running diagnostics on power relays. Lofryyhn works himself ragged making sure all the backup systems are functioning, and Sergeant Tofarain runs his entire crew ragged making sure the remaining starfighters are ready to scramble.**

**Cee-cee sits uncharacteristically silent as the timer counts down. The circular derelict passes in its closest approach. The timer reaches zero, and a series of faint flashes show that the charges are detonating on time. Adrimetrum orders: "Helm, ahead. Remember: keep it slow." A slight lurch follows as the ship thrusts forward.**

Maneuvering the ship in this close to the asteroids is risky: collision with the chunks of space debris can damage the ship, as well as revealing the *FarStar's* position to any orbital or ground-based observation.

A *Very Easy* or *Easy capital ship piloting* roll indicates that the *FarStar* has been struck by an asteroid and the main drive engines are damaged; all piloting rolls increase by one difficulty level until the system is fixed.

A *Moderate* or *Difficult* result allows the *FarStar* to successfully navigate the asteroid field, though several smaller asteroids have impacted with the shields and the hull, throwing off showers of sparks that may be visible to scanners or visual observation. While this has no overall game effect — Sarne fully intends to allow the *FarStar* to land — gamemasters can use this to heighten the tension of the scene.

A *Very Difficult* or *Heroic* result allows the *FarStar* to glide through the cloud of asteroids unscathed.

Read the following aloud:

**As the ship clears the asteroid field, Adrimetrum orders: "Cut thrust and bring us down." The ship powers down and falls quiet as the faint engine vibrations cease. The overhead luma-panels cut out and are replaced by low power combat lighting, bathing cee-cee in a ruby glow. Even the life support systems have shut down, making the ship quieter than you ever remember her being. No one dares speak.**

**Tense minutes pass. The orbiting construct looms larger and larger as you approach, filling the viewports. The strange organic station seems as dead as a desert moon. As your asteroid companions flank you, you pass the construct.**

**Five minutes pass. The sensor techs strain for the slightest hint that the Imperials are diverting toward you. Then, you become more and more aware of the inexorable pull of gravity as it starts to reel you in.**

The *FarStar* is attempting an unpowered entry into the planet's atmosphere — an incredibly dangerous action (especially if the engines were damaged in the asteroid field). Gamemasters should encourage the player controlling the *FarStar's* navigator to spend a Character Point or Force Point (or two ... or *more*) if the pilot's skill roll is low, as the ship is in real danger of crashing during this maneuver.

The pilot must make a successful *Very Difficult capital ship piloting* roll to enter the turbulent atmosphere; failure indicates that the *FarStar* enters at a shallow angle and "skips" off the surface of the atmosphere, rather like skimming

a stone across a pond. The impact does 6D capital-scale damage to the vessel and causes several systems to overload — consult the “Starship Damage Table” on pages 128–9 of *Star Wars, Revised and Expanded* or the comparable chart on pages 104–109 of *Star Wars, Second Edition* to determine how badly the *FarStar* is “wounded.”

If the ship is badly damaged, the *FarStar* will likely be forced to send a landing vehicle to the surface, or attempt a powered touchdown, exposing their position to any observation posts Sarne has established. However, gamemasters should note that the *FarStar* should not be destroyed — at least, not in this scene. Roleplay the *FarStar*’s dire situation to maintain tension, but allow the ship to touch down with a minimum of damage.

Provided the *FarStar* manages to enter the atmosphere in manageable condition, read the following aloud:

**The *FarStar* slides into the upper atmosphere and faint vibrations run through the ship. The deck plates rattle as the vibrations grow in strength. The ship pitches and yaws as Adrimetrum shouts over the noise: “Power up! Bring us in.”**

**Power floods through the systems and the ship settles in as the inertial dampers come on line. The ship dives toward the surface. Sensors show several city-sized ruins, and Adrimetrum**

**orders the ship to land in one of them, roughly two kilometers from a relatively large structure that could be easily defended if necessary.**

## EPISODE TWO: FIRST SURVEY

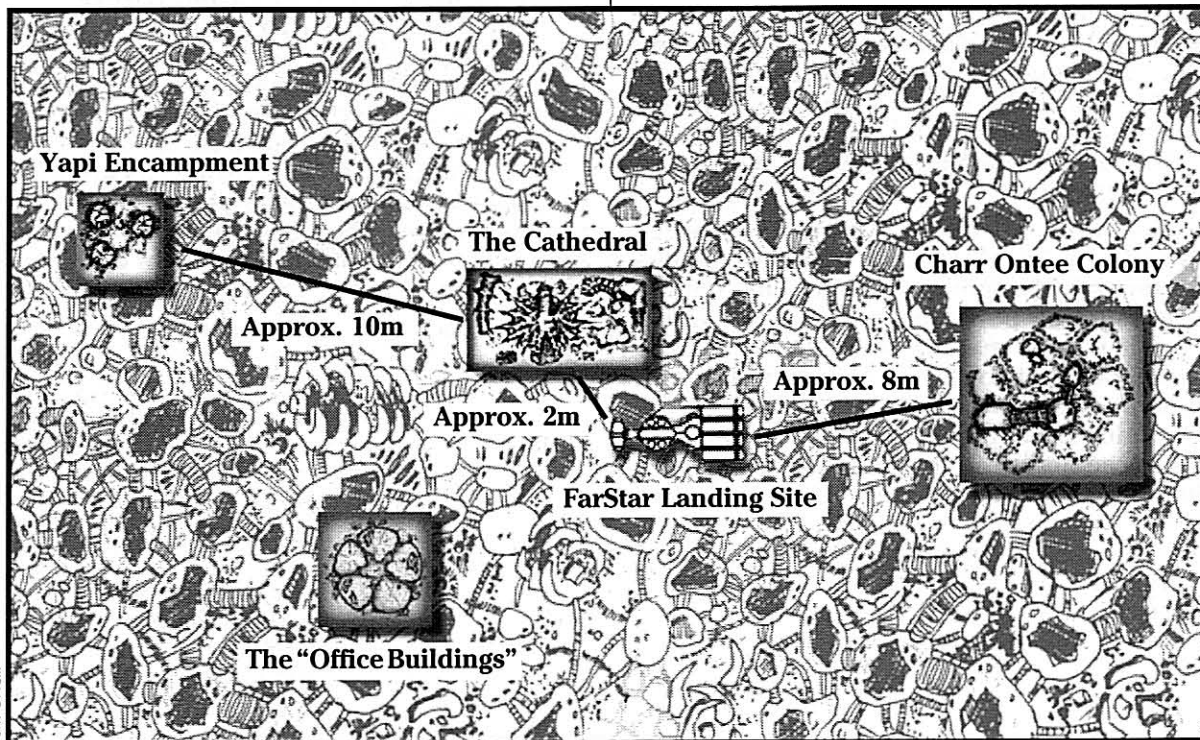
Once the ship has touched down in the city ruins, Adrimetrum orders scouting parties out to gather initial data. The ship was running on passive sensors only while descending, and wasn’t in the air long enough to get a good scan. Scouts on vehicles (speeder bikes, ULAVs, SRV-1s) are sent to establish a perimeter, while foot scouts search the inside of this area for inhabitants, especially Imperial patrols.

### THE CITY OF BONES

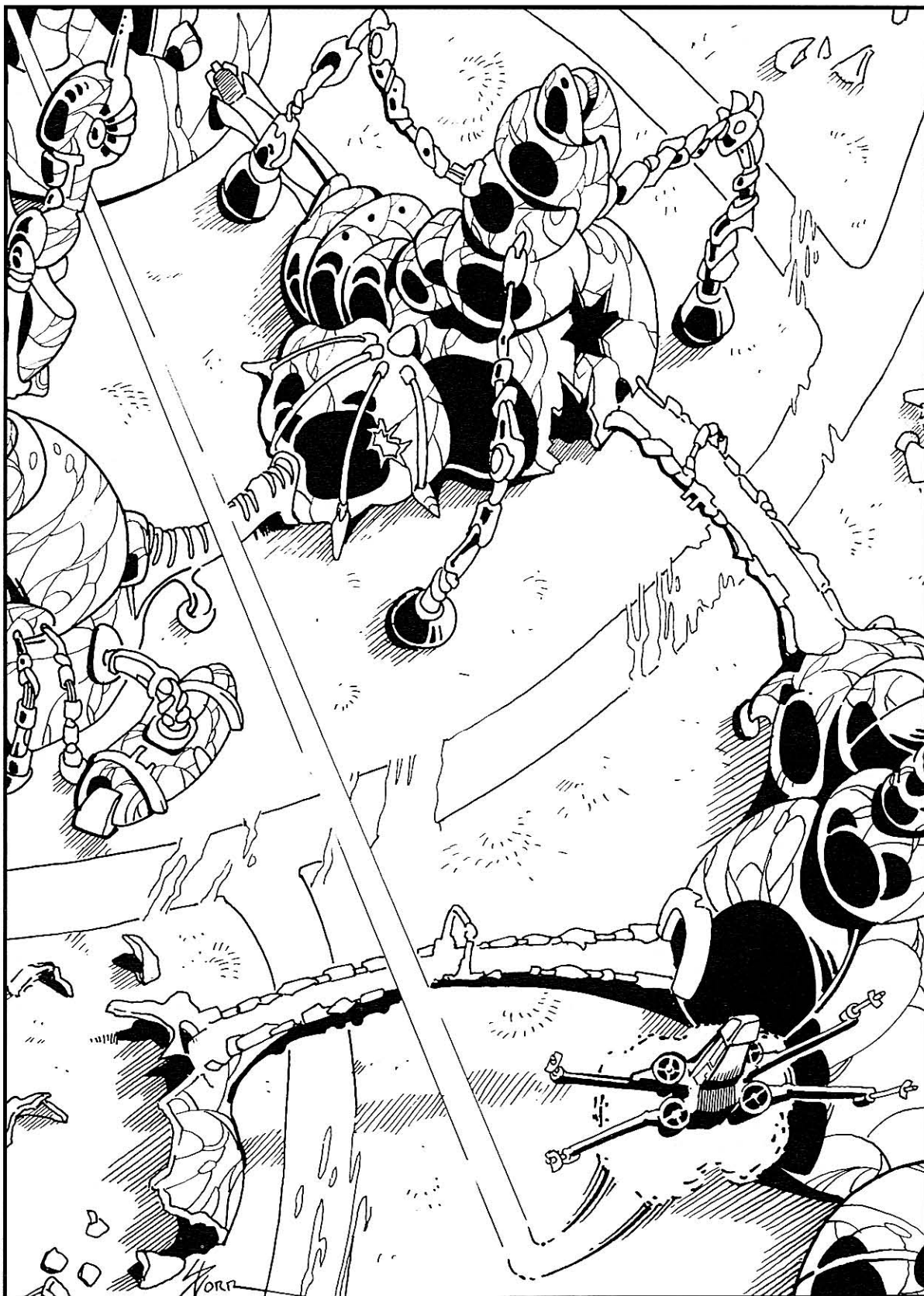
The ruins were built in a bizarre architectural style, an organic-looking area dominated by arches and curves. The ruins seem to be constructed of bone, horn, and resin (and an analysis of the building material shows that that’s exactly what it is, though a detailed inspection is somewhat difficult given the current conditions — a potential battlezone is not necessarily the best place for a science project).

As the player characters disembark, read the following aloud:

**The local buildings are a shambles, and cen-**



Tom O'Neill



Storm Cook

turies-old debris is scattered for kilometers. The large struts and weight bearing structures have managed to survive the passage of time, though they are showing signs of extreme wear. The “walls” (apparently some form of membrane tissues that once stretched over the bone-structures) have long since decomposed, leaving behind small shreds of flesh-like material and strange smelling dust. The streets are made of a smooth, bone-like substance, running among the towering skeletons of long dead organic skyscrapers.

The landing site is strangely quiet — no insects, no birds, no signs of life at all. The preternatural quiet is disturbed only by the intermittent wail of wind through the massive skeletal constructs, an eerie dirge that seems to be a cry of pain from the ruined city itself.

A Moderate *search* check reveals that the whole area is riddled with an underground labyrinth of pipes and tunnels, an intestinal jumble that would stump all but the most advanced scouting droid. Some of these passages are home to several local inhabitants. Run any or all of the following encounters, which do not have to be played in any order.

### THE CATHEDRAL

If the player characters enter the “cathedral,” read the following aloud:

**The largest building in the immediate vicinity is a massive oval structure of indeterminate age and unknown purpose, although it looks like it may once have been some sort of meeting hall or cathedral. Inside the main entrance, you can see a round depression in the floor, surrounding what appears to be a circular stairway leading stretching up to the floor above, and dropping to the lower levels of the building.**

The building has two stories, although the upper story is rotten and extremely unstable, with large holes in the floor. The floor only lasts long enough for someone to venture into the middle of it, then gives way, sending the unfortunate character straight down into the clutter of the ground floor (4D damage). The ground floor is littered with the remnants of horn and bone constructs of unknown purpose.

This building’s basement is connected to the subterranean piping system, and a colony of Maoi have settled this area for years. Any investigation into the subterranean level provokes an attack.

(See “The Hungry Ones,” on pages 71–72.)

### THE “OFFICE BUILDINGS”

If the player characters examine “the office buildings,” read the following aloud:

**Most of the ruins remind you of office buildings, the sort of building one sees in any human city, although they could have been apartments or shops. There are a half-dozen standing office buildings in surprisingly good shape, constructed only of bone-material rather than the bone-membrane combination of most of the other structures.**

There are several “office buildings” in the area, one of which houses a tribe of Yapi (see “The Fierce Ones” on pages 72–73), and another, at the opposite end of the ruin, a settlement of Charr Ontee (see “The Old Ones” on pages 73–73).

### FIRST CONTACTS

Run any or all of the following encounters over the course of the first day on the surface of the planet. The ship arrives early in the local morning, so you have all day to do this. Some of these encounters might be better experienced by gamemaster characters, and relayed to the players as a story (“It was horrible! We were investigating this building, when Marca got attacked by this blob-thing!”).

Several of the intelligent species encountered would make excellent allies against DarkStryder and Sarne’s forces. The Yapi and Charr Ontee in particular are eager to see DarkStryder fall. The Zizimaak hold no love for DarkStryder, either, but because Sarne’s people occasionally use them for rifle practice, they will refuse to help the *FarStar* teams; as far as the flyers are concerned, any groups that contain humans can’t be good for the Zizimaak.

Gamemasters should gently encourage the player characters to befriend some of the aliens, not only because the group needs some allies, but because peaceful behavior towards indigenous species is a standard New Republic procedure. Without allies, the crew is in even deeper trouble than they realize.

### IMPERIAL PATROLS

The scouts establishing the perimeter have, at first, an easy time of it. After confirming that there isn’t an enemy camp right next to the ruins, the scouts relax a little and report in. Just as they’re ready to return to base, one of the scout teams hears the distinctive whine of an Imperial speeder bike.

Assuming the scouts quickly duck under cover (a Moderate task, *sneak* if the team is on foot, *hide*

if the team also includes a bike, a Difficult *hide* if the vehicle is a ULAV or SRV-1), they do so in time to avoid an Imperial scout trooper patrol. The troopers aren't looking for them specifically, just patrolling.

If the quintet of scouts are attacked, they'll pause and return fire for two rounds to assess the enemy strength, then retreat to report back to base. They report to base that they are under attack in the second round of combat, and if they survive to retreat, they report in the estimated number and type of enemy. Otherwise, they will merely continue their patrol.

**Imperial Scout Troopers.** All stats 2D except: *blaster* 4D, *brawling parry* 4D, *dodge* 4D, *repulsorlift operation: speeder bike* 3D+2, *Mechanical* 3D, *brawling* 3D. Move 10. Scout armor (+2 to resist physical and energy damage, +2 to hit targets moving more than Move 10 and/or in visually obscured conditions), blaster pistol (4D), concussion grenades (5D/4D/3D/2D), survival gear. Character points: 2.

**Aratech 74-Z Military Speeder Bikes.** Speeder, maneuverability 3D+2, move 175; 500 kmh, body strength 2D. Weapons: laser cannon (fire control 2D, 3-50/100/200, damage 3D).

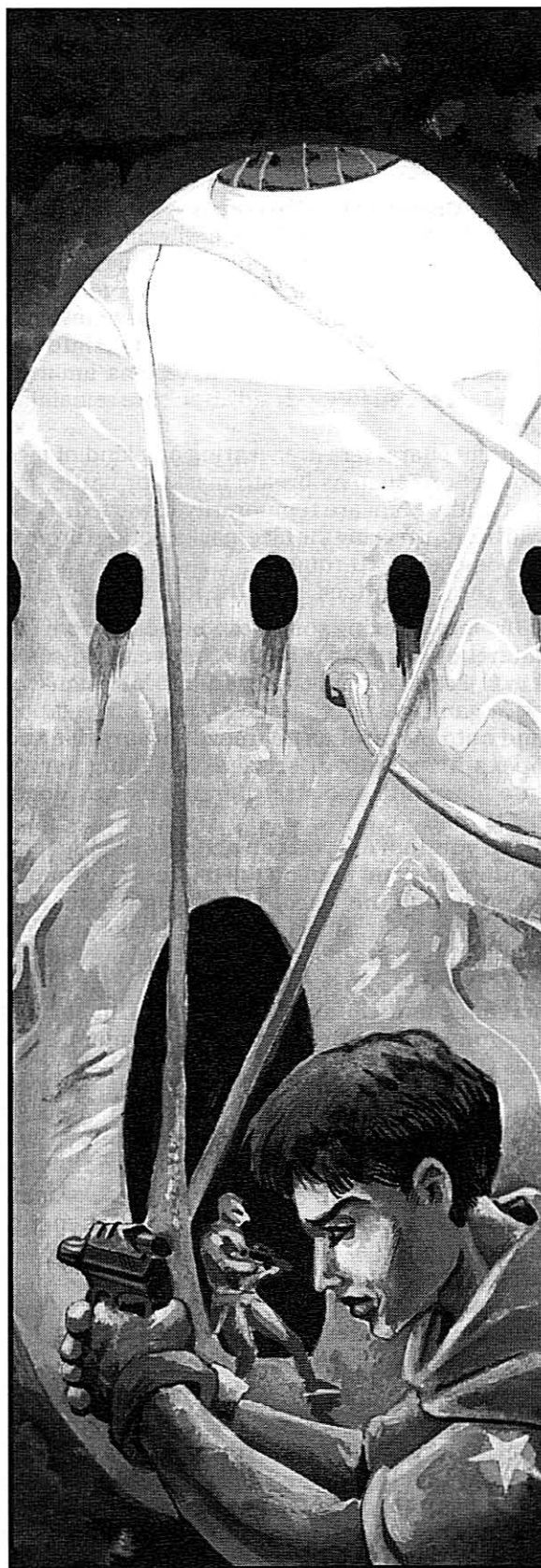
## THE HUNGRY ONES

If one of the survey teams investigates the lowest level of the building nick-named the Cathedral, they can easily make it to the lower level via the spiral staircase on the main floor.

Read aloud:

The room is roughly 50 meters long, a shadowy, oval room with a gently curving bare floor that is divided by a spine-ridge. The walls are a hard horn-like material evenly spaced with the bony rib-like support struts. Every nine spaces in the walls is a collection of oval openings in the wall, as if the room was once connected to a capillary network. These spaces may once carried fluid: the floor from the pipe openings to the spine ridge divots into some kind of irrigation canal. In the middle of the room, on both sides, are a pair of large tunnels, about two meters tall and a meter wide. The room is lit by clusters of phosphorescent blue-green fungi, casting strange shadows on the walls as you move through the room.

The tunnel openings vary in diameter, some as small as one centimeter, and others as wide as 10 centimeters. The Maoi — amorphous indigenous life forms — are lurking in these tunnels, aware of the presence of the player characters. If the characters shine a light into the pipes (not just at



Stern Cook

the openings, but actually into them), the Maoi inside attacks, an attack both swift and deadly. Otherwise, the Maoi wait until the team has split up across the room or they have gotten to the far end to attack. If the team just looks around and quickly exits, the Maoi let them go without attacking.

The Maoi attack — if it comes — is sudden and vicious: there are five Maoi and each attacks a different person, by flowing quickly across the floor and flinging themselves at the target's face. Once contact is made, the Maoi slither down the victim's throat and begin to devour their internal organs. After devouring their victims innards, the Maoi seek new food and attack the remaining team.

If the characters are wearing any kind of face protection (such as breath masks or battle helmets), the Maoi are temporarily thwarted. They will begin attacking the face masks, eating through the devices in 1D rounds.

If the Maoi attack, read the following aloud:

**A wet slithering sound can be heard from the tunnel opening. In a flash of movement, some kind of sticky, semi-transparent blob leaps out at (a gamemaster character), past his weapon and onto his face! As he freezes in surprise and opens his mouth to scream, the thing surges into his mouth and starts forcing its way down his throat!**

**To your horror you can actually see the look of utter fear and pain on the hapless crewman's face through the viscous, amorphous creature attacking him. In a panic, he backs up and chokes on the thing. It clears his throat and he doubles over in pain. "It's eating me!" he screams, and collapses, wracked with spasms in agony. He writhes for another moment, then lies still, dead.**

**You hear wet slithering sounds all around you now.**

The four remaining Maoi attack.

**Maoi.** All stats 3D except: *brawling* 5D. Amorphous form: +2D to resist physical and energy damage. Internal devouring attack ignores all armor; successfully resisting the attack (opposed roll: player character's *Strength* versus the Maoi's *brawling*) indicates that the alien is ejected. If ejected the Maoi requires one round to "collect" itself and attack again. **Note:** Maoi do not have *Mechanical* or *Technical* attributes.

If the player characters defeat the Maoi, (or if they prudently retreated and avoided the attack) they might investigate the two large tunnels; if they do, they hear the same slithering sounds the

Maoi give off — only louder. It sounds like thousands of the creatures live in these tunnels. The surviving members of the scouting party will likely back off (and wisely so); the Maoi will continue to attack until the player characters retreat or are finished off.

## THE FIERCE ONES

While checking out the north end of the city ruin, the player characters encounter a tribe of Yapi. The Yapi know that the ship has landed and are stalking a survey team. After a while, the Yapi decide that these aliens are not Imperials (probably a different tribe, they figure), and grow bold enough to initiate contact.

Read aloud:

**You turn a corner, and there in the deserted street ruin is a small alien, about a meter tall, a cross between a man and a canine, in a primitive costume of skins and red feathers. He holds a spear crossways across his legs and a faint snarl on his muzzle.**

**"You cross Red Claw Yapi land, Imperials," he says quietly.**

This statement is a ruse, to test the theory that strange new outsiders aren't actually Imperials.

If the team attacks, 10 Yapi warriors spring up and fire their flintlocks. The Yapi then scatter and regroup, and harass the team all the way back to base camp. They are accompanied by a Yapi shaman, who will begin to use his Ta-Ree powers if the *FarStar* crewers are winning the fight, though they will only do so to cover a Yapi retreat.

**Yapi warriors.** *Dexterity* 3D, *archaic guns* 5D, *dodge* 5D, *running* 3D, *melee* 5D+2, *melee parry* 5D+1, *thrown weapons* 4D+2, *Knowledge* 1D+1, *survival* 6D, *Mechanical* 1D+1, *Perception* 2D, *hide* 4D, *search* 6D, *sneak* 6D, *Strength* 3D, *brawling* 5D, *stamina* 5D, *Technical* 1D+1, *archaic gun repair* 3D, *first aid* 3D+1, *melee weapon repair* 3D. Move: 11. Flintlock (3D, one round to reload), spear (STR+1D), throwing axe (STR+1D), parrying shield, decorative beads and feathers.

**Yapi shaman.** All stats 2D except: *dodge* 4D. Special abilities: *Psychokinesis* 3D, *light* 4D, *pyrotechnics* 3D. Move: 11. Flintlock (3D, one round to reload).

If the team quickly denies that they are Imperials, the warrior (called simply "Speaker") briefly quizzes them: who are they, why do they walk Yapi land armed with "lightning weapons," and why are there other Ones (meaning non-humans; the Yapi concept word for an intelligent species is "One") with them, and so on. If the team is



convincing, the Yapi offer to escort them out of Red Claw land and back to the characters' ship. If the team isn't convincing, the Yapi order them off Red Claw land, and are willing to go to battle to enforce their decision.

Once Speaker gets to the base camp, he quizzes Adrimetrum about her intentions, who the New Republic is ("What does it mean, 'New Republic?'"), what their connection with the Gray Ones and White Ones (the Yapi consider stormtroopers a different species than the other Imperials), and so on.

Speaker, the tribe leader, is the only Yapi of his tribe who can truly communicate in Basic — he is a natural linguist and learned Basic from his father, who learned it from Sarne, during the Moff's visit to the planet years ago.

Speaker is a visionary leader: he quickly comes to the idea that the "New Ones" (the New Republic *FarStar* crew) are a new source of technology — and is becoming aware of the possibility that the New Ones can topple DarkStryder once and for all.

## THE OLD ONES

While checking out the southern end of the city ruin, a team encounters a group of Charr Ontee. The Charr Ontee maintain a small community at the extreme end of this ruin, and mean to defend it. The Charr Ontee became aware of the *FarStar* as soon as it landed: they assumed it was an Imperial vessel and quickly assembled a squad to roust the Imperials from the area. The Charr Ontee hurried to intercept the alien invaders.

The Charr Ontee first lurk around in the shadows of the city ruin, evaluating the intruders. The Charr Ontee have a "home-ground" advantage; a successful Moderate *search* roll convinces the spotting character that the team is being shadowed, but the Charr Ontee slip away into the shadows without being spotted. A deliberately dislodged pebble clatters behind them (though any investigation turns up nothing). Later, at a cross street, 16 Charr Ontee spring up around the team, four to each side. Another four Charr Ontee lurk above, waiting to descend on the team if a fight breaks out.

The Charr Ontee won't fire first; they are very curious about non-humans (as they've only encountered human Imperials), especially Vegath Tist. If the Charr Ontee are attacked, they respond in kind, and will be mistrustful of future attempts to negotiate. The Charr Ontee don't speak Basic at all. Speaker does speak Charr Ontee, though, and may be invaluable in securing the Charr Ontee's goodwill. If the team has no aliens (near-humans don't count) and no Yapi,

and a firefight doesn't immediately break out, the Charr Ontee brusquely order the team away, indicating this with two claw-tipped limbs.

This assumes that Dajus is not among this team; if she is, the Charr Ontee are thunderstruck by her, and treat her as a long lost legend, referring occasionally to the "Sleeper."

Any character who makes a Difficult *alien species* or *Knowledge* roll notices that the Charr Ontee bear a striking resemblance to creatures rumored to exist in a pocket form of hyperspace. Some teams of Rebel Alliance troops encountered a species called the "Charon" during Palpatine's reign, though the incident has been retold so many times it is something of a tall tale now.

**20 Charr Ontee Soldiers.** *Dexterity 3D, dodge 5D, archaic weapons: pulse-wave blaster 5D, Knowledge 2D, survival 3D, Mechanical 1D, Perception 2D, hide 5D, search 4D, sneak 6D, Strength 2D, brawling 4D, climbing/jumping 5D, Technical 2D.* Move 10. Pulse-wave blaster (4D), bio-sensor (+2D to *search* to detect living subjects), spinnerets (body strength 4D), claws (STR+1D+2), *translation 4D, receptive empathy 5D, projective empathy 5D.*

## THE FIERY ONES

As the day draws to a close, read the following aloud to players controlling characters still aboard the *FarStar*:

**The twin suns are setting, casting an orange glow over the ruined cityscape. The howling wind is picking up a bit more and exterior sentry patrols begin checking in, complaining of poor visibility caused by wind-propelled dust.**

**Suddenly, one of the sentries exclaims in alarm, clearly startled by something. "FarStar, this is sentry post four. Do you have anything on your sensors? I have visual contact with ... something. It's approaching from the west. Negative, make that from north and west."**

Any player characters present in cee-cee can undertake a scan; a Moderate *sensors* roll reveals that a number of small energy sources are approaching from all directions and are converging on the *FarStar*.

Give the players a few moments to decide on a course of action, then read the following aloud:

**Suddenly cee-cee is flooded with thousands of small, glowing spheres, some a few centimeters in diameter, some as big as a half-meter. They float throughout the command center, pausing near startled crewers and occasionally**

even pass through solid objects. Reports begin flooding in from all over the ship — mostly intruder alarms, proximity warnings, and panicked calls from frightened crew. From outside, sentries begin requesting orders: “Cee-cee, do we fire or hold position. Request instructions. Come in, *FarStar!*”

These odd, ghostly visitors cannot really be harmed by anything the crew does, although if hit by blaster fire they feel pain, empathically transmit this pain at everyone in the landing area (for an automatic 1D stun) and retreat immediately. The Fiery Ones are only curious about these visitors, and do not try to communicate. After a few rounds — provided they aren’t attacked — they leave as suddenly as they came.

## THE LEGEND OF THE SLEEPER

Dajus finds herself the center of a great deal of attention during these negotiations. The Charr Ontee treat her deferentially, as if they know and respect her. At the Yapi council of war a few of the Yapi shamans are overawed by her, holding a quick conference with the other shamans, who become very excited and immediately push their leaders into rising against DarkStryder.

Speaker mentions in passing that the shamans have taken to calling her the Awo-ken, but has a hard time getting the shamans to explain why. Dajus is treated as a returning hero or a living legend by both the Charr Ontee and the Yapi.

If pressed for an explanation the Charr Ontee pull out an age worn image — some sort of fibrous hardcopy — and show it to her. It’s an image of Dajus — or someone who looks a great deal like the ex-Imperial — eyes closed as if sleeping. This image, the Charr Ontee explain, is over 1,000 years old and was brought out of what is now DarkStryder’s fortress when their ancestors were driven away. They know only that it is the image of a great hero.

The Yapi shamans, on the other hand, will eventually reveal (if strongly persuaded) that they have actually seen this face, in DarkStryder’s fortress, in a place called the Shrine of the Sleeper. The Yapi don’t know who it was, only that DarkStryder has always been fearful of the Sleeper awakening.

## THE “SKY PEOPLE”

Any survey team can have this encounter, during the day only. Read the following aloud at an appropriate moment:

**As you begin your survey, you notice a buzzing sound coming from the south and growing louder. Suddenly, the buzzing peaks and a cluster of shadows flashes by overhead. Above you, you can see several insect-like flying creatures, with translucent wings, green-grey bodies, and massive, curved tails with a spiked tip. They whirl and hover for a moment, clearly staring at you. A moment later, they begin moving slowly toward you.**

This is a swarm of Zizimaak passing overhead. Noticing the strangers, they whirl and hover a moment, then move closer, curious but cautious. Any sudden movement startles them back again, and any aggression sends them fleeing. The Zizimaak will not come close enough to communicate, especially if there are Yapi with the team; Yapi consider Zizimaak wings a delicacy). After a few minutes of watching the *FarStar* teams, they fly away.

## CHARR ONTEE NEGOTIATIONS

The Charr Ontee are suspicious of the humans in the group (since all the prior humans they’ve seen have worked with DarkStryder) but recognize that an alliance against DarkStryder would achieve their goal: to free the Precursors. The Charr Ontee have never assaulted DarkStryder in the past because they believed that an extended fight would damage the Precursor’s receptacle, and because the Charr Ontee were simply outnumbered. An overwhelming attack, on the other hand, might seize the fortress quickly, reducing the danger of damage.

If the *FarStar* crew can convince the Charr Ontee that there is a good plan to overthrow DarkStryder (coupled with a fair amount of firepower) *and* that the Yapi tribes are united in the effort against DarkStryder, they’ll agree to join the alliance. To convince the insectoid species that those conditions have already been — or will soon be — met requires a Difficult persuasion or con roll. If successful, the Charr Ontee promise a minimum of 100 warriors *if* the Yapi also agree to participate in the revolt.

## THE YAPI COUNCIL

The Yapi are eager to fight DarkStryder, and encouraged by the prospect of Charr Ontee aid. There’s only one small problem; getting the Yapi tribes to unite. The Yapi are a fractious, quarrel-

ling people, unwilling to obey the leader of another tribe. Getting the Yapi to put aside their differences would be a diplomatic feat if a trained negotiator had time and resources; under the current conditions, it is more on the level of a miracle.

Still, Speaker is able to convene a meeting of the leaders of 20 tribes within the space of four hours — he sent the messengers out right after meeting the *FarStar* crew; he's a shrewd strategist and respected even among his enemies.

This meeting is held at the Red Claw encampment, about eight kilometers from the ship. Speaker and the other tribal leaders debate the matter quickly, and agree that this is a fine opportunity to overthrow DarkStryder, but each thinks that he is the best choice to plan and lead the attack. This argument threatens to derail the talks.

The obvious solution (which Speaker will suggest, if no one else does) is for a non-Yapi to forge the alliance, and lead the Yapi — for one of the New Ones to do it. Any player character who attempts to convince the gathered Yapi hosts that a New One would make an effective leader in a battle against DarkStryder must make a persua-

sion roll.

A Very Easy, Easy or Moderate result indicates that the clans are extremely reluctant to trust the offworlders with the fate of the Yapi. After a great deal of grumbling (which gamemasters are encouraged to roleplay to increase some of the tension of this scene), the leaders agree to the concept ... *if* the proposed Leader of Yapi is willing to undergo the Test. (See "The Test," below.) A Difficult or higher result indicates that the Yapi will accept this proposal wholeheartedly.

## THE TEST

The Test is a show of bravery, luck and cleverness. The candidate is put, unarmed, in a pit with six large jars and a club. One of the jars contains a captive — and angry — Maoi. The candidate must shatter at least two jars, with the club, without freeing the caged Maoi. The candidate may not open the jars or otherwise test the jars, although use of natural or Ta-Ree senses (a form of "magic" the Yapi practice) is perfectly fair.

The more jars shattered, the more the Yapi are impressed. Which jar is deadly is up to the gamemaster; or have the candidate roll a die. On



Storm Cook

a “one,” the unfortunate test-taker smashes open the Maoi jar.

If the Maoi is freed, the candidate must escape the 10-meter-deep pit, kill the enraged alien, or be killed. Since the object of the Test is to keep the Hungry One caged, the Yapi consider the test failed once the alien is free (although they’ll be quite impressed with anyone who can kill a Hungry One with a club). Anyone who fails such a Test — and actually survives — is not allowed to take the Test again.

In the event of a series of candidates, the Hungry One’s jar is switched, to keep the Test fair.

Once a leader is ratified the Yapi tribes promise to contribute at least 100 Yapi warriors to the war against DarkStryder.

## THE ZIZIMAAK

The Zizimaak can also be coopted into the growing army, provided that they are contacted by the Charr Ontee. If the Charr Ontee have not agreed to supply forces to the endeavor, the Zizimaak will patently refuse to acknowledge any kind of diplomatic overture.

If a *FarStar* negotiator (accompanied by a Charr Ontee) contacts the Zizimaak, and makes a Difficult *persuasion* roll, the Zizimaak agree to provide aerial scouts, but aren’t willing to fight or expose themselves to danger; as soon as ground emplacements begin firing on them, they will break off and return to their aerie. The idea that the Zizimaak are willing to help at all astounds the Yapi. The Zizimaak will have to be restrained from pouncing on any Segmi they encounter in this period, since they consider Segmi a fine meal.

### STAGING TIPS

There are several good candidates among the *FarStar* crew: Kl’aal, Lofryyhn, Scoryn, Unda Lagor, Thanis Gul-Rah, or one of the player’s reserve characters. Gamemasters should make sure that the player knows his or her character is in mortal danger. If the Maoi is freed, it is unlikely that the character taking the Test will survive the encounter.

In addition, this scene can make for an excellent roleplaying situation — the character taking the Test likely knows that death is imminent, and noble sacrifices like this make excellent dramatic moments.

## THE LONG ONES

The Segmi, contacted by the Yapi, are very willing to help, and reveal that they know a way into the fortress tunnels. They also request that the attackers be careful not to harm any of their people in the fortress — a number of the Segmi were captured by DarkStryder some time ago, probably to expand his fortress. If the Segmi hear that the Zizimaak being in the alliance, they’re wary — the Zizimaak are ancient enemies who prey on them mercilessly — but still willing to help. The Segmi can’t fight, but they can lead them into the depths of their enemy’s fortress.

## EPISODE THREE: SIZING UP THE ENEMY

The natives of the planet are familiar with DarkStryder and the strength of the creature’s forces.

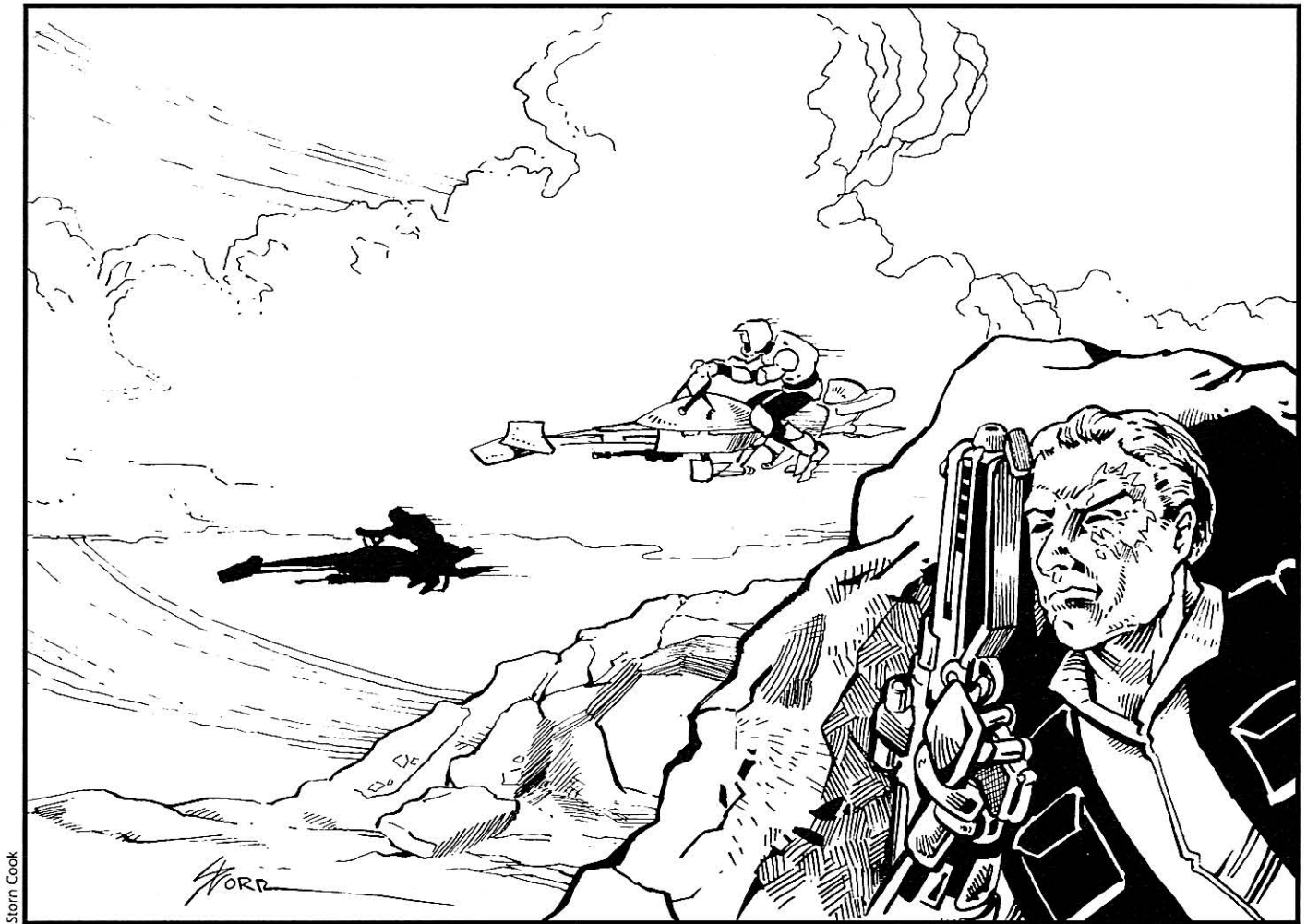
The Yapi assert that DarkStryder has 70 Yapi tribes serving him as scouts and external forces (about 750 Yapi warriors), hundreds of Krakai (which they’ll explain as best they can), a few hundred Servants, and dozens of his minions, the Ssamb. Gathering more detailed information on DarkStryder’s numbers is impossible.

On the positive side, neither the Charr Ontee or the Yapi are familiar with armored vehicles or artillery (so DarkStryder obviously doesn’t have any), the DarkStryder Yapi are described as having middle-period firearms, and the Krakai and Servants are armed with pulse-wave blasters much like the Charr Ontee’s.

The Imperials, on the other hand, are an unknown quality. How the players get their information on the Imperials depends on how much time they have to get it. If they scout the Imperials out, they must approach within a half-kilometer of the fortress (requiring intermittent Moderate *sneak* rolls to avoid Imperial biker scout patrols) and reconnoiter the fortress.

The player characters can learn more about the fortress each hour they spend scouting out the enemy. Each hour, if the scouting characters make a successful Moderate *search* or *Perception* check, they can slowly gather the following information:

- **Hour One.** The Imperials have established a base on the far side of the fortress, in a standard defense-in-depth configuration. Fortunately, they haven’t dropped a prefabricated garrison, though they have deployed a fairly large ground force, possibly the to relieve overload from the Imperial vessels orbiting the planet.



Stern Cook

The garrison grounds are in a 1 kilometer rectangle, defined by a high-powered “death fence” (5D speeder scale damage). Immediately inside the fence is a 50 meter thick ring of proton mines (1 in 6 chance of tripping one, 2 in 6 if a vehicle, 6D character scale damage). The actual base, at the center of the circle, has a commanding view of the surrounding terrain, and is protected by six hexagonally deployed E-Web heavy repeating blasters in hardpoint cover, as well as the troops and armor housed there. (See pages 96–103 for complete stats on Imperial defenses at the fortress.)

- **Hour Two.** The base apparently houses about the standard garrison military contingent; roughly four battalions. A stormtroopers battalion (consisting of 400 troopers of assorted specialties) is performing maneuvers and patrols and appear to be mobilizing at a high alert level.

- **Hour Three.** A repulsorlift battalion and two armor battalions (one including an unknown

number of AT-ATs and AT-STs) is present. The other battalion is comprised largely of repulsortanks. Various support personnel have also been deployed, although it is apparent there is not a full garrison staff present.

Attacking the base seems suicidal. The attack will have to concentrate on the fortress.

## AMBUSH!

Once the crew is on track and making plans to overthrow DarkStryder and Sarne, they get a nasty surprise: Sarne — aware of the *FarStar* crew’s presence — stages an attack.

If the ship made planetfall stealthily, Sarne doesn’t attack until at least 24 hours after landing, partially because it takes a while for him to discover the *FarStar*’s exact landing site — DarkStryder will eventually inform the Moff of the New Republic troops’ location; they can’t hide from its Force-awareness.

If the *FarStar* or landing party has announced their presence, engaged the Imperials in a land

battle, or otherwise comes to Sarne's attention, he attacks no sooner than 12 hours after landing.

If Dajus does not disembark the *FarStar*, Sarne will wait no more than 36 hours, then implement his backup plan (see "Plan B," on page 79).

Sarne attacks the *FarStar*, not the *Aegis* or the *Muvon II* if the characters used these ships to land. Nor does Sarne launch an attack on the roving landing party; the *FarStar* is his primary objective. Sarne wants to drive the New Republic ship into hyperspace (preferably after scaring the crew half to death). Sarne hopes to cut off the landing teams from the *FarStar*, splitting the already badly-demoralized New Republic troops from their command base. Once cut off, Sarne's troops — with some help from DarkStryder's minions — can capture or destroy the landing teams at their leisure.

### THE FIRST WAVE

The first wave of the attackers consists of six TIE/In starfighters, which will fight in pairs.

**TIE/In Starfighter.** Starfighter, *starfighter piloting 4D+1, starship gunnery 4D*. Maneuverability 2D, space 10, atmosphere 415; 1,200 kmh, hull 2D. Weapons: two laser cannons (fire-linked, fire control 2D, space range 1-3/12/25, atmosphere range 100-300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 5D).

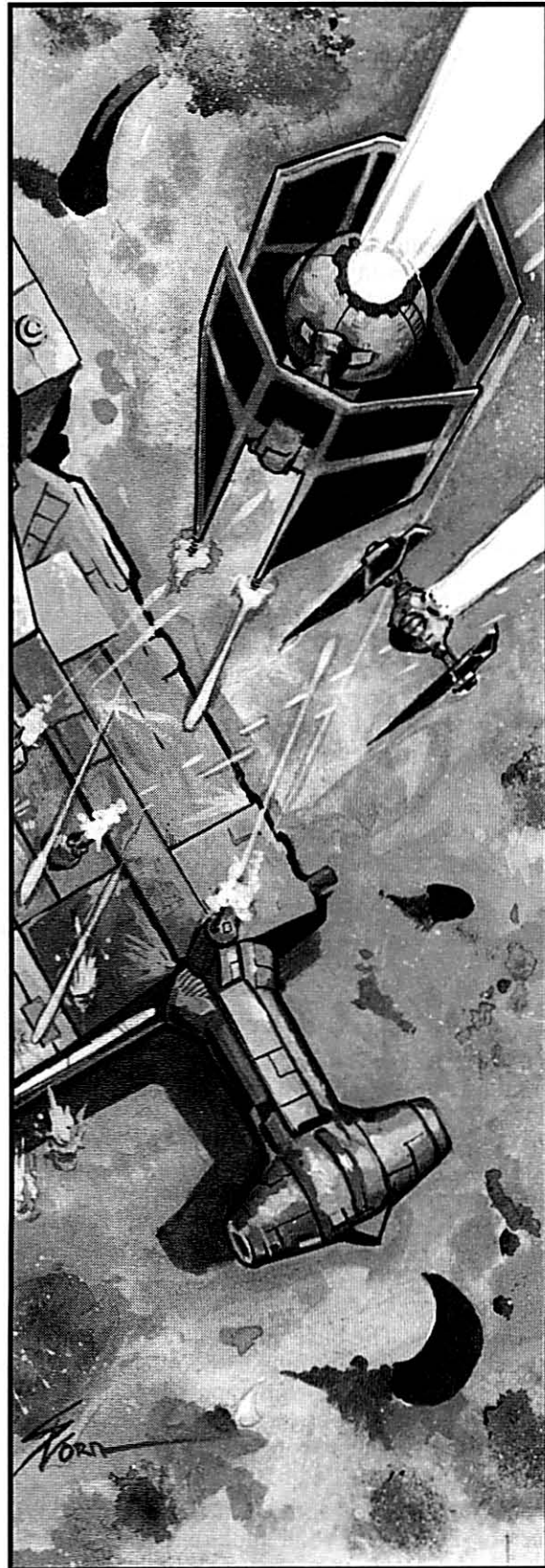
### THE SECOND WAVE

The second wave is a pair of Skipray blastboats, which maintain some distance from the TIEs and try and suppress ground fire.

**Skipray Blastboats.** Capital, *capital ship gunnery 5D, capital ship piloting 5D, capital ship shields 4D*. Maneuverability 1D+2, space 8, hull 2D+1, shields 2D. Weapons: 3 medium ion cannons (fire-linked, fire control 3D, space range 1-3/12/25, atmosphere range 100-300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 4D), 2 laser cannons (starfighter scale, fire-linked, fire control 1D, space range 1-3/12/25 atmosphere range 100-300/1.2/2.5 damage 5D),

### COVERING JESSA DAJUS

Jessa Dajus *must* survive the events of this portion of the adventure. The gamemaster should have this attack occur while as many of the command crew are away from the ship as possible. Ideally, Capt. Adrimetrum, Dajus, Scoryn, Lt. Thyte, and Loh'khar should be cut off from the retreating ship. DarkStryder can tell if Dajus is with the ship or not, and Sarne will wait until she is fairly far away from the *FarStar* before launching his ambush.



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proton torpedo launcher (starfighter scale, fire control 2D, space range 1/3/7, atmosphere range 50–100/300/700, damage 9D), concussion missile launcher (starfighter scale, fire control 1D, space range 1/3/7, atmosphere range 1–50/100/250 damage 6D).

## THE THIRD WAVE

The third wave of the ambush consists of a squadron of three Scimitar assault bombers. Each Scimitar is carrying four concussion missiles which will also be used to handle the suppression of ground fire and “coax” the *FarStar* off the ground. When the Scimitar roar in to launch the concussion missiles, Adrimetrum should realize that the *FarStar* is doomed if it stays on the ground — in the skies it has a chance. She should order the *FarStar* to lift, even though it means stranding the landing party.

**Scimitar assault bombers.** Starfighter, starfighter piloting 4D, starship gunnery 4D+2, starship shields 2D+1, missile weapons 4D+2. Space 9, atmosphere 295; 850 kmh, hull 5D, shields 1D+2. Weapons: two laser cannons (fire-linked, fire control 2D, space range 1–3/12/25, atmosphere range 100–300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 4D), concussion missiles (fire control 3D+2, space range 1/3/7, atmosphere range 1–50/100/250 damage 9D).

## “PLAN B”

Sarne needs Dajus. This is crucial to his plan. He’s willing to toss most of the rest of his carefully crafted schemes, if it means he can turn Dajus over to DarkStryder in exchange for the creature’s technology.

If she does lift off with the *FarStar*, Sarne can’t let it get away, and quickly orders that it be captured. The Interdictor cruiser uses its gravity well projectors to the best of the gunner’s abili-

### STAGING THE AMBUSH

Remember, the attacking Imperials are under orders to flush the *FarStar* and drive her into hyperspace, not destroy her. The strikes are meant to appear as a genuine attack, but only a few shots should actually strike home. This attack is intended to cut Dajus off from the resources of the *FarStar*, and send the *FarStar* off to lead the New Republic fleet to their doom.

The *FarStar* must now run a gauntlet of engagements to escape. See “Battle Stations.”

ties, the ships that can use ion cannon and tractor beams to capture the *FarStar*. Spacetrooper platoons are then sent aboard to subdue the crew, and Dajus is eventually brought before Sarne, for the final confrontation.

## EPISODE FOUR: THE BATTLE OF KATHOL SYSTEM

In the early stages of this battle, the Imperial objective is to drive the *FarStar* into hyperspace. As the battle progresses, and more and more ships arrive the Imperial goals shift; destroying the *FarStar* becomes an option to Imperial commanders.

### BATTLE STATIONS!

The *FarStar* charges into orbit, and encounters a Victory Star Destroyer, an Interdictor cruiser, and the remaining blastboats (if any). The Victory and Interdictor are approaching from the *FarStar*’s flanks, one on each side, and are on an intercept angle. Both are 90 units away and approaching at full speed.

The *FarStar* can’t jump to hyperspace until it has cleared the gravity well, in a later scene. Any remaining blastboats continue to harass the *FarStar* until lightly damaged. Once lightly damaged, the blastboats pull off.

**Skipray Blastboats.** Capital, capital ship gunnery 5D, capital ship piloting 5D, capital ship shields 4D. Maneuverability 1D+2, space 8, hull 2D+1, shields 2D. Weapons: 3 medium ion cannons (fire-linked, fire control 3D, space range 1–3/12/25, atmosphere range 100–300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 4D), 2 laser cannons (starfighter scale, fire-linked, fire control 1D, space range 1–3/12/25 atmosphere range 100–300/1.2/2.5 damage 5D), proton torpedo launcher (starfighter scale, fire control 2D, space range 1/3/7, atmosphere range 50–100/300/700, damage 9D), concussion missile launcher (starfighter scale, fire control 1D, space range 1/3/7, atmosphere range 1–50/100/250 damage 6D).

Meanwhile, at the far edge of the *FarStar*’s sensors, more enemies close in.

### INTERDICTOR SNARE

As the *FarStar* clears the planet’s gravity well edge, the Interdictor snares them in its own artificially-generated gravity well. The Interdictor is still at tremendous range, but the gravity well projector has a range of up to 150 units. The gravity well gunner’s roll is made for the range to

the *FarStar*, not against the *FarStar*'s dodge, since the well affects a large area.

**Interdictor-class cruiser.** Capital, *astrogation* 5D, *capital ship gunnery* 5D, *capital ship piloting* 5D, *capital ship shields* 4D. Maneuverability 1D, space 6, hull 5D, shields 3D. Weapons: 20 quad laser cannons (fire control 2D, space range 1-3/12/25, atmosphere range 2-6/24/50 km, damage 4D), four gravity well projectors (fire control 6D, space range 1-5/75/150, damage 0D (blocks hyperspace travel)).

The *FarStar* must move 25 units away from the gravity well to attempt to jump: add +10 to the *astrogation* difficulty. At 50 units, they may attempt to jump without additional difficulty. (There are more detailed rules for Interdictor gravity well projection in combat on pages 18-20 of *Wanted by Cracken*.)

The Interdictor does not shift the well to track the *FarStar*.

## THE JAWS OF VICTORY

As the *FarStar* attempts to escape the gravity well, the Victory Star Destroyer closes in, and fires her ion cannon! Only two ion cannon bear forward, and the gunners blaze away with four shots each. They're not really looking to hit the *FarStar*, just scare her.

**Victory-class Star Destroyer.** Capital, *astrogation* 3D+2, *capital ship gunnery* 4D+2, *capital ship piloting* 5D, *capital ship shields* 4D, *sensors* 3D+2. Maneuverability 1D, space 4, atmosphere 280; 800 kmh, hull 4D, shields 3D+1. Weapons: 10 quad turbolaser batteries (fire control 4D, space range 3-15/35/75, atmosphere range 6-30/70/150 km, damage 5D), 40 double turbolaser batteries (fire control 3D, space range 3-15/35/75, atmosphere range 6-30/70/150 km, damage 2D+2), 80 concussion missile launchers (fire control 2D, space range 2-12/30/60, atmosphere range 4-24/60/120 km, damage 9D), 10 tractor beam projectors (fire control 4D, space range 1-5/15/30, atmosphere range 2-10/30/60 km).

## BETWEEN THREE HARD PLACES

The two attack lines move in formation, approaching at 45-degree angles to the *FarStar*. Behind the *FarStar*, the Victory and Interdictor form up into a short line and follow the *FarStar*. The formation leaves a hole in directly front of the *FarStar*! One more run and it can escape.

The *FarStar* need only complete it's 50 unit run to jump. The Imperial ships ineffectively blaze away at her, as per their orders, and the *FarStar*

## NOTE TO GAMEMASTERS

The crew of the *FarStar* is in for some very big surprises during this battle, and gamemasters should really play this up — this is possibly the biggest battle ever fought by such a small contingent of New Republic troops.

In order to make this battle more dramatic, it has been divided up into several smaller scenes. The *FarStar* is in real danger of being destroyed during these scenes — in fact, the destruction of the battered Corvette is inevitable, though gamemasters will likely find it most satisfying to save the ship's demise until the final scene of the space battle. "Fudging" the die rolls as needed to ensure the *FarStar*'s survival until the last possible moment is encouraged.

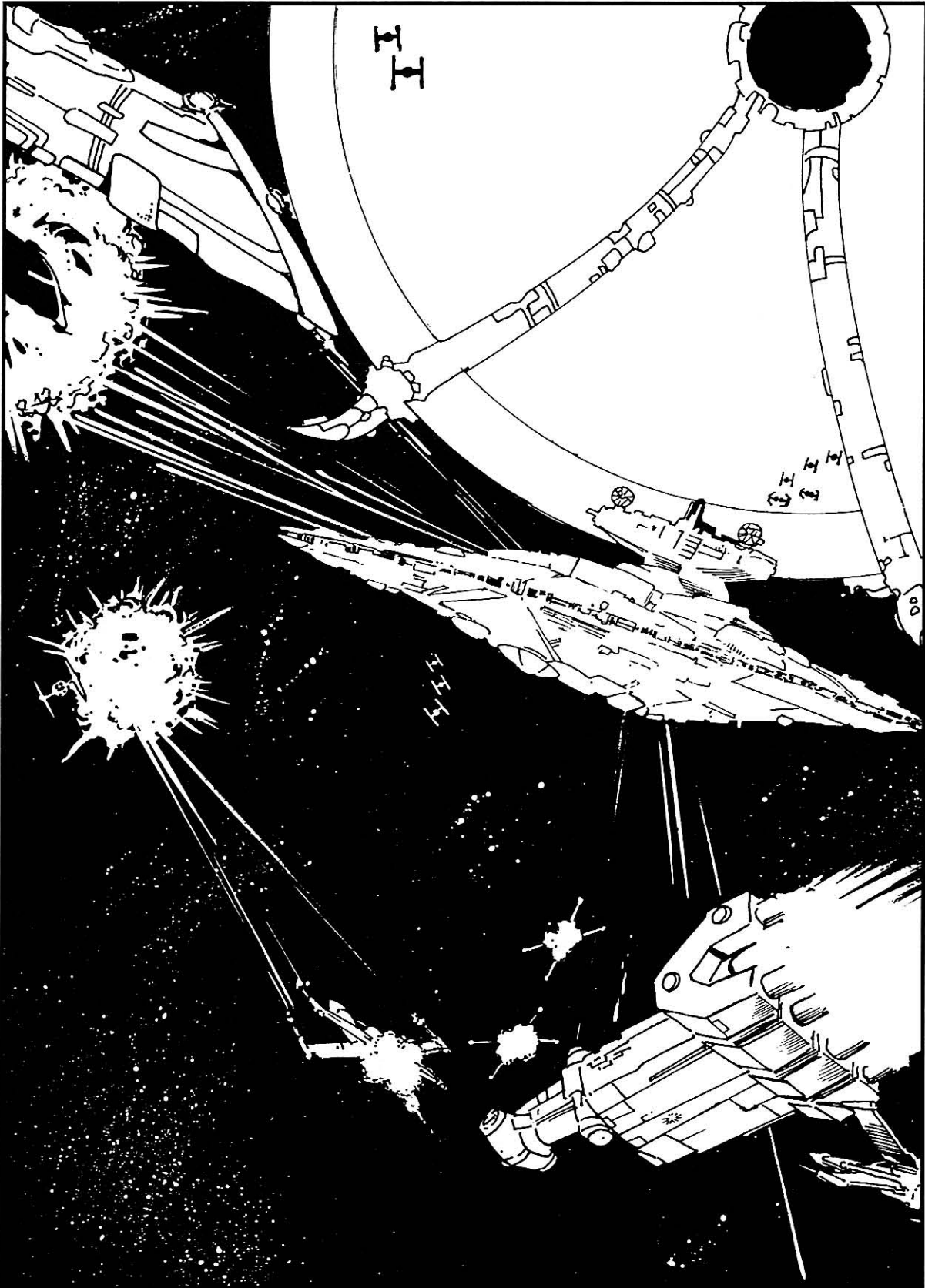
Most important, however, is the need to convince the players that they have a shot of getting the *FarStar* out of harm's way, which means that gamemasters have to maintain a delicate balancing act between tweaking die rolls and exercising a little "gamemaster fiat" to keep the crew in the game.

As more combatants enter the fray, the players should slowly realize that they are in *way* over their heads, though the bulk of the battle should be described as background elements ("You see one of the Aing-Tii ships smash into the bridge of the nearby Imperial Nebulon-B. A massive explosion rocks both ships as they tumble, sparking and exploding, into Kathol's atmosphere. Sweeping in from starboard, six TIE fighters mean to see that you share that fate ...").

The bulk of the battle should be used as storytelling device, a chaotic backdrop to make the players react. Make sure that they don't have too much time to think about their situation and plan their next move: keep the action moving by asking them what they intend to do *right now*.

Setting a time limit on their responses is a good way to make the space battle flow faster. For example, giving a player five seconds to say what he or she is going to do forces that player to think quickly and respond quickly ... just like it was a real battle. By keeping the pace frantic, gamemasters can emphasize the dramatic possibilities of the scene.





Storn Cook

starts her jump — for an instant. Read the following aloud:

**Just as someone yells “Punch it!” and the flickering stars begin to streak into lines of radiance, the *FarStar* suddenly lurches, as if a giant hammer smashed into the hull. The proximity alert and mass sensors all scream in protest as the *FarStar* slides out of position and narrowly avoids a Nebulon-B escort frigate that has just appeared in your path. All around you, ships are dropping in from hyperspace.**

**The *FarStar* is surrounded.**

## THE BOTHANS ARRIVE

The *FarStar*'s hyperdrive overloads under the stress of slamming into a mass-object, and will require a Very Difficult *capital ship repair* roll (and a minimum of 20 hours) to fix, and should be replaced at the earliest opportunity. Until repaired, the *FarStar* cannot jump.

The ships that just jumped in are not hostile to the *FarStar*, though gamemasters may find it amusing to let the player's sweat for a few minutes, at least until communications are established.

The newcomers are a Bothan “Combat Response Element” which has been tracking the *FarStar* for weeks, via the Lifeline Project.

The Bothan squadron consists of a gunship line and cruiser line. The captain of the gunship line promptly sizes up the situation, powers up weapons and shields, and attacks the nearest Star Destroyer, taking it by surprise.

The flagship is the escort frigate *Boash'ua*, under the command of Captain Kursk Mal'ia. He broadcasts the following message:

**“Attention! This is Captain Kursk Mal'ia of the New Republic Navy. This system is claimed by the Bothan Worlds in the name of the New Republic! All Imperial personnel are ordered**

## THE BOTHAN COMBAT RESPONSE ELEMENT

The Bothan Combat Response Element (jokingly referred to as a “micro-fleet”) is an experimental fleet configuration assembled by one of the more daring Bothan clans. Originally conceived as a short-range squadron of ships designed for fast-attack missions or retaliatory strikes against nearby targets, this particular fleet group was pressed into service to track the *FarStar*'s progress against Sarne.

This particular “micro-fleet” consists of four Corellian Gunships, an assault frigate, a bulk cruiser, a Nebulon-B escort frigate, and a Corellian corvette, either captured from Imperials over the years or supplied by the New Republic to augment the *FarStar* mission.

**Nebulon-B Escort Frigate, *Boash'ua* (Mal'ia's flagship).** Capital, *astrogation* 3D, *capital ship gunnery* 4D+1, *capital ship piloting* 3D+2, *capital ship shields* 3D, *sensors* 3D+1, *starship gunnery* 4D+1. Maneuverability 1D, space 4, atmosphere 280; 800 kmh, hull 3D+2, shields 2D. Weapons: 12 turbolaser batteries (fire control 3D, space range 3–15/35/75, atmosphere range 6–30/70/150 km, damage 4D), 12 laser cannons (starfighter scale, space range 1–3/12/25, atmosphere range 2–6/24/50 km, damage 2D), two tractor beam projectors (fire control 2D, space range 1–5/15/30, atmosphere range 2–10/30/60 km, damage 4D).

**Corellian Gunship, *Resistance*.** Capital, *astrogation* 3D+1, *capital ship gunnery* 4D+2, *capital ship piloting* 4D, *capital ship shields* 4D+1, *sensors* 3D. Maneuverability 2D+1, space 7, atmosphere 350; 1,000 kmh, hull 4D+2, shields 2D+1. Weapons: Eight double turbolaser cannons (fire control 3D, space range 3–15/35/75, atmo-

sphere range 300–1.5/3.5/7.5 km, damage 4D+2), six quad laser cannons (fire control 3D, space range 1–5/10/17, atmosphere range 100–500/1/1.7 km, damage 5D), four concussion missile tubes (fire control 3D, space range 2–12/30/60, atmosphere range 200–1.2/3/6 km, damage 9D).

**New Republic Assault Frigate, *Victory at Endor*.** Capital, *capital ship gunnery* 4D+2, *capital ship piloting*: *assault frigate* 5D, *capital ship shields* 4D, *sensors* 3D. Maneuverability 1D+2, space 6, hull 5D, shields 3D. Weapons: 15 laser cannons (fire control 3D, space range 1–3/12/25, atmosphere range 100–300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 2D), 20 quad laser cannons (fire control 2D, fire rate 1/3, space range 1–5/10/17, atmosphere range 100–500/1/1.7 km, damage 4D), 15 turbolaser batteries (fire control 1D, space range 3–10/30/60, atmosphere range 300–1/3/6 km, damage 7D).

**Bulk cruiser, *Hutt's Ambition*.** Capital, *capital ship gunnery* 4D+1, *capital ship piloting* 4D, *capital ship shields* 4D+1. Maneuverability 1D, space 4, hull 5D, shields 2D. Weapons: 30 quad laser cannons (fire control 2D, space range 1–5/10/17, damage 4D), 2 tractor beam projectors (fire control 2D, space range 1–5/15/30, damage 4D).

**Corellian corvette, *Ast'ria*.** Capital, *astrogation* 3D, *capital ship gunnery* 4D+1, *capital ship piloting* 3D+2, *capital ship shields* 3D, *sensors* 3D+1. Maneuverability 2D, space 6, atmosphere 330; 950 kmh, hull 4D, shields 2D. Weapons: six double turbolaser cannons (fire control 3D, space range 3–15/35/75, atmosphere range 6–30/70/150 km, damage 4D+2).

**to surrender your vessels and prepare to be boarded.”**

The only response is the shift of the Imperial lines to an attack formation clearly aimed at the Bothans.

Mal'ia requests the *FarStar* to form up with the other corvette, the *Ast'ria*, and engage the enemy. Whether they do so, decline, or ask the *Ast'ria* to form up with them, is up to the *FarStar*'s current commanding officer. However, if the *FarStar* does not join up with the Bothans, gamemasters are encouraged to subject the ship to severe pounding; without the Bothan's covering fire, the *FarStar* is an easy victory for most of the Imperial ships arrayed against her.

### DEATH OF THE TITANIA

As the Imperials and Bothans are forming their lines up into attack formations, the Bothan gunship line delivers the first blow, launching a crushing missile strike on their targeted Imperial Star Destroyer, the *Titania*. In the next round, the gunships launch a backward-strike, blasting her with their rear-facing missiles. The *Titania* suffers another series of explosions and falls away from the formation uncontrollably, burning in space.

As this occurs, read the following aloud:

**The Bothans move quickly and decisively, executing a brilliant offensive on an approaching Star Destroyer, the *Titania*. The Star Destroyer shudders under a series of massive detonations and begins to yaw with the force of the blasts. A moment later, the Bothan gunships sweep past, raking the *Titania* with rear-fired missiles. The Imperial vessel reels from the assault, a series of explosions ripping through her superstructure as she spins out of control, burning in space.**

**The *FarStar* cee-cee crew lets out an exultant cheer — the tide of battle is turning!**

If the *FarStar* is sticking close to the Bothan ships, they receive a transmission from their rescuers — a flight of 12 TIEs is moving in: “Get ‘em off our backs, *FarStar*.” The *FarStar* can either launch fighters to help screen Imperial ships from the Bothans (the recommended course of action, if they haven't already done so), or move the battered Corvette to engage the TIEs, which will likely be much more difficult and will expose the already-wounded ship to more damage. The TIEs break into four three-ship elements and concentrate on the larger Bothan ships.

**TIE/In Starfighters.** Starfighter, *starfighter* piloting 4D+1, *starship* gunnery 4D. Maneuverability

2D, space 10, atmosphere 415; 1,200 kmh, hull 2D. Weapons: two laser cannons (fire-linked, fire control 2D, space range 1–3/12/25, atmosphere range 100–300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 5D).

If the *FarStar* is not near the Bothans, Captain Mal'ia will signal that he needs the *FarStar* to move in close to the enemy and engage Imperial vessels. If the *FarStar* handles the TIEs, Mal'ia will make a similar request. “Don't worry, *FarStar*,” the Bothan captain says. “We're with you.”

### INFIGHTING

The other ships maneuver into attack range, and the real battle starts. Believing this to be the New Republic fleet, and realizing the threat posed by the squadron, the Imperials fight in earnest. Unfortunately for the Imperials, the two lines are caught separated with the attackers behind them. Unfortunately for the Bothans, they're caught between two lines, vulnerable to a withering crossfire.

Gamemasters should run five or so rounds of combat for the *FarStar*. The Bothans swing towards the *Titania*'s line (now somewhat jumbled after losing its command ship), and concentrate their fire on one ship at a time. Two squadrons of Y-wings, launched from the bulk cruiser, join the battle and concentrate on the Imperial corvette. (See “The Titania Line,” on page 84.)

The *Titania* is out of the fight, but the remaining ships return fire vigorously. The Bothan's goal in this scene is to cross the Imperial's line, to get to the other side and out of the Imperial crossfire. In doing so, they should be able to seriously damage the remaining Imperial ships in that line. “It's going to be a real tough run,” Mal'ia says, “but we're a little quicker than they are. We should be able to pull this off.”

It takes roughly four rounds to move through the gap in the *Titania*'s line, and Mal'ia's ships take out the Nebulon-B in the initial pass. The Dreadnaught is badly damaged, but is still firing (its movement cut in half, and its shields reduced to 1D). The Corellian corvette is still in the fight, however. “We'll handle the dreadnaught, *FarStar*,” Mal'ia says. Ordering the *Ast'ria* to assist, he requests that the *FarStar* lead the attack against the Imperial corvette. In five rounds, the second Imperial attack line will arrive to strengthen the remnants of the *Titania* group. “Better have ‘em finished up by then, *FarStar*,” Mal'ia signals. “The *Raptor* and her ships are on the way.”

### IMPERIAL COUNTERATTACK

The *Raptor* and her support vessels arrive, either in time to help the *Titania* group or to

## THE TITANIA LINE

The *Titania's* attack line consists of the following ships:

**Dreadnaught Cruiser.** Capital, *capital ship gunnery 5D, capital ship piloting 5D, capital ship shields 4D*. Maneuverability 1D, space 4, hull 5D+1, shields 2D+1. Weapons: 10 turbolaser cannons (fire control 3D, space range 3–15/35/75, damage 2D), 20 quad turbolaser cannon (fire control 2D, space range 3–20/40/80, damage 4D), 10 turbolaser batteries (fire control 1D, space range 3–10/30/60, damage 7D).

**Nebulon-B Escort Frigate.** Capital, *astrogation 3D, capital ship gunnery 4D+1, capital ship piloting 3D+2, capital ship shields 3D, sensors 3D+1, starship gunnery 4D+1*. Maneuverability 1D, space 4, atmosphere 280; 800 kmh, hull 3D+2, shields 2D. Weapons: 12 turbolaser batteries (fire control 3D, space range 3–15/35/75, atmosphere range 6–30/70/150 km, damage 4D), 12 laser cannons (starfighter scale, space range 1–3/12/25, atmosphere range 2–6/24/50 km, damage 2D), two tractor beam projectors (fire control 2D, space range 1–5/15/30, atmosphere range 2–10/30/60 km, damage 4D).

**Corellian corvette.** Capital, *astrogation 3D, capital ship gunnery 4D+1, capital ship piloting 3D+2, capital ship shields 3D, sensors 3D+1*. Maneuverability 2D, space 6, atmosphere 330; 950 kmh, hull 4D, shields 2D. Weapons: six double turbolaser cannons (fire control 3D, space range 3–15/35/75, atmosphere range 6–30/70/150 km, damage 4D+2).

avenge them. The Bothans have only suffered light damage, so far.

The *Raptor* and her line engage the Bothans head-to-head.

**Imperial Star Destroyer, *Raptor*.** Capital, *astrogation 4D, capital ship gunnery 4D+2, capital ship piloting 5D+1, capital ship shields 4D+1, sensors 4D*. Maneuverability 1D, space 6, hull 7D, shields 3D. Weapons: 60 turbolaser batteries (fire control 4D, space range 3–15/36/75, atmosphere range 6–30/72/150 km, damage 5D), 60 ion cannons (fire control 2D+2, space range 1–10/25/50, atmosphere range 2–20/50/100 km, damage

3D), 10 tractor beam projectors (fire control 4D, space range 1–5/15/30, atmosphere range 2–10/30/60 km, damage 6D).

The *Raptor* also launches its complete TIE wing, and a *Gamma*-class shuttle (which the *FarStar* detects on a Very Difficult sensors roll, due to the sensor clutter in the battle zone).

## THE IMPERIAL ACE

The *Bastion* is an *Imperial II*-class Star Destroyer, with better offensive and defensive systems. It is accompanied by a *Strike*-class cruiser and *Carrack*-class cruiser.

**Imperial II Star Destroyer, the *Bastion*.** Capital, *capital ship gunnery 5D+2, capital ship piloting 5D+1, capital ship shields 4D*. Maneuverability 1D, space 6, hull 7D+1, shields 2D+2. Weapons: 50 heavy turbolaser batteries (fire control 0D, space range 3–15/35/75, atmosphere range 6–30/70/150 km, damage 10D), 50 heavy turbolaser cannons (fire control 1D, space range 3–15/35/75, atmosphere range 6–30/70/150 km, damage 5D), 20 ion cannons (fire control 4D, space range 1–10/25/50, atmosphere range 2–20/50/100 km, damage 4D), 10 tractor beam projectors (fire control 4D, space range 1–5/15/30, atmosphere range 2–10/30/60 km, damage 6D).

**Loronar *Strike*-class cruiser.** Capital, *capital ship gunnery 4D+2, capital ship piloting 5D, capital ship shields 3D+2*. Maneuverability 2D, space 6, hull 6D, shields 2D+2. Weapons: 20 turbolasers (fire control 2D, space range 3–15/35/75, atmosphere range 5–30/70/150 km, damage 5D), 10 turbolaser batteries (fire control 1D, space range 3–15/35/75, atmosphere range 5–30/70/150 km, damage 7D), 10 tractor beam projectors (fire control 2D, space range 1–5/15/30, atmosphere range 1–5/15/30 km, damage 4D), 10 ion cannons (fire control 4D, space range 1–5/15/30, atmosphere range 2–10/30/60 km, damage 4D).

**Damorian Manufacturing's *Carrack*-class light cruiser.** Capital, *Astrogation 3D+2, capital ship gunnery 4D+2, capital ship piloting 4D+1, capital ship shields 4D, sensors 4D+1*. Maneuverability 2D, space 8, hull 5D, shields 2D+2. Weapons: 10 heavy turbolasers (fire control 3D, space range 3–15/35/75, atmosphere range (3–15/35/75 km, damage 7D), 20 laser cannons (fire control 3D, space range 1–3/12/25, atmosphere range 100–300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 2D), five tractor beam projectors (fire control 2D, space range 1–5/15/30, atmosphere range 1–5/15/30 km, damage 4D).

The *Bastion* also launches its TIE wing, identical to the *Raptor's*, and another *Gamma*-class

shuttle. As needed, the gamemaster can have Mal'ia request the *FarStar's* assistance in dealing with the various fighter elements.

## REPEL BOARDERS!

The *FarStar* detects a small ship on a collision course! A Difficult *sensors* check shows it to be a *Gamma*-class assault shuttle, maneuvering to intercept! If the player characters have identified the shuttle, they have two rounds to destroy the *Gamma* before it attacks and deploys its spacetroopers.

The *Gamma* approaches, if at all possible, on the starboard (right) side, grabs hold of the *FarStar* with its tractor beam and reels itself in. As long as the shuttle is attached by its tractor beam, the *FarStar* cannot effectively dodge the shuttle's attacks, although the shuttle must roll to hit as normal. The shuttle approaches at its usual Move rate.

When the *Gamma* gets within 8 units it fires a missile into the landing bay. A successful hit affects everyone and every ship and starfighter in the bay, and the *FarStar* itself. It does no extra damage, due to the bay's armor, but may very well deal a devastating blow against the *FarStar*.

**Gamma-class assault shuttle.** Capital, *capital ship gunnery* 3D+2, *capital ship piloting* 5D, *capital ship shields* 4D. Maneuverability 2D, space 8, hull 3D+2, shields 4D+2. Weapons: 4 laser cannons (fire control 3D, space range 1-3/12/25, atmosphere range 100-300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 2D), tractor beam projector (fire control 4D, space range 1-5/15/30, atmosphere range 100-500/1.5/3 km, damage 5D+2), concussion missiles (fire control 2D+1, space range 1-2/8/15, atmosphere range 100-200/800/1.5 km, damage 4D).

As soon as the shuttle reels itself within three units of the *FarStar*, the shuttle's spacetrooper

## THE RAPTOR'S FIGHTER WING

The *Raptor's* fighters will engage the Bothan lines before any other Imperial vessels. The following stats cover the type and number of Imperial fighters dispatched to combat the *FarStar* and her Bothan allies.

Gamemasters should have the *FarStar* crew deal with the fighters as needed — if the *FarStar* is tied up handling one set of fighters, have the remaining Bothan ships engage a different set of TIEs; this way the *FarStar* is not immediately overwhelmed by the enemy's sheer weight of numbers, and play does not involve a great deal of bookkeeping and dice rolling. If the players ask why some of the fighter elements have not engaged the *FarStar*, the gamemaster should simply reply that the nearest Bothan ships are screening them quite effectively.

**Twelve TIE interceptors.** Starfighter, *starship gunnery* 5D+2, *starfighter piloting* 6D+1. Maneuverability 3D+2, space 11, hull 3D. Weapons: 4 laser cannons (fire control 3D, space range 1-3/12/25, atmosphere range 100-300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 6D).

**Attack Pattern:** The TIE interceptors break off into six two-ship elements and concentrate fire on the Bothan flagship.

**Thirty TIE/In Starfighters.** Starfighter, *starfighter piloting* 4D+1, *starship gunnery* 4D. Maneuverability 2D, space 10, atmosphere 415; 1,200 kmh, hull 2D. Weapons: two laser cannons (fire-linked, fire control 2D, space range 1-3/12/25, atmosphere range 100-300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 5D).

**Attack Pattern:** These TIEs break into five separate six-ship elements and attempt to screen the *Raptor*. If the TIE interceptors are routed or destroyed, 20 of

them will engage the Bothan flagship, with the rest dispatched to scatter the Bothan's — and by default the *FarStar's* — fighter cover.

**Twelve TIE/rc starfighters.** Starfighter, *sensors* 4D+2, *starfighter piloting* 4D+1, *starship gunnery* 4D. Maneuverability 2D+2, space 10, atmosphere 415; 1,200 kmh, hull 2D. Weapons: two laser cannon (fire control 2D, space range 1-3/12/25, atmosphere range 100-300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 2D+2).

**Attack Pattern:** These TIEs avoid combat, and scout out enemy forces, passing tactical data back to the *Raptor*. At some point during the battle, Mal'ia requests that the *FarStar* deal with these recon ships.

**Twelve TIE Bombers.** Starfighter, *missile weapons* 4D+1, *starfighter piloting* 4D, *starship gunnery* 5D. Space 6, hull 4D+1. Weapons: 2 laser cannon (fire-linked, fire control 2D, space range 1-3/12/25, atmosphere range 100-300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 3D), concussion missiles (16 per ship, fire control 3D+2, space range 1/3/7, atmosphere range 50-500./1/5 km, damage 9D).

**Attack Pattern:** These bombers break into three four-ship elements and attack the gunships in the Bothan line. If the gunships are having trouble dealing with the bombers.

## THE RAPTOR'S CAPITAL SHIP LINE

The rest of the line is identical to the *Titania* line; see the stats on page 84 as needed.

After five more rounds of combat, the *Bastion* arrives after a micro-jump from the far edge of the system, responding to a call for backup from *Raptor*.

platoon is deployed; 40 zero-gee stormtroopers immediately enter the flaming ruins of the landing bay.

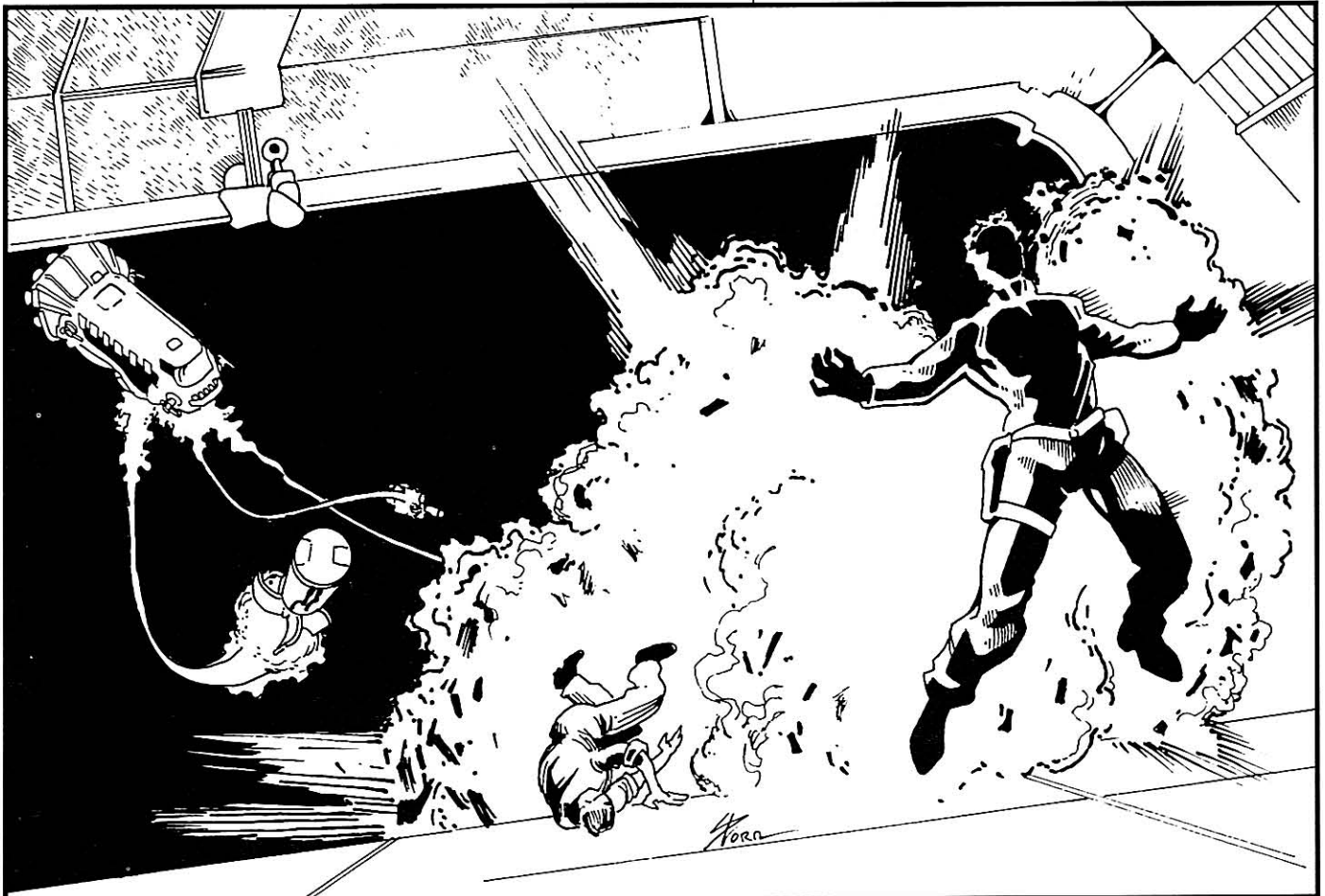
**Spacetroopers.** *Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D, brawling parry 5D, dodge 4D, grenade 5D, missile weapons 5D, Knowledge 2D+1, survival 5D+1, Mechanical 3D+2, astrogation 4D+2, powersuit operation: spacetrooper armor 6D, repulsorlift operation 5D+2, space transports 5D+2, starship gunnery 4D, starship gunnery: proton torpedo launcher 5D+2, Perception 2D+2, search 5D+2, Strength 2D, brawling 3D, stamina 4D, Technical 2D, demolitions 3D+1, security 4D+1, powersuit repair 4D+1.* Move: 11, in armor 8. Space Move: 1. Spacetrooper Armor: +4D physical, +3D energy to resist damage, reduces *Dexterity* and all related skills -1D. Magnetic couplers allow adherence to any metal surface. Weapons: Grenade Launcher (uses missile weapons skill) fires concussion grenades: Ammo: 30, 5D/4D/3D/2D (stun), blast radius 0-2/4/6/10; gas/stun grenades: Ammo: 30, 5D/4D/3D/2D (stun), blast radius 0-2/4/6/8. Mini-Proton Torpedoes: Uses *starship gunnery* skill, 6D damage, Ammo: 6. Blaster cannon, 6D damage; laser

cutters, 3D damage (starfighter scale.)

The spacetroopers must make a *Difficult powersuit operation* roll to enter the landing bay in one turn. Roll once for each of the four ten-man squads — success indicates they have crossed directly into the landing bay, failure by one to five indicates they have landed on the ship, and can advance into the bay in two turns, and failure by six or more indicates the troopers have failed to cross, and are lost in space, left behind the maneuvering and racing ships.

If the troopers make it on board they enter through the landing bay, and move to secure engineering and cee-cee (two squads each). Once these are secure, they intend to cut power to the weapons and shields, slow the *FarStar* to a stop, and signal the *Bastion* that this ship is secure. Once the *FarStar* is out of action, one squad will stay aboard while the rest move on to another boarding action.

The players will presumably do something to stop this. If they are unable to stop the spacetroopers, a clever technician may suggest that the power core can be overloaded, taking



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the Imperials out with them. Alternatively, the *FarStar* might ram an enemy ship and accomplish much the same thing.

Resolving the boarding will take considerable time — continue with the battle as long as possible. The other assault shuttle is performing similarly against the *Boash'ua*. If the *FarStar* is seized, so is the *Boash'ua*.

## THE SCORE BALANCES

As the battle rages, the Imperials start to push the Bothans back. The gunships have expended their missile reserves to good effect, and the Imperials are hurting, but the combined firepower of two Imperial Star Destroyers and their attending ships have shifted the odds to the Empire's favor. The bulk cruiser is burning in space, the *Boash'ua* and the assault frigate are heavily damaged, one of the gunships is destroyed, another severely damaged, and the other two lightly damaged.

On the Imperial side, the *Bastion* is lightly damaged, the *Raptor* heavily damaged, and the *Titania* destroyed. The remaining Imperial ships are lightly damaged.

The Imperials would seem to have the upper hand. Then, a new attack line drops in from hyperspace.

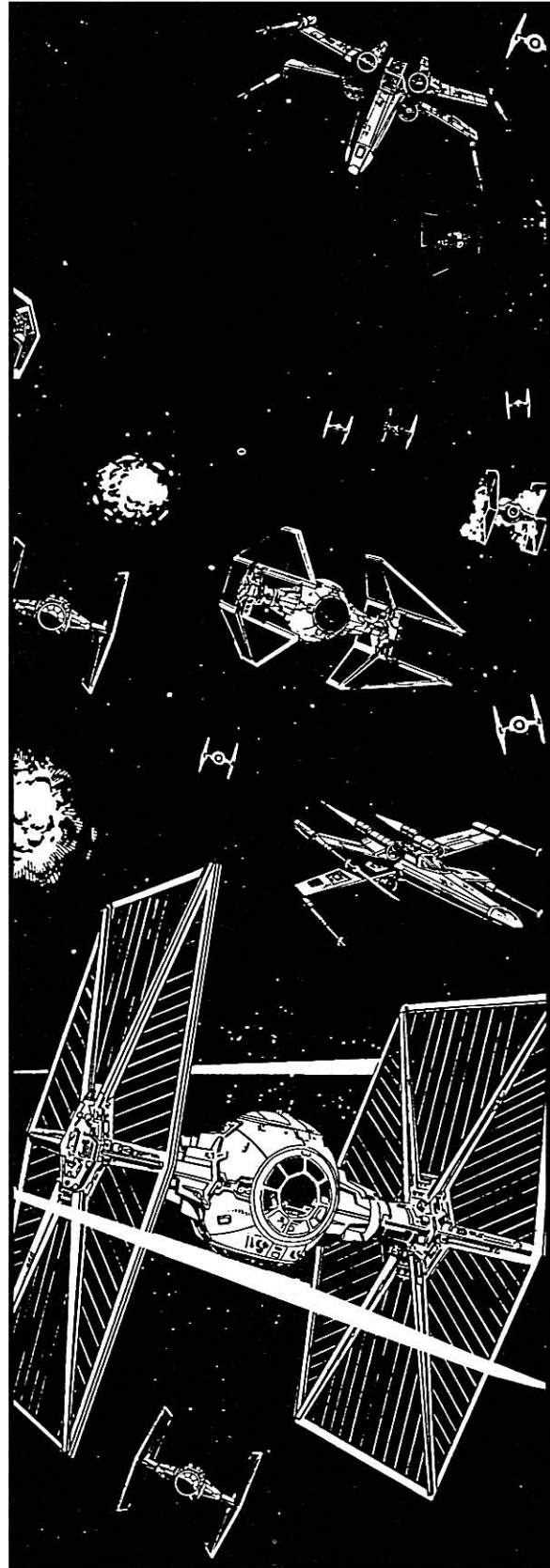
## THE QEKTOTH ARRIVAL

As the battle progresses, read the following aloud:

**Sensors announce the arrival of a new set of combatants — three Qektoth cruisers. They immediately target several Imperial ships and open fire, though they probably aren't allies of the *FarStar* either. Fortunately for you, the Imperials were closer to them than you were.**

The Qektoth Confederation has also followed the Lifeline Project. They have a nominal alliance with Sarne, but since they want DarkStryder technology for themselves, and since the game seems to up for grabs (what with the New Republic already in the system), they open fire on whoever has the upper hand, after one round. This is probably the Imperials — who are caught flat-footed. All three Qektoth cruisers concentrate fire on the *Raptor* first, nudging it to severe damage in the first round, and destroying it in the second. The rest of the *Raptor's* line is next on the Qektoth targeting schedule. The Qektoth weapons ignore enemy shields, but the Qektoth shields can only angle to one or two arcs at a time.

**Qektoth cruisers.** Capital, capital ship gunnery 4D+2, capital ship piloting 5D, capital ship shields 4D+2. Maneuverability 1D, space 3, hull 4D+2,



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shields 2D+2. Weapons: 4 plasma cannons (fire control 2D+2, range 1-7/20/35, damage 5D), Bio-energy array (fire rate 1/3, fire control 1D+1, damage 4D+1).

**Attack Pattern:** The Imperials quickly get their act together, and a furious battle develops between Imperial and Qektoth forces. The Qektoth quickly start losing in the fight — their cruisers aren't up to taking on even a damaged Imperial attack line, but this surprise gives the New Republic time to make patch repairs and get knocked out systems back on-line.

If, by some fluke, the Qektoth survive the battle, they pause to begin some makeshift repairs and launch an attack on whoever else survives. The Qektoth are too greedy for their own good, it seems.

In the midst of this, another arrival throws the balance yet again.

### KHZAM'S FINAL STROKE

As the Qektoth's battle with the Imperials is beginning to wind down, read the following aloud:

**"Proximity warning," screams the sensor tech. "I don't believe this ... more ships dropping from hyperspace!"**

**Four gunships bearing Skandrei Bandits markings drop into realspace, flanked by three Skipray Blastboats. A moment later, a comm signal reaches the *FarStar*.**

Any character in cee-cee who makes a Moderate *communications* roll realizes that the signal is in Vaathkree Trade language, and is similar in its coding to a message intercepted by Darryn Thyte near the planet "Demonsgate," on the edge of the Kathol Rift. (See "Showdown," in the *DarkStryder Campaign* supplement, *The Kathol Rift*.) A Moderate *computer programming/repair* roll allows the reader to decrypt the following message:

**Finder,  
Flock's in. Signal From Surface When Ready.  
Keep Head Down.  
Khzam.**

Gorak Khzam, the treacherous former first officer of the *FarStar* and leader of the Sabriador Slavers, having tracked the Qektoth and followed the Lifeline project, arrives with a flotilla of light ships. He's enlisted the aid of the Skandrei Bandits and commands a formidable collection of capital ships.

Khzam fires on the closest vessels, regardless of side, and simply sweeps along, not pausing to target anyone in particular. If the *FarStar* gets in the way, his ships fire on it. Khzam is flailing in surprise — he wasn't expecting this big a party.

**Four Skandrei gunships.** Capital, *capital ship gunnery* 4D, *capital ship piloting* 3D+2, *capital ship shields* 3D+2, *starship gunnery* 4D. Maneuverability 1D, space 4, hull 3D, shields 2D. Weapons: 4 double turbolaser cannon (fire control 3D, damage 4D+2), 6 quad laser cannon (starfighter scale) (fire control 1D, damage 5D).

**Three Pirate Blastboats.** Capital, *capital ship gunnery* 5D, *capital ship piloting* 5D, *capital ship shields* 4D. Maneuverability 1D+2, space 8, hull 2D+1, shields 2D. Weapons: 3 medium ion cannons (fire-linked, fire control 3D, space range 1-3/12/25, atmosphere range 100-300/1.2/2.5 km, damage 4D), 2 laser cannons (starfighter scale, fire-linked, fire control 1D, space range 1-3/12/25 atmosphere range 100-300/1.2/2.5 damage 5D), proton torpedo launcher (starfighter scale, fire control 2D, space range 1/3/7, atmosphere range 50-100/300/700, damage 9D), concussion missile launcher (starfighter scale, fire control 1D, space range 1/3/7, atmosphere range 1-50/100/250 damage 6D).

Almost immediately after Khzam's arrival, yet another arrival drops in from hyperspace.

### HOLY WARRIORS

Three rounds after Khzam's contingent arrives and begins blazing away, the Aing-Tii arrive in force, angry and hot on the trail of the slavers. They immediately start chasing Khzam's group around — and anyone between the Aing-Tii ships and the slavers is fired on.

**Six Aing-Tii Sanhedrim ships.** Capital, *capital ship gunnery* 5D, *capital ship piloting* 4D+2, *capital ship shields* 4D+1. Maneuverability 2D, space 4, hull 5D, shields 1D+2. Weapons: 30 Aing-Tii energy web generators (fire control 2D, range 1-3/7/10, damage 7D/6D/5D), 6 null-burst projectors (fire control 4D, damage: stuns crew for 1D hours).

### KHZAM'S LAST STAB

Khzam had lots of time and almost unlimited access to the *FarStar's* systems, which he used to implant a last-ditch security measure, on the off chance he ran into his former shipmates and they held a grudge. The wily Rodian left a surprise package in the shield systems — a remote-detonated mine. Setting the mine off cripples the *FarStar's* shields, including the particle shields, reducing the ship's Hull rating by -2D. He does this as soon as he realizes what a bad situation he's in, as a last bit of spite.





**Attack Pattern:** The Aing-Tii use their null-burst generators to stun ship crews, then dispatch them at their leisure with their short-range energy webs, or simply ram their targets. If the player characters' encounter with the Aing-Tii at "Demongate" was less than amicable, the Aing-Tii will target the *FarStar* as well. (See the adventure "Showdown," in the *DarkStryder Campaign* supplement, *The Kathol Rift* for more details.)

Once the Slavers are destroyed, the Aing-Tii give the Imperials and Qektoth the same treatment, then vanish into hyperspace without communicating. They have no interest in Kathol, or the Precursors.

In the midst of this, a small group of Yvarema ships arrive.

## THE FANGS OF WARYL

The Yvarema, concerned by the high volume of ship traffic, all of whom (except the Aing-Tii) stopped off at Yvara to check their hyperspace navigation, sent a relief force to aid the *FarStar*. Gunthar and Qesya Vth'naar command the force.

**Four Yvarema relief vessels.** Starfighter, starship gunnery 3D, starfighter piloting 4D, sensors 5D. Maneuverability 1D, space 2, hull 2D. Weapons: navigational deflector (fire control 1D, damage 2D).

**Attack Pattern:** These ships are no match for even low-end capital ships (the Yvarema are not a war-like species), but they will be invaluable for rescue operations — they can only carry about 50 passengers, but they will tow life pods and lifeboats, and help ferry survivors to larger ships.

In addition, Qesya has been helping the Yvarema develop some more sophisticated defense options for Yvara — and, suspecting that the *FarStar* would need help — convinced Gunthar to supply the prototype defense force for the mission. Essentially, the Yvara system defense consists of upgunned Yvarema scout vessels, though Qesya has been teaching the docile hive-mind species some of the finer points of fighting dirty. All 10 of the new Yvara warships arrive, and, under Qesya's orders, attack the nearest Imperial vessels, giving the *FarStar* a moment of respite.

## ■ Yvarema Warship

**Craft:** Modified Royal Yvarema Scout ship, "Waryl's Fangs"

**Type:** Short-range attack craft

**Scale:** Starfighter

**Length:** 20 meters

**Skill:** Archaic starship piloting: Yvarema scout ship

**Crew:** 2

**Crew Skill:** Archaic starship piloting 5D, astrogation 4D, starship shields 4D+1

**Passengers:** 3

**Cargo Capacity:** 10 metric tons

**Consumables:** 2 weeks

**Cost:** Not available for sale

**Hyperdrive Multiplier:** x4

**Nav Computer:** Limited to three jumps

**Maneuverability:** 2D+2

**Space:** 5

**Atmosphere:** 295;800 kmh

**Hull:** 3D

**Shields:** 2D

**Sensors:**

*Passive:* 25/0D

*Scan:* 35/1D

*Search:* 50/2D+1

*Focus:* 3/3D

**Weapons:**

**Navigational Deflector (29)**

*Fire Arc:* Front

*Crew:* 1

*Skill:* Starship gunnery

*Space Range:* 1-3/8/15

*Atmosphere Range:* 100-300/800/1.5 km

*Damage:* 2D

**Quad Laser Cannon**

*Fire Arc:* Front

*Crew:* 1 (pilot or co-pilot can fire)

*Skill:* Starship Gunnery

*Space Range:* 1-3/12/25

*Atmosphere Range:* 100-300/1.2/2.5 km

*Damage:* 6D

**Tactical Fusion Missile**

*Fire Arc:* Front

*Crew:* 1 (co-pilot)

*Skill:* Missile weapons: fusion missile

*Space Range:* 1/3/7

*Atmosphere Range:* 50-100/300/700

*Damage:* 10D

**Capsule:** The Yvarema ships are primitive by galactic standards, but serve the small alien fleet well in the protection of their small patch of space. The Yvarema ships feature a powerful navigation deflector meant to clear a path in the dust and gas-

shrouded Rift. In a pinch, these deflectors can be used as make-shift weapons, but are limited in range and not very effective. The Yvarema ship feature fluidics based control systems, meaning that they are immune to ionization damage.

In addition, under Qesya's direction, these ships have been upgunned with makeshift weaponry cobbled together by the skilled Yvarema technicians. The quad laser cannons are fairly primitive, with a tendency to misfire, though they do pack quite a wallop.

The most devastating entry into the Yvarema arsenal is the single tactical fusion missile each warship carries. These weapons are fairly small compared to larger Imperial weapons, and their guidance systems are extremely primitive; any attempt to fire the weapon at a target increases by one difficulty level.

## DEATH OF THE FARSTAR

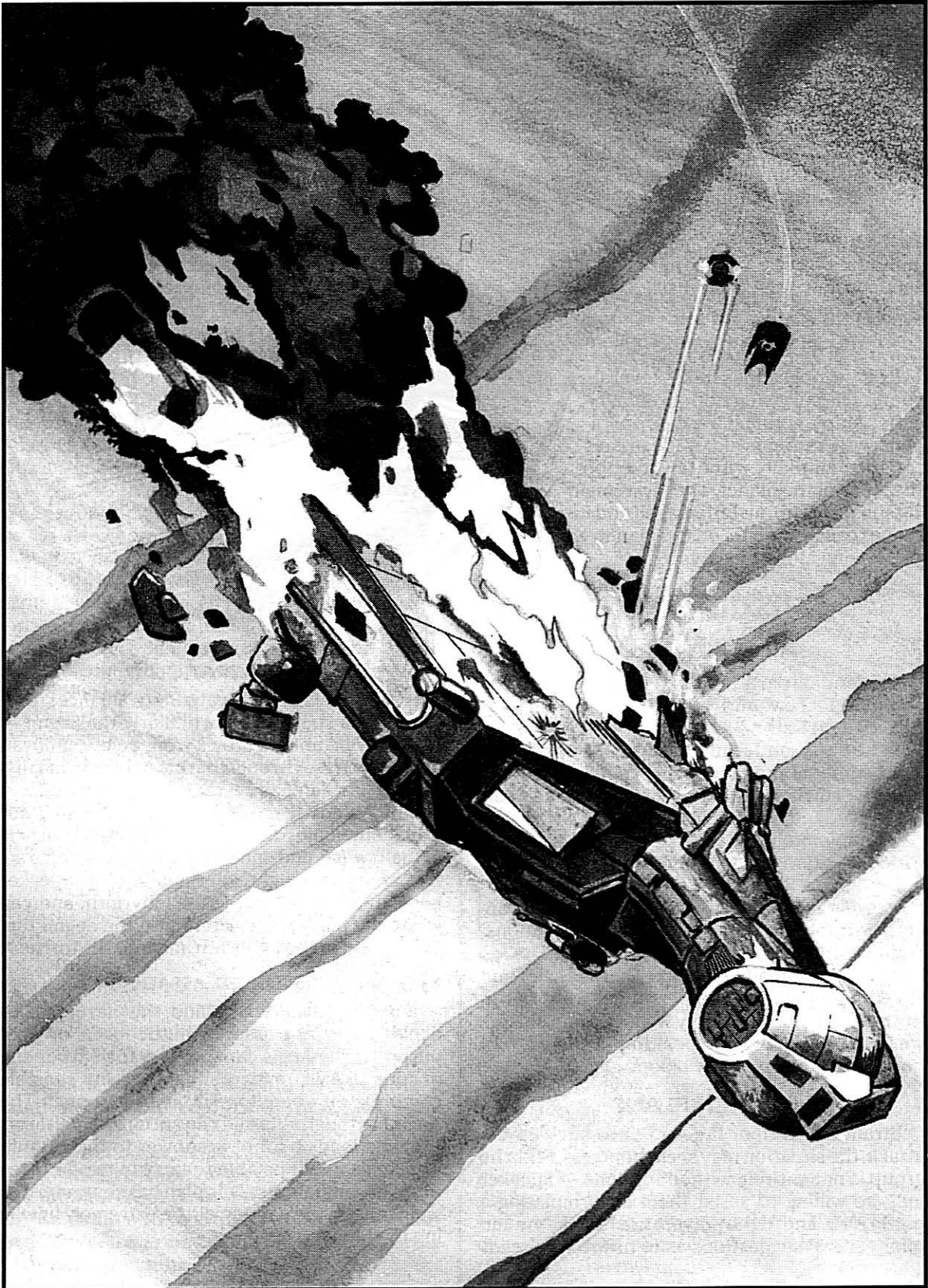
At some point in the battle, the *FarStar* suffers critical damage and must be abandoned. When and where is largely up to circumstances. Most of the scenes in the battle are open-ended enough to allow the players in charge of the *FarStar* to make their own decisions, so this might happen at any time. Gamemasters can pick the most appropriate method for dispatching the *FarStar* that suits their campaign.

- **The Spacetroopers.** If the spacetrooper platoon isn't stopped, they'll take over the *FarStar*. This can't be allowed to happen, and either the commanding officer or Lofryyhn will destroy her with a power-core overload.

- **Sarne's Ultimate Trapdoor.** Sarne has one undiscovered hardwired failsafe to use against the *FarStar* — a blackout command. If sent, this trapdoor blanks the *FarStar's* computer systems completely. All systems shut down, and the *FarStar* drifts without control. She's a sitting target, with no functioning weapons or defenses. Sarne uses the command if the *FarStar* is still in the fight when the Yvarema arrive.

- **The Raptor.** The *Raptor*, ignoring Sarne's directives about "scaring off" the *FarStar*, begins to smash at the corvette in earnest. The *FarStar* is so badly damaged that it is on a collision course with the vengeful Star Destroyer. Unfortunately, the *FarStar's* meager counteroffensive manages to damage the Star Destroyer's guidance system; the two ships collide, sending the *FarStar* spinning off towards Kathol's atmosphere.

- **The Aing-Tii.** The Aing-Tii warships turn on the *FarStar*, angered by their confrontation with the New Republic at Demonsgate. One Aing-Tii warship moves in and attempts to ram the *FarStar*



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after firing its null-burst projector. The *FarStar* collides with the alien ship and spins — out of control and fatally damaged — towards the planet.

The *FarStar* isn't destroyed in a blazing fireball. Instead, it suffers crippling damage, and tumbles toward Kathol itself, finally plummeting into the atmosphere and slamming into the surface not far from the Imperial garrison, wreaking havoc on the Imperials in a final hammerblow (see "The Falling Star" on page 95).

## AFTERMATH

Rescue operations take several hours. The surviving Bothan and Imperial ships conduct rescue operations with Yvarema aid, trade prisoners, then mutually withdraw to opposite sides of the planet. The few remaining ships are seriously damaged and in no shape to affect events on the planet, which are moving along quickly.

## EPISODE FIVE: STRANDED!

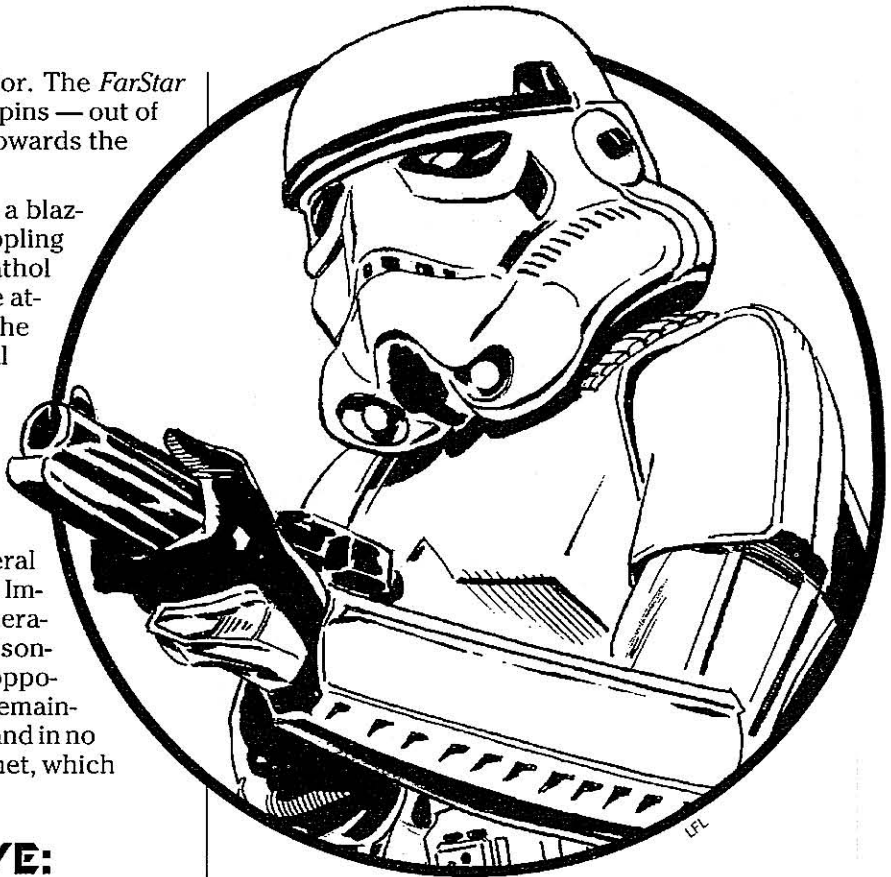
The landing party, including a fair chunk of the command crew and survey teams, are left stranded on Kathol.

If the party landed in the Aegis, they probably have some combination of troops, scouts, vehicles, a small selection of weapons, some survival gear, and, of course, the Aegis.

If the *FarStar* landed, the castaways have a wider selection of equipment: certainly a couple of ULAVs, the SRV-1s, some speeder bikes, operating crew and at least five troopers, heavy weapons, portable defense shields, a weeks rations, and possibly the Aegis shuttle as well. The vehicles were off-loaded to make access easier and speed maintenance, the personnel were out in the fresh air, and the heavy weapons and shields were out to defend the position in the even of hostile natives or enemy troops.

## ATTACK PLANS

Stranded, without the *FarStar* to back up the attack, the situation may seem hopeless. Still, the group is not entirely without options — Speaker may be willing to assist them in formulating a battle plan, and, if the players are "stuck," he can offer several suggestions as to how to proceed:



## INFILTRATION

If the crew has cultivated any alliances with indigenous species — particularly the Segmi — they may be able to attack from below, infiltrating the fortress through DarkStryder's own labyrinth. This plan has several advantages (mainly avoiding a costly battle at the fortress gate), but it has one major flaw: DarkStryder's fortress is actually *alive*, and once inside, the player characters are in for a fight. On the plus side, Speaker has actually been inside the labyrinth, and can guide the player characters into the Segmi tunnels, through the labyrinth and into the fortress.

## AIR-LIFTED ASSAULT

If the Aegis was left behind, the players might decide to use the assault shuttle for its original purpose. The Aegis can carry up to 40 troopers, or four ULAVs, or two SRV-1s, or any sensible combination of equipment and personnel. The Aegis is a tough ship and can shrug off small arms fire, and lends a lot of firepower to the assault. The Aegis might be able to ferry in two or three loads of combatants. This plan has some merit as well, though the natives will be extremely unwilling to enter the Aegis.

## FRONTAL ATTACK

Attacking the main gate and trying to blast a path into the fortress is an extremely bad idea. The main gate can hold off all the Yapi or Charr Ootee on the planet — although it wasn't designed to withstand more sophisticated firepower. The ULAVs could conceivably punch a hole in the gate and lead an attack, but it would be a costly fight.

A frontal assault might work better as a distraction, gathering the defenders' collective attention on the front gate while an infiltration team or air-lifted assault (or both) hit the fortress at a different location. The main problem with this idea is the knowledge that the Imperials would almost certainly come to DarkStryder's aid.

A combination of these ideas will probably work best — a frontal assault using the Yapi, Charr Ootee, and ULAVs, with air-lifted support, and an underground infiltration. Gamemasters may choose to switch back and forth between groups, or stick to one group and describe the action elsewhere.

Whatever plan the players come up with, they'll have to do it quickly. The best time to act is while Sarne believes there aren't sufficient New Republic forces on the surface to cause him major problems. Speaker will also mention that the "White Ones" (scout troopers) are stepping up patrols and will likely notice the presence of so many Yapi (and Charr Ootee, and Zizimaak) in close proximity. Speaker and the Yapi clans will want to move very quickly to attack. Any attempts to hold them in check will make them resentful and angry ("Do you wish the Yapi to assist you? Speak now, or we go, and you may fight DarkStryder and the White Ones without us!").

## GATHERING THE TROOPS

As the *FarStar* crews prepare for the coming battle, Speaker announces that the Yapi tribes are gathered and ready. According to Speaker, only the bravest Yapi warriors — and those with certain proficiency in magical Ta-Ree powers — were selected to take part in the attack.

Read the following aloud:

**Speaker leads you to a hill overlooking a small plain — the Yapi tribes fill it, with fully one thousand warriors eager to take on DarkStryder's forces. At the sight of "the New Ones," they rise and begin to chant war-songs. The jubilant Yapi have put aside old rivalries for the chance to overthrow their hated overlord. They are armed with primitive firearms and melee weapons.**

## STAGING TIPS

The preparation for the assault on DarkStryder's fortress can be handled a few different ways:

- **Out Of Scene.** The players can simply tell the gamemaster what equipment they need, what their overall plan is. The gamemaster can then say that time has elapsed and the attack may begin.

- **In Scene.** The gamemaster can encourage the players to roleplay their characters during relevant planning stages of the game. Rather than have the players say indicate what their characters are doing, have them play the scene in character.

*Example:* George is playing Adrimetrum, Paul is playing Loh'khar, and Pete is playing Brophar. During the preparation for the battle, George reasons, the Captain would be issuing orders and generally interacting with her troops.

George (as Adrimetrum): "Sergeant Tofarain, I want you to double check the Aegis. Make sure we don't have to worry about any mechanical glitches when we air-lift in."

Pete (as Brophar): "Affirmative. Just let me get my tools, Captain."

Paul (as Loh'khar): "Ah, perhaps the good sergeant requires some technical assistance?"

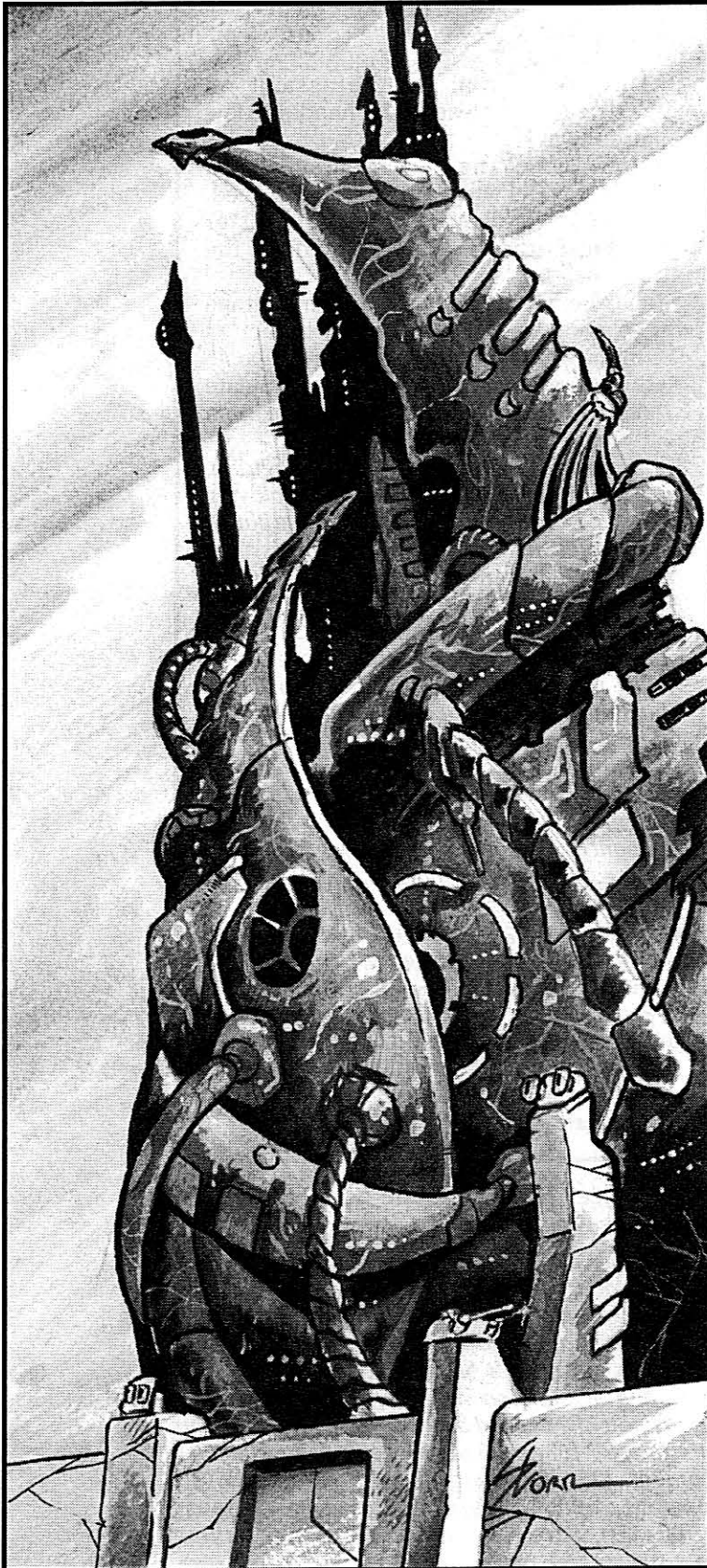
Pete: "Yeah, sure, Finder. At least I'll be able to keep an eye on you."

Paul (feigning wounded innocence): "Me? Why would you need to 'keep an eye' on me, sergeant?"

By roleplaying this scene in character, this gives the players the opportunity to work with some of the "Suggested Development" and "Directed Development" of their characters.

**"You see? More than one hundred tribes!"  
Speaker says gleefully.**

**Typical Yapi Warrior.** *Dexterity 3D, archaic guns 5D, dodge 5D, running 3D, melee 5D+2, melee parry 5D+1, thrown weapons 4D+2, Knowledge 1D+1, survival 6D, Mechanical 1D+1, Perception 2D, hide 4D, search 6D, sneak 6D, Strength 3D, brawling 5D, stamina 5D, Technical 1D+1, archaic gun repair 3D, first aid 3D+1, melee weapon repair 3D.* Move: 11. Special abilities: *battle mastery 3D, combat sense 4D, energy blade 4D.* Flintlock (3D damage, takes one round to reload), spear (STR+1D), throwing axe (STR+1D), parrying



shield, decorative beads and feathers.

The Charr Ontee are assembled not far away — 160 soldiers in organic battle-armor, grimly awaiting the coming conflict.

If the player characters decide to inspect the Charr Ontee contingent, read the following aloud:

**Arrayed before you are more than one hundred Charr Ontee, clad in strange battle armor and carrying their ancient pulse-wave weapons.**

The fearsome-looking insectoids are the opposite of the boisterous, chanting Yapi. The Charr Ontee are quietly preparing for battle with relentless efficiency, with each warrior double-checking his neighbor's status as well. Other than the click of their clawed feet on the ground, the Charr Ontee encampment is silent.

The battle-armor is ancient but well cared for, and greatly enhances the wearer's fighting ability. The armor is designed for the distinctly non-human Charr Ontee form, and cannot be worn by non-Charr Ontee.

**160 Charr Ontee Soldiers.** *Dexterity 4D, dodge 4D+2, pulse-wave blaster 5D, pulse-wave cannon 4D, Knowledge 2D, survival 3D, Mechanical 1D, Perception 2D, hide 5D, search 4D, sneak 6D, Strength 5D, brawling 5D+2, climbing/jumping 5D+1, Technical 2D. Move 10. Special abilities: entangle 6D, web 2D, armor 3D, translate 5D, receptive empathy 5D, projective empathy 5D. Pulse-wave cannon (4D+2), Battle armor: bio-sensor (+4D to detect living subjects), power-claws (STR+4D), spinnerets (web Strength 4D).*

### SNEAKING IN

One of the smarter ways to attack DarkStryder is to take the Segmi's offer to lead them into the fortress via their underground tunnels. DarkStryder and his servants aren't aware of these access tunnels — only the Segmi know about them (and only the Segmi are capable of navigating these tortuously convoluted passageways). The tunnel-network was built at the very beginning of construction of DarkStryder's fortress, and later plugged with resin. Entering the Labyrinth begins the Battle of DarkStryder's Fortress, detailed on pages 98–112.

### OVER THE WALL

Some of the characters may try coming in over the wall, either in the Aegis or with Zizimaak assistance. The roof and courtyard are guarded by more troops than the Labyrinth, though, and the *FarStar* team will have a much tougher fight on their way in.

## KNOCKING ON THE FRONT GATE

Then again, the party might try a straightforward frontal attack. This is not a good idea by itself, although it should work fine as a distraction.

## THE FALLING STAR

The *FarStar* is crippled at some point in its battle to escape Kathol system — inevitably (see “Death of the *FarStar*” on pages 90–92). The ship tumbles into Kathol’s gravity well and crashes only a few kilometers from the Imperial base, on the far side of DarkStryder’s fortress, hammering everything within kilometers with the force of a half-million tons of detonite.

The space battle is intense and fairly long, but it’s likely to happen faster than the action on the ground, where at least some of the characters have to trudge around on foot. The *FarStar* might take its death blow long before the players have launched their attack. When the wrecked *FarStar* crashes is up to the timing and preferences of the gamemaster and the player’s speed. It takes a while for a the *FarStar* to tumble into Kathol’s gravity well, from several minutes to hours.

This fantastic explosion flattens everything and kills everyone within 10 kilometers — fortunately, the player characters are more than 10 kilometers away, though they can probably see the mushroom cloud and hear the thunderous report of the impact.

Most of the troops at the Imperial base are seriously injured, many are killed, the AT-ATs toppled like toys, the repulsorlift vehicles damaged, and the buildings shattered like flimsy models. To top this off, all the proton mines in the garrison’s minefield detonates with the impact of the *FarStar*. The Imperials are suddenly in no shape to help anyone, even themselves.

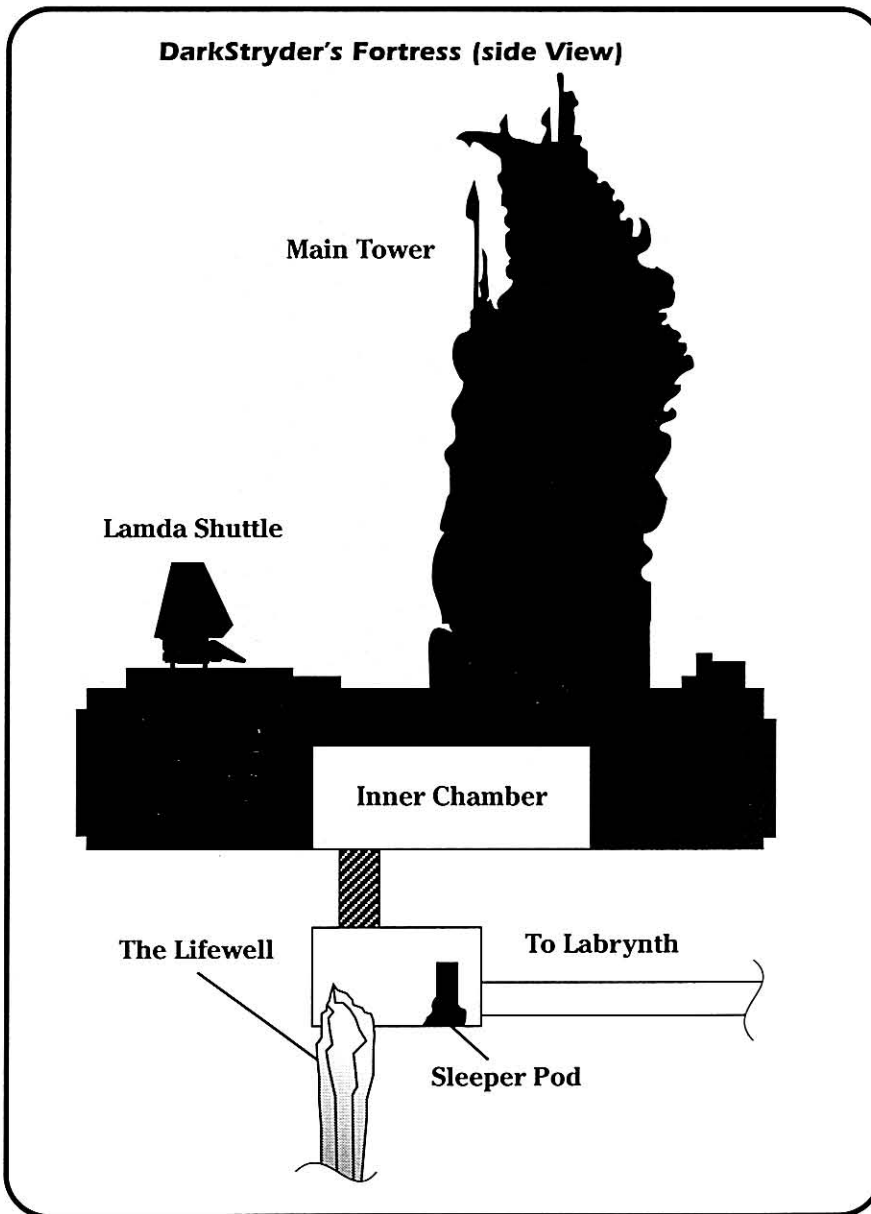
Any characters and vehicles outside DarkStryder’s fortress must take 1D capital scale damage — which means that player characters nearby cannot resist the damage — and characters and vehicles inside DarkStryder’s fortress must resist 1D starfighter scale damage.

Characters back at the city ruin should also resist 1D starfighter scale damage. Characters underground, even in the fortress, need only resist 1D speeder scale damage — they’re much less likely to get hurt.

The impact of the explosion rocks the surface, knocks everyone down, and causes ringing in the ears for a few minutes; all auditory based *search* rolls are two difficulty levels higher for 1D minutes. Machinery may be seriously affected and delicate mechanisms are almost certainly shattered. The fortresses organic systems are badly



Starr Cook



Thomas O'Neill

damaged by the force of the explosion, suffering from trauma, shock, and injuries, and the central control brain shuts down most of its non-essential systems. This includes systems that DarkStryder might consider essential — such as Halbret's hibernation chamber.

## DARKSTRYDER'S FORTRESS

Organized large-scale warfare has never been practiced on Kathol, and the fortress is not equipped with heavy weapons. DarkStryder is paranoid, though, and has a large garrison of

Yapi warriors, Krakai soldiers and Yimi slaves, all under strict orders to protect the despot at any cost.

The fortress is a strange mix of Imperial technology and Precursor biotech. Durasteel armor plating has been retrofitted to the organic structure, though the slimy, translucent construction material that DarkStryder favors is still visible in several places. Strange, vein-like conduits run in swirling patterns around the building, obscured only by Imperial additions to the fortress.

One very strange feature of the building is noticeable if the player characters make a Moderate *Perception* check: the organic portions of the fortress have a strange, rhythmic motion, as if the structure is breathing. The main doors inside are a bizarre, nictating membrane, sickly-green in color and dripping with moisture.

- **Main Gate.** Guarded by 100 Yapi and about 50 Servants, the front gate is a sliding double door made of resin over a bony mesh. The ULAVs, SRV-1s, or Aegis can punch through the gate without much trouble, but the Yapi and

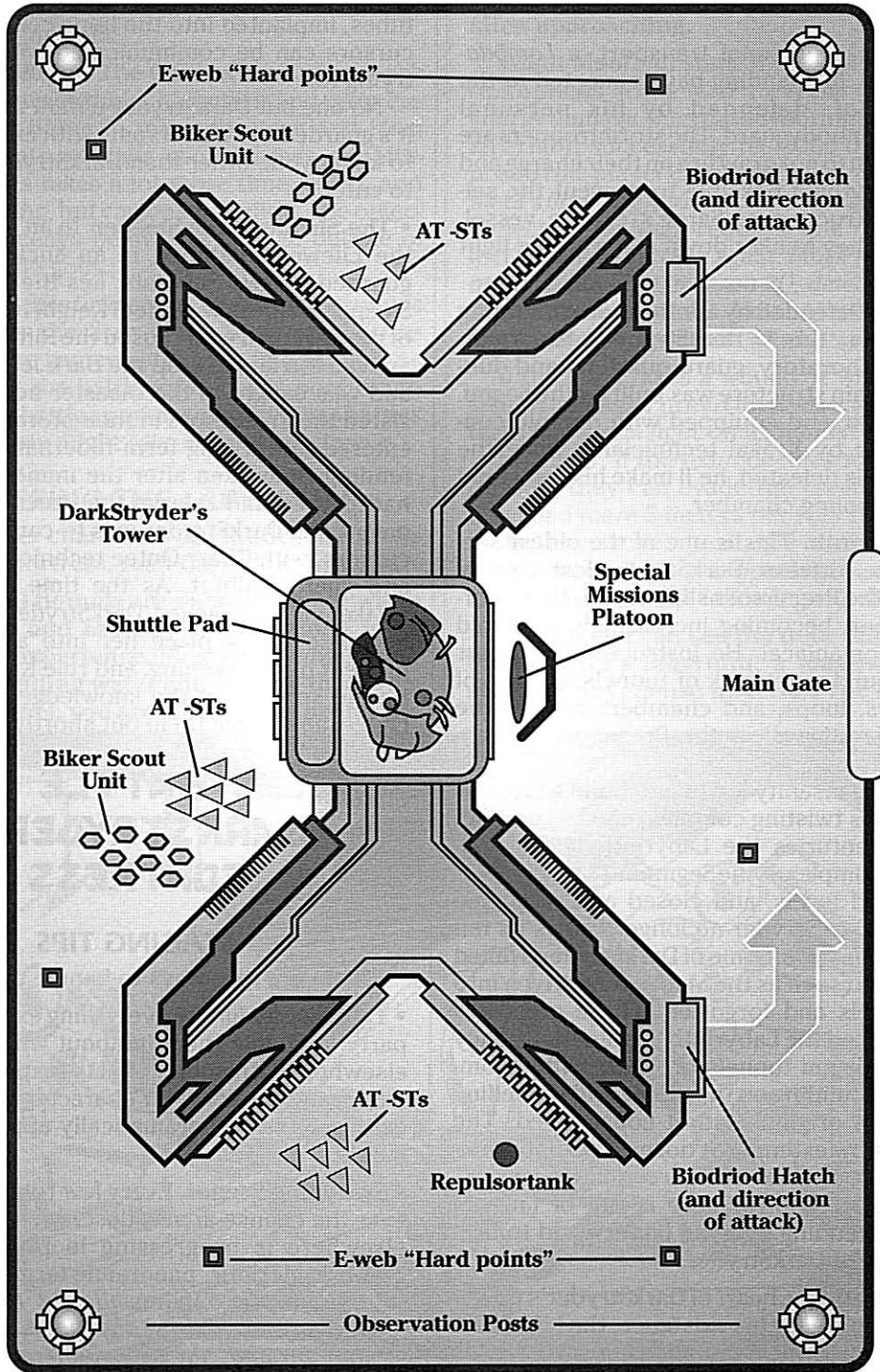
Charr Ontee don't have anything to challenge it. If the characters don't have the hardware for smashing the gate open, DarkStryder sends his Yapi warriors and Servant guards out, to deal with them directly.

- **The Yard.** The main battle between DarkStryder and his Kathol will likely occur here. The fortress is defended by about 200 Yapi, 100 Yimi, 300 Krakai, an Imperial Army assault platoon, and an Imperial Army armor section, and this is where they'll make their stand. (See "The Battle of DarkStryder's Fortress" on pages 98–112.)

- **The Roof.** The top of the Inner Keep is a flight



## DARKSTRYDER'S FORTRESS [TOP VIEW]



deck, mainly used by the Krakai — DarkStryder has been trying to create a loyal predatory flying servant species for centuries, but nothing has come of it — although he has developed several vicious flying monstrosities. The flight deck bays opens out of the roof via a number of nictating doors.

Sarne has a personal transport, a *Lambda*-class shuttle, in a landing bay connected to the fortress roof, defended by his personal stormtrooper bodyguard. The stormtroopers are smart enough to not draw fire on their charge and will do everything possible to prevent the seizure or destruction of Sarne's escape vessel. Otherwise, they hunker down and wait the fight out.

- **The Keep.** Defended by another set of nictating double doors, this is DarkStryder's headquarters, main laboratory, guard quarters, and dungeon. The main structure was built by the Segmi, centuries ago, and equipped with organic control systems by Krakai technicians. Once the outer guard is defeated, he'll make his last stand here, in his ruling chamber.

- **The Labyrinth.** This is one of the oldest sections of the fortress. DarkStryder lost control soon after the Precursors slipped into their storage chamber, becoming increasingly paranoid and megalomaniacal. He instructed the Charr Ontee to build a network of tunnels, a maze of blind alleys, loops, and chambers around the vault of the Lifewell — the Precursor's receptacle.

In time his insanity led him to build a fortress on top of this twisting complex, and to add to it. Over the centuries the Labyrinth became increasingly complex as the Segmi and Krakai added sections and levels, and closed and reopened chambers. DarkStryder no longer knows its full extent; no one does. Some of DarkStryder's failed experiments (such as the Maoi) were driven into these tunnels and forgotten. These creatures have expanded the Labyrinth — sometimes they break into Segmi tunnels or Charr Ontee complexes, and building on the piping and tunnelling systems the original Kathol constructed. The Labyrinth now extends for dozens, perhaps hundreds, of kilometers in all directions, occasionally surfacing. Yapi folklore is full of tales of heroes descending into the underworld to face the minions of DarkStryder.

- **The Lifewell.** The heart of DarkStryder's power and the purpose for his existence, the Lifewell is a huge translucent organ, glowing with the life energies of the Precursors. The Chamber of the Lifewell is a large bone chamber with organic

control systems lining the walls, apparently of superior design, or at least better aesthetics, than the rest of DarkStryder's technology. These controls are tactile (activated by touch), warm, and highly sensitive to the users intent. The Lifewell is fed through a network of nutrient tubes, implanted into the bone ceiling. The Precursors can be communicated with simply by trying to.

No one but DarkStryder enters this chamber. It's guarded by two Servants with express orders to kill anyone other than DarkStryder who tries to enter.

- **The Shrine of the Sleeper.** In an alcove inside the Lifewell Chamber, in an ancient chamber guarded by two Servants, lies the Sleeper. The Sleeper, Halbret, was a Jedi Knight hot on the trail of the Dark Jedi who caused the Rift Disaster. She arrived too late to stop the Dark Jedi's rampage, and was caught in the Disaster herself. She assisted the Precursors in their storage plan, then entered into a long term hibernation trace, intending to awaken after the immediate danger had passed and release the Precursors. In the meantime, DarkStryder was to care for the Precursors, with Charr Ontee technical assistance, and guard Halbret. As the time for Halbret's awakening approached, DarkStryder realized that he could easily place her into a stasis tube, prevent her awakening, and rule Kathol himself. He did so without the knowledge of the Charr Ontee, and drove them out shortly after.

## THE BATTLE OF DARKSTRYDER'S FORTRESS

### STAGING TIPS

There are four ways to handle this battle:

- **Tight Focus.** Ignore everything except the main party, and clue them in about what's going on elsewhere with sound effects (explosions, most likely) and gamemaster characters entering and exiting scenes at dramatically appropriate moments.

- **Switching Scenes.** Every few rounds, or whenever the chance arises, describe how the battle elsewhere is progressing in pulse-pounding, breathy, glorious, panoramic terms.

*Example: "Meanwhile, at the gate to DarkStryder's fortress, the ULAVs rush up and spin around, the tail-gunners take aim, squeeze their triggers, and blow the gate into*

bone and resin flinders! As the dust clears, dozens of Yapi rush forward with an ear-splitting howl and pile into the breach!"

This can prevent a great deal of confusion and dice rolling that may bog down play. Appropriate places to switch scenes are indicated below by the *Imperial* insignia.

• **Switching Roles.** The players can switch back and forth between their characters, and progress through the battle in many theaters and from several points of view more-or-less simultaneously. This takes a lot more time, effort, and record keeping, but can be rewarding. The objective-based scenes below will give an outline of how the battle goes.

• **Star Wars Miniatures Battles.** If the group is familiar with the Star Wars Miniature Battles rules, and the gamemaster puts in a bit of time constructing the battleground, it is possible to run the main battle as a massive miniature battles scenario. (This might take several sessions.)

## ENTERING THE LABYRINTH

If the player characters use the Segmi tunnels to enter the fortress, read the following aloud:

The Segmi tunnels are uncomfortably warm and humid, and moving through them is an unpleasant experience. Sloshing through foul-smelling standing water and moving through a dimly-lit tunnel, you are all sweating profusely.

Stopping to rest for a moment, you can hear a slithering, wet sound from behind you.

A lone, extremely large Maoi is searching for a meal and is approaching from behind. The player characters can attempt to fight, or move ahead in hopes of eluding the hideous blob-like alien approaching.

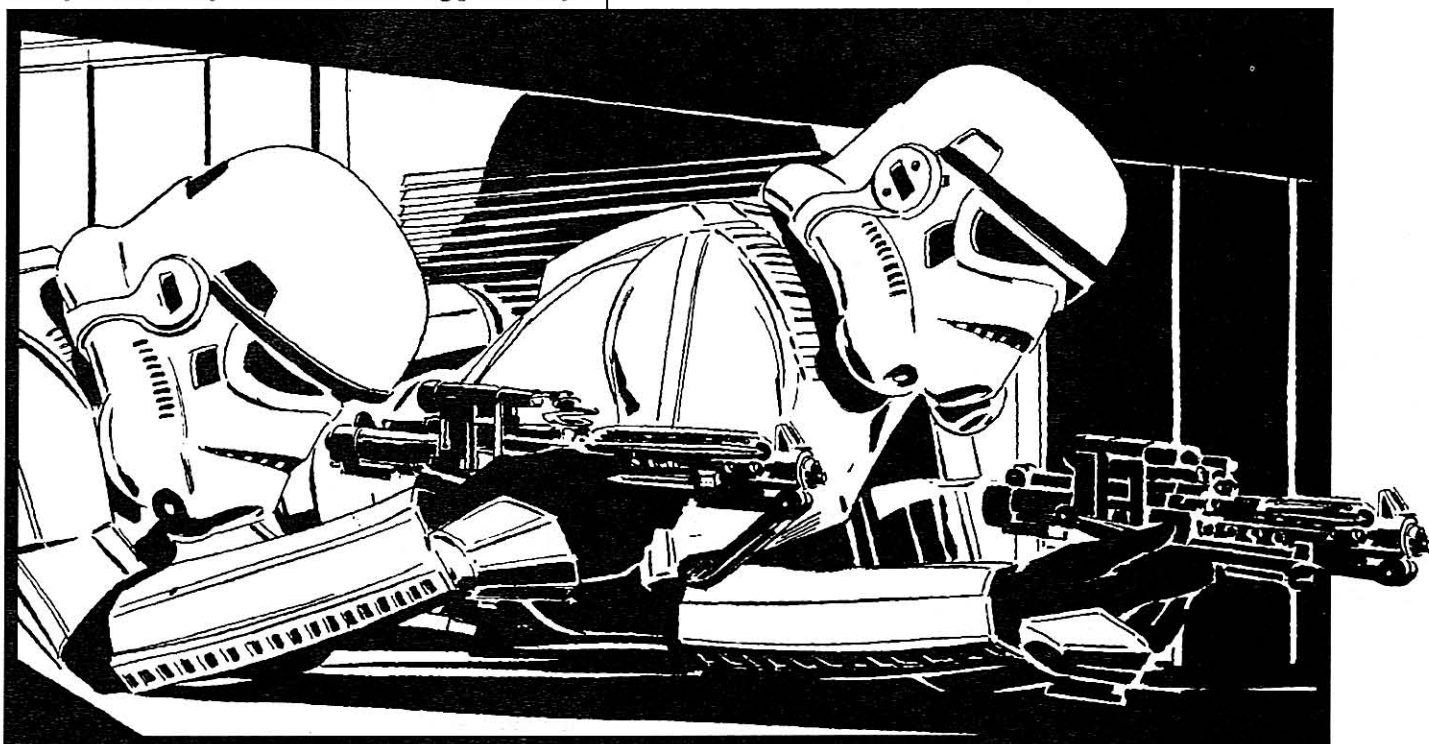
**Giant Maoi.** All stats 3D except: *brawling* 5D. Amorphous form: +2D to resist physical and energy damage. Internal devouring attack ignores all armor; successfully resisting the attack (opposed roll: player character's *Strength* versus the Maoi's *brawling*) indicates that the alien is ejected. If ejected the Maoi requires one round to "collect" itself and attack again. *Block pain* 3D, *boost attribute* 3D, *danger sense* 2D, *detect life* 2D, *heat* 2D, *psychokinesis* 4D. **Note:** Maoi do not have *Mechanical* or *Technical* attributes.

If the Maoi takes a wound, it will retreat and search for easier prey. Otherwise, the infiltration team has a real fight on its hands.

However, if the team decides to move ahead quickly, they can evade the creature, which is moving a mere 5 meters per round.

As they move ahead, the team achieves its goal—the resined-over opening to DarkStryder's Labyrinth. Read the following aloud:

Ahead, you can see the door that leads into DarkStryder's labyrinth, a massive bone-like slab of shiny, dense material. The door is per-



LFL

fectly smooth, and the moist, slick surface that the door is mounted in appears to be, of all things, *breathing*.

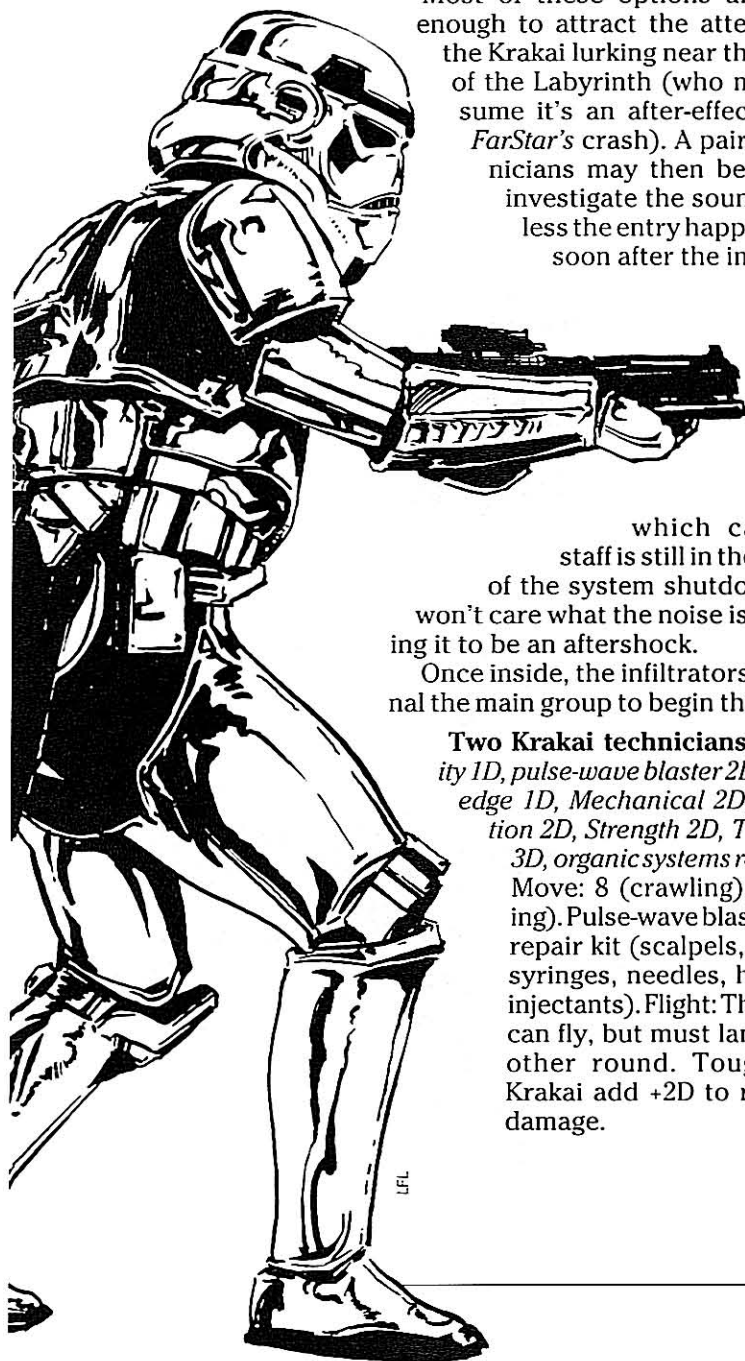
The resin is strong (5D *Strength* to resist damage), but can be smashed through, opened with an explosive charge (a Moderate *demolitions* task), cut open, if the characters have the power tools, or simply blasted open with hand weapons. Attacking the membrane around the door will work more quickly, but it will alert the entire fortress to their presence. Any Yapi or Charr Ontee accompanying the group will warn them of this. Otherwise, double the number of opponents in all subsequent encounters if the characters attack the membrane.

Most of these options are noisy enough to attract the attention of the Krakai lurking near the center of the Labyrinth (who might assume it's an after-effect of the *FarStar's* crash). A pair of technicians may then be sent to investigate the sound — unless the entry happens very soon after the impact, in

which case the staff is still in the throws of the system shutdown, and won't care what the noise is, assuming it to be an aftershock.

Once inside, the infiltrators can signal the main group to begin the attack.

**Two Krakai technicians.** *Dexterity 1D, pulse-wave blaster 2D, Knowledge 1D, Mechanical 2D, Perception 2D, Strength 2D, Technical 3D, organic systems repair 5D.* Move: 8 (crawling), 12 (flying). Pulse-wave blaster (3D), repair kit (scalpels, clamps, syringes, needles, hormone injectants). Flight: The Krakai can fly, but must land every other round. Tough: The Krakai add +2D to resist all damage.



## ATTACKING THE MAIN GATE

If the the Yapi tribes and Charr Ontee legion march on the fortress, read the following aloud:

**With a massive war cry, the Yapi clansmen charge towards the main gate, firing their primitive slughtrowers and tossing their spears. Expecting resistance at the main gate, the boisterous Yapi move forward rapidly, hoping to overcome the defenders by sheer weight of numbers.**

**The Charr Ontee also proceed with the attack, moving with almost unbelievable silence, in total contrast to their Yapi allies. Suddenly, a shout erupts from behind the main gate — a Yapi cry.**

**DarkStryder apparently has more reinforcements than you thought.**

The Yapi charge is met by a force of about 1,000 exiled Yapi in DarkStryder's service (the estimate of enemy forces was considerably off). A grand melee ensues between DarkStryder-allied Yapi exiles and regular Yapi clansmen, with the outer Yapi aided by Charr Ontee soldiers and New Republic troops. The characters must fight off a charge of a dozen DarkStryder-allied Yapi. On the plus side, DarkStryder chose these Yapi as henchmen because they did not possess Ta-Ree abilities; they are outcasts from the main Yapi tribes.

**Twelve Yapi warriors.** *Dexterity 3D, archaic guns 5D, dodge 5D, running 3D, melee 5D+2, melee parry 5D+1, thrown weapons 4D+2, Knowledge 1D+1, survival 6D, Mechanical 1D+1, Perception 2D, hide 4D, search 6D, sneak 6D, Strength 3D, brawling 5D, stamina 5D, Technical 1D+1, archaic gun repair 3D, first aid 3D+1, melee weapon repair 3D.* Move: 11. Breechloaders (3D+1 damage, take one action to reload), stabbing spear (STR+1D), parrying shield, decorative beads and feathers.

The battle goes well for several minutes, until an Imperial Army armor force counterattacks. The player are fighting off the last remnants of the charges when they hear a low, pulsing throb grumbling through the ground. The battle quiets as a massive repulsortank glide around the corner of the keep and opens fire with its turret-mounted repeating blaster and laser cannon! The blaster cuts down Yapi on both sides.

**Medium Imperial repulsortank.** *Speeder, repulsortank operation 5D+2, vehicle blasters 5D+2.* Maneuverability 1D+2, move 105; 300 kmh, body strength 4D+2. Weapons: medium blaster can-

non (fire control 1D+1, 50-200/500/1 km, damage 3D+2), heavy repeating blaster (fire control 1D+1D, 3-75/200/500, damage 8D, character scale).

Any New Republic forces aiding the attack can use any of the several methods available to them to destroy the enemy tanks — calling in ULAVs, any starfighters that may have remained behind, and so forth. Once this is done, the enemy Yapi flee.

With the external guards routed, the *FarStar* troops can blast open the front gates (3D speeder scale *Strength*), or have the Charr Ontee rip them open with their power-claws.



### THE LIFEWELL

The infiltrators reach the Lifewell, and encounter Servant guards programmed to attack any intruders .

**Two Servant guards.** *Dexterity 2D, pulse-wave blaster 4D, Knowledge 1D, Mechanical 1D, Perception 1D, search 4D, Strength 2D, Technical 2D.* Move: 10. Pulse-wave blaster (4D), armor (+1D physical, +2 energy). These guards will not surrender, and are programmed to fight to the death.



### INTO THE BREACH!

The Charr Ontee soldiers, Yapi warriors, and *FarStar* troops pour into the outer courtyard, and are opposed by Servant guards. In addition, one of the nearby E-Web emplacements will begin opening fire as well.

#### ■ E-Web Repeating Blaster

**Model:** BlasTech E-Web Repeating Blaster  
**Type:** Two-man heavy repeating blaster  
**Scale:** Character  
**Skill:** Blaster: repeating blaster  
**Ammo:** Power generator only  
**Range:** 3-75/200/500  
**Damage:** 8D

#### ■ "Hardpoint" Heavy Weapons Armor

**Model:** Imperial Munitions "Rampart" Blast Armor  
**Type:** Portable Heavy Armor  
**Scale:** Character  
**Cost:** 10,000 credits  
**Availability:** X  
**Game Notes:** Provides +3D protection against physical attacks, +2D against energy attacks. These emplacements take 10 hours to set up and properly anchor, requiring a Moderate *Technical* roll to successfully install them. The armor has been formed to provide ample cover for an E-Web blaster, two gunners and a power generator.

**Imperial E-Web Gunners.** All stats 2D+1 except: blaster 5D, search 5D. Move: 10. Blaster

pistol (4D), helmet (+1D physical).

**Yimi Servant guards.** *Dexterity 2D, pulse-wave blaster 4D, Knowledge 1D, Mechanical 1D, Perception 1D, search 4D, Strength 2D, Technical 2D.* Move: 10. Pulse-wave blaster (4D), armor (+1D physical, +2 energy).

If the players are the first through the gate, they have to blast their way through 20 Servant guards, and that's just to meet the real opposition — a heavily defended assault platoon!



### IMPERIAL SURPRISE

At the end of the courtyard, directly in front of the Inner Keep doors, an Imperial heavy weapons squad is in a defensive position with heavy repeating blasters.

This position is defended by a barricade of portable defense shields (4D character scale), essentially the same as the shields stored on the *FarStar*. If the shields suffer damage, the Engineering squad will attempt to repair the devices and keep them functional.

The Yapi charge the repeating blasters bravely but uselessly. The Imperials are quite able to hold off an army of the primitively armed natives, and will do so if the player characters don't take them out. After 15 rounds of combat, the Yapi will turn tail and flee if the characters don't at least attempt to subdue this position.

### OTHER IMPERIAL DEFENSES

There are additional Imperial defenses at DarkStryder's fortress, generally serving in a patrol capacity. For game play purposes, see the overview map of DarkStryder's fortress for the starting positions of defense elements. In general, these defenses will redeploy to augment other positions that have been engaged in 10 or more rounds of combat.

- **Biker scout units.** A number of biker scouts have taken up defensive positions near the north and south wings of the fortress.

**Imperial Scout Troopers.** All stats 2D except: *blaster 4D, brawling parry 4D, dodge 4D, repulsorlift operation: speeder bike 3D+2, Mechanical 3D, brawling 3D.* Move 10. Scout armor (+2 to resist physical and energy damage, +2 to hit targets moving more than Move 10 and/or in visually obscured conditions), blaster pistol (4D), concussion grenades (5D/4D/3D/2D), survival gear. Character points: 2.

**Aratech 74-Z Military Speeder Bikes.** Speeder, maneuverability 3D+2, move 175; 500 kmh, body

strength 2D. Weapons: laser cannon (fire control 2D, 3-50/100/200, damage 3D).

**Attack Pattern:** The biker scout units will sweep out and make strafing passes at nearby combatants, breaking into 2-man elements.

• **AT-ST elements.** Sarne has also deployed armor to defend the fortress. While he does not have any larger vehicles (such as AT-ATs or Juggernauts), he does have some repulsortanks and a small contingent of AT-STs.

**AT-STs.** Walker, *missile weapons 4D, vehicle blasters 4D+2, walker operation: AT-ST 5D, maneuverability 1D, move 30; 90 kmh, body strength 3D. Weapons: twin blaster cannons (fire control 1D, 50–200/1/2 km, damage 4D), twin light blaster*

*cannons (fire control 1D, 50–300/500/1 km, damage 2D), concussion grenade launcher (fire control 1D, 10–50/100/200, damage 3D).*

**Attack Pattern:** The six-walker teams of scout walkers will maintain their positions (to the north, west and south of the fortress) and only engage any vehicles and armor the attacking forces may employ.



**THE SLEEPER AWAKENS**

As the player characters enter the Sleeper's chamber, read the following aloud:

**The tiny chamber is strewn with bits of rock, rubble and bits and pieces of the bio-organic construction material DarkStryder favors. In one corner, a two-meter long, biomechanical pod is stirring, as if someone — or something — inside is struggling to exit.**

**A moment later, the pod opens with a wet, hissing pop and a bedraggled human woman falls out, landing hard on the floor of the chamber. The woman is startled by your presence, and she reaches for a small metal cylinder at her waist ... a lightsaber.**

The woman is Halbret, a Jedi of the Old Republic who was present at the original Rift Disaster thousands of years ago. She has been inside the

stasis pod for all that time, and despite the fact that she looks like she's in her mid-40s, she is actually thousands of years old. While she is initially wary, she will not attack unless attacked herself. After a moment, she will speak quietly to the player characters, ostensibly to say "hello," and identify herself. Halbret speaks in a formal, antique form of Basic, requiring a Moderate *languages* roll to understand her.

The stasis chamber she was in was delicate, and was consequently damaged by the *FarStar's* crash, allowing her to complete her trance. Halbret believes that only a few months have passed, and that these people are Old Republic scouts. She quickly assimilates her situation, however, and gladly relates the story behind

**SPECIAL MISSIONS PLATOON**

Sarne's Special Missions Platoon is charged with the on-site ground security of DarkStryder's fortress. This Platoon (nicknamed "Kal'Shebbol Fury") breaks down into four squads, under the command of Lt. Gerrin Nikals.

• **Sharpshooter Squad A (8 troopers, plus sergeant).** *Dexterity 2D+2, blaster 5D+2, blaster: blaster rifle 7D+1, blaster: repeating blaster 6D+2, blaster artillery 4D+2, brawling parry 3D+2, dodge 4D+2, grenade 4D+2, melee combat 3D+2, melee parry 3D+2, running 3D+2, vehicle blasters 5D+2, Knowledge 1D, intimidation 3D, streetwise 2D, survival 3D, Mechanical 3D+2, communications 4D+2, ground vehicle operation 5D+2, hover vehicle operation 4D+2, repulsortank operation 4D+2, Perception 2D+1, command 3D+1, hide 3D+1, search 3D+1, sneak 3D+1, Strength 1D+1, brawling 3D+1, climbing/jumping 2D+1, stamina 3D+1, Technical 1D, armor repair 2D, blaster repair 2D, first aid 2D+2, ground vehicle repair 2D, hover vehicle repair 2D, repulsortank repair 2D. Move 10. Blaster rifle (5D), field armor and helmet (+1D physical +2 energy), grenades (5D), helmet comlink, survival gear, utility belt with supplies. Character points: 3. (In addition, the sergeant has *command 4D*).*

**Attack Pattern:** "Fury" Squad A is the "fixed-position" squad; Squad A will attempt to target and dispatch any targets attempting to move through the main gate.

• **Sharpshooter Squad B (8 troopers, plus sergeant).** *Dexterity 2D+2, blaster 5D+2, blaster: blaster rifle 7D+1, blaster: repeating*

*blaster 6D+2, blaster artillery 4D+2, brawling parry 3D+2, dodge 4D+2, grenade 4D+2, melee combat 3D+2, melee parry 3D+2, running 3D+2, vehicle blasters 5D+2, Knowledge 1D, intimidation 3D, streetwise 2D, survival 3D, Mechanical 3D+2, communications 4D+2, ground vehicle operation 5D+2, hover vehicle operation 4D+2, repulsortank operation 4D+2, Perception 2D+1, command 3D+1, hide 3D+1, search 3D+1, sneak 3D+1, Strength 1D+1, brawling 3D+1, climbing/jumping 2D+1, stamina 3D+1, Technical 1D, armor repair 2D, blaster repair 2D, first aid 2D+2, ground vehicle repair 2D, hover vehicle repair 2D, repulsortank repair 2D. Move 10. Light repeating blaster (6D), field armor and helmet (+1D physical +2 energy), grenades (5D), helmet comlink, survival gear, utility belt with supplies. Character points: 3. (In addition, the sergeant has *command 4D*).*

**Attack Pattern:** "Fury" Squad B has been assigned "mobile interdiction duty." As Squad A targets enemy positions and fires on them, Squad B will move away from cover and attempt to cut of the target's escape routes in a flanking maneuver.

• **Heavy Weapons Squad (8 troopers, plus sergeant).** *Dexterity 2D+2, blaster 5D+2, blaster: blaster rifle 7D+1, blaster: repeating blaster 6D+2, blaster artillery 4D+2, brawling parry 3D+2, dodge 4D+2, grenade 4D+2, melee combat 3D+2, melee parry 3D+2, running 3D+2, vehicle blasters 5D+2, Knowledge 1D, intimidation 3D, streetwise 2D, survival 3D, Mechanical 3D+2, communications 4D+2, ground vehicle operation 5D+2, hover vehicle operation 4D+2, repulsortank operation*

*4D+2, Perception 2D+1, command 3D+1, hide 3D+1, search 3D+1, sneak 3D+1, Strength 1D+1, brawling 3D+1, climbing/jumping 2D+1, stamina 3D+1, Technical 1D, armor repair 2D, blaster repair 2D, first aid 2D+2, ground vehicle repair 2D, hover vehicle repair 2D, repulsortank repair 2D. Move 10. Heavy repeating blaster (three in the squad) (8D), field armor and helmet (+1D physical +2 energy), grenades (5D), helmet comlink, survival gear, utility belt with supplies. Character points: 3. (In addition the sergeant has *command 4D*).*

**Attack Pattern:** The heavy weapons squad will maintain position behind the shield wall and pour as much fire as possible into the bulk of oncoming enemy forces.

• **Engineering squad (8 engineers, plus sergeant).** *Dexterity 2D, blaster 5D, brawling parry 3D+2, dodge 4D+2, grenade 4D+2, melee combat 3D+2, melee parry 3D+2, running 3D+2, vehicle blasters 5D+2, Knowledge 1D+2, intimidation 3D, streetwise 2D, survival 3D, Mechanical 1D, communications 2D+2, ground vehicle operation 2D+2, hover vehicle operation 2D+2, repulsortank operation 2D+2, Perception 2D+1, command 3D+1, hide 3D+1, search 3D+1, sneak 3D+1, Strength 1D+1, brawling 3D+1, climbing/jumping 2D+1, stamina 3D+1, Technical 3D+2, armor repair 4D, blaster repair 5D, demolitions 5D+2, first aid 4D, ground vehicle repair 5D+2, hover vehicle repair 5D+2, repulsortank repair 5D+2. Move 10. Blaster pistol (4D+2) field armor and helmet (+1D physical +2 energy), grenades (5D), detonite, helmet comlink, sur-*

*vival gear, utility belt with supplies, toolkit. Character points: 3. (In addition, the sergeant has *command 4D*).*

**Attack Pattern:** The Engineering squad will only provide fire support if one of the sharpshooter squads is routed. However, if Lieutenant Nikals is captured or killed, the Engineering squad will surrender, deactivating the defense shields.

• **Lieutenant Nikals.** *Dexterity 3D+2, blaster 5D+2, blaster: blaster rifle 6D+1, blaster: repeating blaster 6D+2, blaster artillery 4D+2, brawling parry 4D+2, dodge 5D, grenade 5D, melee combat 4D+2, melee parry 4D+2, running 4D+2, vehicle blasters 5D+2, Knowledge 2D+2, intimidation 4D, streetwise 3D, survival 4D, Mechanical 3D, communications 4D+2, ground vehicle operation 5D+2, hover vehicle operation 4D+2, repulsortank operation 4D+2, Perception 3D+1, command 5D, hide 4D+2, search 4D+2, sneak 4D+2, Strength 2D+2, brawling 3D+1, climbing/jumping 3D+1, stamina 3D+1, Technical 2D+2, armor repair 3D, blaster repair 2D, first aid 3D+2, ground vehicle repair 3D, hover vehicle repair 3D, repulsortank repair 3D. Move 10. Heavy blaster pistol (5D), field armor and helmet (+1D physical +2 energy), grenades (5D), helmet comlink, survival gear, utility belt with supplies. Character points: 6. Force points: 2.*

**Attack Pattern:** Nikals will stay near the Engineering squad, attempting to coordinate the attacks of the sharpshooters and the heavy weapons squads. If one of the squads is wiped out, his nerve is shaken and his command skill suffers a -1D penalty.

The tiny chamber is strewn with bits of rock, rubble and bits and pieces of the bio-organic construction material DarkStryder favors. In one corner, a two-meter long, biomechanical pod is stirring, as if someone — or something — inside is struggling to exit.

A moment later, the pod opens with a wet, hissing pop and a bedraggled human woman falls out, landing hard on the floor of the chamber. The woman is startled by your presence, and she reaches for a small metal cylinder at her waist ... a lightsaber.

The woman is Halbret, a Jedi of the Old Republic who was present at the original Rift Disaster thousands of years ago. She has been inside the

stasis pod for all that time, and despite the fact that she looks like she's in her mid-40s, she is actually thousands of years old. While she is initially wary, she will not attack unless attacked herself. After a moment, she will speak quietly to the player characters, ostensibly to say "hello," and identify herself. Halbret speaks in a formal, antique form of Basic, requiring a Moderate *languages* roll to understand her.

The stasis chamber she was in was delicate, and was consequently damaged by the *FarStar's* crash, allowing her to complete her trance. Halbret believes that only a few months have passed, and that these people are Old Republic scouts. She quickly assimilates her situation, however, and gladly relates the story behind

4D+2, Perception 2D+1, command 3D+1, hide 3D+1, search 3D+1, sneak 3D+1, Strength 1D+1, brawling 3D+1, climbing/jumping 2D+1, stamina 3D+1, Technical 1D, armor repair 2D, blaster repair 2D, first aid 2D+2, ground vehicle repair 2D, hover vehicle repair 2D, repulsorlift repair 2D. Move 10. Heavy repeating blaster (three in the squad) (8D), field armor and helmet (+1D physical +2 energy), grenades (5D), helmet comlink, survival gear, utility belt with supplies. Character points: 3. (In addition the sergeant has command 4D).

**Attack Pattern:** The heavy weapons squad will maintain position behind the shield wall and pour as much fire as possible into the bulk of oncoming enemy forces.

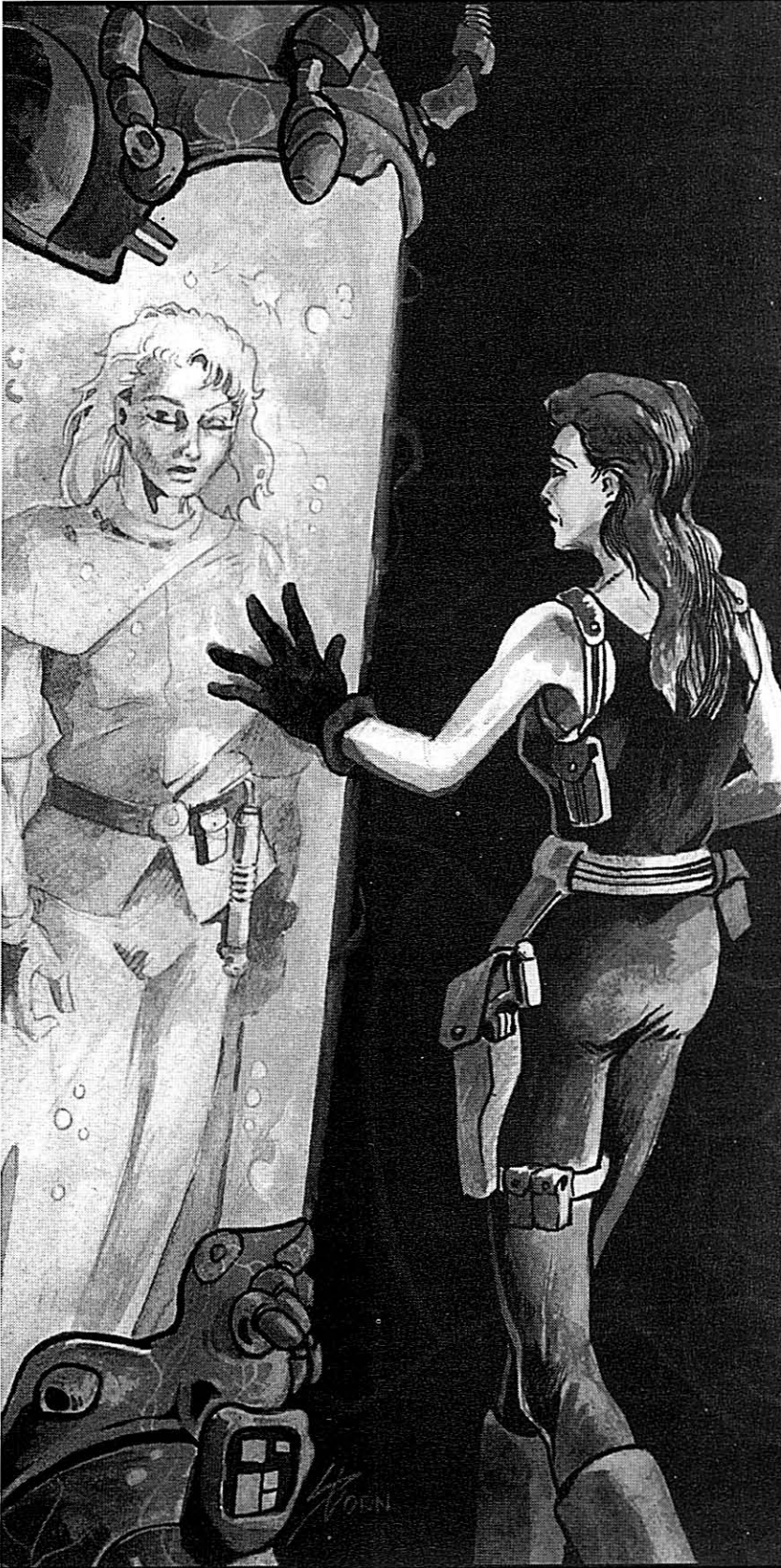
• **Engineering squad (8 engineers, plus sergeant).** Dexterity 2D, blaster 5D, brawling parry 3D+2, dodge 4D+2, grenade 4D+2, melee combat 3D+2, melee parry 3D+2, running 3D+2, vehicle blasters 5D+2, Knowledge 1D+2, intimidation 3D, streetwise 2D, survival 3D, Mechanical 1D, communications 2D+2, ground vehicle operation 2D+2, hover vehicle operation 2D+2, repulsorlift operation 2D+2, Perception 2D+1, command 3D+1, hide 3D+1, search 3D+1, sneak 3D+1, Strength 1D+1, brawling 3D+1, climbing/jumping 2D+1, stamina 3D+1, Technical 3D+2, armor repair 4D, blaster repair 5D, demolitions 5D+2, first aid 4D, ground vehicle repair 5D+2, hover vehicle repair 5D+2, repulsorlift repair 5D+2. Move 10. Blaster pistol (4D+2) field armor and helmet (+1D physical +2 energy), grenades (5D), detonite, helmet comlink, sur-

vival gear, utility belt with supplies, toolkit. Character points: 3. (In addition, the sergeant has command 4D).

**Attack Pattern:** The Engineering squad will only provide fire support if one of the sharpshooter squads is routed. However, if Lieutenant Nikals is captured or killed, the Engineering squad will surrender, deactivating the defense shields.

• **Lieutenant Nikals.** Dexterity 3D+2, blaster 5D+2, blaster: blaster rifle 6D+1, blaster: repeating blaster 6D+2, blaster artillery 4D+2, brawling parry 4D+2, dodge 5D, grenade 5D, melee combat 4D+2, melee parry 4D+2, running 4D+2, vehicle blasters 5D+2, Knowledge 2D+2, intimidation 4D, streetwise 3D, survival 4D, Mechanical 3D, communications 4D+2, ground vehicle operation 5D+2, hover vehicle operation 4D+2, repulsorlift operation 4D+2, Perception 3D+1, command 5D, hide 4D+2, search 4D+2, sneak 4D+2, Strength 2D+2, brawling 3D+1, climbing/jumping 3D+1, stamina 3D+1, Technical 2D+2, armor repair 3D, blaster repair 2D, first aid 3D+2, ground vehicle repair 3D, hover vehicle repair 3D, repulsorlift repair 3D. Move 10. Heavy blaster pistol (5D), field armor and helmet (+1D physical +2 energy), grenades (5D), helmet comlink, survival gear, utility belt with supplies. Character points: 6. Force points: 2.

**Attack Pattern:** Nikals will stay near the Engineering squad, attempting to coordinate the attacks of the sharpshooters and the heavy weapons squads. If one of the squads is wiped out, his nerve is shaken and his command skill suffers a -1D penalty.



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DarkStryder and the Precursors (whom she calls the Kathol); see Halbret's Capsule for more information.

## ■ Halbret

**Type:** Jedi Knight

**DEXTERITY 3D**

Blaster 6D, brawling parry 7D, dodge 7D, lightsaber 8D, melee combat 5D, melee parry 4D+2, running 6D

**KNOWLEDGE 3D\***

Alien species 4D, cultures 5D, languages 5D, streetwise 5D, survival 6D, willpower 7D

**MECHANICAL 3D\***

Archaic ship piloting 5D, astrogation 6D, beast riding 6D

**PERCEPTION 3D**

Command 5D, hide 4D+2, persuasion 4D, search 5D+1, sneak 6D

**STRENGTH 3D**

Brawling 5D, climbing/jumping 5D+2, stamina 4D, swimming 4D+2

**TECHNICAL 3D\***

First aid 5D, ground vehicle repair 4D, hover vehicle repair 4D+1

\*These attributes and related skills limited to information available at the time she entered hibernation. It is possible that some skills and powers have atrophied or been lost during her long hibernation.

**Special Abilities:**

*Force Skills: Control 7D, sense 5D, alter 5D*

**This Character is Force Sensitive**

**Force Points: 6**

**Character Points: 20**

**Move: 10**

**Equipment:** Lightsaber, Jedi robes

**Capsule:** Halbret, a Jedi from the ancient Republic, has spent millennia in a hibernation trance, in a stasis field on Kathol. Born on Coruscant, Halbret was trained to be a Jedi from childhood, and followed her heart to the Unknown Reaches beyond the Rim (what is today called the Inner Rim).

After years of exploring, she discovered the trail of a renegade Jedi, who had gone over to the dark side of the Force and was scheming to conquer a vast hegemony outside of Republic space. Enlisting the aid of a cadre of other Jedi, she tracking this vile creature down to Kathol, freed the Kathol from their overlord's will, and engaged in a massive battle to end the Dark Jedi's power. In the course of this battle one of the Kathol hyperspace launch gates overloaded and created a massive energy distortion — the Rift. As the energy wave approached Kathol system, the Kathol hurriedly assembled an experimental guardian unit — DarkStryder — and selected their best minds to be absorbed into a storage receptacle.

As the surviving Jedi made ready to escape, Halbret, feeling partially responsible for this turn of events, volunteered to remain behind and help DarkStryder and the Charr Ontee watch over the Kathol minds, and free them once the danger had passed. DarkStryder and the Charr Ontee, as durable bio-constructs, could survive the coming holocaust. The Kathol were more fragile (thus the storage receptacle), and Halbret sealed herself away into a Precursor "impact pod," and willed herself into a hibernation trance while the Charr Ontee



terraformed Kathol into a livable world again.

DarkStryder, however, preferred to rule, and activated the impact pod's stasis function, trapping Halbret in a permanent hibernation trance to prevent her from freeing the Kathol. While inside the pod, Halbret has been in contact with the Precursor's energy-selves, trapped inside the Lifewell. If asked, she will reveal that the Lifewell's inhabitants are now inextricably intertwined with the Force in a unique way, and that this energy signature is what has warped the Force in this region, thereby creating Ta-Ree magic. In addition, she has been mentally exploring the plane of existence that the Precursors now inhabit, and in fact she greatly prefers it to her former life. She is unhappy at no longer being able to communicate with the Precursor's whom she calls "exquisite creatures, inhabiting a realm of beauty."

She will admit, however, that most Precursors do not relish their captivity in the Lifewell — more than anything they wish to be released from their crystalline prison. According to Halbret, the transformation is now irreversible, and the Precursor's will exist in their energy forms, bound to the planet for eternity. Still, she hopes to grant them their wish for freedom, and will ask for the player characters' help in releasing the captive life forms.

Halbret closely resembles Jessa Dajus — they are directly related via Halbret's sister, Dajus' Coruscantan ancestor.



## THE EXPERIMENTS

As the Imperial platoon falls to the advancing forces, the Krakai release monstrous biodroids, bio-engineered creatures designed to kill. These creatures are mindless and violent, and attack the nearest living being. There's one biodroid for every player in the scene (and plenty more for the Charr Ontee and Yapi). Read the following aloud as the Imperial Special Missions Platoon begins to falter:

**You can see several of the force fields that the Imperial platoon had set up fail in ghostly splashes of sparks. The "Kal'Shebbol Fury" platoon is in real trouble and they know it. One squad of sharpshooters looks like it is about to surrender.**

**Suddenly, from doorways in the northern and southern wings of the fortress, a hideous, bloodcurdling scream erupts! The doors swing open and creatures from a madman's nightmare emerge — massive, muscular beasts with huge fangs and claws. In fact, they appear to be bred only to kill — they do not possess hands or other manipulatory digits, only claws.**

**The monsters immediately sweep across the field, heading directly at your forces (though**



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the beasts attack any Imperial who happens to step in their way). Judging by the ferociousness of the attack and the wanton, indiscriminate attacks, you realize that the fight just became that much more deadly!

## ■ Biodroids

Type: Bio-engineered fighting creatures

DEXTERITY 3D

Brawling parry 4D

PERCEPTION 1D

STRENGTH 5D

Brawling 6D

Special Abilities:

*Horn-Claws*: STR+2D

*Bite*: STR+1D

*Carapace*: +2D to resist damage.

Move: 12

Size: 3 meters tall

**Capsule:** Hideous creatures designed to attack rebellious Yapi and Charr Ontee, these creatures are untamable and ferocious. They lack paws or hands, since the Krakai designed them with sharp horn-claws for combat. They will not surrender, fighting until they are killed (or are ordered to stop fighting by their Krakai masters or DarkStryder itself).



## MEETING THE ENEMY

The infiltrators ascend into DarkStryder's inner chamber, surprising DarkStryder, Sarne, and Mist, who are speaking to each other in the center of the chamber.

Read the following aloud:

**The Chamber of the Lifewell and the Sleeper connects directly to DarkStryder's inner chamber, via a bone-and-resin spiral staircase. The stairs come out behind a low dais, on the other side of a curtain. As you emerge, you hear faint conversation, growing louder as you grow closer.**

The chamber is very large, its exact dimensions impossible to determine as most of the room is bathed in shadow. The floor is made up of several "rib-like" crenellations that twist throughout the chamber, but all leading to the dais in the center of the room. Most of the crenellations are fairly tall, and should provide partial cover if a firefight breaks out.

The player character can attempt to *sneak* closer or they can charge forward and attack.

If the characters *sneak* forward, have each make a skill check. A Moderate or better result means they can close the distance to Sarne and DarkStryder to a mere 30 yards. Read the following aloud:

DarkStryder — a decidedly insect-like creature — is somehow more frail looking than you expected, though you can't help but feel an instinctive revulsion towards the hideous beast. Several hairless, spider-like creatures are crawling all over his worm-like body, and he occasionally clicks his jaws at them or strokes their backs as if they are beloved pets.

Standing on the dais, speaking to the monster, is Kentor Sarne. He looks somewhat annoyed with his benefactor. You can just make out their conversation at this distance, DarkStryder's deep, gravelly voice echoing throughout the chamber.

"Sarne-One," it rasps, clicking it's multiple leg together to emphasize the words. "Things not good. Brannij-One departs without fixing hyperdrive devices. This One's children slaughtered in fortress yard. New One's — New Republic ones? — all in area, yet not destroyed. Danger to Sarne-One as well as this One. You must fix."

Sarne retorts, "I'd say that your situation is far worse than mine, *benefactor*," the Moff snarls caustically. "I have a way off this miserable rock, whereas you do not. Our arrangement is terminated."

Two sets of steps begin moving away.

"Wait! This One's children speak. Enemies here!" DarkStryder's thin limbs are quivering with agitation, dislodging several of his spider-pets, which remain motionless when they hit the floor, as if awaiting instructions.

Looking down you can see hundreds more of the creeping, arachnid pets surrounding you, unmoving, as if they are merely watching you. And they've apparently told the insect-despot you are here.

Sarne draws his blaster, fires a few rounds in your direction and runs, apparently for some concealed exit. DarkStryder rears up, his tattered cloak-remnants parting to reveal the hundreds of legs growing from his worm-like body. "Kill intruders, Children," it growls, "Bring them to this One."

The menacing creatures move forward as one.

Right towards you.

There are approximately 500 Ssamb in the chamber, all willing to carry out DarkStryder's bidding — and the player characters are in real trouble.

**Ssamb.** *Dexterity 4D, brawling parry 5D, Knowledge 1D, Mechanical 1D, Perception 2D, Strength 3D, brawling 5D, Technical 1D.* Move: 5 (crawling). Fangs: STR+2D damage. Cling: Can cling to



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almost any surface. Charge: The Ssamb can charge at triple rate every other round.

The Ssamb move in waves, attacking roughly 20 at a time, from all sides. The player characters can attempt to fight it out, or blast a path through them towards DarkStryder. However, DarkStryder has kept roughly 1,000 of the predatory arachnids near him as a guard force. Two good hits with explosives (such as thermal detonators or grenades) will stun the bulk of the swarm for 1D rounds, before they regroup and attack again. By laying down a staggered pattern of grenades an blaster fire, the player characters should be able to reach DarkStryder, or flee the room, as they desire.



## CRACKING THE SHELL

Once the “Kal’Shebbol Fury” platoon is dispatched, the outside attackers have a shot at

opening the fortress. The doors to the main keep can be blasted open (5D speeder scale *Strength*) and the liberators will have the opportunity to enter.

If the player characters manage to reach the main doors to the keep and blow them open, read the following aloud:

**You rush into the maw of DarkStryder’s citadel discover that the main entrance is defended by a horde of berserk Krakai. The walls in the entryway appear to be breathing, and stray blaster shots provoke a sudden spasm from the strangely organic structure.**

Every character must fight off two Krakai defenders. If a player character rolls a “one” on the Wild Die during a blaster skill roll, the stray blaster round aggravates the living building immensely — the resulting spasm hurls the combatants to the floor. All characters must make a Moderate *Dexterity* check or be thrown to the floor (which does 2D stun damage).

**Krakai defenders.** *Dexterity 3D, pulse-wave blaster 4D, Knowledge 1D, Mechanical 2D, Perception 2D, Strength 2D, brawling 4D, Technical 2D.* Move: 8 (crawling), 12 (flying). Pulse-wave blaster (3D). Flight: The Krakai can fly, but must land every other round. Tough: The Krakai add +2D to resist all damage.

The defending Krakai fire their pulse-wave blasters, then charge (fly) onto the attackers and attack with their tentacles. This is quite disgusting, as the transparent tentacles are slimy with mucus and other less-pleasant secretions. If a Krakai manages to land on top of a character, the insect-creature will attempt to choke the victim with the rubbery appendages (requires an *brawling* check to see if the Krakai is successful in grappling with the character; an opposed *Strength* roll determines if the character remains entangled; every round that a character is entangled, he or she suffers 2D damage).

Once the defenders are tied up with Krakai, a small group of technician Krakai use green trapezoidal modules to mindwarp the attackers (just like the one Sarne used on Page's Commandos months ago during the Siege of Kal'Shebbol) — the characters must make a Very Difficult *willpower* roll to overcome the effects of the mindwarper, or spend the next hour unconscious — not a tenable position in the middle of a firefight. The effects can be overcome by vigorously shaking the characters (requiring a Moderate *Strength* check).



## FIRST FIRE

If the player characters make it near DarkStryder, read the following aloud:

**The hideous insect-like creature rears up, towering above you as his — its — coiled body unfurls.**

**“Not expecting you,” it hisses, the deep voice reverberating through the chamber. “Will crush you, like this One crushed old masters.”**

If Halbret is with the infiltration party, DarkStryder adds:

**“And Sleeper-One is with you,” the creature adds, its appendages making a hideous clicking on the bony ground. “Very clever, New Ones. Greetings, Sleeper. Long has this One waited for Sleeper to awake. But this One is ready for Sleeper.”**

If Dajus is among the infiltrators DarkStryder says:

**“And, the Promised One. Hungered for Promised One, and Promised One is here. Treacherous Sarne-One actually spoke truth. Now, Promised One will stand aside while this One kills New Ones. This One requires Dajus undamaged.”**

**DarkStryder's Ssamb minions slowly edge toward you again, regrouping.**

After the devastating blaster fire and grenade barrage, the Ssamb minions are down to a handful — only 100 or so remain. They will break into teams of ten and attack in three rounds. (During these three rounds, the player characters can use any explosives they have left or begin raking the floor with blaster fire, as the Ssamb, now committed only to killing the player characters, will not attempt to *dodge*. With each Ssamb killed, DarkStryder howls in rage, and begins slithering off the dais, moving with surprising slowness, as if afraid that sudden movement may cause it damage.



## DARKSTRYDER'S MINIONS

Outside, if the attackers have overcome the last of the Krakai, they need only push open the doors to DarkStryder's Inner Chamber. Once they do so, they see the building confrontation between DarkStryder and the infiltrator party. As they rush across the Inner Chamber they're attacked by a horde of Ssamb dropping from the vaulted ceiling. Every character gets three consecutive Ssamb to deal with.

**Ssamb.** *Dexterity 4D, brawling parry 5D, Knowledge 1D, Mechanical 1D, Perception 2D, Strength 3D, brawling 5D, Technical 1D.* Move: 5 (crawling). Fangs: STR+2D damage. Cling: Can cling to almost any surface. Charge: The Ssamb can charge at triple rate every other round.

Read the following aloud:

**As the Inner Chamber doors swing open (and the horde of Ssamb descend on the invaders), DarkStryder turns to you with a snarl, its eyes flashing an eerie green.**

**“New Ones have made this One's children rise,” it chitters, its voice filled with cold, naked — and utterly alien — hatred. “Those from Outside invade. This One's chambers violated. The Kathol are endangered. This One is still a prisoner. New Ones have interfered in the plans**

of this One. New Ones, die.”

DarkStryder rears to a height of five meters and extends its body to its full 15 meter length. Entwined among its various appendages, you can see dozens of small, geometrically-shaped totems, several of which are beginning to glow.

Seeing the successful attack on his fortress, DarkStryder goes berserk, sweeping aside resistance and fighting to the last. All bets are off — DarkStryder uses his full powers and won't spare anyone. Blow as many Force points as possible. However, DarkStryder has many targets to occupy him, and he isn't likely to concentrate on killing any particular person, though the depot will avoid attacking Dajus, unless forced.

## ■ DarkStryder

Type: Kathol Bio-construct

### DEXTERITY 4D

Brawling parry 7D, dodge 7D+1, melee combat 8D, melee parry 7D+1, running 6D+2, thrown weapons 4D+2

### KNOWLEDGE 4D

(A) Bio-engineering 4D, cultures 5D, intimidation 9D, willpower 11D

### MECHANICAL 4D

### PERCEPTION 4D

Command 9D, hide 6D, persuasion 5D, search 5D, sneak 6D

### STRENGTH 4D

Brawling 7D, stamina 6D

### TECHNICAL 4D

(A) Bio-construct repair 4D+1, first aid 6D, flash-imprinting 6D, (A) medicine 4D,

This character is Force-sensitive.

Force Points: 12

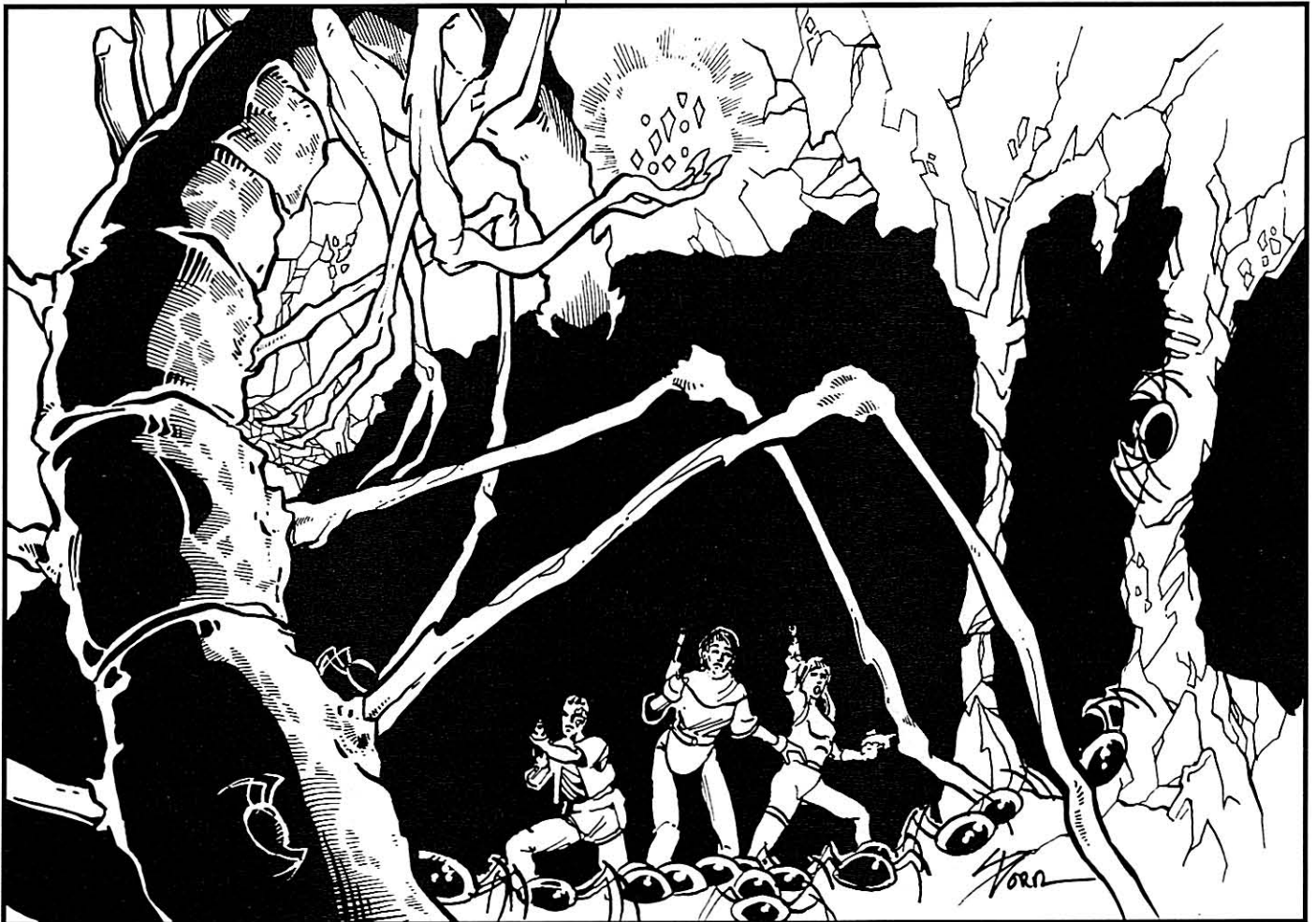
Dark Side Points: 14

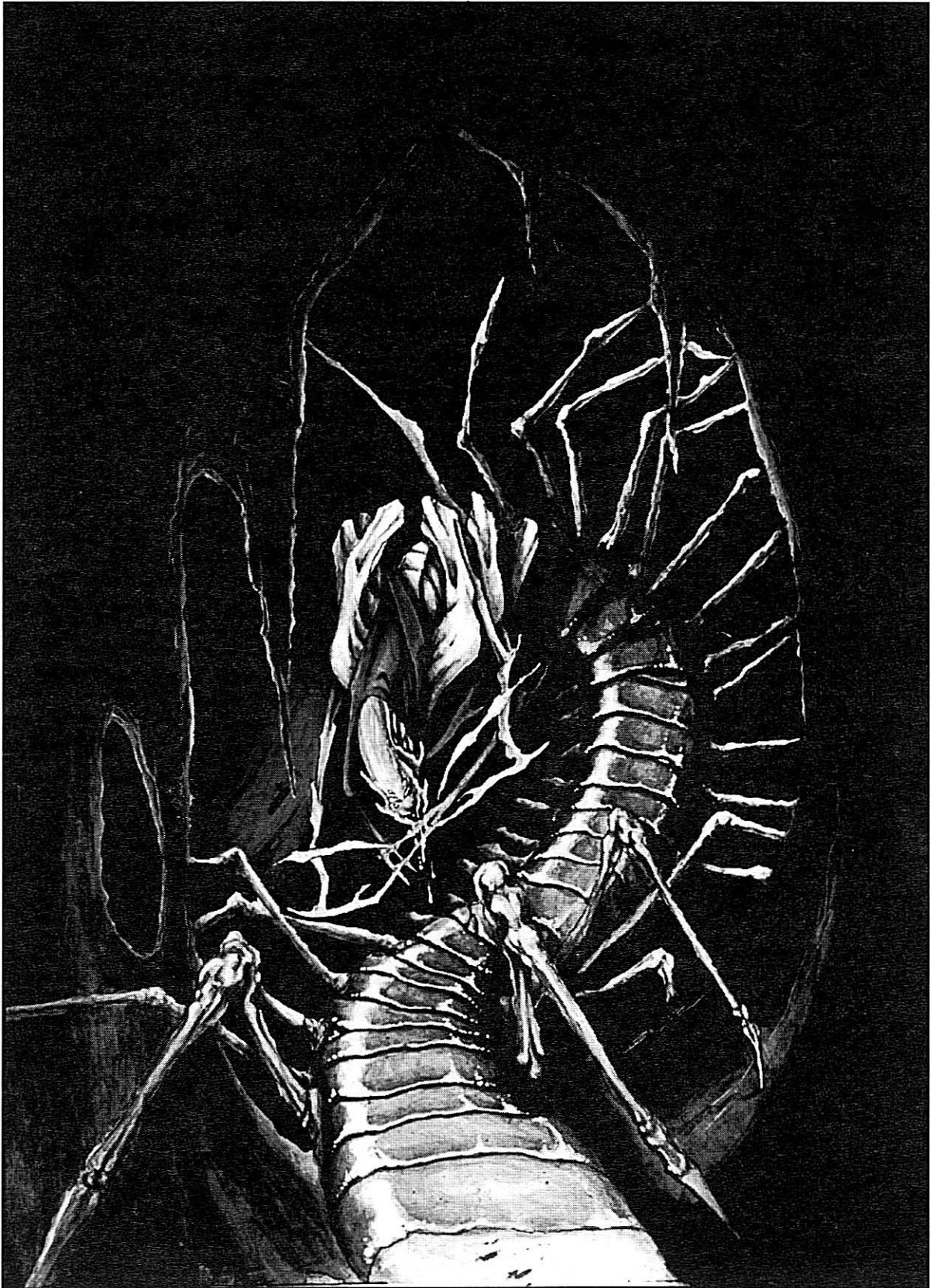
Character Points: 36

Move: 12

Equipment: Tattered Precursor robes, five mindwarper DarkStryder modules\* (requires a Moderate *willpower* check to activate, all characters within 20 meters must make a Very Difficult *willpower* check or fall immediately unconscious for one hour; can only be awakened by vigorous shaking requiring a Moderate *Strength* roll), five lightning modules\* (fires lightning bolt at a single target, 3-7/25/50, 7D damage, uses *willpower* skill), five firespray modules\* (launches a fan of green flame at a single target, 3-4/8/12, 3D damage each round until fire is extinguished, uses *willpower* skill).

\* Note: All DarkStryder modules are good for one use only.





Tom O'Neill

The remaining Ssamb expend themselves in a fury. A Yapi warrior charges through the Ssamb at DarkStryder and is cut down in mid-leap by force lightning. Three lumbering Charr Ontee charge the dais and are swept aside by telekinesis.

As the battle begins, Sarne bolts.

## DARKSTRYDER FLEES

The player characters can battle DarkStryder, but will end up taking on the scores of Ssamb that seem to wade in after the *FarStar* team with no regard for their own safety. After its Ssamb allies are decimated, and its supply of modules is depleted, DarkStryder flees, heading towards the Lifewell. Halbret manages to withstand the effects of the mindwarper that DarkStryder uses to cover its escape and wakes the player characters a few moments later.

"The creature is headed for the Lifewell," Halbret says, frantically urging the player characters to hurry and follow her. "If it gets down there, it'll be able to make more of those devices ..."

If the player characters head for the Lifewell, read the following aloud:

**Moving cautiously down the stairwell, you enter the chamber that houses the life-energy forms of the Precursors—the Kathol, as Halbret calls them. The massive crystal imbedded in the floor has asymetric facets carved all over it, appearing at once synthetic and naturally-formed, an oddly contrasting shape.**

**"This is just the crystal's tip," Halbret says, her voice tinged with awe. "It extends into the planets mantle — several kilometers straight down."**

**A moment later, as if hearing the voices in the chamber, a series of ghostly, swirling tendrils of energy seem to swim up from the crystal's depths, spinning beneath the glassy surface and throwing splashes of colored light across the entire room.**

**From the far side of the crystal, you hear a now-familiar, hissing voice. "New Ones. Sleeper. Old Ones. All together. All will die."**

Any character who makes a Moderate *Perception* check realizes that the sound came from up near the ceiling. As the player characters move around the crystal to get a better look at the creature, read the following aloud:

**You can see DarkStryder now, coiled among the many resin structures dangling from the ceiling, like resin-sculpted stalactites. Near its head, a strange organic machine is pulsing, beating like a living heart. The "heart" is connected to the crystal by a series of vein-like**

**tendrils that begin glowing as more of DarkStryder's limbs are inserted into the pulsing machine.**

**DarkStryder begins to hiss more loudly now, its eyes radiating the ancient monstrosity's hatred of you as clearly as its words.**

**Withdrawing its appendages from the strange, pulsating machine, you can see that DarkStryder has more alien weapon modules, several of which are glowing.**

**Halbret activates her lightsaber, adding the purple gleam of her blade to the swirling chaos of color flashing throughout the room. "We must stop this evil now, my friends," Halbret says, stepping around the crystal and assuming a defensive posture.**

Halbret will lead the attack, launching a blinding series of lightsaber attacks that DarkStryder avoids by coiling among the ceiling stalactites. Finally, the creature tires of dodging Halbret and activates several attack modules at once, depleting most of its supply of the creations. A dozen lightning bolts fly from the geometric tools and smash through Halbret's defenses. The Jedi Knight is badly wounded, her clothing partially ablaze.

However, Halbret's sacrifice is not in vain; the player characters now have a shot at bringing down DarkStryder. Dajus, if present, will likely be torn between her desire to possess DarkStryder technology and power, and her loathing of the fearful dreams the alien creature has subjected her to for the last few months.

DarkStryder will attempt to dodge past the *FarStar* teams shots and move back to the pulsating machine that supplied it with attack modules.

Gamemasters should run five more rounds of the encounter, before Halbret staggers to her feet: "Destroy the device," she yells, her voice hoarse with pain. "Don't let it get more modules!"

The biomachine has *Strength* 2D to resist damage; if destroyed, DarkStryder will fall to the ground and attempt to attack the player characters physically.

When the biomachine is destroyed, read the following aloud:

**DarkStryder hisses in rage and panic, screaming at you in its own language.**

**Clearly, the ancient monstrosity is not happy.**

**Seeing her opening, Halbret yells, "Handle the monster! I'll take care of its power source." Turning on her heel, she stands before the Lifewell. As DarkStryder screams louder, moving towards the Jedi Knight, she swings her blade down, shearing off huge chunks of the crystal and the glowing vein-tendrils that con-**

nect it to DarkStryder's machines.

**With a massive crash, the crystal shatters, and thousands of energy forms stream from the breach, disappearing through the walls like phantoms.**

The Kathol are free.

DarkStryder — defeated, with nowhere left to run — attacks blindly now, trying to match physical strength with the player characters, a contest it will likely lose. However, during the battle, Halbret sacrifices herself to save Dajus, who is about to take a blow from the monster. She crumples, succumbing to her wounds, and fading from sight. Only her tattered Jedi robes and lightsaber remain.

Under the combined efforts of the attackers, DarkStryder can be defeated. How, precisely, is up to the particular group and their actions. DarkStryder won't go down easily and probably takes a number of his opponents with him.

## ALTERNATE RESOLUTION

As an alternate resolution to the above scene, gammasters can have Jessa or the remaining player characters attack the Lifewell crystal. The Lifewell has *Strength* 6D to resist damage, so the characters will probably be forced to spend some Character Points to crack the crystal.

In any event, Halbret should fall, killed by DarkStryder or some other in menace, though her death should be worthy of a Jedi Knight of the Old Republic.



## SARNE ESCAPES

As the New Republic troops entered the room, Sarne fled to his *Lambda*-class shuttle, lifting off to the orbiting hyperspace launch gate, to execute his masterstroke.

If the player characters managed to fight through the Ssamb and DarkStryder they emerge onto the landing pad. Read the following aloud:

**You can see a *Lambda*-class shuttle just lifting off. As various troops open fire on it, it gives a small "victory" waggle of its wings before rocketing skyward, rapidly fading from sight.**

The Yvarema and still-recovering Bothans pick the shuttle up on their sensors, but they are too busy conducting repair and rescue operations to

catch it. They do track it to its destination however, and note that the mysterious orbiting hulk is emitting energy surges unlike any the New Republic has ever experienced.



## EPISODE SIX: THE FINAL BATTLE

Sarne has retreated to his last refuge in the system, the ancient hyperspace launch gate in orbit around Kathol. After disembarking, he and Mist hurry to the central control room, where he plans to activate the damaged gate and use it to destroy the "New Republic fleet," not realizing that he can't control the negative energy flux and that it would destroy the system and vastly expand the Rift's borders, wreaking unimaginable destruction across entire sectors of space.

The gate takes less than an hour to power up, and Sarne intends to aim the launch gate in the general direction of the Bothans, for maximum effect. The players must stop him within the hour. Even though they probably have no idea of Sarne's plans, the characters realize (most likely Jessa) that Sarne always has a backup plan, and has headed to the station, not the *Bastion*.

Halbret knows that the Rift disaster was caused by a launch gate, and if present will say the following:

**"Perhaps," Halbret says, her thick accent making her words difficult to understand, "this 'Sarne' you have told me of plans to duplicate the work of my ancient enemy. Several weeks journey from this place was a construct much like the one above, a "railgun" of sorts that propelled vessels into hyperspace. This railgun can be a dreadful weapon — my enemy managed to explode the other gate creating the vast energy distortion in this sector. Another such detonation ... will be catastrophic."**

Halbret will insist that the *FarStar* troops move to stop Sarne aboard the orbiting launch gate ... before all is lost.

## SARNE'S STORMTROOPERS

As the player characters gather whatever ships they can and make their way towards the station, read the following aloud:

**As you approach the ominous circular construct, you finally have an opportunity to truly gauge its size —the device is massive, and its mass is no doubt partly responsible for the chaotic state of the terrain below.**



A quick scan confirms what the Bothans have already volunteered: some kind of energy signature is now being emitted from the tower-constructs that ring the surface of the gate, focussing on a central point roughly 100 km “above” the the main body of the device.

Your sensors also detect a cavernous landing bay has opening in the construct, large enough to part a fleet in. This must be where Sarne landed, and a magnetic shield appears to be holding a breathable atmosphere in place.

The gate’s cavernous landing bay is the only way into the construct; attempts to burn through the superstructure are ineffectual. The characters can fly straight through the magnetic shield, and see that the bay houses only a single ship—Sarne’s *Lambda*-class shuttle.

Hidden among the many organic “ribs” of the bay, however, an elite squad of Sarne’s personal stormtrooper legion are stationed, preparing an ambush. If the player characters scan the inside

of the bay with their ships’ sensors, a Moderate result indicates the presence of the 10 troops. Otherwise, the *FarStar* crewers have no warning that the Imperial ambush is set.

**Ten elite stormtroopers.** *Dexterity 5D, blaster 6D, brawling parry 5D, dodge 6D, melee combat 5D+2, melee parry 5D, Knowledge 2D+1, streetwise 3D+1, survival 3D+1, Mechanical 2D+2, Perception 2D+2, command 5D, hide 4D, search 4D+2, sneak 4D+2, Strength 3D+1, brawling 5D+1, lifting 4D, stamina 4D, Technical 2D+1, first aid 3D+2, security 4D+1.* Move 10. Blaster rifle (5D), stormtrooper armor (+2D physical +1D energy, -1D Dexterity and related skills) helmet comlink, survival gear, utility belt with supplies. Character points: 5.

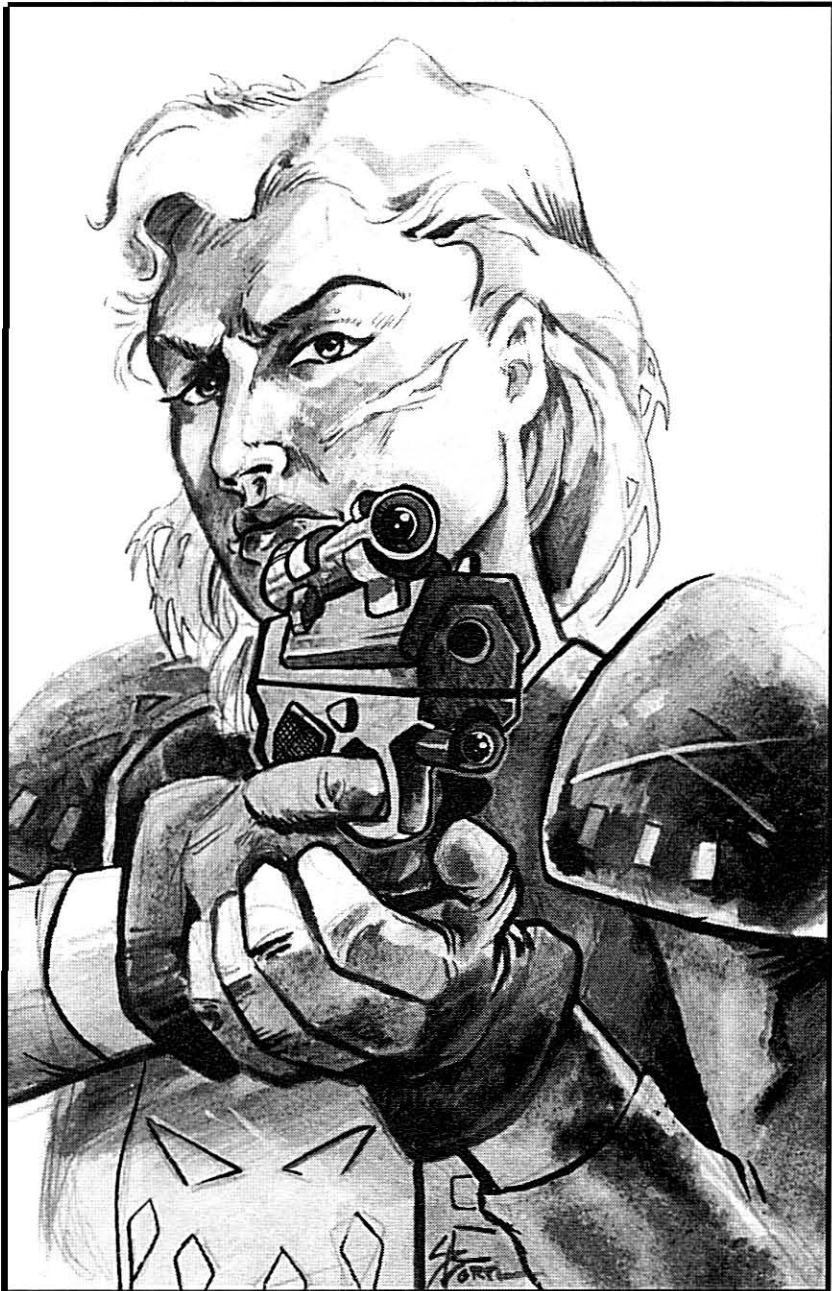
**Attack Pattern:** These stormtroopers have been specially trained as bodyguards for Moff Sarne, and they will fight to the death. As soon as the player characters land their ships and disembark, they will attempt to surround the group and catch them in a crossfire.



Stern Cook

As the player characters disembark, read the following aloud:

The landing bay is immense — far larger than most spaceports. It is a huge, domed chamber (the ceiling is roughly a half kilometer above you), harshly lit with green-tinged and purple lights, the extreme brightness making it difficult to refrain from wincing. The floor — like much of the Precursor's architecture, is organic in appearance, with rib-like protrusions scattered throughout the chamber in seemingly random patterns.



Storn Cook

**Sarne's Lambda shuttle is directly in front of the bay exit corridor, as if aimed to receive Sarne's departure, away from the bay entrance. At least it can't fire on you, though attempting to destroy it will probably block the only corridor visible near you.**

After the player characters have moved around for a round or two, the stormtroopers attack. The stormtroopers will sacrifice themselves to the last, but the two shuttle pilots will surrender if allowed to. They don't know what Sarne is up to, just that they were ordered to stand by for emergency departure. However, the departure may be delayed — the shuttle took some damage from orbiting debris during landing, and is now inoperative. The two pilots are struggling with the repairs, hoping to fix the damage in time for Sarne's departure.

Blowing up the shuttle with the Aegis is a bad idea, since that would block access to the corridor (this occurs to the characters on a Moderate Perception check).

## MIST IN THE DARK

As the player characters move into the exit corridor, read the following aloud:

**The corridor you enter is even darker than the landing bay — only pale purple lights shine down on you, casting strange shadows along the gnarled, twisted texture of the walls. Suddenly, the high pitched whine of a blaster shot from up ahead startles you — a shot that appeared to come from the walls themselves!**

Mist, acting as Sarne's catspaw, tries to delay the party in the corridor. Mist takes full advantage of the stealth abilities of his modified armor, and waits until the group has entered the corridor, then attacks from the shadows. After a few rounds of combat, Mist withdraws to the control center.

### ■ Mist

Type: Bounty Hunter

**DEXTERITY 3D+2**

Blaster 9D, blaster: blaster rifle 9D+1, brawling parry 6D+2, grenade 5D, melee combat 5D+2, melee parry 5D+1

**KNOWLEDGE 2D**

Alien species 5D, bureaucracy 5D, languages 7D, planetary systems 6D+2, streetwise 8D, survival 5D+2, value 7D

**MECHANICAL 3D**

Astrogation 6D, jet pack operations 5D+2, powersuit operation 7D+1, repulsorlift operation 7D, space transports 6D, starship gunnery 6D+2, starship shields 6D+2

**PERCEPTION 4D**

Bargain 7D, command 4D+2, con 5D, hide 5D, search 7D+2, search: tracking 8D, sneak 6D+1

**STRENGTH 3D+2**

Brawling 5D+2, climbing/jumping 5D

**TECHNICAL 3D**

Armor repair 4D, armor repair: photo-reactive armor

7D+2, blaster repair 6D+2, security 8D

**Character Points:** 12

**Move:** 10

**Equipment:** Heavy blaster pistol (5D damage), blaster rifle (5D damage), hold-out blaster (3D+2 damage), 2 smoke grenades, 2 paralysis canisters (20 meter radius, instant paralysis for 1D rounds for opponents who do not make a Difficult Strength roll), thermal flare, medpac, modified Krail Photo-reactive armor, binders, datapad, Imperial Peacekeeping Certification, man trap.

**Capsule:** Mist uses a paralysis canister (unless the characters are all in sealed suits), then picks a few off with blaster fire from the shadows before re-treating.

## ■ Mist's Bounty Hunter Armor

**Model:** Modified Krail Armory Model 1010 Photo-reactive Personal Armor

**Type:** Modified personal battle armor

**Skill:** Powersuit operation: Krail 1010 armor

**Cost:** (with all modifications) 80,000

**Availability:** Basic suit is "X" (illegal) on most planets; modified suit is unique

**Game Effects:**

*Basic Suit:* Protection +2D to *Strength* for energy attacks, +2D+1 to physical attacks; -1D to *Dexterity* and related skills. Suit has a Move of 15, with movement rolled on *powersuit operations* skill.

*Power Suit:* +1D to *lifting*

*Sensor Pod:* +1D+1 to *search*

*Integral Flechette Launcher:* 20-meter range, rolled on *blaster* skill (causes 3D stun damage).

*Jet Pack:* Move of 100 meters horizontally, 65 meters vertically. Uses *jet pack operation skill*, base difficulty is Easy, modified by obstacles. Has 16 charges, two of which can be expended per round.

*Sealed Enviro Filter:* Filter system blocks out harmful molecules, or in case of insufficient or deadly air supply, the unit can completely seal, drawing on a three hour oxygen supply. In addition, the helmet's filter contains a voice disguiser, rendering attempts at voiceprint identification futile.

*Photo-reactive Coating:* The armor has a coating of photosensitive microscopic crystals that reflect the

## MIST'S SECRETS

If Mist is captured or mortally wounded, his helmet is removed to reveal his, or more precisely, her features. Mist is a woman with sharp, angular features, long curly blonde hair, and a harsh scar running down the left side of her otherwise attractive face. Dajus recognizes her as a minor actress named Shella Inion, from Kal'Shebbol, who vanished shortly after her family was killed in a Sarne-staged Rebel attack — one that Dajus helped plan.

Believing that Rebels had killed her family and disfigured her, she eagerly cast her lot with Sarne. If Jessa can convince Inion of the truth (a Heroic *persuasion* roll), the actress-turned-bounty-hunter will switch sides and assist the *FarStar* crew.

ambient colors in a given area, making the armor difficult to see in virtually any situation. This adds +2D to *sneak*. *Reflec Plating:* In addition to enhanced camouflage, the armor is covered in a fine mesh of *reflec*, a sensor absorbing material favored by the Imperial Storm Commandos, adding an additional +1D to *sneak*.

As this scene is closing, the player characters are informed by the Bothans that the surviving Imperial Star Destroyer is entering Kathol's orbit. The Bothans are sending a gunship to stand it off, but it won't be there for several minutes — time enough for the Star Destroyer to do some real damage — or provide Sarne with an escape route.

## SARNE'S LAST STAND

The survivors of Mist's attack work their way down a long sinuous corridor to another rounded chamber — the launch gate control center. At the center of the oval room, Sarne — seated at a control station — awaits the *FarStar* team calmly. In his left hand he keeps a grip on a deadman's remote switch, but otherwise affects a relaxed air.

## ■ Moff Kentor Sarne

**Type:** Imperial Moff

**DEXTERITY 3D**

Blaster 5D, dodge 6D+2, melee combat 4D+2, melee parry 5D+2

**KNOWLEDGE 4D**

Alien species 7D, bureaucracy 9D, cultures 7D, intimidation 7D+1, languages 6D+1, planetary systems 7D, survival 5D, value 5D

**MECHANICAL 3D+1**

Astrogation 5D, beast riding 5D, capital ship gunnery 4D+2, capital ship piloting 4D+2, capital ship shields 4D, repulsorlift operation 3D+1, space transports 5D+1, starship gunnery 5D, starship shields 4D+1

**PERCEPTION 3D+2**

Bargain 6D+2, command 10D+2, con 6D+2, gambling 5D+1, search 6D

**STRENGTH 2D**

Brawling 4D+1, stamina 5D, swimming 5D

**TECHNICAL 2D**

Computer programming/repair 5D, first aid 3D, security 5D

**Force Points:** 3

**Dark Side Points:** 4

**Character Points:** 18

**Move:** 10

**Equipment:** Datapad, blaster pistol (4D), com-link, rank code cylinders, deadman's switch

**Capsule:** Kentor Sarne is a career Imperial military man, enlisting shortly after Palpatine's assumption of Imperial power. After a stint in the Imperial Survey Corps, ending with his return from the depths of the Kathol Outback and beyond, Sarne was promoted and transferred to the 15th Deep Core Reserve Fleet, quickly rising to command rank. For several years Sarne served as commander of the Renegade, the former *FarStar*, and was noted for his effectiveness against pirates and Rebel terrorists. He quickly rose to flag rank, and kept the

Renegade in his command. Ten years ago, Sarne won an appointment as Moff of the remote Kathol sector, somewhat to the disappointment of his peers.

Sarne quickly established an iron grip on Kathol sector, keeping Rebel activity to a minimum by staging "Rebel atrocities" and crushing nascent rebellion wherever it rose. Only one world, Charis, attempted an outright rebellion under Moff Sarne, and it suffered devastation.

Sarne made contact with the alien bio-construct DarkStryder during his scouting mission in beyond the Kathol Rift, and made a deal to provide the creature with Force-sensitives in return for DarkStryder's exotic technology. Jessa Dajus was carefully cultivated by Sarne for this, as were certain other Force-sensitives. Sarne planned to deliver them all at once, but the New Republic assault on Kal'Shebbol changed that. Read the following aloud:

**As you enter the large chamber ahead, you can hear Moff Sarne address you through a speaker system that his technicians have obviously retrofitted to the station. His back is to you as he sits at what appears to be a modified control panel of distinctly Imperial design ... no doubt another addition to the launch gate courtesy of the Empire.**

**"The *FarStar* crew," the sardonic voice quips, "Well, I must say, it took you long enough to find me. I was running out of clues to dangle before you cretins. Fortunately, you were smart enough to get here — even though I had to practically draw you a map. Typical Rebels."**

**As you move closer to Sarne's position, he swivels around to**

**face you, the burn scar on his face twisting his otherwise patrician features into a harsh scowl. "Before you do anything drastic," he growls, all pretense at humor and civility gone, "I warn you that I hold a deadman's switch in my hand, controlling the activating mechanism for this gate."**

**He holds up a small metallic device in his left hand, gesturing at you with it. "This gate can project a vast amount of energy, and it's aimed at your ships. Kill me and your Bothan allies — and those thrice-blasted hive-mind people — will all perish."**

**"And the New Republic relief fleet from Kal'Shebbol that will be here within the hour will die with them."**

Sarne is convinced that the bulk of the New Republic fleet present at Kal'Shebbol is on its way to the system, responding to an emergency summons from the Bothans. He also believes that he has enough control over the gate's energy flow to destroy them. He's wrong on both counts. Even if convinced that he's wrong he won't change his current plans.

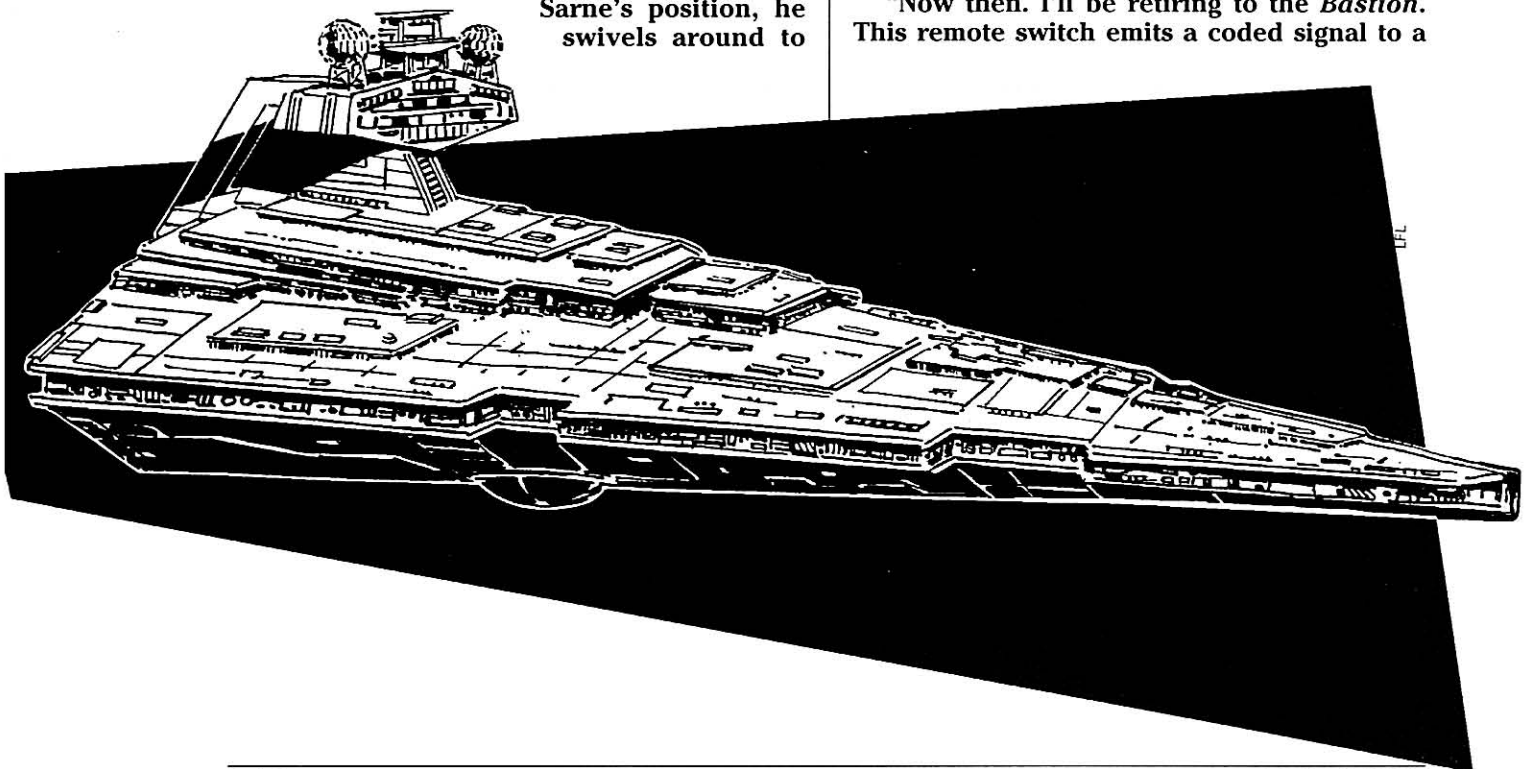
If Jessa Dajus is present, read the following aloud:

**"Ah, Jessa, my dear," Sarne says with a smirk. "I can't believe you've chased me all this way over a little spat? How flattering."**

Finally, he turns to the player characters and issues some demands.

Read the following aloud:

**"Now then. I'll be retiring to the *Bastion*. This remote switch emits a coded signal to a**



receiver. The launch gate activates when the signal stops. I imagine you'll be able to override the circuitry once I've left. You'd better, because once the *Bastion* jumps, the signal will be cut off. If you don't ... well, that's not my problem."

He speaks into his com-link: "Captain Brannij, send over your shuttle; mine has been damaged in all the scuffle."

If allowed to, Sarne cheerfully boards his shuttle — with a somber Mist in tow — and shuttles to the *Bastion*, which jumps to hyperspace.

### ■ The Bastion (damaged)

**Craft:** Kuat Drive Yards' Imperial II Star Destroyer  
**Type:** Star Destroyer  
**Scale:** Capital  
**Length:** 1,600 meters  
**Skill:** Capital ship piloting: Star Destroyer  
**Crew:** 15,326, gunners: 30, skeleton 5,000/+10  
**Crew Skill:** Astrogation 5D, capital ship gunnery 5D+2, capital ship piloting 5D+1, capital ship shields 4D, sensors 4D+1.  
**Passengers:** 9,700 (troops)  
**Cargo Capacity:** 36,000 metric tons  
**Consumables:** 5 years  
**Hyperdrive Multiplier:** disabled  
**Hyperdrive Backup:** x8  
**Nav Computer:** yes  
**Maneuverability:** 0D  
**Space:** 4  
**Hull:** 7D+1  
**Shields:** +2  
**Sensors:**  
*Passive:* 50/1D  
*Scan:* Disabled  
*Search:* Disabled  
*Focus:* Disabled  
**Weapons:**  
**10 Heavy Turbolaser Batteries**  
*Fire Arc:* 5 front, 3 left, 2 right  
*Crew:* 1 (20), 2 (30)  
*Skill:* Capital ship gunnery  
*Fire Control:* 0D  
*Space Range:* 3-15/35/75  
*Atmosphere Range:* 6-30/70/150 km  
*Damage:* 10D  
**15 Heavy Turbolaser Cannon**  
*Fire Arc:* 5 front, 4 left, 4 right, 2 back  
*Crew:* 3  
*Skill:* Capital ship gunnery  
*Fire Control:* 1D  
*Space Range:* 3-15/35/75  
*Atmosphere Range:* 6-30/70/150 km  
*Damage:* 5D  
**2 Ion Cannon**  
*Fire Arc:* 1 left, 1 right  
*Crew:* 1 (10), 2 (10)  
*Skill:* Capital ship gunnery  
*Fire Control:* 4D  
*Space Range:* 1-10/25/50  
*Atmosphere Range:* 2-20/50/100 km  
*Damage:* 4D  
**Tractor Beam Projector**  
*Fire Arc:* 1 front

*Crew:* 1 (2), 4 (2), 10 (6)  
*Skill:* Capital ship gunnery  
*Fire Control:* 4D  
*Space Range:* 1-5/15/30  
*Atmosphere Range:* 2-10/30/60 km  
*Damage:* 6D

**Capsule:** Sarne's personal Star Destroyer, the *Bastion*, is a Mark II with superior weaponry and armor, and crewed by the best that Sarne could cull from the fleet. Not merely a trophy ship, Sarne keeps his crew fit, drilled, and ready for action at any time. Security is provided by a battalion from his personal legion of stormtroopers.

The *Bastion's* captain, Brannij, is a capable officer, hand picked by Sarne for his competence and obedience. It will take months for the *Bastion* to reach civilized space.

Five minutes after the *Bastion* jumps, the gate explodes, destroying Kathol's sun, vastly increasing the Rift, and wreaking vast destruction across the region.

Obviously, this isn't a desirable ending to the adventure. The players can do several things to prevent this. Precisely how the characters save the day is up to the individual group. Some tactics available to them are:

- **Shoot Sarne.** Grabbing the switch before Sarne lets go is a Difficult *Dexterity* task (unless someone, like Kl'aal, sneaks up close behind him; then it's an opposed *Dexterity* roll) The remote switch may activate, and the characters must quickly deactivate the gate, a Very Difficult *Technical* task. (Characters with any Force Points left may find that this is an excellent time to start spending them ...)

- **Deactivate the receiver, then shoot Sarne.** Finding the receiver is a Moderate *communications* task. Deactivating it without setting off the launch gate is a Difficult *communications repair* or *Technical* task. Sarne will be well on his way to the *Bastion* by the time this is finished.

- **Convince Brannij to blow the gate up.** Loyal but not stupid, Brannij has no great love for Sarne and can be convinced to open fire on the gate, destroying it before it activates, with appropriate role-playing or a Very Difficult *persuasion* roll.

Once the gate is activated it takes 20 rounds to actually explode. If destroyed in that time the sector is safe.

**Sarne's TIE/shuttle.** Starfighter, *starship gunnery* 4D+1, *starfighter piloting* 6D. Maneuverability 2D, space 8, hull 2D. Weapons: Laser cannon (fire control 2D, damage 2D+2).

- **Final Option.** If the player characters appear totally beaten, and have no way of deactivating the gate, the gamemaster can exercise one final option: Rojer 621.

As Sarne's DarkStryder plot grew more important to the Moff, Brannij tired of watching his friends casually sent off to die, for no other reason than to provide his Sarne with getaway time. As soon as he realized that Sarne had planned to allow Kal'Shebbol to fall all along, he immediately began using the cover identity of a New Republic spy — Rojer 621.

The real Rojer 621 had been located and killed years ago, though Sarne had maintained the facade that the agent was still active by occasionally allowing snippets of information to leak out — ostensibly from Rojer — to a dead drop on Kal'Shebbol. Brannij was privy to this secret, and, finally decided to use the plan against Sarne.

As Sarne's shuttle leaves the station, Brannij signals the New Republic team on board and tells them how to deactivate the gate's energy buildup, after identifying himself as Rojer 621. Brannij then promptly blows up Sarne's shuttle and surrenders his forces to the New Republic.

Gamemasters should only use this option as a last resort if the players are really "stuck."

## AFTERMATH

Once Sarne is dead or escaped and the catastrophe is averted, things settle down quickly. The survivors have several weeks before a rescue force arrives.

In the aftermath, read the following aloud:

**You set down near the burning wreckage of DarkStryder's fortress. When DarkStryder died, the palace appeared to die with it, folding in on itself in several locations. The once-menacing structure looks merely pathetic now.**

**The feeling of triumph over the victory is short-lived however; arrayed before you are wrecked repulsortanks and AT-STs, smoking explosion craters, and fallen pieces of pock-marked durasteel armor. Scattered amidst the detritus of the hard-fought battle are hundreds of dead Imperials, Char Ontee and Yapi war-**

**riors. And for once, the ethereal wail of the planet's wind is not all that punctuates the silence; The cries of the wounded still being tended to by frantic New Republic medics and equally hurried Yapi shamans can be heard from the battle plain.**

**The battle against Moff Sarne — and DarkStryder — may have been won ... but the cost of victory was incredibly high.**

The *Bastion*, with the few surviving Imperial ships, limps into hyperspace on backup hyperdrive.

The Bothans re-group, and explain that they have been shadowing the *FarStar* since the beginning of her voyage. They work on repairing their ships, and get one of the hyperdrives functional, but estimate they won't be able to transfer survivors out-system with the passenger capacity available to them. They'll actually have to leave some of their own behind, if they return to Kal'Shebbol. That probably won't be necessary, since the Bothans know that a force was sent out from Kal'Shebbol shortly before they entered the Rift.

The Yapi promptly return to their fractious ways.

Several weeks later, a New Republic force arrives in system and rescues the surviving *FarStar* and Bothan crew. After several more weeks, the whole group returns to Kal'Shebbol and an enthusiastic welcome from the sector governor, Monjai.

## CHARACTER REWARDS

Characters who participated in the battle against DarkStryder and Sarne and survived receive a total of eight character points. In addition, any characters who behaved particularly heroically receive an additional five character points.



Storn Cook

To: Lieutenant Page

From: Mon Mothma

Regarding: The so-called "DarkStryder Incident" and subsequent protest filed to the Provisional Council (datapad ref. 29843032)

**WARNING: SECURITY DATALOCK ENABLED. DOCUMENT WILL BE DELETED AFTER DOWNLOAD ...**

Lt. Page:

The Council would like to offer our condolences to you on the passing of Captain Kelemen Ciro. I know you were personally very fond of Keleman, as was I. His passing is unfortunate, and the galaxy is a darker place for his loss.

Your suggestion that an honors ceremony be held for the *FarStar* crew has been taken under advisement. I am afraid, my old friend, that the answer will remain the same: there will be no public or private ceremony for those who found the Kathol system.

I — and the others on the Council — know that the *FarStar* crew did an outstanding job, and performed a desperate mission that admittedly we should have paid more attention to. Councillor Organa Solo was particularly distressed that we could not grant the *FarStar* crew the recognition they so richly deserve.

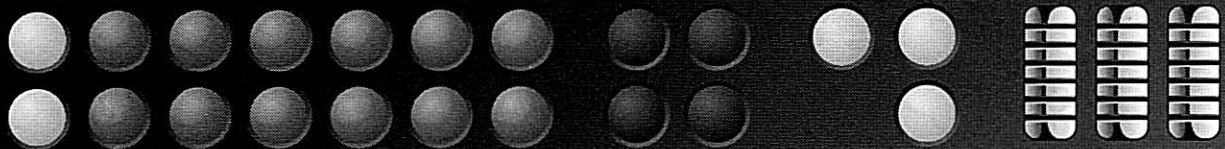
But the presence of a planet where "Ta-See" magic and fantastic, powerful artifacts exist is too tempting a target for any greedy Imperial warlord to pass up. If the public were made aware of the *FarStar's* mission, the Empire would become aware of it as well.

And then, we'd have to fight the same battle all over again.

If you honor what they fought for — and what many of them *died* for — it is best to let the matter disappear. New Republic Intelligence teams are deleting all records of the mission, and the surviving team members have all agreed to total secrecy. The few stories that may creep out — particularly from confidants of Loh'khar and Khzam — will likely be treated as a "tall tale," and I would personally hope it remains one from now on. We've buried sensitive material in the past, and now, I'm afraid we must do so again.

On a personal note, I'd like to congratulate you — you picked a fine team to handle this mission. We are once again in your debt.

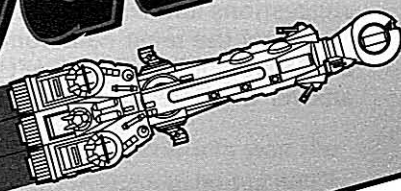
May the Force be with you.

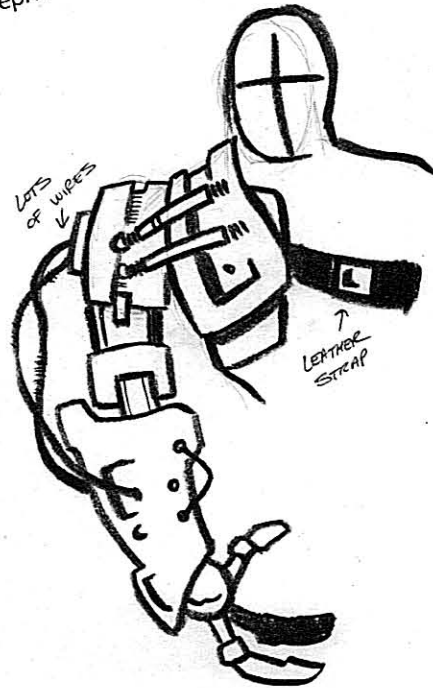
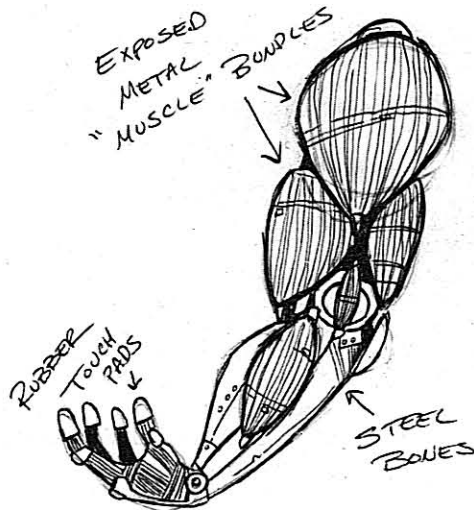


# THE MAKING OF... STAR WARS®

# THE DarkStryder CAMPAIGN



This version of the DarkStryder Campaign logo (originally designed by Stephen Crane) captured a very "retro" feel, though it was eventually replaced by the current logo.



Early design sketches for Darryn Thyte (illustrated by Tim Bobko). The tattoo on Thyte's face was eventually discarded, and the "three-fingered" mechanical hand was replaced with a steel claw.

# DARKSTRYDER

## “BEHIND-THE-SCENES”

BY ERIC S. TRAUTMANN

### WHY “BEHIND-THE-SCENES”?

On the surface, a behind-the-scenes section for a roleplaying adventure may seem kind of odd; West End Games has certainly never included such a segment in any prior products.

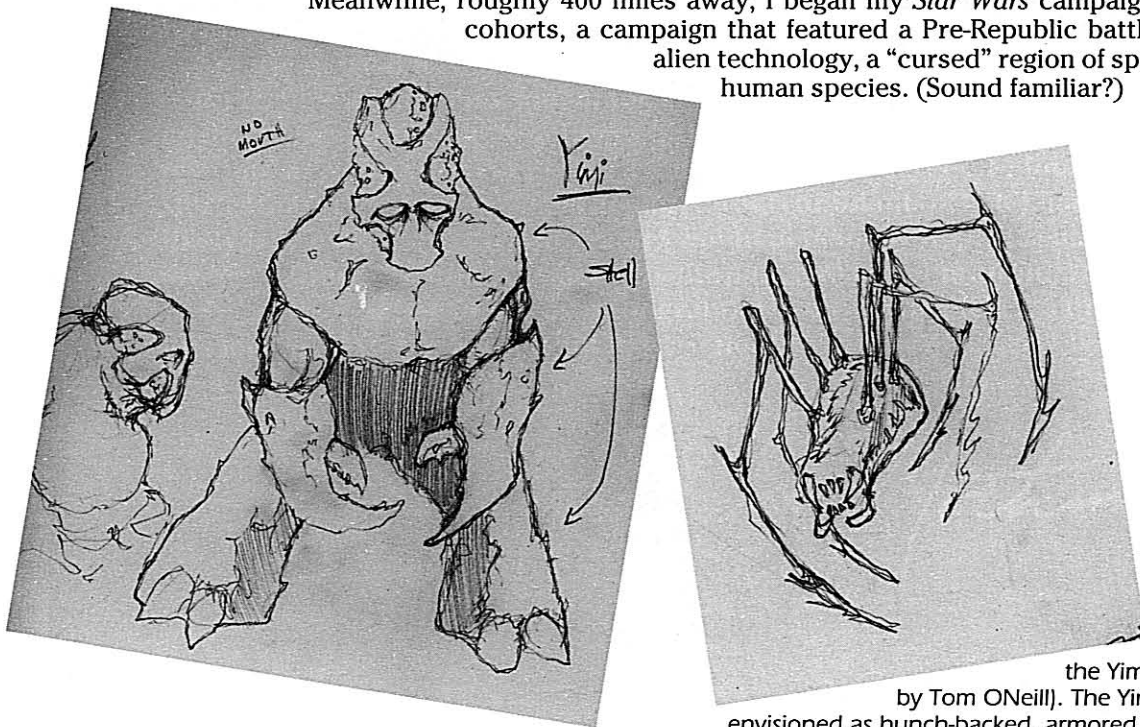
But the *DarkStryder Campaign* hasn't really been like any other *Star Wars* products, either. Fan response to the campaign has been surprisingly enthusiastic, and critical response has been equally good. At various roleplaying conventions, *DarkStryder* has been a constant source of questions, suggestions and comments. Obviously, somebody out there has been following it.

One of the most common questions asked by fans is, “Where do you get your ideas?” Since the *DarkStryder Campaign* hasn't followed many other gaming traditions, there is now an opportunity to answer that question, and others as well.

### WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

The actual genesis of the *DarkStryder Campaign* is somewhat convoluted. Bill Smith, the *Star Wars* line editor, during a conversation with Daniel Scott Palter (West End's esteemed publisher) broached the subject of a campaign boxed set. During the conversation someone (we're not really sure who) asked the question: “Wouldn't it be cool to blend high-fantasy, gritty drama and space opera?”

Meanwhile, roughly 400 miles away, I began my *Star Wars* campaign with my gaming cohorts, a campaign that featured a Pre-Republic battle site, mysterious alien technology, a “cursed” region of space and a lost non-human species. (Sound familiar?)



Preliminary designs of the Yimi and the Ssamb (illustrated by Tom O'Neill). The Yimi were originally envisioned as hunch-backed, armored creatures with claws for hands. The Ssamb managed to remain virtually unchanged from the early sketches.

## FIRST STEPS

In the course of editing handfults of other projects, Bill Smith mentioned the possibility of a high-fantasy/*Star Wars* hybrid to Timothy Zahn (author of the much-acclaimed *Thrawn Trilogy*) during one of Tim's occasional phone calls. Apparently, Tim was rather taken with the idea and chewed it over with Bill during the following months.

At the same time, I was involved with a number of freelance projects (*The Last Command Sourcebook* and *The Truce At Bakura Sourcebook*) and was often on the phone with Bill.

During one such call, Bill mentioned the then-unnamed *DarkStryder Campaign* (I think it was still called "The *FarStar* Campaign" back then) and that he was having trouble coming up with a reasonable explanation for a planet where "magic" worked.

I sheepishly pointed out a few paragraphs from one of my earliest *Star Wars* pieces: the equipment chapter in the *Star Wars Gamemaster Handbook*. In that chapter, it discusses a lost alien species — the Cthol — that was essentially a group of "superscientists." I also mentioned that I was using that as a springboard for my home campaign, a campaign that featured a planet of lost alien technology on the far side of a "haunted" region of space — a place called the Cthol Rift.

That's roughly when the project was named "DarkStryder" (at my suggestion).

## BUILDING THE FOUNDATION

Early on, several decisions were reached concerning how the campaign should be structured, and a modestly detailed "writer's bible" was formulated. Because this was West End's first campaign boxed set, several new approaches to the way we structure adventures were launched (notably, the multi-character aspect of play).

It was also decided that this campaign would be of finite length (I believe six products was the original plan). Rather than require consumers to purchase dozens of products for years and years, it was determined that the *DarkStryder Campaign* would have a story with a definite beginning, middle and end. In addition, we also developed a number of characters (some old, some new) who would grow and interact in plausible and interesting ways.

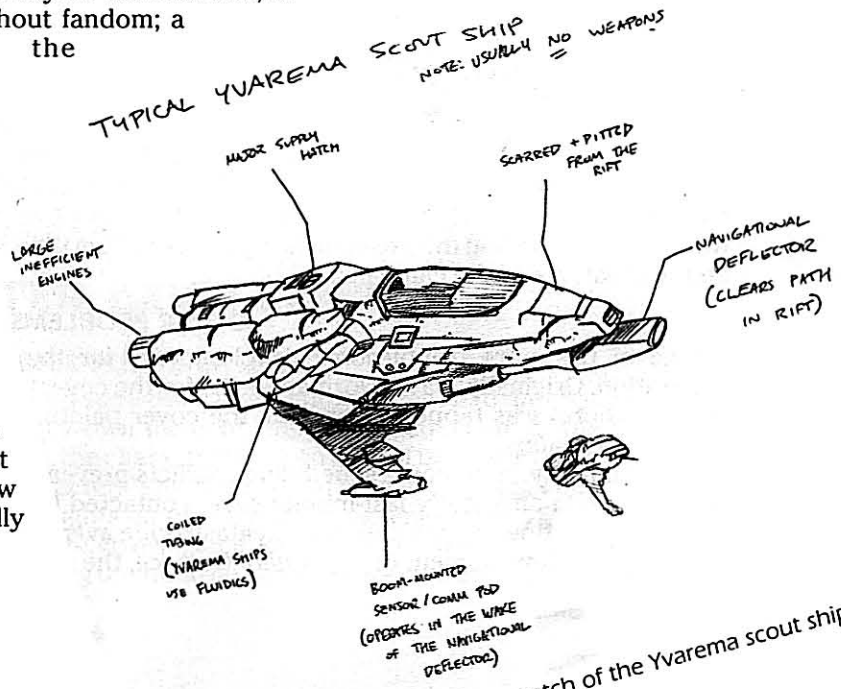
Peter Schweighofer was assigned the task of designing characters for the command crew of the *FarStar*. Bill Smith and Stephen Crane (West End's illustrious art director) mulled over the design for the *FarStar*; at the same time, Bill, Tim Zahn and myself shot ideas back and forth for the story bible.

Several interesting elements were rejected early on: High Inquisitor Tremayne (from *GG9: Fragments From The Rim*) would not be included as an adversary, since the character of Captain Adrimetrum was from the same book; the *DarkStryder* artifacts would not be allowed to work very far from the Rift, to avoid destabilizing campaigns throughout fandom; a second starship (nicknamed the "PaleShadow") disappeared, presumably buried in the pile of preliminary notes; a dark Jedi in a hibernation trance on Kathol/Cthol was heavily modified (into Halbret, the female light-side Jedi featured in this volume).

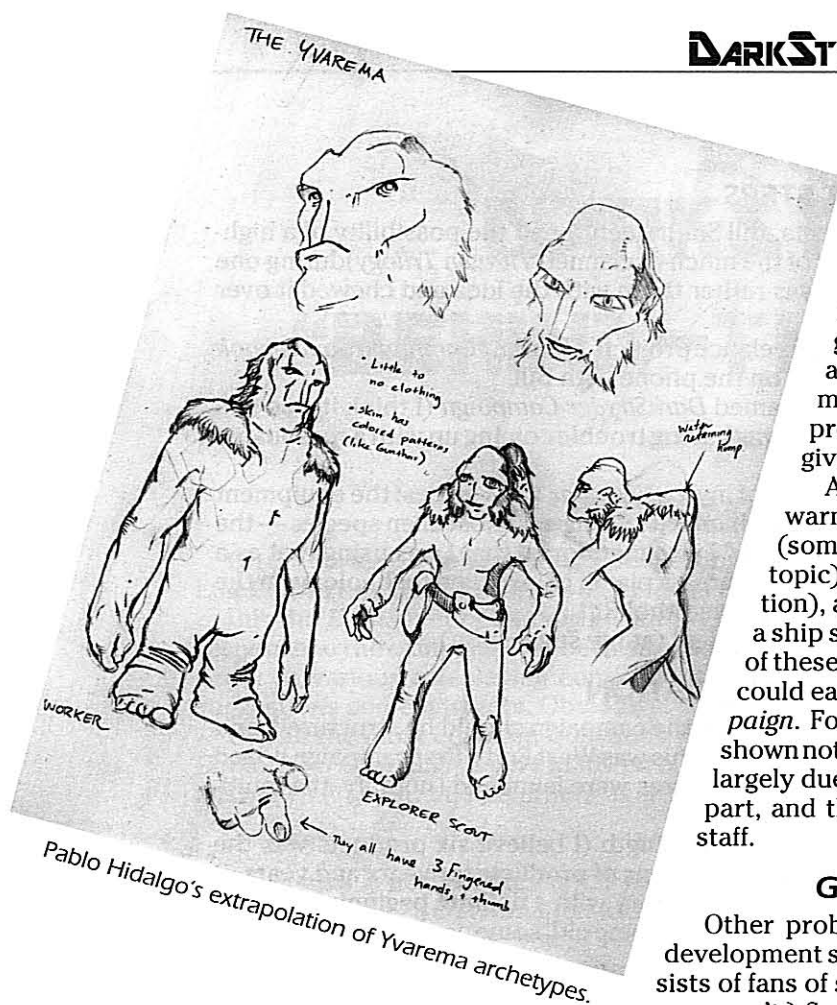
Obviously, ideas were flying fast and furiously.

## HEADING TROUBLE OFF AT THE PASS

A great deal of design work hinged on something very important, something that the average *Star Wars* gamer doesn't know much about (or in many cases is totally unaware of): approval by Lucasfilm Ltd.



Pablo Hidalgo's original design sketch of the Yvarema scout ships.



Pablo Hidalgo's extrapolation of Yvarema archetypes.

Since every product with the *Star Wars* logo must be officially sanctioned by Lucasfilm, these products pass through the overworked *Star Wars* approvals department. The LFL team handles not only the roleplaying game, but card games, comic books, novels, toys, computer games and virtually every other aspect of the *Star Wars* merchandising program. Ultimately, it is the approvals department that says “yes” or “no” to a given project.

And DarkStryder was custom-tailored to set off warning bells at LFL: an Old Republic battle site (something that has traditionally been a “hands-off” topic), a new variant of the Force (also a risky proposition), ancient Jedi, biotechnology and a new version of a ship shown in the movies (the blockade runner). If any of these points were not properly thought out, Lucasfilm could easily have put the brakes on the *DarkStryder Campaign*. Fortunately, this was not the case. Lucasfilm has shown nothing but enthusiasm and support for DarkStryder, largely due to a great deal of research and planning on our part, and the extremely open minds of the LFL approvals staff.

## GREAT MINDS THINK ALIKE ...

Other problems became more apparent well beyond the development stage. Naturally the DarkStryder design team consists of fans of science-fiction. (We wouldn't be doing this job if we weren't.) So a number of influences color our work at every stage. Unfortunately, when you spend so much time immersed in

a subject, you tend to develop a certain mindset, one shared by other writers.

Three months after the writer's bible was finished, the then-forthcoming *Star Trek: Voyager* television program was announced to the press, a show that bore a strong resemblance to our plans for DarkStryder, despite the fact that both projects were developed completely independently of each other and that neither design team was even aware of the other. Some frantic last-minute re-tooling was obviously needed, or DarkStryder would look like a knock-off of an existing science-fiction show, something we desperately wanted to avoid.

As the plans for *DarkStryder Endgame* (the “Wrap-Up” book as we referred to it) progressed, we ran into another problem: our vision of DarkStryder and the creatures that inhabited the “DarkStryder planet” were perfectly realized ... as “the Shadows” on the syndicated television series *Babylon 5*. Again, these concepts were developed completely independently of one another, with neither creative team even aware of the similarity between their respective plans. Another series of frantic rewrites was implemented, and the excellent design work of Tom O'Neill and Tim Bobko put an entirely new spin on the creatures of the campaign.

## OTHER PROBLEMS

One of the more troublesome developments for the DarkStryder boxed set was the cover illustration. Originally, David Dorman (artist for the covers of the *Tales of the Jedi* comic book series, among others) was tapped to provide the cover painting, the “Memphis Belle” illustration as we jokingly nicknamed it.

Unfortunately, last-minute scheduling conflicts prevented Dave from completing the painting, and Steve Crane in an equally last-minute save, contacted Christopher Moeller and the finished piece arrived just in time to save the day ... catastrophe averted.

During the development of *The Kathol Outback*, the selection of the cover illustration (featuring a

Star Destroyer and a handful of variant Z-95 Headhunters) raised a major problem: there were no Star Destroyers featured in any of the adventures. George Strayton managed to rework the adventure “Galaxy’s Edge” to include the massive starship, and was able to blend it in seamlessly.

As the second supplement, *The Kathol Rift*, neared completion a new problem surfaced, one that is fairly rare in game design: the book was just too long. The adventure “A Cry For Help” (by Matt Maneely) was cut for space considerations. The adventure, an exploration of an ancient temple, was originally intended to be the vehicle by which the Codex would be discovered. (The Codex was the object Makezh — the crazed navigator — had been programmed to seek out.) It was then necessary to incorporate the Codex into Josh Miller’s “Waystation.”

## A PERSONAL NOTE

Despite the problems and challenges of making such a vastly detailed storyline fit together and still maintain playability, the *DarkStryder Campaign* has been a remarkably good experience for me professionally. It has allowed me to define “my own little corner” of the *Star Wars* gaming universe (albeit a corner filled with bugs and crawly things), as well as affording me the opportunity to develop contacts with a variety of extremely talented writers and artists.

I would like to offer my special thanks to those who have made DarkStryder such a rewarding project for me: Tim Bobko, Steve Bryant, Steve Crane, Storn Cook, Dan and David Day, David Deitrick, Chris Doyle, Tim Eldred, Jordi Ensign, Richard Hawran, Sterling Hershey, Pablo Hidalgo, Ray Lederer, Matt Maneely, Josh Miller, Tim O’Brien, Tom O’Neill, Terry Pavlet, Tony Russo, Brian Schomburg, Pete Schweighofer, Doug Shuler, Lisa Smedman, Bill Smith, George Strayton, Paul Sudlow, Philip Tan, Chris Trevas, Mike Vilardi, Christina Wald, and of course, Timothy Zahn.

## PASSING THE REINS

BY BILL SMITH

The *DarkStryder Campaign* has been, for me, one of those things best described as “a good idea at the time.” If I’d known how much was involved in putting something like this together, I probably would have thought better of it. Fortunately, with the help of folks like Timothy Zahn, Richard Hawran, and the West End editorial team, we managed to pull it off.

Part of the fun of this project was being able to play with new concepts, new ideas and new approaches, to try and come at it with a fresh, innovative and altogether different method of constructing an adventure, and still have it be recognizable as a part of the *Star Wars* universe.

It was also extremely rewarding to take these concepts and pass them on to a new crop of writers and artists — particularly the relatively new West End staffers — and see them run with these ideas, turning out products that felt distinctly original and fresh. Who would have guessed that Gunthar was part of a hive-mind? Who knew that Khzam and Loh’khar would end up being co-conspirators? Or that the infamous Rojer 621 was in fact Moff Sarne’s adjutant? Or that Mist was actually a disgruntled actress manipulated into the service of the evil Moff?

All these surprises were developed as the story progressed, and it has been a delight for me to see the innovation at West End’s disposal. For me, that was the highlight of the *DarkStryder Campaign* — seeing it take on a life of its own. I hope you have enjoyed it as much as I have.

## CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

BY PETER SCHWEIGHOFER

Creating characters for games and fiction is something I truly enjoy. When I had the chance to flesh-out the *FarStar* crew, I merged many of my own ideas to the general concepts of the command personnel we began with. During the writing, the characters took on lives of their own (as they should). Part of the pleasure was working on the characters’ shady pasts and hidden agendas. The sidebars for the command crew provided some keen insights on how these characters worked.

Part of the enjoyment of working on *DarkStryder* came long after the box set was completed. Creating the characters is one job — developing them can be a much more challenging exercise. Fiends

like Gorak Khzam and Loh'khar the Finder were meant to betray the *FarStar* — it was just a matter of when and how. I didn't expect Scoryn to make First Officer after Khzam jumped ship. Perhaps the best surprise was seeing what Pablo Hidalgo did with Gunthar and the Sludir Qesya in *The Kathol Rift's* "Home." Gunthar was the big, lovable, seemingly stupid alien, while Qesya was a noble warrior of a savage species — I would never have guessed they would have bonded as they did. I suppose every character has to find a place to call home.

## REVISIONS AND STAR DESTROYERS

BY GEORGE STRAYTON

"It's about this being/force out in the Unknown Regions called DarkStryder," Bill Smith said to me at a convention about two years ago. He went on to explain more of the details of the campaign and the philosophies behind the setting, and I couldn't help but become excited about the concept. I just hoped I would have a chance to become involved in the project. But Bill mentioned that he had lined up some of West End's freelancers already, including Timothy Zahn, to write the initial boxed set, so I didn't even voice my interest.

I kept in contact with Bill and did some work for Peter Schweighofer, all the while asking how DarkStryder was progressing. About nine months after I had learned of the project, Bill called and asked whether I'd take a look at the manuscript, which at this time was in editing. I, of course, readily agreed and anxiously awaited the package. Once it arrived, I spent the next week poring over the text, noting any problems I encountered as well as those sections I enjoyed. By the time I finished I *really* wanted to become a part of the DarkStryder team.

Less than two months later, I received a phone call from Paul Sudlow, who was looking for freelancers to write the first DarkStryder supplement, *The Kathol Outback*. Without even a first thought, much less a second, I took on the assignment. Ideas leaped from the back of my mind before I hung up the receiver, and I got to work on my two adventures right away.

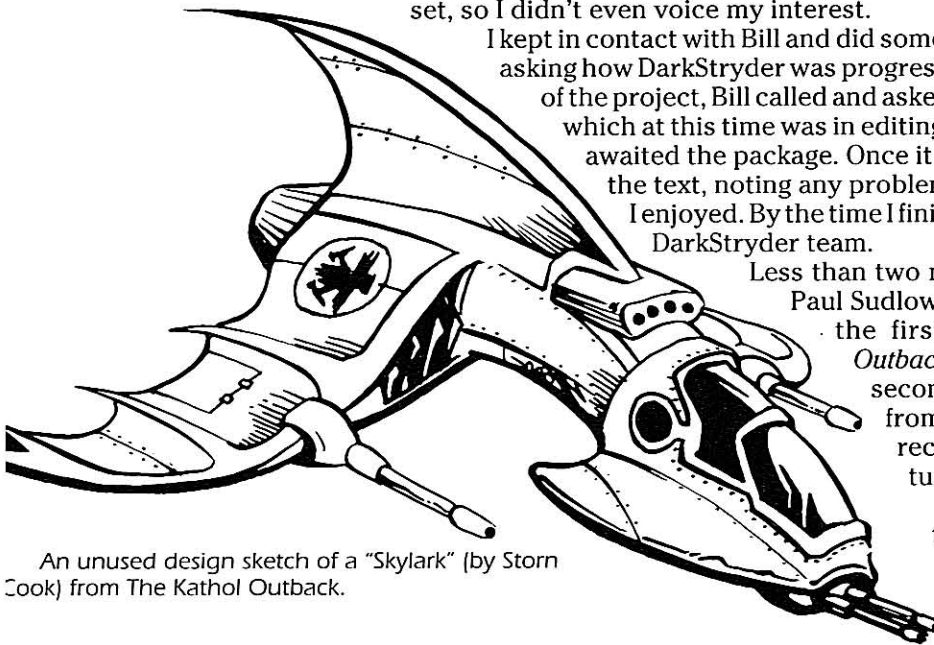
After completing my drafts and sending them in, I moved on to other projects—until Paul called me. Apparently, the cover selected for *Outback* didn't match any of the adventures, so he asked whether I could alter my scenario to incorporate the *Star Destroyer* (!) depicted in the illustration.

I accepted the charge, and went back to work to modify the plot of the adventure.

When Eric Trautmann told me he had taken on the second DarkStryder supplement, *The Kathol Rift*, I expressed interest in writing the fiction introductions (at this point I had been a full-time staff member at West End for about nine months—the editors had hired me after reviewing the four drafts I had submitted for various products). I wound up writing three pieces, one of which sauntered off into the trash when the adventure it introduced was scrapped for space considerations.

A few months later, I noticed that Eric was also editing the final DarkStryder supplement. I let him know that I would love to write a fiction introduction for the book that mirrored the story Tim Zahn had created for the boxed set. He accepted my offer, and I produced a finished manuscript (3,500 words longer than requested!) in just over a week.

I've enjoyed all the time I've spent working on DarkStryder, and I hope we get to do a similar project in the near future. Right now I'm just glad I attended that convention a couple of years ago and had the good fortune to run into Bill. That conversation probably changed my life more than any other in the recent past. Thanks, Bill, Peter, Paul, and Eric! I'm glad I had the chance to work with all of you.



An unused design sketch of a "Skylark" (by Storn Cook) from *The Kathol Outback*.

Now, can someone help me get rid of these nightmares I keep having about this disgusting, slug-like creature and his spidery pets ...

## TWO-WEEK WONDERS

TIMOTHY S. O'BRIEN

My involvement with the DarkStryder Campaign has been somewhat ... chaotic. Apparently the adventure collection *The Kathol Rift* ran into scheduling problems of some kind, and my editor, Eric, gave me a call and asked me if I wanted to contribute to the book. Naturally, I said yes, little realizing that I — like Pablo Hidalgo and Sterling Hershey — had two weeks to crank out a finished adventure. Fortunately, Eric provided us with detailed outlines and basically told us, “If it isn’t specified in the outline, you have free reign to make it up.” Two frantic weeks later, “Harm’s Way” was finished.

Then came *Endgame*. As I recall, it began something like this: during my work on *The Kathol Rift* project, Eric mentioned that he would be looking for similar assistance on the DarkStryder “Wrap-Up” book.

“Oh, sure,” I said. “That’d be great.”

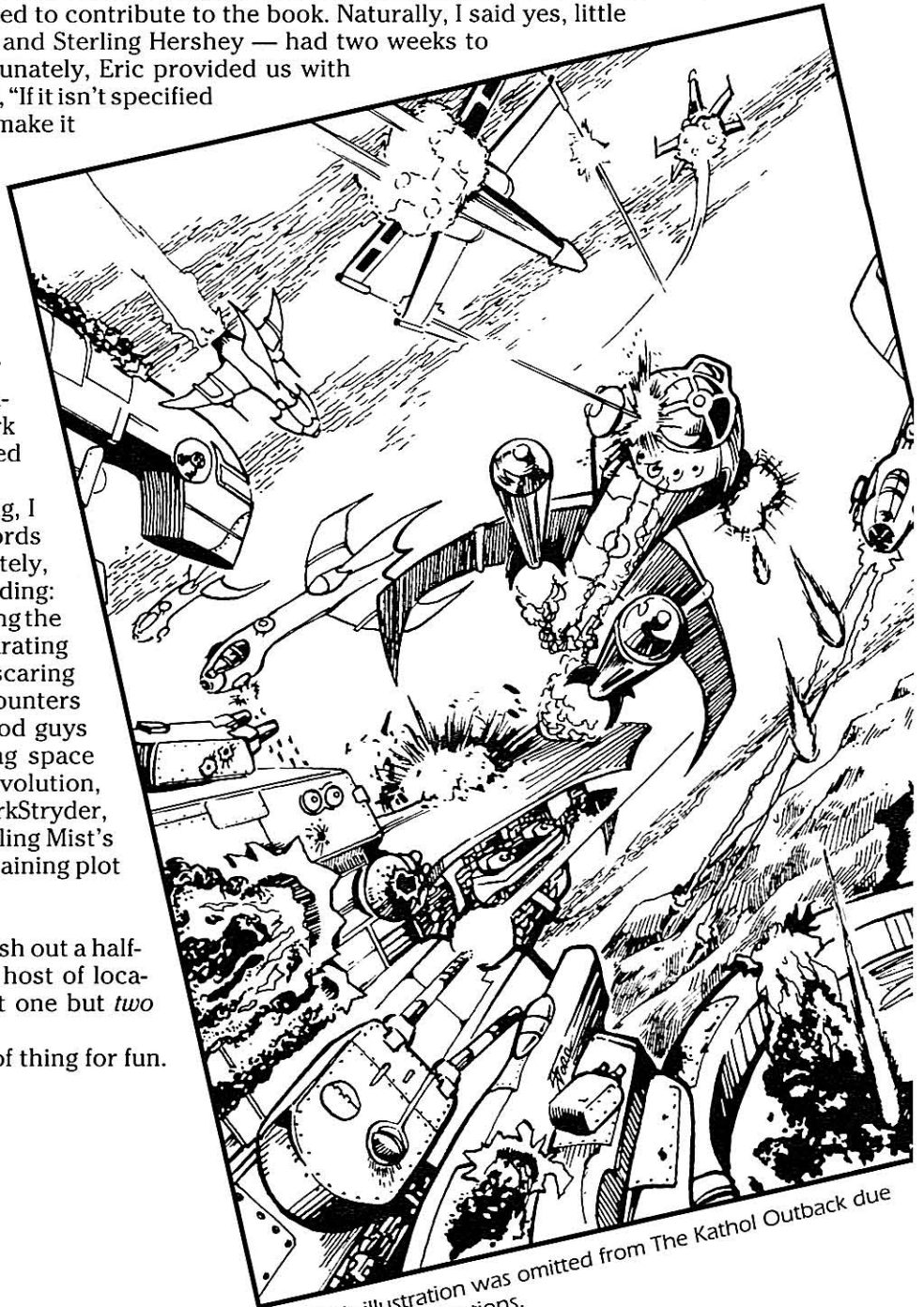
Freelancers apparently have a conditioned reflex to acquire more work than they can reasonably be expected to handle.

After a few rounds of re-scheduling, I found myself committed to 20,000 words of text ... due in three weeks. Fortunately, the project was not terribly demanding: the plot outline merely called for getting the *FarStar* to the surface of Kathol, separating the command crew from the ship, scaring the *FarStar* off planet, detailing encounters with strange aliens, throwing the good guys into a tremendous, rapidly-escalating space battle, touching off a planetside revolution, confronting the centipede-monster DarkStryder, confronting Sarne, battling Mist, reveling Mist’s past, and pretty much settling all remaining plot threads.

Really. That was it.

I also got to design Sarne’s fleet, flesh out a half-dozen alien species, toss together a host of locations and encounters, and script not one but *two* huge battles.

Pretty neat; I used to do this sort of thing for fun.



This illustration was omitted from *The Kathol Outback* due to space considerations.

## UNUSUAL SYMMETRY

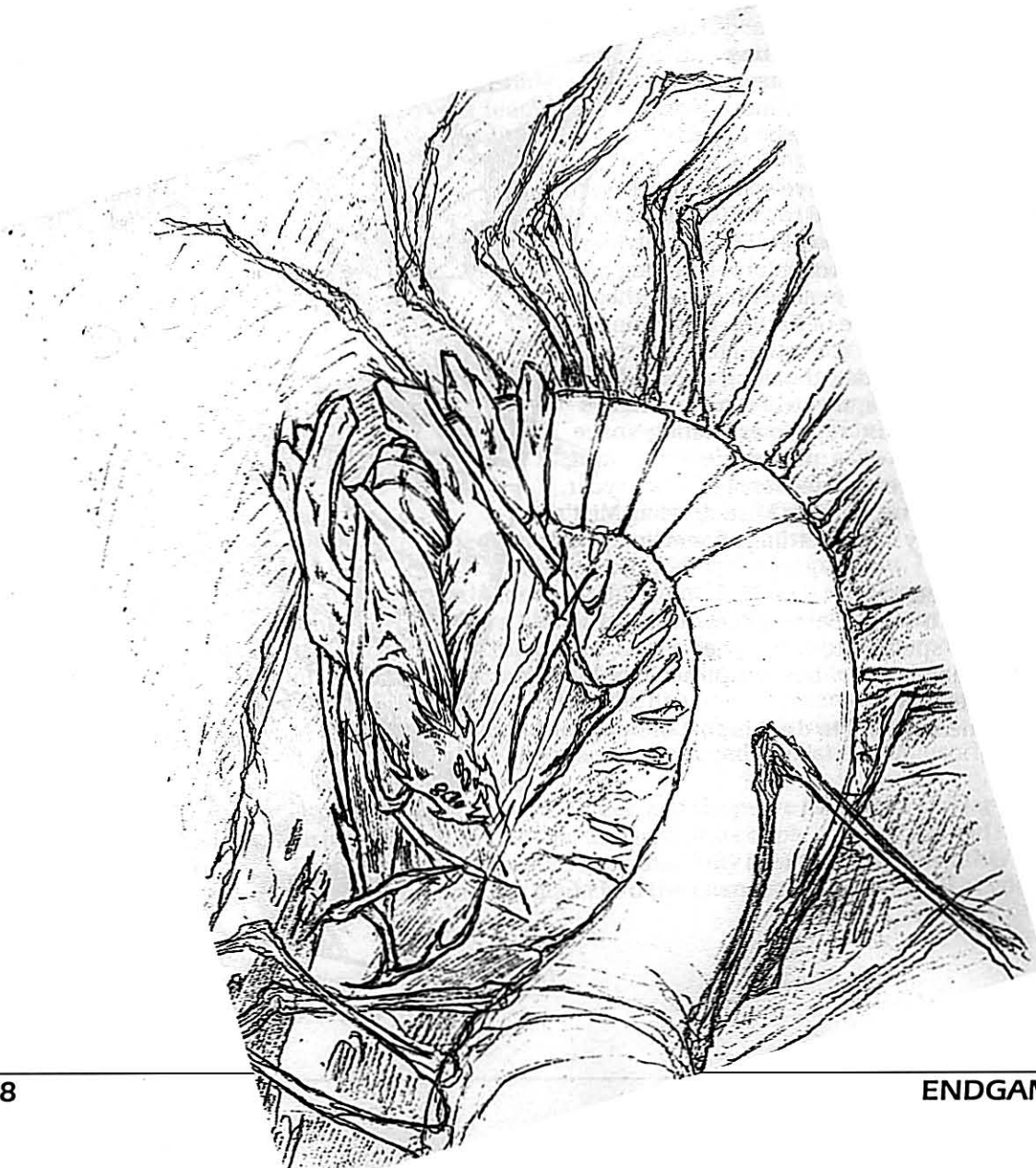
PAUL SUDLOW

When I was first approached to contribute to the DarkStryder boxed set, I was a freelancer. By the time I sat down to tackle the two adventures I had been contracted to write, I was a *Star Wars* editor for West End Games.

Which saved me a lot of work in the end. The project was in constant flux as it took shape, and what applied one week did not necessarily apply the next. Writing for the boxed set — capturing the feel and flavor and timbre of the Kathol sector, and the *FarStar* and her crew — would have been a near-impossible task from 400 miles away.

*The Kathol Outback* was my first more or less solo job for West End, and thanks to some talented writers and artists, it emerged as a strong book. The vibrant cover, by the way, was originally the cover of the Hungarian edition of the *Dark Force Rising* novel. I don't think Grand Admiral Thrawn would have minded us borrowing his Star Destroyer for Sarne's flagship. Certainly, George Strayton didn't, who graciously agreed to tweak the climax of his last adventure to accommodate the cover.

George was also a freelancer when he started the project, and a *Star Wars* editor by the time it shipped. Come to think of it, so was Eric Trautmann, who did development work in the very beginning of the project, and carried the DarkStryder torch from *Kathol Rift* to the finish line in *Endgame*. DarkStryder seems to have a life of its own. It certainly sucked the three of us in...





# STAR WARS®

# ENDGAME

by Timothy O'Brien, George Strayton and Eric S. Trautmann

## *The DarkStryder Campaign concludes!*

The New Republic ship *FarStar* has arrived at Moff Sarne's hidden lair, a distant planet once ruled by a long-dead species of scientists that were obliterated in a mysterious catastrophe thousands of years ago. The New Republic has finally caught up with Sarne, and is moving to end his reign of terror once and for all.

Or are they?

As Sarne launches his final offensive, the crew of the *FarStar* must struggle with the forces of the Empire, a hostile planet filled with bizarre and dangerous species, and the might of a despotic alien monster ...

... a monster called DarkStryder.

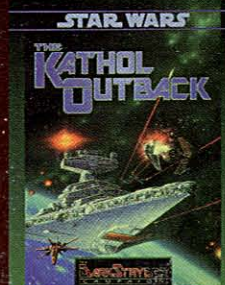
This 128-page adventure supplement contains a full-length adventure that concludes the epic *DarkStryder Campaign*, as well as complete source material on DarkStryder's home planet, the history and origin of the Kathol Rift, and the source of Sarne's mysterious "DarkStryder" technology.



Don't miss these exciting *DarkStryder Campaign* supplements ...



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The Kathol  
Outback



The Kathol Rift



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