

STAR WARS®

Secrets of the
SISAR RUN



Secrets of the **SISAR RUN**

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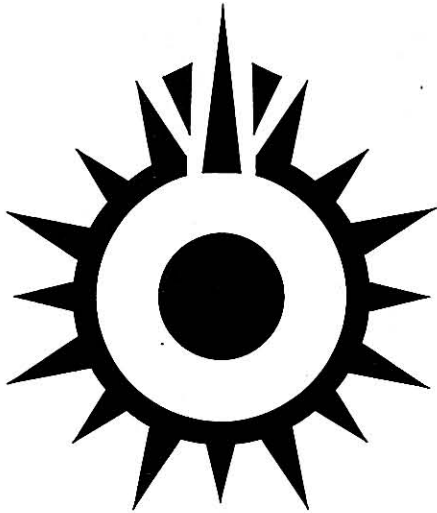
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Introduction

It wasn't the longest of lines, but it certainly had to be one of the slowest.

Pyrron Nox stood there, shifting the weight from his tired left leg to his tired right leg, while organizing the credentials in his datapad. At the very least, the air in the BoSS office was sufficiently scrubbed and chilled to make standing there slightly less of an ordeal.

Faris returned to his place in line.

"Not much progress, huh?" he asked.

"Very observant." Pyrron replied, pulling a datapad of non-human design from his vest pocket.

"Hey, ain't that Wrune's?" Faris asked.

"The observations never cease," Pyrron smiled. "Yeah, it's his. He said he'd be by, but if he was late, to get him renewed."

"Don't tell me Wrune's busy. Come on!"

"No joke." They shuffled forward as the line moved. "He got his ship fixed up, and he's running for Sprax."

"Sprax? Is he nuts?" Faris lowered his voice, stepping in closer. "Has Wrune grown sick of breathing? Sprax is dirty, you know."

"What are you talking about?" Pyrron shook his head.

"He runs Jatayus Outbound, shippers on the Sisar Run."

"There are neutron stars less dense, you know that, Pyre? Jatayus Outbound is Black Sun."

"Oh *please*. Like there's a nasty Dark Prince lurking somewhere pulling all the strings! It's just folklore...spacer stories..." Pyrron's rant had taken them to the head of the line. "And you called *me* naive."

"Greetings Pyrron, Faris," said the clerk behind the glossy white partition. "Usual operating license renewals I take it? How's biz in the vack?"

"None too shab, Lommbo," Pyrron said. "The usual, plus I'm proxying for Wrune Tsallin."

"All right. Just a..." If Lommbo's eyes had lids, he would have surely blinked.

"What is it?" Pyrron asked.

The Nimbanel scrolled down the infocrawl on his datascreen. "I guess you haven't heard. Wrune's dead

and his license expired. His ship was impounded, as remuneration for breach of contract with his employer. He was found desiccated, floating in the Ac'fren Spur without a vac-suit."

"Just a shipping business, huh?" Faris whispered.

"I've got to get out of this place." Pyrron said.

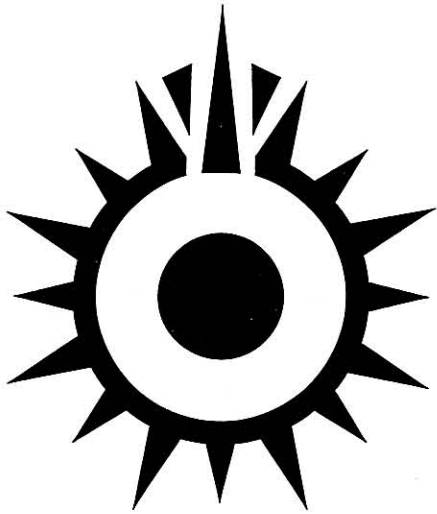
Black Sun Adventures

Though the Galactic Civil War affects a great many beings, there are other, more subtle elements working behind the scenes. Criminal organizations operate within structures far more complex than those of the corporations in the Core and affect the lives of almost everyone in the Empire.

There are some criminals and organizations who seem destined for notoriety and infamy. Others, however, are content to lurk within the shadows and coordinate their activities from the recesses. Such is the case with the most powerful criminal figure in the galaxy: the Falleen Prince, Xizor, leader of Black Sun. Known publicly as the owner and president of Xizor Transport Systems (XTS)—an immense shipping megacorporation—Prince Xizor maintains a perfect front for his criminal empire.

This book details some of the key operatives working for Vigo Sprax, one of Xizor's most powerful lieutenants. After familiarizing yourself with Sprax and the agents working within his sphere of control, you'll find a set of adventures that can be run independently or as a Black Sun mini-campaign.

This book is set after *Star Wars IV: A New Hope*, but before the conclusion of the novel *Shadows of the Empire*. The adventures are designed for a group of smugglers or traders, mostly independent but perhaps with loose Rebel affiliations. They have had no outward dealings with Black Sun in the past, but before the campaign finishes, they will find themselves inextricably drawn into the shadows of the Empire!



Into The Shadows...

Black Sun is the galaxy's most powerful criminal syndicate, though perhaps not the most infamous. Whereas criminals such as Ploovo Two-For-One and Jabba the Hutt revel in their own exploits, Prince Xizor and Black Sun are so well concealed beneath layers of fronts, bribes and other covers that most beings suspect stories of a "galactic crime family" to be little more than myth.

While the upper echelons of Black Sun, including Prince Xizor and his human replica droid bodyguard Guri, operate in the opulent Galactic Core, operations throughout the galaxy are overseen by a team of Vigos.

Each Vigo (an old Tionese term for "nephew") is a valued lieutenant with a specific area of operation. Currently there are nine Vigos in Black Sun, each one wealthy and hungering for more wealth, carefully watching their peers for any slips they can exploit.

There is no standardization in a shady organization such as Black Sun. Each Vigo maintains his own command structure, with scores of contacts, criminals and advisors serving as protective layers between the Vigo and any law-enforcement officers not in Black Sun's pocket. So layered is the employment structure that most operatives (including resourceful player characters) do not even suspect that they really work for Black Sun.

Vigo Sprax and Black Sun

"Is that clear?" Kisquar asked the two.

The Wookiee bolted from his chair and roared, shattering a large crystal goblet with a massive paw. His Corellian companion, not as blindingly quick as he often boasted, was cut down by Kisquar's hirelings. The raging Wookiee swung at Shotarr Kass, in blind fury, only to be stopped by the Tunroth Hunter's wicked blade.

The blast door behind Kisquar opened, flooding the small room with orange light. Vigo Sprax stepped in to survey the wreckage that was once a relatively decent office.



Joey Robinson

"Did they have any questions?" Sprax asked his lieutenant.

"No sir," Kisquar replied.

"Good," Sprax smiled.

Along the area of space called the Sisar Run, smuggling and shipping activity is overseen by one being: the cunning Nalroni Vigo named Sprax. Under Sprax's direction the Sisar arm of Black Sun brings in billions of credits annually; the Nalroni's personal fortune and that of his leader, Xizor, continue to grow as a result of Sprax's effective leadership and shrewd methods. The influence of Sprax and his companions extends from the Core to the Outer Rim and his infamy in the smuggling community is equal or better than that of Jabba the Hutt or Abdi-Badawzi.

Originally groomed to head the Jatayus Trading Consortium (the large Celanon-based group named after the Nalroni goddess of prosperity), Sprax was recruited into Black Sun before he gained control of JTC. He apprenticed to the guildmaster of a prominent Brentaal merchant, worked for some time as a division supervisor with Xizor Transport Systems, then "retired" from the business seemingly content to live the life of a young executive with incredible wealth. In truth, he became a Vigo for Black Sun.

Sprax now maintains an extensive network of "resource specialists," beings skilled in the acquisition of whatever goods and services might be in demand. Many of Sprax's specialists focus solely on the acquisition of ship parts and components (or whole ships if the opportunity presents itself), and the sale and distribution of these items throughout the Sisar Run. These operatives tend to have numerous depots and bases throughout the galaxy; their services are highly sought after by legitimate shippers, smugglers and pirates alike.

As might be expected of a criminal lord so heavily involved in transport craft and their application, Sprax loves fine vehicles and sharp designs. Though not a very able pilot, at his many estates Sprax keeps scores of some of the most impressive, rare starships from around the galaxy. Of the many craft he owns, Sprax's favorite is one of seven *Shadow Keepers* ever built, a ship as dangerous in space combat as its namesake, a predator native to Kashyyyk's deadly jungles.

Like most Nalroni, Sprax is a slight humanoid with a long, tapered snout. He often dyes his graying fur brown-gold as it was in his youth and maintains an extensive wardrobe like that of the Brentaal merchants—long-tailed jackets over long tunics.

For more information on Sprax and Black Sun, refer to the *Shadows of the Empire Sourcebook*.

Sprax

Type: Nalroni Vigo

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 5D, dodge 4D+2, pick pocket 6D

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Bureaucracy 6D, bureaucracy: Black Sun 7D+2, business 6D+2, business: Black Sun 8D, business: Brentaal trade houses 7D+2, business: XTS 7D, cultures 4D+2, intimidation 5D, languages 4D+2, planetary systems 6D, streetwise 5D, streetwise: Black Sun

6D+2, value 8D

MECHANICAL 2D

PERCEPTION 4D+2

Bargain 7D+1, command 6D, con 5D, forgery 6D+2, investigation

7D+1, persuasion 6D

STRENGTH 2D+1

TECHNICAL 2D

Computer programming/repair 4D+2, security 4D

Force Points: 3

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 11

Move: 9

Equipment: Comlink, datapad, hold-out blaster (3D).

Fronts

Secrets of the Sisar Run hinges on the players working for Vigo Sprax, but not knowing the identity of their benefactor. As such, here is a list of some of Sprax's many front companies.

Jatayus Outbound

Sprax allowed a Sisar chapter of this Celanon-based conglomerate to open up due to his past associations with Jatayus. This company only ships within the Sisar Run, using bulk freighters and medium transports to move all manner of supplies. There is only one super transport in Jatayus' fleet, called the *Warren*. While the smaller transports can haul transport containers, only the *Warren* can handle huge cargoes.

Criminal Operations: On paper, any "excess container yields" that cannot be mixed with other containers must be carried by small transports. While it seems unlikely that Jatayus' shipping fleet is so busy that it can't handle these "excess yields," ship shortages do occur—and quite often. The "surpluses" are carried by independent traders (free-lancers) whose records and associations with Jatayus can be lost with the single stroke of a delete key; their vessels carry no corporate logos. Needless to say, when a cargo must get somewhere within the Sisar Run, and normal means can't be found to ship it, a freelancer is called in.

To-Sharr Uuta Shipworks

This Hutt concern is actually a co-venture between Vigo Sprax and Vigo Durga the Hutt. Because Sprax's organization treads so close to Hutt Space, there had been much tension between Durga and Sprax. Sprax suggested a co-op as a means of easing the situation, although Sprax's true motive was creating a means through which he could closely monitor Durga's workings. Durga agreed to the deal for similar reasons.

To-Sharr is a Hutt-version of the Corellian Merchant Guild. It is set up to assist member spacers with port facilities, discounts and astrogational assistance.

Criminal Activities: While designed as an espionage tool, it has also become a major instrument for feeding Sprax's fixation with ancient and unique ships. Many old Hutt worlds have Expansionist Era or Sith War-era wrecks, and Shipworks funds archaeological excursions to uncover such wrecks. Shipworks has been known to steal unique or powerful vessels and on the side it also launders millions of credits.

Subspace Communications

A subscriber service, Subspace Communications offers access to thousands of deep-space subspace transceiver units (comsats), allowing near-instantaneous communications anywhere in the Sisar Run beyond the reach of standard shipboard subspace transceivers and without the expense of maintaining a HoloNet node. The area around the stellar anomaly called the Novolek Beacon is one of the few through which Subspace cannot deliver communications lines.

Criminal Activities: This is the “cleanest” of Sprax’s operations. It does, however, serve as an intelligence tool. Every deep-space comsat has a log-in program that records on-line users and their current locations. Using this log-in program, Sprax’s agents can use the network to track the last known location of any vessel—or even planet-bound individual. The comsats were the favored targets of the Disac pirates until Sprax had his agents crack down on the vandalism.

Xizor Transport Systems

A galactic corporation, Xizor Transport Systems hauls cargo throughout the Empire. Sprax does use XTS on occasion, but only for shipments into or out of the Sisar Run. His own personal affiliations keeps him using Jatayus Outbound within the Run.

Criminal Activities: Like Jatayus Outbound, XTS is used both to launder credits and to haul illegal cargo from planet to planet.

Note: Players familiar with the *Shadows of the Empire* storyline will most likely recognize XTS’ association with Black Sun. As such, you may want to keep XTS out of your adventures until you’re ready to reveal to the characters the nature of their employer.

Major Players

Directly under Sprax are a chief lieutenant, a chief bodyguard and perhaps a dozen primary advisors and liaisons. Beneath those individuals are hundreds of informants, thieves, pilots, and other operatives.

Kisquar

Sprax’s first officer and head of Sisar Run operations, Kisquar is a slight, red-and-black-plumed, vaguely avian Mriss male. Kisquar tends to many of the day-to-day matters that involve Sprax’s smuggling and shipping interests. As part of his service to Sprax, Kisquar oversees stealing and salvaging starship parts, reselling them to whoever makes it worth his while. The clientele often includes Rebel operatives and Imperial-sanctioned agents.

One of the most useful assets Kisquar provides Sprax and Black Sun are his numerous contacts that he brought with him from his prior career as a hijacker, pirate, smuggler, and “shipping coordinator.” Those who know Kisquar respect his abilities. His reputation within the smuggling industry allowed Sprax to recruit even more profitable clients. “A favor done me is a

favor done you,” Kisquar has informed business partners on more than one occasion.

Though many times Black Sun uses its intricate web of operatives for recruitment, Kisquar is often sent to personally recruit prospects for special jobs, particularly those involving the Rebellion or bounty hunting.

An able information broker in his own right, Kisquar has teamed with some of Sprax’s most capable slicers and spy masters, and developed an incredibly intricate—and untraceable—information network so labyrinthine it would do Prince Xizor proud.

Kisquar demands a great deal of respect from those who work directly below him, a crew of approximately a dozen infochants and crack pilots. He treats them as peers the majority of the time, but when it comes time to get down to work, there is no question who is in charge.

Kisquar

Type: Mriss Lieutenant

DEXTERITY 1D

Blaster 3D+1, dodge 4D+1

KNOWLEDGE 4D+1

Business 5D+1, business: Black Sun 6D+1, streetwise 5D, streetwise: Sisar Run 7D+2, value 6D+1, value: starships 7D+1

MECHANICAL 2D

Astrogation 3D+2, space transports 5D, starship gunnery 4D, starship shields 4D+2

PERCEPTION 2D+2

Bargain 5D+2, command 5D+2, con 5D, investigation 5D+2, persuasion 6D

STRENGTH 1D+1

Brawling 3D+1

TECHNICAL 1D+2

Security 4D+2, space transports repair 3D+2

Special Abilities:

Teaching Ability: Though Kisquar has not embraced the traditional ways of his people, he can advance all specializations of the scholar skill at half the normal Character Point cost.

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 12

Move: 6

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, datapad, security ID.

Note: For more information on the Mrissi, see page 147 of the *Thrown Trilogy Sourcebook*.

Shotarr “The Strap” Kass

Shotarr “The Strap” Kass is an aspiring Tunroth Hunter and Sprax’s personal guard, though he is not actually part of Sprax’s security force. Born and raised on Jiroch-Reslia, Shotarr was left without family or home following the Reslian Purge. Having seen the death of so many of his people and the destruction of most of his society, Shotarr took it upon himself to preserve as much of his culture and the Tunroth ideals as he could. He chose to train as a Hunter.

Eventually, Shotarr landed work with Black Sun and quickly gained Sprax’s confidence and faith. Due to his preference for leather jerkins, Shotarr was nicknamed “Strap” by his employer. He now shadows the sly Nalroni almost everywhere. Shotarr is extremely dedicated to his employer, as Sprax provides him with the means of continuing his training and education.

Shotarr is very well educated; he has a particular interest in Wookiee culture and history, and speaks the

Wookiee language fluently. He has studied but not yet developed skill in some Wookiee martial arts, and is familiar with many of the finer points of their protocol.

While Shotarr is loyal to Sprax and Kisquar, he finds it extremely troubling when his superiors call in other "freelancers" to do a job that should, by all rights, be his. To quell profit-draining activities by the notorious Disac pirates, Sprax hired Prince Xizor's mysterious "shadow killer" Ket Maliss. Maliss did a commendable job, wiping out the pirates in short order. Although Shotarr has said nothing, he despises Maliss and sees him as a threat. Now that Maliss has left, Shotarr is looking for the opportunity to prove his versatility to Sprax or Kisquar.

Shotarr has dark-yellow skin like many of his kind, though the horns of his chin are somewhat longer than average. Hulk-ing, quiet and intimidating, Shotarr's fierce image is further compounded by the pet he keeps in his company, a nashtah by name of Klirun. Sprax is quite fond of the beast, particularly after Klirun savagely mauled an assailant who attempted to ambush Sprax.

Shotarr "The Strap" Kass

Type: Tunroth Guard

DEXTERITY 4D

Blaster 5D, brawling parry 6D, dodge 5D+2, grenade 4D+2, melee combat 5D, melee combat: kiltar stave 7D, melee parry 5D

KNOWLEDGE 2D+2

Alien species 3D, alien species: Wookiees 5D+2, business 3D, cultures: Wookiee 5D+2, intimidation 5D+2, languages 4D, languages: Wookiee 6D, streetwise 4D, survival 4D

MECHANICAL 2D+2

Beast handling: nashtah 5D, beast riding 3D+2

PERCEPTION 3D

Hide 5D, investigation 3D+2, search 5D+1, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 3D+2

Brawling 7D, climbing/jumping 4D, stamina 4D+2

TECHNICAL 2D

Droid repair 3D, first aid 3D

Special Abilities:

Quarry Sense: Tunroth receive +1D to search when tracking an individual they are familiar with.

Force Points: 2

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 9

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster rifle (5D), datapad, gaderffii (STR+1D), kiltar stave (STR+2D+1, Moderate difficulty)

Note: For more information on the Tunroth and their history, see pages 88 and 89 of *Galaxy Guide 12: Aliens—Enemies and Allies*.

Klirun

Type: Nashtah

DEXTERITY 4D

PERCEPTION 3D

Search 4D

STRENGTH 5D

Brawling 6D, climbing/jumping 6D+2

Special Abilities:

Claws: STR+1D damage.

Move: 12 (running), 15 (leaping)

Size: 1.3 meters

Puln

Puln has never been sure of what would happen to him if Sprax ever found out what he really did for Black Sun. So far as Sprax is concerned, Puln is one of the Nalroni Vigo's best spies, fronting as a low-level thug under Vigo Green. He feeds Sprax valuable information regarding Green's organization.

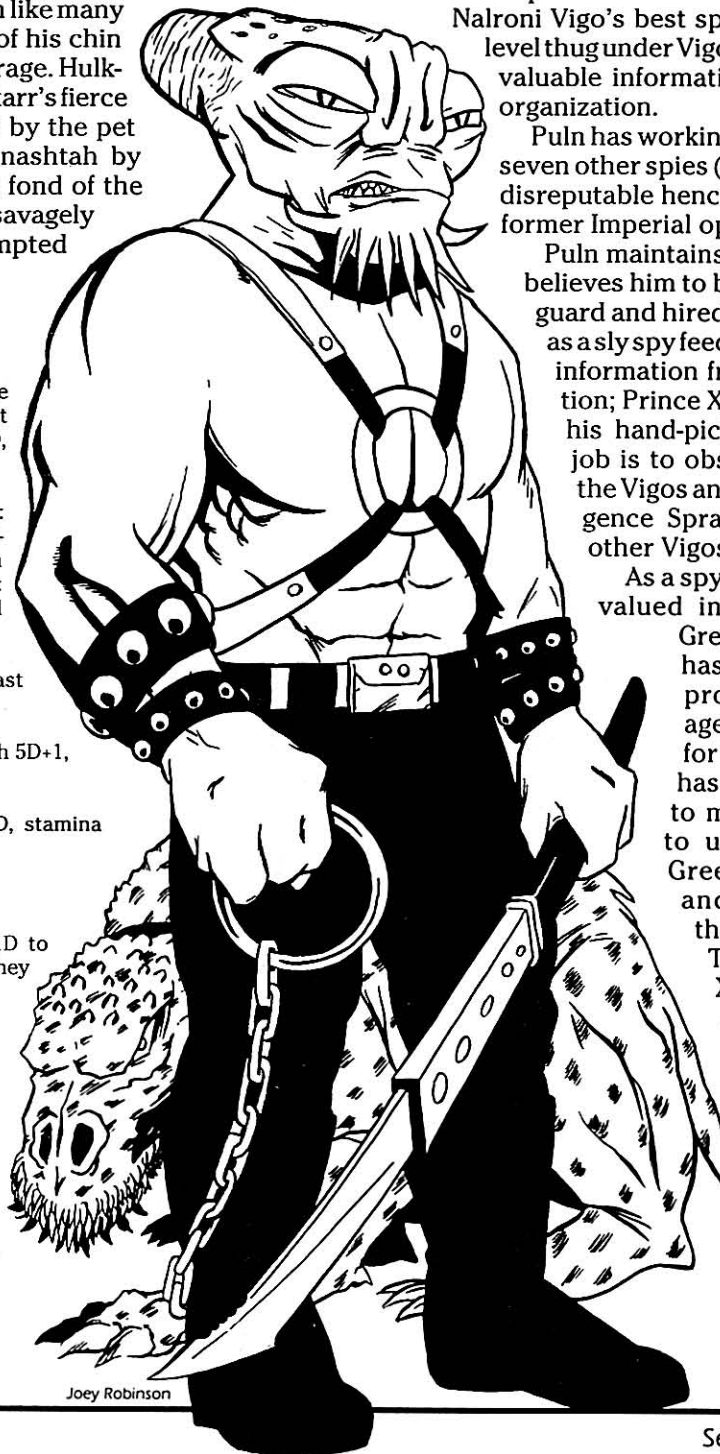
Puln has working under him a group of seven other spies (also posing as various disreputable henchmen), among them a former Imperial operative.

Puln maintains many facades: Green believes him to be a quiet but effective guard and hired killer; Sprax sees him as a sly spy feeding him much-needed information from Green's organization; Prince Xizor knows Puln to be his hand-picked operative whose job is to observe the activities of the Vigos and monitor what intelligence Sprax receives regarding other Vigos' operations.

As a spy, Puln is actually most valued in his observation of Green. The human Vigo has been absorbing a disproportionate percentage of Black Sun revenue for his own use and Puln has since been assigned to make an "extra effort" to uncover exactly why Green's been skimming and to what purpose those monies have gone.

That Puln also feeds Xizor information on Sprax is of value as well: at this time, Sprax is too wise to cross the Dark Prince.

Puln makes efforts to ensure his true motives are never revealed to anyone other than his Falleen master.



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What a conundrum Sprax would find himself in upon learning one of his favorite spies was actually spying on him. Puln would hate to put the Nalroni in such an unfortunate situation; the spy is actually rather fond of the Nalroni Vigo.

Puln is a stocky, brown-skinned, near-human male who commonly wears a thin shirt and baggy pants. His physical appearance, augmented by the nasty-looking metal club he carries with him everywhere, makes him look like a typical thug. But his alert eyes suggest there's more to him than just a bruiser.

Puln

Type: Near-Human Spy

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 5D, brawling parry 4D+2, dodge 6D, grenade 5D, melee combat 5D, melee parry 4D

KNOWLEDGE 2D+1

Aliens species 3D+1, intimidation 4D+1, languages 4D+1, law enforcement 3D+1, streetwise 5D+1, survival 4D+1, willpower 3D+1

MECHANICAL 2D

Beast riding 3D, communications 5D+1, repul-sorlift operation 3D+2, sensors 5D

PERCEPTION 4D+1

Command 5D, con 6D, forgery 5D+1, hide 5D+1, sneak 4D+2, search 5D

STRENGTH 3D+2

Brawling 6D+2, climbing/jumping 4D+2, lifting 4D+2, stamina 5D+2

TECHNICAL 2D+2

Computer programming/repair 5D+2, security 4D+2

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 7

Move: 11

Equipment: Club (STR+2), comlink.

Triple-Take

Puln grabbed the stocky Noehon by the carapace and slammed him into the permex wall. The insectoid slumped to the ground weakly. Puln kicked him again for good measure.

Vigo Green observed dispassionately from his comfortable grav-couch across the casino. He raised his glass, acknowledging his employee's work. Puln respectfully nodded to his Vigo and dragged the drunk out of the casino.

"What a good, hard-working guard Puln has proven himself to be. Perhaps it's time we considered promoting him," Green said to one of his aides.

Adventure Idea

Remnants of the Disac pirates—a now-disorganized band of cutthroats lurking about the Sisar Run—have turned up and Shotarr Kass has been given the assignment of eliminating them. Depending on the characters' standing with Sprax, the players may be approached by Shotarr to "assist" him, serving as covert transport for the Tunroth and allowing him to assess the pirate situation. Conversely, the characters may be hired to subdue the Disac remnants, garnering status with Sprax or Kisquar. This would make Shotarr quite angry and he would watch the characters very closely for any indiscretions in their association with Black Sun which he could report to his superiors.

Gamemaster Hints: What, No Villain's Palace?

Perhaps you noticed that there are no floorplans labeled "Sprax's lair" and no listing of what sort of protection he has in his inner sanctums. That's because this campaign is a little different from traditional *Star Wars* adventures. In fact, depending on how the characters fare, Sprax and his associates may not even be the villains.

Black Sun is not crafting some giant super-weapon or working on a virus capable of wiping out all alien life, nor are they interested in ruling entire systems by fear. Black Sun is a business; its members are interested in amassing credits. Anything that impedes their acquiring credits is something to be eliminated and Black Sun has the power to eliminate most obstacles.

During the characters' first few adventures, when they may not suspect Black Sun's involvement, keep the criminal operations on the "neat and tidy" side. A "simple" theft here, some illegal cargo smuggling there.

Even when the characters learn that Black Sun is involved, you may want to keep their role from being too dark.

Black Sun is still a ruthless organization, capable of deadly, evil actions, but it shouldn't be a threat to the characters until they've become far too comfortable with their cushy new jobs. What goes around does come around—characters should not be involved in gangland hits or brutal enforcements. An interesting and pivotal adventure hook could be if their boss asked them to do such an assignment, but be sure to allow the characters an option to "come clean" and renege on the deal.

Who the characters run to for safety after leaving the criminal underworld would also make an interesting adventure, depending on the enemies they may have made through the course of the campaign.



Puln sat at the short desk next to the bed in his sparse quarters, sealing an infochip destined for Vigo Sprax. In the morning, he would hand one of his guards a blaster rifle, with the chip hidden inside the magazine. That agent would ultimately see the chip to Sprax's courier on Maccant, who would in turn see it to Kisquar, who would give it to the Nalroni. This chip was particularly important as it held documentation regarding Green's work in getting three executives from the Drearian Defense Conglomerate onto Black Sun's payroll, information that would be very useful to Sprax considering his growing involvement near Green's territory.

Puln slipped the chip under the rifle's stock and wedged it on the underbarrel along the magazine.



Kisquar quietly exited the office, and Sprax was left to review a number of datafiles delivered by his intelligence couriers earlier in the day.

He spotted a small datachip with marks matching a BlasTech ammo primer and recognized it as one of Puln's. He inserted it into his reader and sat back, delighted at the information that scrolled onto the screen.

Puln, Sprax thought to himself, *an agent who has really proven his worth*. After viewing the information, Sprax arranged for a bonus to be deposited in Puln's standing account.



Puln bowed low. The stunning woman Guri, Prince Xizor's second, stood before him, looking over the datapad that Puln had brought her.

"Good work, agent. Our master will be pleased with what you have brought him. You are sure to be rewarded." Guri touched Puln's head, and the spy rose.

"Thank you, ma'am," the Puln responded. Praise from Guri was always sought—while her lethal displeasure was always feared.

"You are dismissed."

Puln quickly left the small room, eager to get back to his ship. There was a group of farmers Green wanted roughed up by week's end....

Allies and Employees

As might be expected, Sprax's business and lifestyle brings him into contact with beings from all around the galaxy. Following are profiles of some of the beings who fit prominently in Sprax's dealings on behalf of Black Sun.

Mal Biron

Sprax's best and favorite smuggler, Mal Biron is an older Shistavanen male who is somewhat of an "elder statesman" in many smuggling circles. Born on the third planet of the Shistavanen home system of Uvena, he hails from a long line of distinguished scouts and leaders. Once a scout for the Old Republic, Mal was a premier pilot and tracker.

Since the rise of the New Order, Mal has worked as a smuggler and bounty hunter. Never one to miss an excellent prospective employee, Xizor placed Mal Biron under the direction of the Nalroni Vigo Sprax. Mal, though aware of the high opinions others have of him and his work, cares little for such notions. He has a sincere love for piloting and as the Empire's restrictive measures have prevented him from pursuing his first love—scouting—he has turned to the smuggling trade with the same drive and determination. Modest but

extremely confident, Mal Biron has run the most perilous trade routes and smuggled to and from Nar Shaddaa during several Hutt gang wars.

Though officially a smuggler and freight hauler for Sprax, Mal is a representative of sorts for Black Sun among his own kind. Current political instability in the Shistavanen home system (brought about by corruption) have threatened Black Sun's interests there. Mal has made use of his popularity among Uvena's government officials to prevent Black Sun's losses from being too extensive. It is feared, however, that the current drive in Shistavanen politics to cleanse the system of its rampant corruption might prompt Black Sun to withdraw its interests in the region. If that proves to be the case, there are certainly other spheres of interest in which Mal's skills can be effectively utilized.

In addition to his representative duties among his people, Mal is considered Sprax's "ambassador" to the smuggling world. While Sprax, Kisquar and a number of other smugglers in the Vigo's employ are quite respected in that community, none of them seem to have the clout or respect of Mal.

While this has been a sore point for Sprax in the past—why an aging Shistavanen free-trader should have more clout bewilders the Nalroni—he has used Mal's reputation to increase contracts and profits for his group.

Mal is a graying Shistavanen male, who often dresses in kahki-colored clothing, a throwback to his scouting days. He is missing his left ear and his muzzle contains a few chipped teeth.

Mal Biron

Type: Shistavanen Smugglee

DEXTERITY 2D+2

Blaster 4D+2, blaster: blaster rifle 5D+2, brawling parry 4D+2, dodge 4D+2, grenade 3D+2, melee combat 4D+2, melee parry 4D+2

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Alien species 4D+2, cultures 5D, intimidation 4D+2, languages 5D+1, planetary systems 5D, survival 6D+2

MECHANICAL 3D+1

Astrogation 6D+1, beast riding 4D+1, communications 4D+1,



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repulsorlift operation 4D+1, space transports 6D+1, starship gunnery 6D, starship shields 6D

PERCEPTION 2D

Hide 4D+1, search 5D, search: tracking 6D, sneak 4D+2

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 5D, climbing/jumping 4D, climbing/jumping: climbing 5D, stamina 7D

TECHNICAL 3D

First aid 4D+2, space transports repair 5D+2

Force Points: 1

Character Points: 12

Move: 11

Equipment: Blaster rifle (5D), comlink, medpac, survival kit.

Eyeshine

Type: Modified Corellian Engineering Corporation *Barloz*-regular Heavy Freighter

Scale: Starfighter

Length: 41 meters

Skill: Space transports: *Barloz* freighter

Adventure Idea

While on the edge of the Sisar Run, the characters see Puhn—who they recognize as a fellow employee—conversing with Vigo Green. While the characters may not recognize Green, they may see that Puhn is handing datapads and the like over to this other Vigo. If the characters approach Puhn, he may be forced to eliminate them to maintain his cover or he may try to have them “play along” so that he can get one final bit of information out of Green.

Conversely, the characters may run to their superiors, snitching on Puhn’s activities. While this may get them some recognition, it would also make them a target of retribution by Puhn and possibly Green’s agents.

Crew: 1

Crew Skill: See Mal Biron

Passengers: 5

Cargo Capacity: 80 metric tons

Consumables: 6 months

Cost: Not available for sale

Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1

Hyperdrive Backup: x8

Nav Computer: Yes

Maneuverability: 1D+2

Space: 6

Atmosphere: 330; 950 kmh

Hull: 5D

Shields: 3D

Sensors:

Passive: 40/1D

Scan: 80/1D+2

Search: 100/2D+2

Focus: 4/3D+1

Weapons:

Quad Laser Cannon

Fire Arc: Turret

Crew: 1 (from cockpit)

Skill: Starship gunnery

Fire Control: 3D

Space Range: 1-5/10/17

Atmosphere Range: 100- 500/1/1.7 km

Damage: 5D

2 Ion Cannons

Fire Arc: Turret

Crew: 1 (from cockpit)

Scale: Capital

Skill: Capital ship gunnery

Fire Control: 2D+2

Space Range: 1-10/25/30

Damage: 3D

Capsule: The *Eyeshine* is the perfect example of what happens to a simple scouting ship when its owner turns to smuggling. With consumables intended for the long scouting expeditions, the *Eyeshine* seldom needs refueling. Added armor plating, improved shields, advanced sensors and top-notch weapons provide Mal with the tools for a long smuggling career. The *Eyeshine*’s X10-D droid brain—like that found on several other smugglers’ and bounty hunters’ craft—helps him maintain and operate the ship effectively. The *Eyeshine* is named for a female Defel that Mal one romanced in his younger days.

Kalend Thora

A former weapons smuggler for Kintan gunrunners, Kalend Thora is a seasoned Duro pilot who works for Mal Biron and handles some of Sprax’s most important shipments.

Until recently, Kalend spent most of her time in Corellian space. Throughout the Corellian sector, Kalend is renowned for her ability to elude capture. Little do most of the other smugglers and free-traders know that Sprax makes sure Kalend stays unmolested; the Imperial forces are paid not to try too hard to bring her in.

Part of Kalend’s work for Sprax entails carrying regular shipments to one of Prince Xizor’s supply freighters, where items the Falleen prince has particular interest in are deposited. However, most of Kalend’s work is simple smuggling, blockade running and gun-running; she loves her chosen profession and has never let her Nalroni patron down.

She has recently been reassigned to the Sisar Run now that pirate activity has been lowered to a level where Sprax’s profit margins are acceptable. She has extensive knowledge of some of the most efficient smuggling routes and is owed several favors by and maintains close relations with a number of prominent port officials throughout the galaxy. Her skills, loyalty and innate Duro abilities make for an ideal Black Sun operative.

Kalend is a blue-skinned Duro female with a greenish tinge around her neck and shoulders. She wears the same flight suit as many of the A-wing pilots in the Rebellion do and has a long scar across her head.

Kalend Thora

Type: Duro Smuggler

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 4D, dodge 4D+2

KNOWLEDGE 2D+2

Cultures 3D+2, planetary systems 4D+2, value: starships 4D+2

MECHANICAL 4D+1

Astrogation 5D+1, sensors 4D+2, space transports 5D+1, space transports: D9 Runner 6D+1, starship gunnery 5D+2, starship shields 5D

PERCEPTION 3D

Command 4D, con 6D, search 4D

STRENGTH 2D+2

Brawling 3D+2, stamina 4D

TECHNICAL 2D+1

First aid 3D+1, space transports repair 4D+1

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 6

Move: 11

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), headset comlink, medpac, Rebel A-wing pilot flight suit, tool kit.

Starknife

Type: Modified Kuat Drive Yards D9 Runner light freighter

Scale: Starfighter

Length: 23 meters

Skill: Space transports: D9 Runner

Crew: 1; gunners: 2

Crew Skill: See Kalend Thora

Passengers: 4

Cargo Capacity: 75 metric tons

Consumables: 2 months

Cost: Not available for sale

Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1

Hyperdrive Backup: x16

Nav Computer: Yes

Space: 4

Atmosphere: 280; 800 kmh

Hull: 3D+2

Shields: 3D+2

Sensors:

Passive: 15/0D

Scan: 30/1D

Search: 50/3D

Focus: 2/4D

Weapons:

Double Laser Cannon

Fire Arc: Turret

Crew: 1

Skill: Starship gunnery

Fire Control: 1D+1 (fired from the cockpit)

Space Range: 1-3/12/25

Atmosphere Range: 100-300/1.2/2.5 km

Damage: 4D

Proton Torpedo Launcher

Fire Arc: Back

Crew: 1

Skill: Starship gunnery

Fire Control: 1D

Space Range: 1/3/7

Atmosphere Range: 50-100/300/700

Damage: 7D

Capsule: The *Starknife*, a KDY-D9 Runner, was one of the first freighter designs produced by Kuat Drive Yards after the Empire rose to power. An effective, inexpensive model, the D9 was eventually replaced by the faster, more heavily armed D11.

Kalend Thora acquired the *Starknife* after its original owner, a fellow Black Sun operative, was ambushed and assassinated by an unknown party. Nearly two years later, the operative's death is still under investigation. Upon her receipt of the vehicle, Kalend made some modifications to suit her needs and tastes, but has otherwise left the craft unchanged.

The *Starknife* is not the fastest or most impressive smuggling ship, but Kalend finds this an asset. Hijackers and Imperial officials tend to eye flashier, more impressive craft, not the average freighter with modest specs. This charade has kept her in business longer than most shipping companies.

Tasin

Tasin was a promising young trader quickly moving up in the Jatayus Trading Consortium when Sprax, the heir apparent to the Jatayus executive chair, accepted a position with Xizor Transport Systems. In the wake of Sprax's departure, Tasin has since gone on to head the consortium and has arranged for an extremely profitable business relationship between her group, Jatayus Outbound, and XTS.

Among legitimate concerns, Jatayus Outbound's fleet is almost entirely made up of XTS couriers and freighters. For that preference, Xizor has arranged for Jatayus to be privy to lower rates than most other customers, as well as granting many cargo runs within the Sisar Run.

In the criminal realm, Jatayus provides credit laundering services and corporate investment cover for Black Sun, as well as support of the Gricul Yards on

Adventure Idea

The player characters are aboard the *Starknife* with Kalend during a routine haul when they are ambushed by a group of ragtag starfighters. While the fighters don't destroy the *Starknife*, they manage to cripple it. Kalend puts the *Starknife* down at Terman Station, where another assassination attempt nearly succeeds. The characters and Kalend investigate the attempts, finding it the result of a wayward assassin droid who not only slave-rigged the fighters, but has managed to dupe a group of none-too-bright mercs into working for it. The assassin droid believes Kalend to be the original owner of the *Starknife*, and will not rest until she and all aboard the craft are dead.

Srilluur and additional corporate "legitimizing."

The benefits Tasin reaps for favoring XTS and Black Sun are not merely financial; for her trouble, she enjoys the security of knowing her business will prosper for years to come, as she is confident in Prince Xizor's ability to maintain the organization as long as he is its head. Tasin and XTS also share important information regarding competing companies.

Tasin maintains close relations with Sprax, both in business and social concerns. Sprax values her counsel and enjoys her company during visits to his villa on Novor 23, site of the Jatayus local offices. Although there is no romantic interest between the two Nalroni, they are extremely close friends.

Sleek, sly and sexy, Tasin is a dark-furred Nalroni female with dark green eyes. She dresses very professionally and seldom smiles.

Tasin

Type: Nalroni Trader

DEXTERITY 2D+2

Dodge 3D+2

KNOWLEDGE 3D+1

Bureaucracy 4D+1, bureaucracy: Celanon City 5D+1, business 5D+1, cultures 4D, planetary systems 5D, streetwise 4D+1, streetwise: Celanon City 4D+1

MECHANICAL 3D+1

Repulsorlift operation 4D

PERCEPTION 3D+2

Bargain 6D+2, command 5D+2, con 5D+2, forgery 4D+1, persuasion 4D+1

STRENGTH 2D+1

TECHNICAL 2D+2

Computer programming/repair 3D+2, droid programming 4D+2, droid repair 4D+2, first aid 3D+2, repulsorlift repair 4D+2, security 4D+2

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 6

Move: 11

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, datapad, security ID, 200 credits

Nim Abek

Nim Abek (whose real name, Nim'abek'shy-wedell, simply got in the way of one too many introductions) is a red Nikto pirate in the employ of Vigo Sprax. Although

Sprax dislikes piracy—he has seen many a fine-lined vessel ruined by careless pirates—he does recognize its value.

In Sprax's eyes, shipjacking is acceptable as long as the shipjackers are skilled enough to bring in the vessels intact. Abek's crew can do just that.

Abek began his career as a shipjacker in the Sisar Run. When the Nikto stole a ship from Sprax's personal fleet in a fast, professional and flawless way, the Vigo dispatched bounty hunters to bring the Nikto in. Abek was captured...and was quite surprised to find Sprax offering him employment. Since then, Abek has become the leader of a group of pirates, shipjackers and mercs working out a combination chop-shop/shadowport just before the Sisar Run splits to the Ac'fren Spur. (The shadowport exists on no maps, and can only be reached by invitation.)

Abek is a loud braggart, but with good reason. He now has command of over 100 pirates. Vigo Sprax does not trust Abek, but so far he has been very useful and his ship-jacking operation has proven extremely valuable. Abek has several treacherous schemes bubbling in his leathery head, but so far, he has not acted. (Abek will act, however, in "The Barani Conspiracy" adventures, later in this book.)

Nim Abek

Type: Nikto Pirate

DEXTERITY 4D

Blaster 6D, dodge 5D, running 5D

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Bureaucracy: Black Sun 6D, business: Black Sun 7D, intimidation 6D, law enforcement 6D, streetwise 6D, survival: desert 7D, willpower 6D

MECHANICAL 2D+2

Astrogation 5D, communications 4D, repulsorlift operation 4D, sensors 4D, space transports 5D, starship gunnery 5D

PERCEPTION 2D

Bargain 6D, command 5D, con 5D, gambling 5D, investigation 6D, persuasion 5D, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 3D+1

Brawling 4D, stamina 5D

TECHNICAL 3D

Security 6D

Move: 10

Special Abilities:

Vision: Nikto have a natural eye-shielding of a transparent keratin-like substance. They suffer no adverse effects from sandstorms or similar conditions, nor does their vision blur underwater.

Kajain'sa'Nikto Stamina: Red Nikto have great

stamina in desert environments. They receive a +1D bonus to both *survival: desert* and *stamina* rolls.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), blast vest (+1 energy, +1D physical).

Enemies and Rivals

Any being involved in organized crime is bound to have enemies and Sprax is no exception. Several assassins have open contracts on the Nalroni Vigo, and several groups have tried to pressure Sprax's representatives, all to no avail. Whereas most of Sprax's adversaries have been dealt with in one way or another (some bought, most assassinated), some still remain.

Ujin Voli & The Antar Band

Head of the relatively small but influential Antar Band, Ujin Voli is one of the most serious threats to Sprax's interests along the Sisar Run. Voli, a career criminal, has worked with slaving rings, smuggling circles and spice cartels, but his current niche is that of leader of a gang of smugglers, thieves and scavs.

Some months ago, Ujin Voli may have actually had a chance to share some of the market in which he and Sprax have been competing. Now the likelihood of such an arrangement seems nil, as Sprax has tightened his grip on those realms that have proven profitable.

Though he realizes Black Sun overwhelms his group financially and in simple manpower, Voli is determined to continue competing against Sprax. Ruthless, spiteful and a good leader to boot, Ujin is confident he will at the very least be able to persuade his Nalroni nemesis to allow the Gotal his own space. If he is unable to convince

Sprax to leave him alone, he is determined to cause the Vigo's undoing: to that end, he often hires freelance terrorists to harass craft he believes to be under Sprax's wing. Since few of those terrorists survive, Ujin seldom has to actually pay them.

In most cases, any being who would dare oppose Sprax and his factions as nonchalantly as this Gotal and his crew would have met an untimely death a long time ago. Fortunately for Ujin, he maintains the company of some very skilled assassins, including the very respected (and feared) Ishi Tib assassin Zirlig and Ujin's old compan-





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ion Ar'wa Nonshik. Ujin Voli's association with these and other big-name assassins have caused Sprax to spend more time keeping abreast of the killers' whereabouts than pursuing Ujin's demise—Sprax doesn't feel Ujin's death would be such a victory if one of the Gotal's assassins found him at the same time.

Ujin is an aging Gotal male with fuzzy headcones, an indication of his advancing age. His brow is grooved by numerous deep creases, and his right eye is, for the most part, lifeless—the result of an encounter with Black Sun agents some time ago.

Using the Antar Band

In the early adventures of a Black Sun campaign, the Antar Band can be basic villains—cutthroats to oppose the characters and their employers. “Removing” certain Antar agents or hindering their smugglers can serve as a means for the characters' advancement within Black Sun.

However, as the characters advance and learn more about their shadowy employers, they may decide they do not want to work for Black Sun. They may want to “go clean.” If that's the case, their options are limited. Not knowing for certain who is in Black Sun's pocket, their only choice may be to go to Voli. Ironically, even more ruthless criminals could be their only means of leaving the Sisar Run. Of course, Voli would want something in return and if the characters have amassed information about Black Sun, it would be very valuable.

Ujin Voli

Type: Gotal Crime Lord

DEXTERITY 3D+2

Blaster 4D+2, brawling parry 4D+2, dodge 5D+2, melee combat 4D

KNOWLEDGE 2D+1

Alien species 3D+1, bureaucracy 4D+1, bureaucracy: Antar Band 5D+1, business 4D+1, intimidation 4D+1, streetwise 4D+1, streetwise: Antar Band 5D+1, value 4D+1

MECHANICAL 3D

Communications 3D+2

PERCEPTION 3D+1

Bargain 4D+1, command 4D+1, command: Antar Band 5D+1, con 5D+1, investigation 4D+1, search 4D+1

STRENGTH 3D+2

Brawling 4D, stamina 4D+2

TECHNICAL 2D

Computer programming/repair 3D, security 5D

Special Abilities:

Energy Sensitivity: Gotal's are unusually sensitive to radiation emissions and receive a +3D to their *search* skill when hunting targets in open areas within 10 kilometers and +1D to *search* when hunting targets within 1 urban kilometer.

Mood Detection: Gotal's are skilled at reading the intentions of other beings. The Gotal makes a Moderate *Perception* roll, and gains a bonus to all *Perception* skills when making opposed rolls for the rest of the encounter.

Fast Initiative: +1D to initiative against non-Gotal opponents.

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 2

Character Points: 13

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster carbine (3D), grenade (5D), security case, vibroblade (STR+1D), 400 credits.

The Antar Band

The Antar Band, named for Voli's home system, is an experienced group of smugglers, thieves and scavs.

Recruited from all corners of the galaxy, many of the Band's numbers are from now-defunct criminal groups or are former law-enforcement officials now using their training in more profitable pursuits.

As a result of their checkered backgrounds, many members of the group have enemies all over the galaxy; this has, on occasion, caused difficulties, since many missions have been completely derailed by a chance encounter with a foe from the past. The Gotal criminal has since made a point of keeping his roster secret, and tries to not hire high-profile criminals.

Average Antar Band Smuggler. All stats are 2D except: *blaster 3D+2, dodge 3D+2, planetary systems 2D+2, streetwise 3D+2, astrogation 3D+2, space transports 4D+2, starship gunnery 4D, starship shields 3D+2, space transports repair 4D.* Move: 10. Heavy blaster pistol (5D), comlink, 50 credits.

Average Antar Band Thief. All stats are 2D except: *dodge 4D, pickpocket 5D, hide 4D, search 4D, sneak 4D+1, security 5D.* Move: 11. Blaster pistol (4D), datapad.

Average Antar Band Scav. All stats are 2D except: *Dodge 3D, value 3D+2, computer programming/repair 3D+2, repulsoflight repair 4D, security 4D, space transports repair 4D+1.* Move: 11. Blaster (4D), comlink, tool kit.

Zirlig

Type: Ishi Tib Assassin

DEXTERITY 2D+1

Blaster 5D+1, dodge 4D+1, grenade 4D+1

KNOWLEDGE 3D+1

Alien species 4D+1, law enforcement 4D, streetwise 5D+1, streetwise: Antar Band 6D+1

MECHANICAL 2D+2

Astrogation 3D+2, space transports 3D+2, starship gunnery 3D+2, starship shields 3D+2

PERCEPTION 3D+2

Con 4D+2, hide 5D+2, investigation 4D+2, search 5D+2, sneak 6D+2

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 4D, swimming 6D

TECHNICAL 3D

Armor repair 3D+1, computer programming/repair 4D, demolitions 4D+2, security 5D

Special Abilities:

Beak: The beak of an Ishi Tib does *Strength* +2D damage.

Immersion: An Ishi Tib must fully immerse himself (for 10 rounds) in a brine solution similar to the oceans of Tibrin after spending 30 hours out of the water. If they fail to do this, they suffer 1D of damage (cumulative) for every hour over 30 that they stay out of the water (roll for damage once per hour, starting at hour 31).

Force Points: 1

Character Points: 2

Move: 10

Equipment: Blast vest (+1D physical, +1 energy), blaster rifle (5D), comlink, medpac, palm blaster (2D), tangle gun (4D).

Capsule: A perfectionist with the Ishi Tib tendencies towards attention to detail and meticulous planning, Zirlig is a calculating assassin who goes to painstaking ends to ensure a successful job. To his credit, this approach has resulted in a perfect record.

Zirlig has worked for Voli for over two decades and has no inclination to leave his benefactor, even in light of the current disputes with the likely insurmountable Black Sun. Deep down, Zirlig hopes he's ordered to assassinate Sprax. That indeed would be a challenge worthy of his skills!

An average Ishi Tib in appearance, Zirlig is a green,

amphibious biped with rough, leathery skin. Zirlig sports a worn blast vest and has a number of small-ranged weapons at his disposal. Though capable of extinguishing a target's life in many ways, he is a traditionalist who prefers the long-range blaster shot to messier methods.

Ar'wa Nonshik

Type: Aramandi Mercenary

DEXTERITY 3D+1

Blaster 5D+1, dodge 4D+1

KNOWLEDGE 2D+2

Streetwise 4D+2

MECHANICAL 2D

Beast riding 3D+1

PERCEPTION 3D

Sneak 4D

STRENGTH 3D+1

Brawling 4D+1, climbing/jumping 4D+1, stamina 4D+1

TECHNICAL 2D+2

First aid 3D+2

Special Abilities:

Heavy Gravity: Whenever Aramandi are on a planet or other atmosphere with lighter gravity than their homeworld, they receive a +1D to *Dexterity* and *Strength* related skills (but not against damage) and add 2 to their Move.

Breath Masks: Whenever Aramandi are off their homeworld or in non-Aramandi starships, they must wear special breath masks which add minute traces of vital gasses. Without the mask, the Aramandi becomes very ill after six hours and dies in two days.

Character Points: 4

Move: 8

Equipment: Blaster rifle (5D), comlink, grenade (5D), knife (STR+1D), survival kit.

Note: For more information on the Aramandi, see pages 64-70 of *Flashpoint! Brak Sector*.

Capsule: A gun-for-hire from the Cirra akia (clan) of Aramandi, Ar'wa Nonshik is a long-time friend of Ujin Voli and very supportive of Voli's current crusade against Sprax. The short, four-eyed and four-armed being originally served as a guard for a low-level bureaucrat on his homeworld Aram—Ar'wa was never quite sure what his employer did. After a few years working as a guard, a Gotal paid a visit to Ar'wa's employer and soon after the employer was found dead, the Gotal hired the Aramandi as a "freelance operative." Ar'wa Nonshik has been a close friend and employee of Ujin Voli ever since.

Those from the Cirra clan of Aramandi tend to be aggressive, capable combatants; Ar'wa is no exception. He is loyal to Ujin, but not necessarily to others in the Gotal's employ.

The Empire

Governor Streeg

The Sisar Run has drawn little attention from the vast Imperial Navy, but since it is on the frontiers of Hutt Space, the Empire finds it necessary to "fly the flag" in the area. That minimal military presence falls under the command of Territorial Governor Newen Streeg.

Streeg, unlike most other Imperial officials, is not a graduate of the Academy and has nominal ties with the Imperial Military. He was the son of a highly placed bureaucrat—although obviously not highly placed enough to afford her son a better position than the governor of a "lesser trade route."

Streeg's mother was killed by pirate forces when he was 13 standard years old. At the time, Streeg was

A Favor Done...

Bho Vendoll actually considered himself lucky. His ship, the *Tragic Flaw*, was—for once—not living up to its name. The current thrust intermix cowling seemed to have adequate shielding, and the new hyperdrive compressor coils his employers had supplied him with had specs that would make any spacer grin.

And so, Bho grinned. Dame Fortune was grinning with him since moving up in the “company.” It started small, with minor cargo runs up and down the Ac’fren Spur. Then, the jobs got bigger, as did the rewards. Risk, too, increased, but with the current catalog of high-tech goodies beneath the *Flaw’s* access grills, Bho could outrun most risks.

He re-checked his technical station read-outs on the new coil. Much of the initialization language was alien to his ship’s computer, but the standardized design specs were well off the charts. This thing could make his ship just slip into and out of hyperspace. Good thing, too, since it took him nearly 15 hours to install the equipment and to do so, he had to scrap much of his old system.

With his attention seduced by his ship, it was little wonder Bho missed the door chime. When he peered up from his work, he saw Kisquar and a group of Rodians stood near the aft-hatchway. The tiny avian Mriss looked distinctly out of place near the green-skinned thugs.

“Impressed?” Kisquar asked. The Rodians spread themselves around the avian Mriss with military precision. Their striped suits betrayed the contours of deadly hardware hidden in shoulder-holsters.

“Quite.” Bho smiled feebly. With success in the business came new, more powerful supervisors. Bho missed the lower-level ones, the ones he could relate to. Kisquar never joked, never frequented the local tapcafes and spacer cantinas, and probably

couldn’t mix a good drink if his plumage depended on it. “This baby’s a gem. It’ll really make the old girl fly. What is it? A Verpine design? Givin, maybe?”

“Actually. It’s one-of-a-kind.” Kisquar moved closer, with his entourage stepping closer as well. “You will find it quite useful.” Kisquar moved his delicate fingers into his breast pocket, pulling out a small palm-sized datapad.

Bho’s eyes skimmed the infocrawl on the tiny screen. Cargo run...*across Periphery terminals...past the Imperial Customs Inspection teams...*

He thumbed the scroll key. Cargo: biowar viral activators?

Bho had once said he would no longer be surprised by his job. He took it back.

“Our employer has found an interested party in the neighboring sector.” Kisquar answered Bho’s unasked question. “He requires an independent like yourself for the transfer....”

“And if I refuse?” Bho asked, putting the pad down as if it had been contaminated.

“Unlikely. You see, as we speak a purge virus is tearing at your ship’s datacore. A by-product of the alien compressor coil, I’m afraid. Some cultures are just not as open to sharing technology as they could be.”

A smile appeared on Kisquar’s face. “Of course, the alien-translation database can be found at your destination and once decrypted, you will be allowed to retain the coil.”

Bho grimaced. Maybe his luck wasn’t as brilliant as he hoped. Kisquar knew more about spacers than Bho gave him credit. He hit him where it hurt the most: his ship.

“Okay. You have a deal, Kisquar. Oh, and tell your—I’m sorry—our boss that his irony was not missed. Getting a virus to get me to ship viruses.”

“Actually,” said Kisquar, collecting the small pad, “it was my idea.”

wholly accepting of the New Order and read much of the propaganda available to him. He knew what it was like in the Old Republic in those chaotic last days, and he knew the murdering pirates that killed his mother were a product of those times. He swore to “clean up this galaxy, a sector at a time if need be.”

Streeg’s strongest background is in law enforcement and customs duty, although he tends to be more of a theoretical student since his hands-on knowledge is minimal. Streeg has many ideas about how to clean up the sector, but none of them are feasible.

Streeg has to be content with stopping the smugglers that he can catch and quelling pirates that pop up close enough to be captured by one of his cruisers. Although he suspects there is an organized criminal element in this region, Streeg has no idea it is part of the Black Sun galaxy-wide syndicate or that Sprax is an underworld Vigo. Streeg actually doesn’t believe Sprax

is a shady character at all.

To fuel the war effort, much of Streeg’s police fleet has been trimmed down. Although he rarely travels aboard his flagship, the *Ion Storm* (Streeg tends to get spacesick), Streeg is often trying to update his “navy” with newer, better-equipped ships. As part of sector patrols, Streeg sometimes has the luxury of requesting aide from the Star Destroyer *Annihilator*, which skims the edge of Hutt Space, or the Star Destroyer *Ruthless*, assigned to the Periphery, but he usually has to make do with his small fleet of escort frigates, escort carriers, Interdictor cruisers, and systems patrol craft.

Although a by-the-manual commander with little imagination, Streeg has “bent the rules” to secure defense funding from his superiors. Whenever possible, he has his agents plant evidence of Alliance activities, ensuring that his reputation remains strong (having destroyed so many “Rebel cells”) and that he

receives more supplies and ships.

Little does Streeg know that Black Sun agents have gotten to his underling, Captain Barse Neomen. Neomen receives a regular stipend from Sprax's agents to ensure that only minor or competing criminal elements are harassed by Streeg's fleet. Streeg has no idea that his fleet is serving Black Sun's interests.

Governor Streeg

Type: Imperial Governor
DEXTERITY 3D
 Blaster 3D+1, dodge 4D
KNOWLEDGE 4D
 Alien species 5D, bureaucracy 4D+1, bureaucracy: Sisar Run 7D, cultures 4D+1, law enforcement 5D+1, planetary systems 5D
MECHANICAL 3D+2
 Astrogation 4D+1
PERCEPTION 3D+1
 Bargain 4D+1, command 5D, search 5D+1
STRENGTH 2D
TECHNICAL 2D
 Computer programming/repair 5D+1, first aid 5D+1
Force Points: 1
Character Points: 6
Move: 10
Equipment: Datapad, Imperial uniform

Captain Barse Neomen

Captain Barse Neomen trained at the Imperial Academy on Corulag. A competent officer, it was just bad luck (as he sees it) that he was assigned to such an outlying area like the Sisar Run. An officer whose ambition outstretches his ability, Neomen quickly grew bored and corruption soon followed. Black Sun agents approached Neomen, offering him credits in exchange for his loyalty.

Neomen is a collector of Expansionist Era art, including the works of the pre-Hutt Klatooins and Niktos. His travels along the worlds of the Sisar Run has turned up many "gems." Neomen has no respect for his commander, but keeps this to himself. When feeling particularly bitter, Neomen tries to slip in subtle insults and backhanded compliments to Streeg, but he knows enough not to push it too far.

Neomen is the captain of the *Ion Storm*, but is often away, collecting graft and works of art. In his absence, the *Strike*-class cruiser is commanded by Commander Surlev.

Much to Neomen's amusement, Surlev is fanatically loyal to Streeg and also believes in cleaning up the Sisar Run. Whenever possible, Neomen keeps him on a short leash.

Captain Barse Neomen

Type: Imperial Captain
DEXTERITY 2D+2
 Blaster 4D+2, blaster artillery 4D, dodge 4D, melee combat 4D+2
KNOWLEDGE 3D
 Bureaucracy 4D+1, cultures 3D, scholar: Expansionist Era art 5D+1, streetwise 5D+1, tactics: capital ship combat 5D+1, tactics: capital ships 4D, value 5D+1, willpower 4D+2
MECHANICAL 3D+2
 Capital ship gunnery 5D, capital ship piloting 4D+1
PERCEPTION 3D+1
 Command 5D+2, con 5D, hide 4D+1, sneak 4D+2
STRENGTH 2D+1
TECHNICAL 3D
 Security 5D
Force Points: 1
Character Points: 12
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D damage), Imperial uniform

Independents Parties

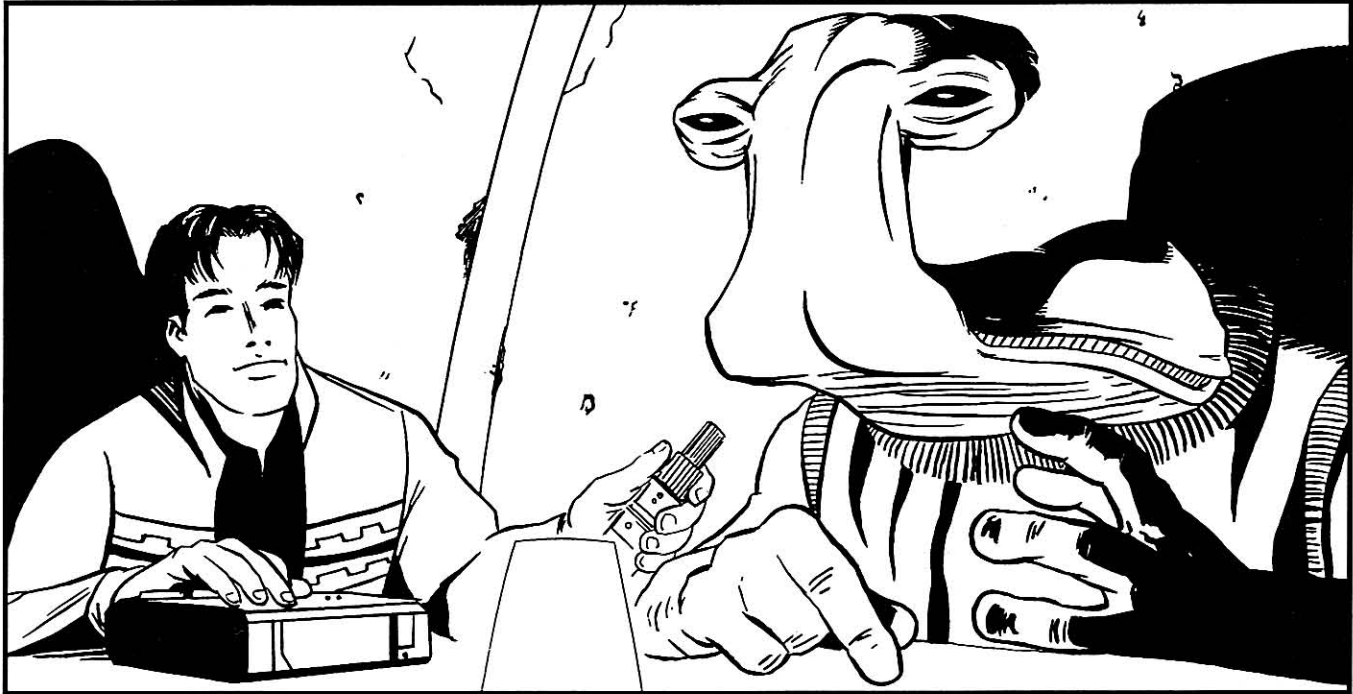
Lan Demoa

Lan Demoa is a freelance reporter working within the Sisar Run and trying to crack a big story that will get him a permanent position with a major newsnet. Unfortunately, most of his reporting covers the farm yields or when the Hvarnec Junior Scout League of Mierm City will have a craft sale at a local marketplace.

Lan is considered a bit of a novelty among spacer circles. Most smugglers view him as harmless, delighting in giving him false leads and seeing how far he'll follow them. The smugglers know that they aren't



Joey Robinson



Joey Robinson

worthy of Lan's "big story," so they let him stick around and sit in on sabacc games.

While Demoal thinks he is a great journalist, his wild conspiracy theories have lowered his credibility in professional and social circles. Demoal goes on about how the Galactic Civil War is all a staged conflict to cut down on civil rights, of how evidence of alien incursions from outside the galaxy have been covered up, or how the Empire is actually ruled by occult Sith-worshipping clonemasters hidden deep in the Core.

Demoal has come across leads that indicate there may be a Black Sun presence in the Sisar Run, but he is smart enough to keep his mouth shut until he has gathered proof. Lan is actually brighter than most people think and he is carefully recording—mentally or electronically—any conversation he may be privy to.

Lan Demoal

Type: Junior Reporter
DEXTERITY 3D
 Dodge 4D+2, running 5D
KNOWLEDGE 3D+2
 Alien species 5D, bureaucracy 4D+1, business: freelance journalism 5D+2, cultures 4D, law enforcement 5D, planetary systems 5D, streetwise: Sisar Run 5D
MECHANICAL 2D+2
 Repulsorlift operation 3D+2
PERCEPTION 4D
 Bargain 4D+2, con 5D, hide 4D+2, investigation 6D, persuasion 4D+2, search 4D+2, sneak 5D
STRENGTH 2D
 Climbing/jumping 3D+2
TECHNICAL 2D+2
 Computer programming/repair 4D+2
Force Points: 1
Character Points: 8
Move: 10
Equipment: Datapad, recording rod, comlink

Using Lan Demoal In Your Game

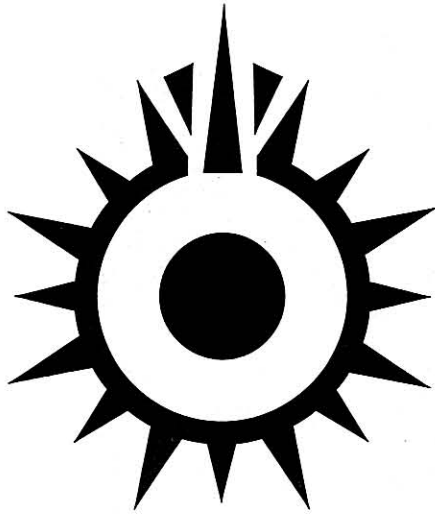
Gamemasters can use Lan Demoal to great effect in directing (or misdirecting) the characters. If the characters seem to be unraveling your mysteries and schemes too quickly, then Demoal can come up with a "theory" or "lead" that gets them sniffing in the wrong direction.

Conversely, if the characters seem hopelessly mired and are moving around in circles, then Demoal can shed light on the goings on in the Sisar Run.

Lastly, Demoal can be used as an example of Black Sun's power in case the characters are considering some double-crosses of their own. By having Demoal eliminated in a rather visual way, you can warn the characters not to take their employers lightly.

Using the Empire's Eyes

As an example of the gall and extent of Black Sun's control in the Sisar Run, one of Vigo Sprax's steadiest purchasers of stolen ships is the very Imperial governor that has sworn to stamp out criminals like him. Governor Streeg has no idea that the vessels he purchases from Sprax are stolen; he simply uses the refitted freighters and fighters to supplement his small fleet. Furthermore Streeg has no idea that Sprax has left a "back window" program interface in the ships' computers that allow Black Sun agents to remotely download sensor logs, datafiles and any intelligence gathered by these ships.



The Sisar Run

The Sisar Run cuts through the heart of the Periphery, a relatively desolate region that skirts the Outer Rim Territories and Hutt Space. The Run serves a number of major routes that feed into Nal Hutta and other prominent Hutt trade worlds. At its other terminal, the Sisar Run links to the heavily traveled Salin Corridor. As a result of its proximity to Hutt Space, it is often assumed the Sisar Run is controlled by one of the Hutt lords rather than the reclusive Black Sun.

The most important planet along the Sisar Run is Sriluur, fifth planet in the system of the same name and homeworld of the Weequays. Sriluur serves as a refueling point for ships traveling along the Run (in either direction), and his intelligence network there provides Sprax with a great deal of intelligence, as his Weequay operatives monitor every ship that enters the system.

For the last year or so, Sprax had been slowly but surely decreasing the presence of the Disac pirates, a group that has long pillaged the systems surrounding the Sisar Run. At first, Sprax used subtle maneuvers to discourage continued Disac activity, but the Disac pirates responded with an exceptionally strong backlash, virtually shutting down the Sisar Run for three weeks. In response to the Disac situation, Sprax recruited the assassin Ket Maliss, one of Prince Xizor's top operatives. Maliss neutralized the Disac leader and a number of high-ranking members of the group within a matter of days.

Following the removal of the Disac crews' leadership, Sprax's agents were able to rid the area of the remaining pirates. Order has since been the norm, though the recent pirate activity in and about the Run has prompted Sprax's Weequay lieutenants to make their presence more visible; Sprax's craft, often flying the flag of Jatayus Outbound or XTS, now regularly ply the route with orders to monitoring traffic and "eliminate all hazards to trade."

Pilots traveling the Sisar Run have few choices for refueling and repair. The five most popular spots are

closely monitored by Black Sun agents and operatives. Three of the ports are small stations administered by private companies, all of whom have paid a significant amount to represent themselves in Sprax's territory.

The two most-frequented refueling points along the Sisar Run are Terman Station and Nwarcol Point. Both relics of ancient Hutt expansion into the area, the two stations compete with one another, offering low fuel prices, good food, and rather accommodating docking bays. In the end, however, Black Sun profits regardless of which of the two stations a pilot chooses.

Average Sisar Run Weequay "Administrator." All stats are 2D except: *blaster 4D, brawling parry 4D, melee combat: force pike 4D, law enforcement: Sisar Run 4D, planetary systems 3D, streetwise 4D+2, survival 3D, astrogation 3D+2, space transports 4D, starship gunnery 4D, command 3D+2, search 3D+2, brawling 4D, space transports repair 3D*. Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), force pike (STR+2D).

In and Around the Sisar Run

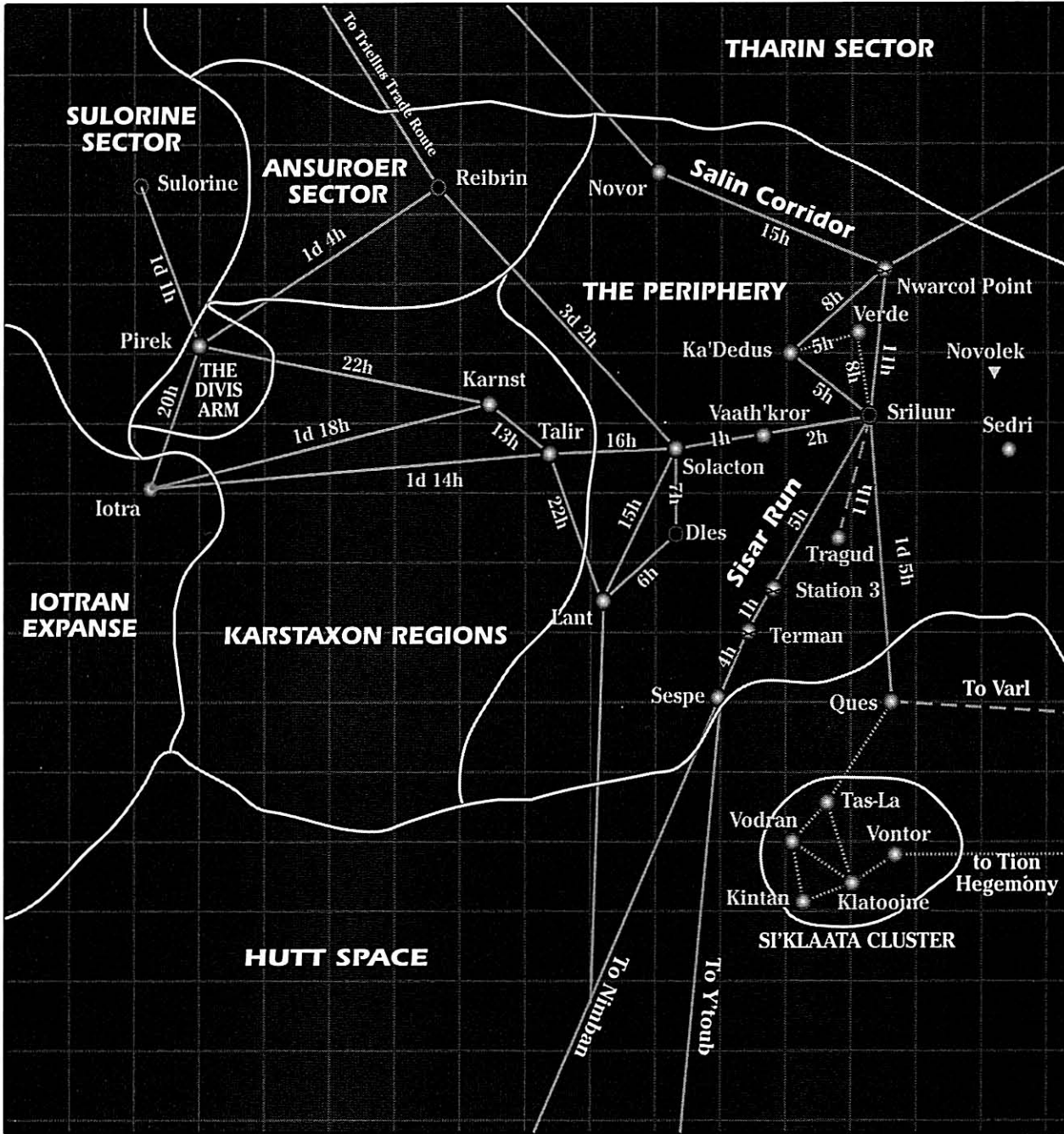
Salin Corridor

The Salin Corridor is one of the largest trade routes in the Outer Rim Territories. It runs the outside skirt of the Outer Rim, only going beyond the boundaries to connect with the Sisar Run at the Sisar Terminal, Nwarcol Point.

Novor System

The Novor system, along the Salin Corridor, hosts an incredible mass of bodies, including the Novor Asteroid Field, which is the blasted remains of what were once the first 17 planets orbiting Novor Major.

Novor Major, now a red giant, expanded millennia ago, ripping apart half of the planets it hosted. The planets that survived were, remarkably, not drastically affected. Sixteen planets—Novor 18 to Novor 33—remain in orbit.



• Charts reflect most recent updates; actual travel times and hazards may differ. Check local navigational bureaus for current information.

• Numbers alongside routes represent standard hyperspace (x1). Travel times subject to local conditions.

• w = weeks. d = days. h = hours.

Key	
	Main hyperspace routes
	Secondary hyperspace routes
	Restricted access routes
	System
	Sector capitol
	Restricted system
	Space station or other construct
	Navigational hazard

NAVFILE A28X

THE SISAR RUN

**CORELLIAN
MASTERNAY, INC.**

The one planet that is capable of sustaining life, Novor 23, is a busy world with large metropolitan centers. The native species, the Ry'coz, have worked with recently arrived human and alien populations to establish a bustling economy and vibrant culture. Novor's capital, Luj City, is one of the key financial centers in the Tharin sector. The local corporate offices of Jatayus Outbound are on Novor 23. One of Sprax's villa retreats is nestled in the picturesque Vos'yr valley.

Nwarcol Point

Also called the Sisar Terminal, Nwarcol Point is the "small giant" of the Sisar refueling posts. Smaller than all but one of the other five stations, it has benefited not only from an advantageous position at the Salin Corridor intersection, but also from direct investment from Xizor Transport Systems.

Much of the traffic leaving Hutt Space heading Coreward follows the entire length of the Run and then follows the Salin Corridor: most small and medium transports find Nwarcol Point an ideal refueling station before continuing through to the Outer Rim Territories. Attractions include a sprawling casino, which accounts for nearly one-fifth of the Point's revenue. Security includes a contingent of Sprax's Weequay guards, three Corellian corvettes and a group of over 40 combat-worthy craft.

Nwarcol Point

System: Nwarcol system

Starport Type: Standard

Traffic: Moderate

Control: Controller

Landing: Droid

Docking Areas: Docking bays, landing pads, fields.

Docking Fee: 25 to 300 credits per day

Customs: Local inspection

Services: Food, lodging, repair facilities, entertainment, storage bays.

Welinarro

Welinarro is noteworthy not only because of his current stature within the Sisar Run, but because he was a prominent Rebel Y-wing pilot who left the Alliance ranks to work for the criminal underworld. Son of Grisserno, Rebel hero of the Battle of Denab, Welinarro is the capable pilot who leads Nwarcol Point's starfighter contingent. Welinarro has already achieved a "killer" reputation throughout portions of the Run. His natural Rodian predatory instincts make him almost unstoppable when he's behind the controls of his Gauntlet starfighter. Under his command are several dozen other capable pilots. Welinarro is a thin Rodian male who's missing several of his species' telltale head spikes. He has a short snout and darker skin than is common for his people.

Welinarro

Type: Rodian Pilot

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 4D, blaster artillery 4D, dodge 4D,

KNOWLEDGE 2D+1

Alien species 3D+1, planetary systems 5D, streetwise 4D+1, streetwise: Nwarcol Point 5D, survival 3D+1

MECHANICAL 3D+2

Astrogation 4D+2, sensors 4D+2, starfighter piloting 5D, starfighter piloting: Y-wing 5D+2, starship gunnery 5D, starship shields 4D+2

PERCEPTION 3D

Command 5D, hide 3D+2, sneak 4D

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 4D

TECHNICAL 3D

Starfighter repair 5D

Force Points: 1

Character Points: 3

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), flight suit.

Modified Gauntlet Fighter. Starfighter-scale, maneuverability 2D, space 6, atmosphere 295; 850 kmh, hull 4D, shields 1D. Weapons: 2 laser cannons (fire-linked, fire control 1D, damage 5D), proton torpedo launcher (fire control 2D, damage 8D).

Verde Asteroid Field

The Verde Asteroid Field (also known as Verde's Belt) is the only truly prominent feature of the Verde system; aside from the expansive asteroid field that hosts numerous mining operations, the system is home to a blue dwarf and two small iceball planets.

Verde's Belt is hot grounds for organized crime; most of the mining is conducted by illegal operations. Pirates, smugglers and thieves were once rampant but things have calmed considerably lately. (Verde plays a major role in "The Barani Conspiracy" mini-campaign later in this book.)

Ka'Dedus System

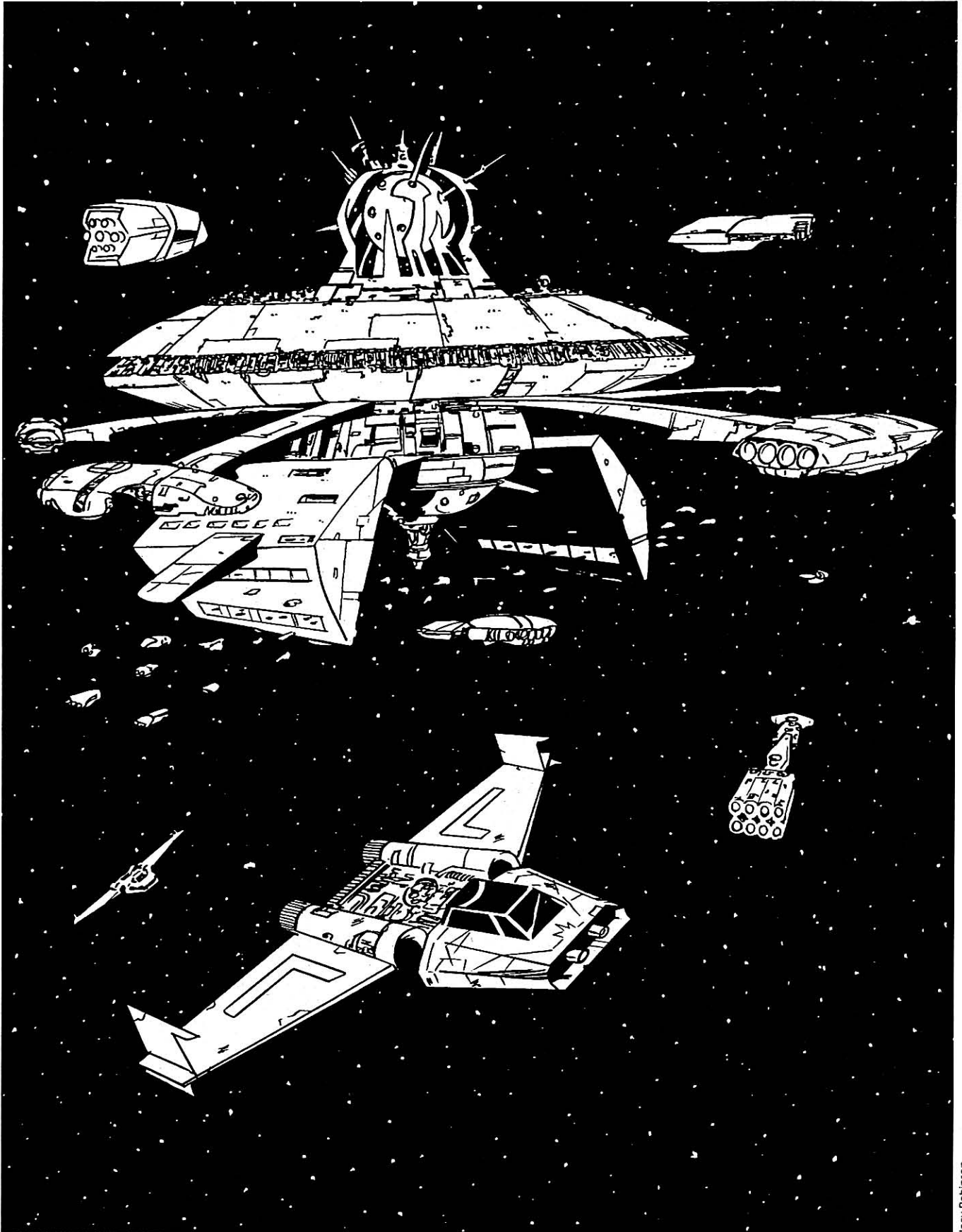
The Ka'Dedus system is dominated by the ultraviolet supergiant Ka'Dedus. The six planets that orbit the star are all gaseous, heavy-gravity worlds. Af'El, the

ADDENDUM/PERSONAL ..

OKEEFE, PLATT

The Sisar Run is one spot you don't want to get caught breaking rules. Some of the meanest local enforcement agents you've ever seen are roving those lanes; none of them are very lenient. You may have heard about the time old Rars Lefken (drunk, as usual) got into a scrap with one of the Weequay enforcers. It was some three weeks before the medical droid in the next system would let him fly again—though some people still question Rars' ever being allowed to fly in the first place.

Bottom line in Sisar: behave. A lot of us are used to dealing with the Imps, who can't shoot all that well and are even worse when it comes to thinking like spacers. The people running the Sisar Run are smart and have hired some very skilled help, so stay on your best behavior.



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fourth planet and only one capable of sustaining life, is homeworld of the mysterious Defel species.

Because of the tremendous velocity necessary for a starship to escape Af'El's gravity well, the planet is seldom visited. Af'El is the only known source of naturally occurring meleenium and as a result, Vulca Minerals, one of the largest mining corporations in the Empire, does make annual trips to the world. A number of private metallurgists and scientists also visit the world for research. Aside from such infrequent invasions, the Defel are largely left to themselves.

(For more information on the Defel, see *Galaxy Guide 4: Alien Races* or *The Thrawn Trilogy Sourcebook*.)

Sriluur System

The Sriluur system is the heart of the Sisar Run. A popular region with traders—legitimate and otherwise—the system is a short six hours from Nwarcol Point and provides easy access to routes that lead to most of the other major worlds in the region.

Sriluur, the fifth planet of the system, is the homeworld of the Weequays and hosts thousands of Houk colonists. Sriluur is a forbidding planet with caustic seas and burning wastelands. The planet's topography consists of towering rock formations, dry scrub-land and semi-arid deserts. Nearly all of Sriluur's northern hemisphere is consumed by the Great Cueva Expanse; the region is littered with huge craters. The planet's southern hemisphere, where nearly all of the Weequays reside, is dominated by long-dormant volcanoes and rocky fields, evidence of the planet's violent tectonic past.

Adventure Idea

Sprax wants a cargo-load of meleenium; Kisquar hires the characters to raid a fully loaded Imperial vessel departing Ka'Dedus. To further his aims, the characters pose as Disac pirates, so that the Imperials will not suspect Sprax's involvement. Aboard the the freighter, instead of meleenium the characters find a ship full of Defel slaves! They must figure out what to do with the ship before the Empire (or real pirates) attack.

The two primary urban centers on the planet are Meirm City and Dnalvec. Meirm City is situated along the Meirm Sea's Copper Coast, named for the copper sand that dominates the beach. Dnalvec is the largest urban center near the Houk Territories, located in the Lesser Cueva expanses near Sriluur's equator.

Relations between the Weequays and the Houk colonists have always been tense; a decade of civil war ended only shortly before the Battle of Yavin. Many of the Weequays that once formed the DDDDnalvec militia are now serving as mercenaries or bounty hunters; many of these former soldiers have found employment with the nearby Hutts.

(For more information on the Weequays and the Houk, see *Galaxy Guide 12: Aliens—Enemies and Allies*. For more information on Sriluur, see the adventures "Running the Sisar," "Hunting the Hunter" and "Codebreaker" later in this book.)



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Gricul Salvage Yards

Sprax has relationships with numerous unions and guilds throughout Meirm City and through his legitimate XTS holdings he maintains control of the Gricul Salvage Yards, a haven for smugglers and others in need of parts or repairs.

The Gricul facilities can transform a hot freighter into a perfectly legitimate hauler with the transponder codes to match. The “favors” those operating the Yards can do for smugglers always ensure there are plenty of operators who owe Sprax—though they seldom know it is actually the Vigo they owe.

Staffed by dozens of loyal Black Sun operatives, the Gricul Yards are overseen by a group of five beings who answer directly to Kisquar, who in turn answers to Sprax. Some of the most skilled underground techs in the Sisar Run are here, and just about every successful smuggler in the area has made use of the Yards at least once.

Average Gricul “Yarder.” All stats are 2D except: *blaster 4D, dodge 4D, con 3D+2, persuasion 4D, search 4D+2, brawling 3D, repulsorlift repair 5D, space transports repair 6D, starfighter repair 6D, starship weapon repair 5D.* Move: 10. Blaster (4D), comlink, tool kit.

Vaath'kror

The Vaath'kror system is largely empty, comprising three planets that are all a considerable distance from one another. The last planet, named after the system, is homeworld to the Vaathkree. The Vaathkree are an extremely wealthy people, profiting greatly from trading. Merchants often make a point of visiting the system to strike deals with the Vaathkree. (For more information on the Vaathkree, see pages 150 and 151 of *The Thrawn Trilogy Sourcebook*.)

Sedri

Located off the Sisar Run, Sedri is a waterworld that recently drew Imperial attention to itself due to a strange inhabitant. Sedri is home to the Sedrians, a

Adventure Idea

When the characters' freighter takes damage far exceeding their credit account, they must set down at the Gricul Yards on Sriluur. The yarders are helpful and patch the ship up. They take whatever credits the characters can spare and simply smile, saying that they are owed a favor.

Now, when you need the characters to perform a Black Sun operation, you have an in. A few days, weeks or months later, a Black Sun rep shows up at the characters' ship, with a “simple” smash-and-grab on a visiting Hutt boss' freighter. If the character's don't agree, several enforcers show up to forcibly remove all the repair work done at the Gricul Yards.

seal-like species. However, the Empire was lured here by a strange collection of Force-sensitive coral-dwelling polyps called Golden Sun. For centuries, the Golden Sun created a natural gravity well that prevented navicomputers from registering Sedri as anything but a large sun, thus cutting off traffic. When the Empire's agents discovered the world, they tried to harvest the intelligent coral, but a team of Rebel agents from nearby Delta Base stopped them. Now, Sedri's gravitational readings have returned to normal.

For more information about Sedri, see the adventure “Backwater Entanglements” in this book, as well as the adventure *Battle for the Golden Sun*.

Tragrud System

The Tragrud system contains only a sun and a single planet, Tragrud. Officially uninhabited and tectonically unstable, Tragrud is actually home to a small Alliance staging area and refueling depot, serving as a springboard into Hutt Space. Hutt Space has proven very difficult for the Alliance to infiltrate; Tragrud's proximity to both the Sisar Run and the Ac'fren Spur have made it an ideal locale for the Rebels.

The Ac'fren Spur

The Ac'fren Spur splits from the Sisar Run just outside of Sriluur and runs to the Si'klaata Cluster. The Spur is one of the primary trade routes to the older portions of Hutt Space.

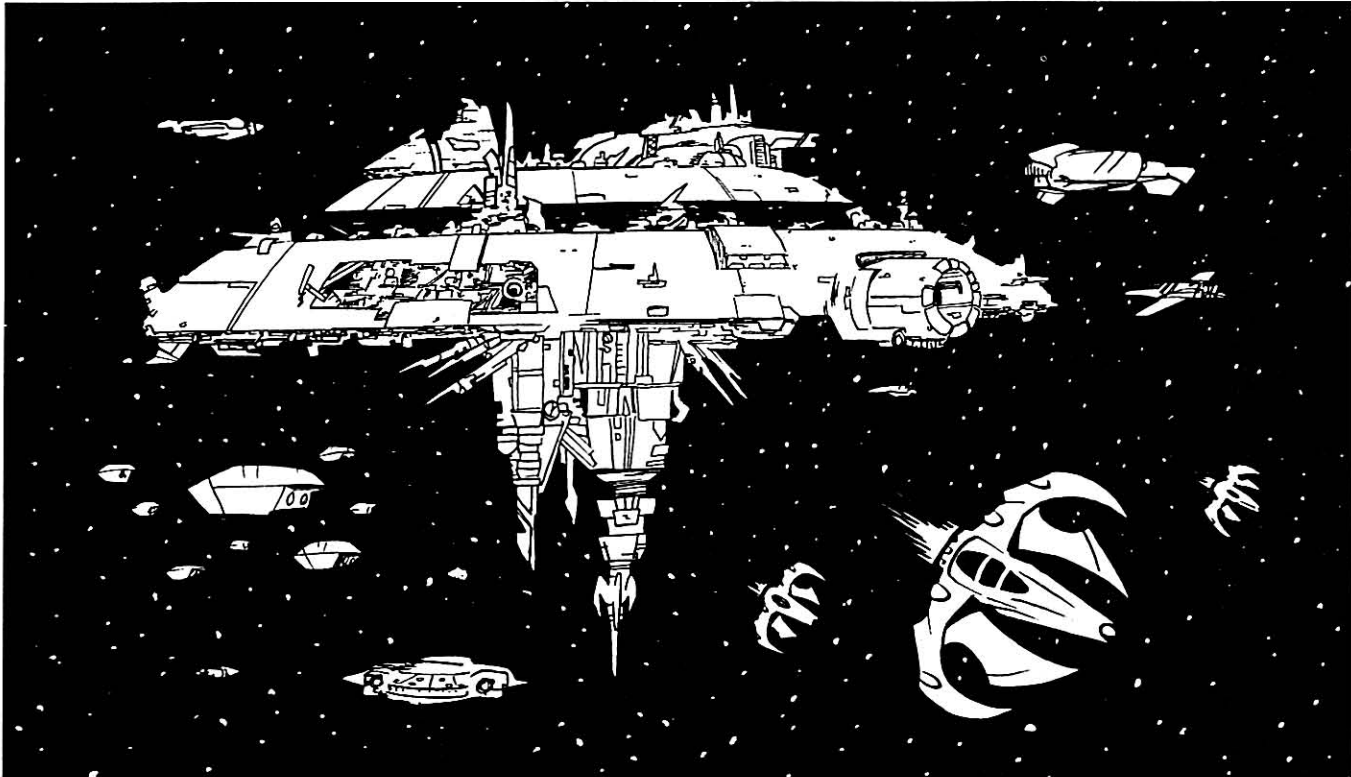
The Disac pirates, however, once made this route almost impassable for non-Hutt craft, harassing and raiding most freighters. While Sprax's agents have greatly reduced the threat from the Disac, many superstitious smugglers believe that Disac remnants still haunt the Ac'fren Spur and are slowly rebuilding for a counterstrike.

Station 3

Between Sriluur and Terman Station is an empty shell of a refueling station, destroyed during a fierce battle between the Disac and Ghilron pirates. This “mynock-infested wasteland” (as some free-traders refer to the region) is littered with wreckage. Pirates and Rebels can occasionally be found hiding here.

Terman Station

Run by an unquestionably odd fellow named Kilon Tarlok, Terman Station is what's left of a millennia-old colonial Hutt outpost and—from the outer facade—it shows. Inside the complex, however, modern amenities and up-to-date docking facilities welcome many small transports and their crews. About twice the size of Nwarcol Point, Terman Station still doesn't generate the business that its smaller cousin does; a less convenient position along the Run, a lack of medium and large transport facilities, and poor management have doomed the Station to second-class status. “Efforts” are currently underway to add facilities to the Station so as to



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increase its traffic and profitability. A compliment of some two dozen Tocsan Q-8 starfighters serve as the Station's defense force.

Terman Station

System: Terman system
Starport Type: Standard class
Traffic: Slow
Control: Controller
Landing: Directional beacon
Docking Areas: Docking bays
Docking Fee: 50 to 200 credits per day
Customs: Local inspection
Services: Food, lodging, repair facilities, entertainment

Kilon Tarlok

Kilon Tarlok was in command of Terman Station for several years before Sprax showed up; while the credits now go to Sprax, Tarlok remains in control of things. Those who visit the station often wonder why Tarlok has stayed in charge; those in the know await Tarlok's removal.

Kilon Tarlok is a tall, aged near-human male with fair pink skin and bright-orange hair. With his passive attitude and high-pitched voice, Kilon has failed in all attempts to muster enthusiasm among his staff or intimidate the occasional disruptive guest.

The sad part of Kilon's story is that the hapless man has no idea whom he works for or who is paying his meager salary. He has suspicions that his payment comes from illicit sources, but hasn't the audacity to inquire.

Kilon Tarlok

Type: Near-Human Station Controller

DEXTERITY 2D

KNOWLEDGE 2D+2

Bureaucracy 3D+2, bureaucracy: Terman Station 4D+2, streetwise 3D+2

MECHANICAL 2D+1

Communications 3D+1

PERCEPTION 3D

Bargain 3D+2, command 4D, con 4D

STRENGTH 2D

TECHNICAL 3D

Security 4D

Character Points: 2

Move: 9

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), datapad, headset comlink, security ID.

Kalna

Type: Minor Hutt Entrepreneur

DEXTERITY 1D

KNOWLEDGE 3D+2

Business 4D, streetwise: Terman Station 4D+2

MECHANICAL 1D

PERCEPTION 3D+2

Bargain 4D, command 4D+2, con 4D+2, gambling 4D+2

STRENGTH 3D

TECHNICAL 2D

Special Abilities:

Force Resistance: Hutts have an innate defense against Force-based mind manipulation and roll double their Perception dice to resist such attacks.

Character Points: 2

Move: 1

Equipment: Comlink, datapad, Hutt floater

Capsule: Kalna was once a promising young Hutt who thought he was on his way to living the life of an affluent gangster, as had so many of his clan. Unfortunately for Kalna, he belonged to the clan Ramesh, which had the audacity to assassinate a leader of the Black Bha'li'r smug-

Lunch at Terman Station

"Will you look at that!" shouted Cairra, suddenly transforming from a streetwise spacer to a tourist.

Melvirre tried to will himself inconspicuous and jabbed a fork into his *cho nor hoola*. They had chosen a table near the rear of the compound to avoid attention, but the effort was failing miserably.

"Right there," said Cairra, pointing at a bas-relief partially covered by slickplast posters announcing the latest musical tour of a band whose name was unpronounceable. Behind the peeling layers of posted bills, ancient hieroglyphs depicted long-forgotten Hutt history. "This place is amazing."

"Cairra," Melvirre said, trying to draw her attention back from the wall. "The buildings are too cold, the landing pads are grimy, the service is slow, and the *cho nor hoola* tastes like rubber. This place is not amazing."

"But, Mel, look. If these are authentic Expansionist Era Hutt *kucha*-sculptures, they could be worth a fortune!" Mel frowned as he envisioned every grifter and con-job within earshot suddenly looking their way. *Great*, he thought. *Of all the partners I could have, I'm stuck with an Ancient Hutt Folklore and Cultures major.*

gler society; while Kalna waited for pickup, his clan was exterminated by the vengeful smugglers.

Upon learning the fate of his clan—and knowing that no other clan would back or protect him—he made the best of a bad situation and set up shop on Terman. Kalna now runs a small "protection service" on Terman Station, employing fewer than a dozen local thugs to harass on-station merchants for payment or goods. True to his Hutt heritage, Kalna has turned this situation into profit (however minor).

Typical Kalna Thug. All stats 2D except: *Blaster* 2D+2, *intimidation* 3D, *brawling* 3D. Move: 9. Blaster (4D).

Sespe System

The Sespe system is home to the planet Topa, a mineral-poor world that serves as a popular shadowport for local pirates. The "White Ledge" of Topa's moon, Torega, contains numerous deep caverns that make for excellent hideouts, although visitors must beware of the large feline wrix packs that inhabit the area.

The Novolek Beacon

Ironically, the stellar body that first brought the Hutts to the Sisar Run millennia ago is now considered a great nuisance by them and anyone else navigating near it. The Novolek Beacon is a trans-dimensional energy streamer, a rare sort of pulsar star that emits a steady barrage of radiation, stellar energy and matter

as it rotates. The streamer is a result of EM-invisible, multidimensional, gravitational curves intersecting across a large star. Sort of a convergence of hyperspace mass shadows, the star is under great gravitational stress, but does not possess enough realspace mass to collapse into a singularity.

In addition, the gravitational curves are not uniform, and occasionally, a patch of the star will be freed of the immense forces pushing against it. This patch then explodes outward in realspace, like air pushed out of a balloon. The realspace stream is mostly high-energy stellar plasma—hydrogen and helium gases—yet this stream causes a hyperspace shadow itself. The hyperspace shadows are dragged back into the other gravity wells, but the realspace particles continue unaffected.

This paradox, the Ei'shuun Aa Effect, causes immense disturbance throughout a localized area of hyperspace. The "walls" between dimensions are stretched thin at this point and even subspace communications signals are disrupted, their broadcast ranges varying radically. Yet, despite all this chaotic activity, all that is seen in realspace is a particle fountain emitted from a bright star, flashing like a light-house in a storm.

The Novolek Beacon, like most energy streamers, is not always active. It follows precise cycles, as the stellar bodies that cause the imposing gravity curves move about in space. The Beacon, nicknamed "The Grandfather Clock" for its precision, flares every 28 days, 12 hours and 42 minutes; the flare's duration is variable, however, lasting anywhere from a few minutes to a couple of days. At this time, all hyperspace travel around the Beacon has to be rerouted or slowed down, depending on the streamer's intensity.

The Hutts have long been dreaming up a way to destroy the star since it slows down traffic and spawns all sorts of excuses for disreputable smugglers who conveniently "lose" important cargoes. Incidentally, it creates an arena for competing pirate forces. Rumors float up and down the Sisar Run that Durga the Hutt is contracting scientists to come up with a plan to destroy the Novolek Beacon. What would happen if a transdimensional streamer was artificially destroyed—is unknown.

Solacton System

The Solacton system is fairly remote, even when compared to the rest of the Periphery. There are, however, several established hyperspace routes that converge on the system. These routes are subject to relatively frequent use by traders making the long trip from the Sisar Run to the Iotran system.

Dles System

The Dles system has no "established" routes leading either to or from it, as it was scouted centuries ago and nothing of value was found. The Rebellion, however, has a number of very well-concealed routes into the system. It uses Dles IV, a small chunk of rock within the

Using the Beacon In Your Game

The Beacon is a device that allows gamemasters to slow characters down or restrict their passage without taking away their freedom. Be sure to tell them about the Beacon early on, or have them overhear it from other spacers, so that they know it *may* complicate things in the future. Then, when you *really* need to get your characters to Sriluur in five hours, not two, or if you think their escape from pirate raiders was too easy, then you can have the Beacon be on one of its bad days. If your characters talk about the Beacon the way some commuters talk about a specific road that's *always* under construction, then you've gone a long way in creating a realistic environment with unique character.

system, as a penal colony.

Though the prison is officially under the jurisdiction of the Alliance High Command and is manned by a permanent staff, the nearby Solorine Sector HQ often contributes manpower and supplies when necessary.

Several sensor beacons have been placed through the system and outlying areas to closely monitor any potentially intrusive traffic.

Si'klaata Cluster

The Si'klaata Cluster was claimed by the Hutts millennia ago during the height of Hutt expansion. It contains numerous planets that are home to sentient species, including Vodran (Vodrans), Kintan (Nikto) and Klatooine (Klatooineans).

Vontor, the historically renowned site of several skirmishes between Xim the Despot and Hutt forces (most notably, the Third Battle of Vontor) is also contained within the Si'klaata Cluster.

The Hutts have tight control of the Cluster, allowing very few ships in or out. Despite thousands of requests from archaeological schools across the galaxy, the Hutts only let in scientists whose findings will support the Hutt's somewhat questionable version of their defeat of Xim the Despot.

For more information on the Vodrans, Nikto or Klatooineans, see *Galaxy Guide 12: Aliens—Enemies and Allies*.

Surrounding Space

Lotran System and the Lotran Expanse

Administered and patrolled by the Lotran Police Force (IPF), the Lotran territories are known as a strict region where even most the most minute lawlessness is not condoned. Iotra, the fifth planet of the system, is the homeworld of the Iotrans. The species is credited as being the founders of several powerful military orders.

Gettiarn, the ninth and outermost planet of the system, hosts Gettiarn Space Station, through which all non-Lotran traffic into the system is routed. The Space Station is a rigidly controlled complex.

Solorine Sector

The Solorine sector is a desolate area of space containing only a few dozen star systems. The sector's light traffic has made it ideal for Rebel activities and one of the largest Alliance bases, Delta Base, can be found on New Kisce, the eighth moon of the eighth planet (Chaasch) of the system. The famed Alliance commander Vanden Willard was once posted at this base.

New Kisce is also the homeworld of the Samuac, a near-human species that has thrown in with the Alliance. The people are largely unknown in the Empire, which has protected the Samuac from Imperial retribution.

Divis Arm and the Pirik system

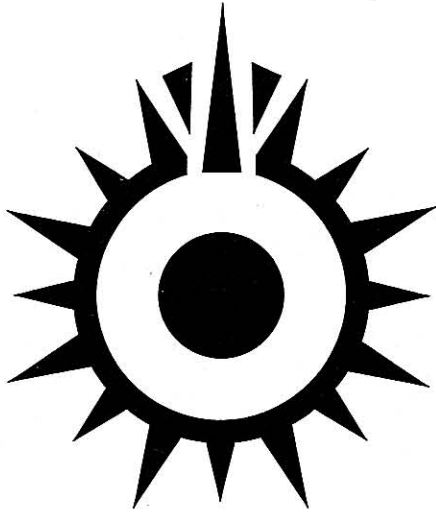
The Divis Arm is a hotbed of Rebel and pirate activity. The Pirik system, site of a number of dead planets, also contains Pirik, a bustling world that is home to large ytterbium and corintium reserves that bolster the area's economy. Its capital, Corinth City, is relatively small by galactic standards, but its dense population and strong economy make it one of the most important urban centers in the Divis Arm.

(For more information on Corinth City, see pages 68-71 of the *Official Star Wars Adventure Journal #10*.)

Reibrin System

The Reibrin system hosts the strongest Imperial presence in the Ansuroer sector. Lijuter, the original home of the Houk species, is the first planet of the system. Though Imperial presence on the planet proper is relatively light, there are numerous Imperial facilities throughout the system. A number of Imperial research labs are housed in the many orbiting space stations about Lijuter's second moon.

For more information on the Houk see *Galaxy Guide 12: Aliens—Enemies and Allies*.



Running the Sisar

Mal Biron sat in the darkness of his luxurious room aboard the passenger liner *Destination: Adventure!* Although he preferred the cabin of his freighter, he knew the old girl was in the hangar bay being restocked and his experience told him things would go considerably faster without him poking his snout in the techs' work. Besides, he trusted the techs; they were some of the best Black Sun had to offer.

The glow from Mal's monitor framed his wizened features and cast an eerie green glow in his ancient-seeming black eyes. The report told the wolfman that three of his smuggler crews had been captured near Ka'Dedus. This would never do.

Mal needed new blood. Loyal and capable servants who knew how to smuggle as well as keep secrets. That was the trouble with this profession. The old conundrum about honor among thieves.

Which wasn't entirely true. Mal had managed to foster an almost fatherly relationship with several very competent smugglers. Kalend Thora, for example, had proven herself a diligent foot soldier for Black Sun.

Still, it was time for some fresh faces. And he knew just the test to separate the cubs from the wolves...

...*running the Sisar.*

Adventure Background

Sprax never deals directly with those who actually perform his dirty work. He instead has a chain of trusted individuals who handle his affairs for him. One of his best and most loyal is Mal Biron, an elder freebooter who is something of a statesman among the smuggling underworld.

Mal is looking for a team of fresh faces to join his coterie of crime. To that end he has invited several well-known crews—including the player characters—to participate in a test of sorts: *Running the Sisar*, a "simple" cargo run from Sriluur to Nwarcol Point, with a twist.

Adventure Synopsis

The characters' adventure begins with a simple smuggling mission under the watchful eyes of Sprax's chief smuggler, Mal Biron, and his secret assistant, a low-key smuggler named Kalend Thora. The party must successfully navigate the Sisar Run and deliver their smuggled cargo to Biron himself at the other end. Along the way they will have to negotiate a deadly astrographic anomaly, treacherous smugglers and an attack by remnants of the Disac pirates.

If the characters are successful, they will have

Getting Started

If using existing characters, you may want to ease them into this adventure by tying their last run to Sriluur. You may also want to begin rumors and spacer talk about Mal Biron being a respected individual in the smuggling community. Beginning characters may be easier to fit into the storyline, but are likely to have many questions.

Once given the datapad handout, have them roll their *streetwise* or Knowledge. An Easy total tells them of Mal Biron's respected status and identifies him as one who likes to share his success by offering opportunities to other smugglers. A Moderate total adds that Mal is a Shistavanen Wolfman who often has private pads and docking bays set aside for his use around the Sisar Run. A Difficult total indicates that Mal pilots the freighter *Eyeshine*, while a Very Difficult total is needed to know that Mal has an exclusive agreement for shipping excess cargo for Jatayus Outbound. There is no way for the characters to know that Biron is a Black Sun operative.

**PROG 40135 Sourcefile:
INVIT218.3
432//32 ... 5/45//END**

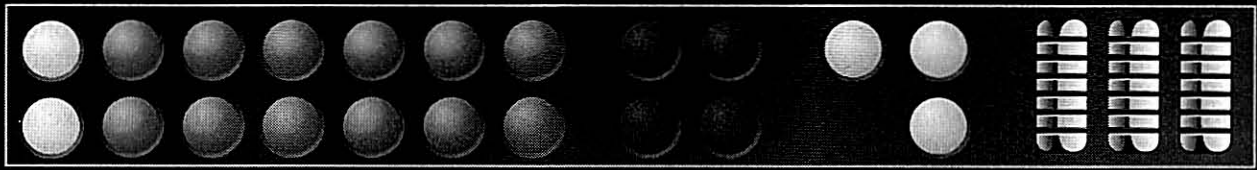
To: My most distinguished colleagues
From: Mal Biron
Re: Employment

I have heard tales of your last few runs, and I must say, I am most impressed. It is operatives such as yourselves that I am interested in meeting with, in four days, at my private bay in Meirm City, Sriluur. I'm in Docking Bay 42. Come around noon.



Clear skies,

Mal Biron



ingratiated themselves not only with Mal Biron and Kalend, but with Vigo Sprax as well. (Should they fail, they'll have to find another way into Black Sun's good graces.)

Episode One: A Meeting of Minds

The characters begin in Meirm City on Sriluur. If this is their first time on Sriluur or if this is their first adventure, consult the sidebar "Getting Started."

To start play, distribute copies of the handout "The Invitation." This is a datapad a courier dropped off at the characters' ship during their last run.

Meirm City

Meirm City, a port city, overlooks the brilliant copper coasts of Meirm Sea. Possibly the only colorful spot on the bleached bone-white desert world, Meirm City is cast over by a coppery fog in the early morning that can be particularly caustic to sensitive-skinned beings.

Meirm City has a poor reputation, and deservedly so. Although allied to the Empire and under the jurisdiction of Governor Streeg, Meirm's police force consists mainly of contract mercs.

The characters begin in the crowded spaceport area, where clusters of docking bays are scattered around the district. Each bay is sealed and its occupants are given an access code to enter the bay. Otherwise, the bays cannot be accessed from the street.

Staging Tips: Meirm City

As the characters move about Meirm City to Docking Bay 42, allow them a glimpse of Sriluur, especially if they haven't been here before.

Almost everything in Meirm City is covered with a coppery cast, either from reflections of the sea, or from the dust that has accumulated over the years. The Copper Coast is a long, ragged shoreline along the Meirm Sea with incredibly high copper deposits. Dur-



Joey Robinson

ing the daytime hours, incoming craft are redirected so as to not approach along Meirm City's west side since the glare from the copper sand effectively blinds pilots.

The city has a diverse population, but large concentrations of the native Weequay as well as Houk colonists can be seen. These concentrations are not integrated; there are distinct Houk and Weequay enclaves in the city.

On almost every street corner stands some version of Quay, a god worshipped by the Weequay. These statues, ranging in height from less than a meter tall to more than five, are not spared from the copper erosion. The Weequays do not mind that their statues are weathered. It is a testament to Quay's durability that



the *Eyeshine*, dominates the scene, but a number of striped awnings have been set up along the side walls, casting sweet, cool shade into the sun-drenched bay. Beneath the awnings are long tables covered with snacks, as well as a beverage dispenser. A servant droid works diligently to serve the dozen or so spacers already assembled.

While an odd setting, the characters' invitation entitles them to partake of the makeshift docking bay picnic. The assembled spacers are a mix of the wary and uncomfortable—those who are not the finger-sandwich type—to the eager, who may not get decent meals on a regular basis.

Depending on what category the characters fall into, they may end up mingling with spacers of decidedly different outlooks. Either way, the spacers aren't saying much. Each of the captains has a datapad invitation. They know no more than the characters about Biron's offer.

A Cast of Thousands

Located throughout this adventure are spacer gamemaster character profiles for use during this scene. You may want to establish friendships, rivalries or other relationships

with these spacers. Feel free to allow the characters to mingle and introduce themselves to the others; additional spacers enter the bay as things proceed. Incidentally, the snacks and beverages are quite good—much better than autochef or cantina grill fare.

Also present is Kalend Thora. She is rather aloof during the "luncheon." While she provides no information about the upcoming run (which she knows full well about), she will occasionally ask each captain their name and their ship. She is keeping track of those present, as Mal has asked her to watch the proceedings.

When the characters have tired of this mingling, proceed to the next encounter.

the statues need no tending.

Weequay tradition has it that for every Sriluur year that a Weequay is away from his homeworld, he must grow a braid of hair. This may have something to do with the Weequay written language, which is actually not written, but rather consists of lengths of braided hair or rope with stones set along different lengths to signify different characters and words. Shops and signs in Weequay areas of town have strands of braids hanging outside, rather than static Basic or aurebesh signs.

Getting In

The characters will need Mal's datapad invitation to access Docking Bay 42. The heavy doors open, revealing a large, spacious and well-kept bay. Mal's freighter,

On With Business

As Mal walks down the ramp of the *Eyeshine*, read the following aloud:

You're enjoying the local specialty, an orange-flavored cinnamon drink called leena, when an older Shistavanen dressed in a well-tailored but functional flight suit enters the room. His face is grizzled with age, his fur peppered with gray and his left ear is torn. He pulls off his gloves and moves to the table where he can see your group and the others.

"Good afternoon, Kalend, Rycar, Kal, Elis, Nabrun, Az-Iban, and (the leader of the player character's group).

"Thank you for coming. I trust the refreshments are adequate. I have some merchandise I need moved along the Sisar Run. It is quite an important cargo, so I've contacted each of you to make the run to ensure that at least some of it gets through. Your crew will be paid 5,000 credits for the run, with a 5,000 credit bonus if you are the first to deliver your final payload. Those who are interested, remain seated. Those who are not, please leave."

None of the other crews leave. Assuming the player characters are interested, Mal will elaborate on the assignment:

"A cargo pod will be loaded onto your ships, at a yet-to-be disclosed location. From that location, you will move to the Salin Corridor and rendezvous with the *Destination: Adventure!*, a luxury liner, and deliver the pod."

There are a few murmurs among the assembled crews. Biron continues.

"To be fair, each of your datapads has a file called 'Envelope.' It indicates your first location. No need looking it up now—the file is coded to work through your nav computers."

Mal is fair and as honest as he can be during any subsequent discussions. It serves the adventure best if the characters develop a professional if not friendly relationship with Mal, as he will appear throughout the mini-campaign.

Once he has made the rounds and greeted (and evaluated) the crews, he will leave. Should anyone ask him what the cargo is, Mal will say only that it is nothing the crew should be alarmed about, though it would be best if the cargo was kept away from any Imperials.

Most of the other crews become tight-lipped when they realize they are competing for a bonus. Kalend Thora doesn't seem worried and might make small talk with the characters. This whole operation is a test set up by Mal and his master, Vigo Sprax; it's Kalend's job to evaluate the other smugglers and choose a crew for a much more important mission later on.

For now, have Kalend make conversation with several of the crews—especially the player characters since they'll meet her again in the next episode.

Nabrun Leids

Type: Morseerian Smuggler

DEXTERITY 3D+1

Blaster 5D+1, dodge 4D+1, grenade 4D

KNOWLEDGE 3D+1

Alien species 4D+2, cultures 5D, survival 5D+1, value 4D+2

MECHANICAL 3D+2

Astrogation 5D, space transports: Ghtroc transport 5D+1, starship shields 4D

PERCEPTION 2D

Bargain 4D+1, con 5D, sneak 4D

STRENGTH 3D

Lifting 5D

TECHNICAL 2D+2

Security 5D

Special Abilities:

Four Arms: Morseerians have four arms. They can perform two actions per round with no penalty; a third action in a round receives a -1D penalty, a fourth action a -2D penalty and so forth. *Methane Breather:* Morseerians require methane to breathe, and cannot survive without it.

Character Points: 5

Move: 10

Equipment: Flight suit, methane-breather, goggles, blaster pistol (4D)

Capsule: Leids is a Morseerian smuggler-for-hire who specializes in runs from Sisar to the Triellus trade route leading to Tatooine. The Morseerians are a client species of the Drackmarians and Leids broke a contract with a Drackmarian warlord named Omogg. Wanted by bounty hunters, Leids fled the Quেলii sector, heading deep into the Outer Rim. Leids has a crew of four, including two Morseerians, a Gand and a Chadra-Fan. Leids pilots the modified freighter *Scarlet Vertha*, whose life-support system provides a methane-only atmosphere.

Scarlet Vertha. Ghtroc Industries class 720 freighter, starfighter-scale, hyperdrive multiplier x1, maneuverability 1D, space 4, atmosphere 280; 800 kmh, hull 4D+1, shields 1D. Weapons: 1 double laser cannon (fire control 1D+2, damage 5D).

Elis Helrot

Type: Givin Smuggler

DEXTERITY 2D+2

Blaster 4D+2, dodge 3D+2

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Alien species 5D+2, bureaucracy 5D+1, cultures 4D, planetary systems 6D+1, survival 5D+1, value 5D+2

MECHANICAL 3D+2

Astrogation 7D, space transports 5D+2, starship gunnery 5D+2, starship shields 4D+1

PERCEPTION 2D

Bargain 5D+1, con 4D, hide 5D, sneak 4D

STRENGTH 2D+2

Stamina 5D

TECHNICAL 4D

Computer programming/repair 5D+1, droid repair 5D, (A) space transports engineering 3D, space transports repair 7D

Special Abilities:

Mathematical Aptitudes: Givin receive a bonus of +2D when using skills involving mathematics, including *astrogation*.

Vacuum Protection: Every Givin has a built-in vacuum suit which protects him from vacuum or harsh element. Add +2D to a Givin's *Strength* or *stamina* roll when resisting such extremes. For a Givin to survive 24 standard hours in a complete vacuum, it must make an Easy roll, with the difficulty level increasing by one every hour thereafter.

Increased Consumption: Givin must eat at least three times the food a normal human would consume or they lose the above protection. Roughly, a Givin must consume about nine kilograms

of food over a 24-hour period to remain healthy.

Character Points: 5

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), datapad

Capsule: A Givin pilot, the unscrupulous Helrot is known to make slaving runs to Kala'uun spaceport and Pavilion port. To Helrot's analytical mind, the bottom line is all that matters. He pilots a highly modified freighter named *Hinthra*. Helrot has a crew consisting of two other Givin and a human male.

Hinthra. Starfighter-scale, hyperdrive multiplier x1, maneuverability 1D+2, space 5, atmosphere 295; 850 kmh, hull 3D+2, shields 2D. Weapons: 2 double blaster cannons (fire control 3D+1, damage 4D), 1 turbolaser (fire control 1D, damage 6D).

Kal'Fainl C'ndros

Type: Quor'sav Trader

DEXTERITY 2D+2

Blaster 4D, dodge 5D, running 6D+2

KNOWLEDGE 3D+1

Alien species 5D+2, planetary systems 5D+2, survival 5D

MECHANICAL 3D

Communications 5D, space transports: Gymsnor 3 transport 6D+1, starship shields 4D

PERCEPTION 2D

Bargain 4D, command 5D+1, search 5D

STRENGTH 4D

Brawling: kicking 6D, climbing/jumping: jumping 5D+2, stamina 6D

TECHNICAL 3D

First aid 5D+1

Special Abilities

Size: Due to her immense height, she may not receive the same cover bonuses as normal characters would during combat. Furthermore, some characters may get bonuses to-hit the Quor'sav (gamemaster option).

Kick: A Quor'sav's powerful kick does STR+2D damage.

Beak: A Quor'sav may make a beak attack for STR+2 damage, but is -1D for any parries she attempts that round.

Character Points: 6

Move: 15

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), medpac, survival kit with flares, syntherope and rations.

Capsule: A freelance spacer, Kal is well-liked by her clients for her easy-going manner and her genuine concern for them. Kal is cautious and with good reason. Tucked away in a protected chamber of her starship *Shelltooth* is a clutch of eggs that will hatch in one standard year. Kal is saving up credits for her children and tries to keep them out of harm's way. Kal is an immense Quor'sav, standing 3.5 meters tall, appearing as a stilt-legged long-necked avian. She has protective instincts when it comes to friends which she deems vulnerable and has particularly motherly feelings for Rycar, which irritates the Bimm trader to no end.

Shelltooth. Modified Corellispace Gymsnor-3 freighter, starfighter-scale, hyperdrive multiplier x1, maneuverability 0D, space 6, atmosphere 330; 950 kmh, hull 6D+2, shields 2D. Weapons: 1 heavy blaster cannon (fire control 2D+1, damage 5D).

Rycar Ryjerd

Type: Bimm Gun-Runner

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 4D+2, brawling parry 5D+1, dodge 5D+1

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Alien species 5D+2, languages: Jawa 7D+1, planetary systems 5D, streetwise: Jabba the Hutt's organization 5D+1, value: blaster 6D

MECHANICAL 3D+1

Astrogation 5D+1, space transports 6D, starship gunnery 5D+1

PERCEPTION 3D+2

Bargain 6D, con 6D+2, hide 5D, persuasion: comedy 6D+1, sneak 6D

STRENGTH 2D+1

TECHNICAL 2D+2

Blaster repair 5D+1, security 6D, starship weapons repair 5D+1

Character Points: 6

Move: 8

Equipment: Blaster repair kit, blaster (4D), holster

Capsule: A former partner of Nabrun Leids, Rycar and the Morseerian now maintain a friendly rivalry. They often run into one another in their old cantinas and other hang-outs. Rycar is a shrewd Bimm businessman and a skilled negotiator. His expertise is gun-running and he has been in the business for over two decades. Ryjerd often smuggles supplies for Jabba the Hutt and has a regular route between Nar Shaddaa and Tatooine. Ryjerd is quick with a story and even quicker with a punchline, telling jokes that would get the toughest Saurin chuckling. Rycar flies the modified freighter *Tower* with a crew of three other Bimms.

Tower. Modified Corellian YT-1300 transport, starfighter-scale, hyperdrive multiplier x1, maneuverability 1D+1, space 5, atmosphere 295; 850 kmh, hull 4D+2, shields 1D. Weapons: 2 ion cannons (fire control 3D, damage 4D) 2 laser cannons, fire-linked (fire control 2D, damage 5D).

Az-Iban

Type: Pirate

DEXTERITY 3D+2

Blaster 5D+2, brawling parry 5D+1, dodge 5D, melee combat 5D+1, melee parry 4D+2

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Alien species 4D+1, languages: Bocce 3D, planetary systems 4D+2, streetwise 5D, value 4D+1

MECHANICAL 3D+2

Astrogation 4D, sensors 5D, space transports 4D+1, starship gunnery 4D+2, starship shields 5D+1

PERCEPTION 3D

Command 4D, con 5D+2, search 6D, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 2D+2

Brawling 6D, stamina 5D+1

TECHNICAL 3D

Demolitions 5D+2, security 5D+1

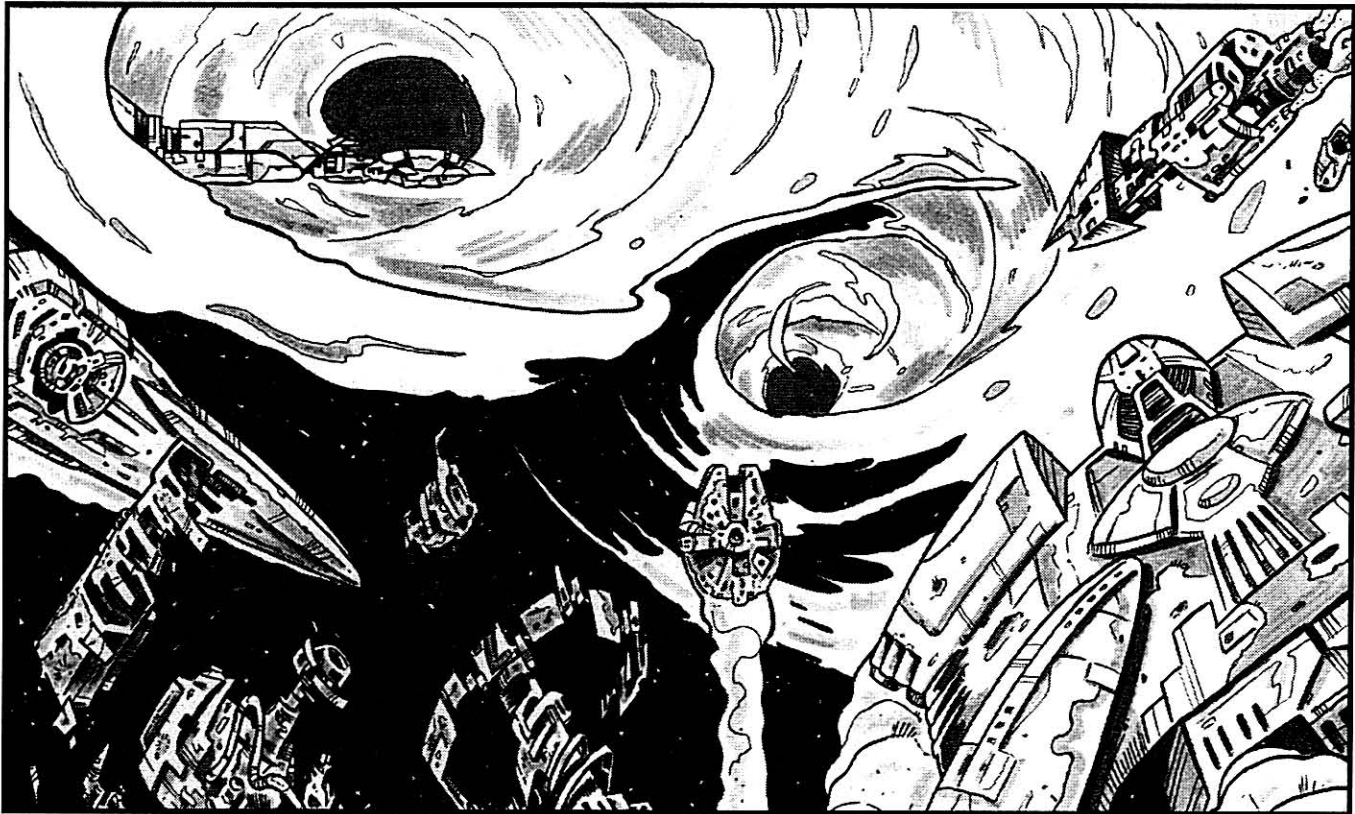
Character Points: 5

Move: 10

Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (5D), blaster (4D), vibroblade (STR+2D), vac-suit

Capsule: Az-Iban is actually Morturr Heth, a survivor from the Disac pirates. After Ket Maliss all but destroyed the Disacs, Morturr's crippled ship came across Az-Iban's vessel. The pirates overtook Az-Iban and assumed his identity. Because Az-Iban was always secretive about his routes (he was paranoid of other smugglers), no one has yet noticed the change. Az-Iban is considered a cutthroat who is no stranger to violence. He flies with a crew of four other former pirates, all scruffy-looking humans.

Rampaging Ranat. Modified Corellian YT-2400 freighter, starfighter-scale, hyperdrive multiplier x1, maneuverability 1D+1, space 6, atmosphere 330; 950 kmh, hull 3D+2, shields 1D. Weapons: 2 double laser cannons (fire control 1D+2, damage 5D).



Marshall Andrews III

Envelope

Once plugged into a ship's nav computer, Mal's datapad opens the file named "Envelope." Inside are a number of sub-files, the largest of which is a software package that "subscribes" the vessel to Sprax's Subspace Communications. The files are fairly intelligent and install themselves into the computer with no problems.

The first file to open up is a set of astrogation coordinates. Characters making a Moderate *astrogation* roll realize the coordinates are near the Novolek Beacon. An Easy *planetary systems* roll informs the characters about the Novolek's obstructive nature to hyperspace travel.

A Basic text instruction also accompanies the coordinates:

"Proceed to following coordinates. Once there, set subspace transceivers to com-band Gamma-34. Await instructions."

The rest of the files are encoded, and cannot be opened without the proper decrypt scheme.

Episode Two: The Tests Begin

Takeoff from Sriluur goes smoothly enough. As the characters speed toward the Novolek Beacon, have the pilot or navigator make an *astrogation* roll to see how fast they clear Sriluur and make their jump into hyperspace: the base difficulty is Moderate.

If their *astrogation* roll fails, the characters show up dead last. If they succeed, for every "hour saved" on

their trip (if they opted for a faster-than-standard trip), add five to their roll for the purposes of determining their placing. For every "hour added" on their trip (if they took it slow and easy), subtract five from their roll for placing.

If the modified roll equals to or exceeds the difficulty by up to five points, they arrive before Rycar Ryjerd but all other pilots are there. If they beat the difficulty by six to 10 points, they have beaten both Ryjerd and Leids. If they beat the difficulty by 11 to 15 points, they have beaten Ryjerd, Leids, Az-Iban, and Helrot. Anything over 16 is needed to beat Kal'Falnl. No amount of success will beat Kalend Thora, however.

Upon arrival, read aloud:

Your ship emerges from hyperspace with a disconcerting amount of dimensional turbulence. Through your shuddering viewport, you see your destination. There, rotating slowly in space like some deadly

Teamwork

During the smuggler luncheon, Kal'Falnl C'ndros approaches the characters with a deal. She is the only crewmember aboard her ship, a rather speedy vessel. She feels disadvantaged and would like to team up with the characters, sharing information and splitting the reward. Kalend will listen intently to this conversation, although it will require a Moderate *Perception* total to notice this.

fountain is the Novolek Beacon. It is a deep yellow star, which spouts its stellar matter as it spins, as if it were bleeding. Littering the area around the star are concentric rings of gaseous plasma, slowly expanding away from the star.

It takes a Moderate *communications* roll to find the proper frequency in the electromagnetic soup surrounding the star. Once discovered, the incoming signal is all static. The star's presence greatly distorts the ranges of subspace transceivers. In order to intercept the source of the signal, the characters' ship must move closer to the star.

A Difficult *sensors* roll finds the source of the signal (be sure to add the appropriate sensor mode dice to the operator's roll). Conversely, a skilled communicator may find the signal source with another Moderate *communications* roll, but let the characters figure that one out.

Race for the Comsat

The diagram shows the basic arrangements of ships near the beacon. Each area near the beacon has appropriate movement difficulties. Likewise, each area near the comsat has differing *communications* difficulties. The placement of the ships varies depending on who arrived first. The first ship is Kalend Thora.

Each square on the grid represents 5 space units. As the characters move closer to the comsat, it becomes easier to detect, but their craft becomes harder to control.

A failed movement rolls means that the particle backwash and sensor chaos has caused the ship to become momentarily lost. Roll a die, and consult the direction table. The ship moves its current speed in the

resulting direction. In addition, movement failures in the Difficult and higher zones result in 1D damage to the ship's hull. Each progressively difficult zone adds another +1D to damage. Getting lost inside the streamer (Heroic+20 zone, as listed on diagram) always pushes the ship back along the streamer's path at a Space rate of 10.

Each spacer will fly close enough to the comsat to receive the signal, turn around and fly back. To enter hyperspace, each ship must fly "off the map."

Treachery

If Az-Iban beats any ships to the comsat, he will try to destroy it. In the current haze of stellar particles, all ship-board weapons lose their fire control dice. The comsat is a small target, increasing its to-hit difficulty by one level. It resists damage with a hull code of 2D+1 (starfighter-scale).

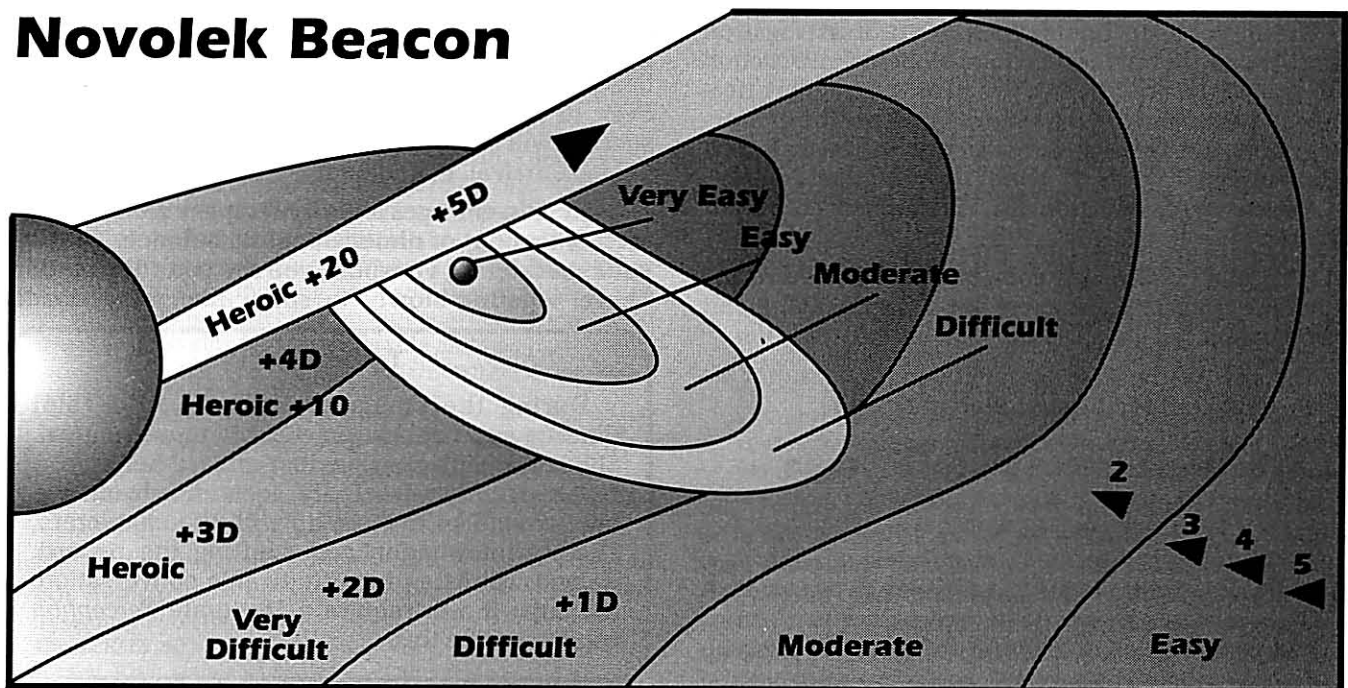
Any spacers left behind because of Az-Iban's treachery are not completely out of luck. Kal'Falni C'ndros will share her information provided that the stranded ships share their pay with her.

The Big Broadcast

Once the comsat's signal is intercepted, it takes a Moderate *communications* roll to decrypt it. The Envelope program opens it up after decryption, and customizes it to the characters' ship. It is a set of coordinates followed by text instructions:

"Congratulations on getting this far. Now, proceed to Nwarcol Point. 'Envelope' will provide you with docking instructions. Your contact will provide you with your cargo. He will greet you with the code phrase, 'The mynocks are bad this monthh.'"

Novolek Beacon



Staging Tips

The race for the comsat should be as thrilling as it is perilous, and so should not be bogged down in number-crunching and die rolls. You can “pre-determine” each spacer’s success by either rolling in advance, or by arbitrarily deciding that, for example, Rycar will fly to the Difficult zone, succeed and fly off.

The key to making this scene work is description: tell the characters how their ship bucks as if riding in an atmosphere. Tell them it may be their imagination, but it feels like it’s getting warmer in the cabin. Describe the brilliant waves of color, the occasional flash of brilliance as a stray cosmic ray bounces off the viewport and how the ship’s viewports are constantly shifting transparency to compensate. (Consider having a short-wave radio tuned into static to help set the scene.)

During the run to the comsat, Kalend Thora only skims to the outer layers of the Beacon’s field. She already knows the instructions carried by the comsat, so she does not actually need to make contact. She will stay around, however, to watch the first few ships make the run before jumping to hyperspace.

Nwarcol Awaits

Getting to Nwarcol requires an *astrogation* roll, similar to the one the characters generated to get to Novolek. The presence of the beacon makes the base difficulty Difficult. Again, modify the difficulty accordingly to hours saved or added, as was done before.

If the roll fails, the characters show up dead last. If the modified roll equals to or exceeds the difficulty number by up to five points, the characters arrive next to last. If the characters beat the difficulty by six to 10 points, they arrive before two other ships, but everyone else is there. If they beat the difficulty by 11 to 15, they arrive third. Anything over 16 means they arrive second, after Kalend.

The smugglers emerge from hyperspace 75+ space units away from Nwarcol Point. Kalend, in the lead, sends a quick taunt as the characters’ ship arrives in-system: “What’s keeping you, boys? The last one to the Point buys the drinks!” At that, Kalend speeds on to Nwarcol Point at maximum speed.

What to Do at Nwarcol Point

Nwarcol Point is similar to many deep-space or orbital docking stations. A habitable volume rests atop a large cluster of docking bays serving small vessels. This rests atop a large gridwork cage for tending to capital ships.

When the characters arrive, Nwarcol is in full swing. The Beacon’s activity has grounded a number of vessels, so many of the docking bays are occupied by frustrated spacers.

Staging Tips: Nwarcol Point

Nwarcol Point is *old*. A relic from the Hutt expansion, the original Nwarcol predates even the Republic. Unlike its sister outpost, Terman Station, enough credits have been poured into its restoration to make it feel modern. The corridors are well-lit, modular, and spacious (having been designed for Hutts.) The docking areas are also modular, with removable walls to accommodate larger freighters.

If one were to dig past the polished hallways and trendy casinos, the engineering core of the station reveals a haphazard array of ancient Hutt electronics and architecture, rife with vermin and other nasty surprises.

For the everyday spacer, however, Nwarcol is just a lay-over spot while refueling. Casinos, bars, repair shops, gift shops, malls, and eating establishments are scattered throughout the station. Administrative offices make up the next greatest concentration of personnel on the station. BoSS, Imperial Customs, the Corellian Merchant’s Guild, XTS, Jatayus Outbound, and numerous other corporations maintain offices here.

Traveler’s Advisory

As the characters approach Nwarcol, the Envelope program translates an incoming signal. It provides instructions to head to Docking Bay 12: 421.

Also in the message is an advisory from the station’s control tower. It warns about the Novolek Beacon being in its active phase, which may affect hyperspace durations and subspace signal range and locations.

Looking Around

Docking goes without incident, as the station tractor beams ensure a steady landing. According to Envelope, the coordinates for *Destination: Adventure!* will be provided in 30 minutes. This ensures that the first person at Nwarcol is also the first person to get the coordinates. If the characters want to slice into Envelope for more information, it takes a Very Difficult *computer programming/repair* roll to get the coordinates. Each attempt takes 10 minutes. Two failed attempts destroy Envelope. Their final destination is two hours away.

The characters have 30 minutes to locate their cargo. If they want, they can explore the surrounding station. After 15 minutes, a nondescript human calling himself Nile Audo approaches their ship. A large, boxy labor droid hauls a two-meter-by-three-meter crate.

Nile is tight-lipped, offering no pleasantries. He simply asks, “Are you Mal Biron’s haulers?” If the characters answer yes right away, take note. Nile has not offered the code-phrase yet, so the characters shouldn’t be confiding anything. If they wait, or press the issue, Nile will say, “The mynocks are bad this month.” Take note of this success.

It takes a good 10 minutes to load the cargo onto the characters’ ship. They will most likely want to depart right away. If they ask, the docking fees have already been taken care of by their employer.



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Take note of the ships' current standings. Kalend should be number one. Again, have the characters generate an *astrogation* total, with the modifications for "hours saved" and "hours added." The presence of the Beacon again modifies the characters' difficulty, this time adding 1D to the difficulty. If the characters fail their *astrogation* roll, they drop two positions. If they simply match it or exceed it by one to three points, they lose one position. If they exceed their difficulty by four to eight points, they keep their position. If they exceed the difficulty by nine to 12 points, they increase one position. A success by 13 to 15 points increases their standing by two positions. Exceeding the difficulty by 16 or more increases their standing by three position. As previously, Kalend Thora automatically arrives first.

As the characters power up for lightspeed, their comm intercepts a subspace signal. With the stellar output of the Beacon in full force, subspace signals are quite unreliable. The intercepted message is not for them:

"All right, listen up, fellow Disac peers. This is your prodigal son, Morrtur Heth, otherwise known as Az-Iban. I've got a sweet little cargo load right from the wolfman's clutches. I've popped 'er open and she looks pretty good. There's gonna be five more loads at the following coordinates, plus a big, juicy luxury liner. Sharpen your teeth, boys. The pickins are gonna be good!"

Az-Iban's ship then soars into hyperspace.

Episode Three: Crying Wolf

The smuggler ships emerge in the Salin Corridor 100 space units away from the luxury liner *Destination: Adventure!* Midway between their position and the ship is an Imperial patrol consisting of six TIE fighters and an Imperial Guardian light cruiser. Allow the characters to panic over this for a moment. This is actually an Imperial contingent from Captain Neomen and is firmly planted in Black Sun's pocket. If the characters wait to see what happens, the fact that Kalend Thora does nothing to change her vector towards the luxury liner should alleviate their concerns. A distorted comm signal from the Imperial cruiser reaches the characters:

"Now reading private ship (name of characters' ship). Cleared to proceed to docking with *Destination: Adventure!*"

At this time, a group of space pirates arrive from hyperspace behind the spacers.

Pirate Battle

If the characters tell the Imperials or the other smugglers of Az-Iban's treachery, the Imperial ships will better handle the pirate attack. Otherwise, the pirates catch the Imperials and the smugglers napping during the first round of combat. Since it's important to make sure the characters are the ones chosen for Mal Biron's future assignments, any crew who is currently ahead of them (other than Kalend) should have their

ships damaged, slowing them down considerably.

Kalend Thora is not sure of the pirate attack, suspecting it to be a surprise twist in Mal Biron's test. She'll spend the first three rounds evaluating the situation. Once she realizes the attack is real, she'll urge her companions to make a run for the protection of the Imperial patrol.

The characters' ship is authorized to pass through the Imperial patrol. The Disac pirates are not. If the characters can just reach the Imperial patrol, the pirates will be forced to retreat.

The characters must travel 50 space units before Imperial identification transponders on a nearby cruiser confirm the smugglers' codes and send word to the patrol to intercept the pirate ships.

The pirates have three craft: a Corellian freighter and two scout ships. Read the following once the action begins:

You exit hyperspace only a few minutes from the *Destination: Adventure!* You've barely oriented yourself when lasers blast across your bow. Two scout ships race by while a third unseen ship fires from behind. The comm suddenly crackles with a gravelly voice. "Greetings," it says, "pull those tugs over now and we won't space you. Run for it and we'll salvage your cargo from the void."

Most pirates show mercy simply to make their prey more likely to surrender without a fight. These hungry pirates show no such restraint. During the battle, Az-Iban will attack the closest freighter (the ship with the next highest standing.)

Wild Fire. Converted stock light freighter, starfighter-scale, *space transports 5D, starship gunnery 5D, starship shields 4D.* Maneuverability 1D, space 8, atmosphere: 365; 1,050 kmh, hull 5D+1, shields 2D. Weapons: 1 quad laser cannon (fire control 3D, damage 5D), proton torpedo launcher (fire control 1D, damage 8D).

2 Pirate Ships. Modified MRX-BR Pacifiers, starfighter-scale, *space transports 4D+2, starship gunnery 4D+2, starship shields 3D.* Maneuverability 1D, space 7, atmosphere: 350; 1,000 kmh, hull 2D, shields 2D. Weapons: 3 laser cannons (fire control 3D, damage 3D) 2 proton torpedo launchers (fire control 2D, damage 9D).

Pirates. *Dexterity 2D, blaster 5D, brawling parry 5D, dodge 5D, Knowledge 1D, Mechanical 2D, repulsorlift operation 4D+2, space transports 4D+2, starship gunnery 4D+2, starship shields 3D, Perception 2D, Strength 2D, brawling 5D, Technical 2D, security 4D.* Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), vibroblade (STR +2D) vac-suit.

Imperials! We're saved!

Just as the characters break past the patrols, read the following:

An Imperial pilot hails you as you race past. "You are cleared to pass, private vessel (ship name). We'll handle it from here." With that six TIE fighters race towards the pirates guns blazing. The Empire has its uses after all!

Guardian-class Light Cruiser. Starfighter-scale, *space transports 5D, starship gunnery 5D+2, starship shields 5D+1*. Maneuverability 1D, space 8, atmosphere 365; 1,050 kmh, hull 5D+1, shields 3D. Weapons: 6 double turbolaser cannons (fire control 2D, damage 4D).

Note: This ship has been outfitted with external docking racks to carry TIE fighters, reducing its maneuverability.

6 TIE/In starfighters. Starfighter-scale, *starfighter piloting 4D+1, starship gunnery 4D*. Maneuverability 2D, space 10, atmosphere 415; 1,200 kmh, hull 2D. Weapons: 2 laser cannons (fire-linked, fire control 2D, damage 5D).

Winning the Race

The group can now dock with the *Destination: Adventure!* luxury liner, where they can deliver their cargo without further interference. The ships land in a large docking bay, currently solely occupied by the *Eyeshine*. When they eventually debark from their ship, they find themselves greeted by Mal Biron himself.

Even if the characters were not the first after Kalend, they may still “win” employment and a bonus from Mal. If they teamed up with Kal’Falnl, they will split the 5,000 credit reward. If they attempted to stop Az-Iban from destroying the comsat, they’ll receive a 2,000 credit bonus. If they warned the other smugglers about Az-Iban’s treachery, they’ll receive a 5,000 credit bonus. For every Disac ship they destroyed, they receive a 1,000 credit bonus.

While the surviving smugglers wait, Mal will speak quietly with Kalend. The characters might notice she points in their direction several times before Mal finally turns away from her to address the smugglers. He first awards the 5,000 credit bonus to the crew that landed first, then says the following:

“Thank you all very much. Your services are much appreciated. Though this run was very important, it was mostly designed as a test. My employer is only interested in the best—and most loyal—crews.

“In the meantime, feel free to spend a few hours in the *Destination’s* lounge. Your food and drinks are on me.”

Mal then dismisses the smugglers and goes to oversee the cargo offloading. Kalend will ask the player characters to join her in the ship’s lounge.

When they arrive, Kalend will momentarily venture off to speak with an old acquaintance. While the group waits at their table for her to return, Elis Helrot approaches and whispers, “Meet me in the back” to the group’s leader or pilot, then vanishes into the thick crowd.

Helrot’s Offer

Elis Helrot, the Givin smuggler, is waiting in the narrow hallway near the refresher when the characters approach. Read aloud:

“I have an offer for you, friends,” the Givin whispers. “While curiosity is not a standard Givin trait, I consider it good business to know what I transport. I



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opened the cargo pod, and must say, I was impressed by what I saw. It takes a lot to impress a Givin. Unfortunately, the item is not complete. I suspect, that with at least one other component, we can assemble a worthy prize. Rycar has agreed to my offer. Together, we can pay 10,000 credits for your component."

Helrot is lying. Rycar has agreed to no such thing. If the characters are unaware of what the cargo is and make their ignorance known, Helrot will take advantage of this.

"You are unaware? Let us say that it takes the Givin gift of technology and science to determine the cargo's value. I am afraid it is profit wasted on you."

Because the liner is Black Sun's, it is equipped with all manner of surveillance and eavesdropping gear. Mal Biron and Kalend Thora will hear of this conversation.

The characters have been warned that Mal Biron prizes loyalty above all else: If they take the Givin up on his offer, they'll stumble into a trap. If they turn him down, they'll make an instant and very powerful ally.

If the party decides to sell Biron out, they'll have to go back down to the cargo area unless they pried the pods open during their trip. From there, they can find out that the cargo pods were taken to the ship's galley.

The Galley

The party's cargo has been taken to the *Destination's* galley. If the player characters sneak down there, they'll see their cargo pod being hauled into a giant freezer. Inside, they'll see their pod as well as those of any other smugglers who survived the run.

Fortunately, one of Elis' men has already taken the bait and is sneaking into the freezer as the characters arrive. Before the group can do anything or is spotted, they'll see Mal and his enforcers move in from the shadows to trap the rival smuggler.

"And I thought we had established a relationship", Mal shakes his head. "This was a simple test of loyalty and I'm afraid you've failed miserably."

At that, Mal's enforcers blast the rival smugglers, dropping them where they stand. Then, from behind Mal, comes Kalend.

"The Hinthra's not going anywhere. Elis has a lot of explaining to do. You know who I've recommended for the job. Let's get this thing moving."

"Patience, Kalend," Mal smiles. "Aren't you curious as to what's in the cargo pods?"

"Of course not," she says, unconvincingly.

"But you should be." Mal nods to one of his enforcers, who steps into the storage room. You can hear him opening the cargo pod, then he steps out carrying

a large, circular box.

"Let's go back to the bay and share this with your friends," Mal smiles.

The characters should rush back to the lounge as fast as they can. When they get there, they'll be invited into the docking bay by Kalend and Mal.

The Cargo

Inside the pods are several glassy, conical metal pieces that are well-protected and quite heavy. Inside the pieces are complex wiring and circuitry, though it's obvious the pieces are missing some vital component.

It takes a Moderate *starship weapon repair* or a Difficult *value* roll to determine that these items are unarmed mag pulse warheads. This new weapon targets the high-energy power grid feeding a ship's weapons systems, rendering the ship defenseless if hit. The warheads are currently missing the mag pulse generator unit and are thus disarmed and useless.

The cargo pods are well-sealed and if curious characters wish to open them before delivery, it requires a Difficult *security* roll to open it without any noticeable signs of entry. If they keep it shut, the docking bay scene will be their first glimpse of this contraband tech.

Read aloud:

"This will come in quite useful for my employers," grins Mal. He turns to you, his wolfish grin growing larger, "or should I say, our employer?"

The Offer

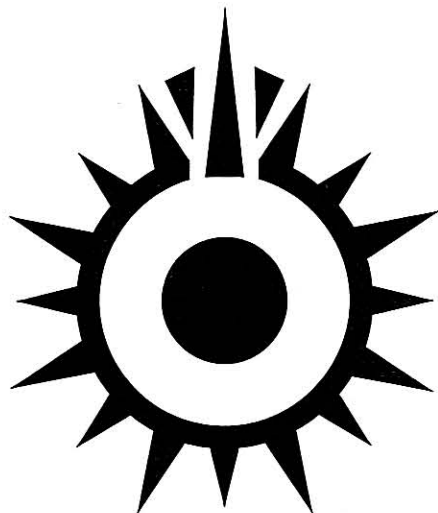
This is the end of the first adventure. The party has managed to work themselves into Black Sun's confidence and made several allies along the way.

Mal's next assignment can be one of your own choosing, or you can head right into the next chapter and choose an adventure from there.

If the characters did not succeed, either by coming in last, or by agreeing to Helrot's offer, there are still ways to work them into Black Sun's debt. If their indiscretion was minor, Mal may test them again with another mission. If Kal'Falnl was the winner, she'll credit the player characters' skill and they'll get hired from her recommendation. If their indiscretion was major, you'll have to arrange it so the characters are in Black Sun's debt and have them carry out a mission as payback.

Adventure Rewards

Give the characters three to five Character Points, plus any individual awards for good roleplaying. Be sure to reward the characters if they won the race without any gamemaster intervention and if they warned the other spacers about Az-Iban.



A Black Sun Campaign

One of the key elements of *Shadows of the Empire* is the effective use of conspiracies. Xizor plots Vader's end, while Vader reciprocates the duplicity. The two plot the capture of Luke, while the Emperor watches on with amusement. Double agents lurk around every corner and loyalties are always in question.

It is this type of story that makes a Black Sun campaign different from the typical *Star Wars* adventures you may be running. Running conspiracies is quite easy, but the key is having your players know *something* is going on without knowing *what*. It's simple to have one Vigo compete against the next, but if the characters are caught up in it, they don't get to experience the fun.

Consider charting out loyalties. For instance, from the first chapter, you learned that Puln is loyal to Sprax yet also works for Green, and that Nim Abek is thinking about double-crossing his boss. Sprax works both with the local Alliance and Imperial forces, which may create some very strange allegiances in both camps if either wants to do in the Nalroni boss. All these odd working relationships can be exploited for some very tricky situation.

The Steps

Over the course of a Black Sun campaign, there are several goals you want to accomplish.

1. Get the characters employed by Black Sun. The previous adventure sets this up. At this stage, the characters only know that they are employed by Mal Biron, who appears to be just another smuggling boss. You may want to work adventures from your own notes rather than this book so you can avoid the players seeing the *Shadows of the Empire* logo on the cover.

2. Get them to like working for Black Sun. You want to cultivate a strong working relationship so the characters don't want to work for anybody else. Sneak in adventures for other companies, but be sure to have the rewards substantially lower. Characters, as a rule,

are greedy. They'll go where the credit is good.

3. Have them learn the organization is much bigger than they suspected. Slowly reveal that Mal Biron is not the head-boss. As the jobs get tougher, bring in new bosses such as Tasin or Kisquar. Let the grapevine tell them that their boss is Jatayus Outbound.

4. Let the characters learn they work for Black Sun. "The Barani Conspiracy" adventures at the end of this book lets the characters learn this, but you may want to introduce it earlier. Don't make Black Sun a villainous organization yet. Perhaps it will be a better sign of trust if Kisquar, impressed by their performance, invites the characters to a private meeting with Vigo Sprax, where the characters learn the truth.

5. Have the characters want to get out. Once fully in the fold of Black Sun, reveal to the characters the true nature of the organization. This step is optional, but packs the most dramatic impact.

Adventure Ideas

The following are short adventure outlines that can be fleshed out into full adventures. While not all adventures have to be played, they are listed in a specific order. As the adventures progress, the characters' role in Black Sun activities becomes more and more important.

Adventure Outline One: The Hijackers

The Set-Up: The local Rebel presence, Sandwind Team, is in desperate need of a stolen Imperial Customs vessel it can use to slip through Imperial security for an upcoming mission. Because that mission will rid the area of a local Customs checkpoint that is biting into Sprax's profits, he is happy to oblige the Rebels by having his agents secure the vessel. Also, since Sprax currently has no Customs ships in his inventory, he is eager to get one.

Episode One: Word From The Top

The characters are contacted by Kalend Thora: their boss, Mal Biron, needs an Imperial ship. The job offers 10,000 credits. She provides the characters with a scheduled itinerary for the Customs frigate *Yanov*.

Episode Two: The *Yanov*

Kalend is running interference on this trip. Her vessel will blanket any Imperial distress calls with jamming. It's now up to the characters to disable the ship with a series of surgical strikes. Provide the characters with target points—modify difficulties to hit a smaller area, but special damage results, such as engine burnout or shield failure. Once the *Yanov* is disabled, the characters board it and must incapacitate the eight Imperials aboard.

Episode Three: The Gricul Yards

The characters pilot the *Yanov* to the Gricul Yards on Sriluur, where Sprax's team of chop-shop artists fit it for Rebel usage. After about four hours of work, the *Yanov's* transponder is rigged to fit the profile needed for Sandwind's mission. There is a catch, however. Because one of the character's surgical strikes was a bit off, it has damaged a vital hyperdrive component in the older Customs frigate. It can't be used until a replacement part is found. Word reaches Sprax (who the characters only know of as "Biron's employer") and he is angered. He must comb his personal stores for a replacement component. He holds back the characters' payment until they complete another end of the deal....

***Yanov*.** Imperial Customs frigate, starfighter-scale, maneuverability 1D, space 8, atmosphere 365; 1,050 kmh, hull 5D, shields 3D. Weapons: 4 laser cannons (fire control 2D, damage 5D), proton torpedo launcher (fire control 2D, damage 9D).

Episode Four: Punishment and Crime

To make up for the botched *Yanov* strike, the characters must pilot the frigate in for Sandwind Team. The job was originally going to be taken care of by hired mercs, but Sprax feels it worthwhile penance for the earlier mistake.

The characters pilot the *Yanov* into an Imperial resupply base. They dock long enough for the Rebel strike team to debark. As the Rebels fight their way through to the reactor core, the characters must take care of TIE fighters harassing the frigate and get back in time to pick up the Rebels.

Tips: Don't jump into combat too easily. Allow the characters roleplaying opportunities when crippling the *Yanov* and when avoiding fire at the resupply base.

Sandwind Team

The Weequay homeworld of Sriluur is a veritable hotbed of Rebel activity and most of it in one way or another revolves around the infamous Sandwind Team, which operates out of the remote spiral formations within the Lesser Cueva Expanse. The intelligence resources of the team have ensured the success of several key Rebel missions in the region over the last few standard months and the group has heavy ties to Sprax and his agents.



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The Sandwind Team has purchased nearly two dozen spaceworthy craft from Sprax's group in the last year, at prices significantly lower than the Rebels could have found them elsewhere. Three of the craft have been kept on Sriluur for use by the Team, while the others were quietly picked up by other operatives in the area.

Black Sun's influence has not only enabled the local Rebel cell to gain ships and supplies it would be otherwise hard-pressed to locate, but it has also relieved some of the pressure of working in an area with a heavy, local Imperial presence. The graft Black Sun pays is sufficient enough to not only protect Sprax's shipping interests in Meirm City, but also the Alliance operatives. While Alliance Command has expressed some concern at their troops being under the "protection" of organized criminals, there is no disputing the benefits the relationship has yielded so far.

The Sandwind Team is composed of six Alliance operatives. Lieutenant Jodar Frein, the group's leader, is a near-human male and a veteran of many battles.

Frein's first officer is an aged Tratlin male by the name of Rallan. Rallan served as a solo operative in Meirm City before the formation of the Team; for years, he fed supplies to the Dnalvec militia in addition to his "standard" assignments that came from various Rebel cells.

The remaining four members of the unit are a diverse mix: Redlio, a Twi'lek spy who once worked as a huntress for crime lords in the Inner-Rim; Ka'ilorshin, a red Nikto who serves as the unit's sharpshooter; Plin Shardona, a young human male in charge of field procurement, and Moldisin, a Reigat female who, instead of serving as the team's muscle as one would expect, is the group's tech and medic.

The Cost of Doing Business

The characters will probably end up with a lot of credits on their hands if they do their jobs right. They can invest this money into making their ship better. This doesn't mean they'll have the most powerful ship in the region, but they'll certainly be better equipped for future missions. Here are a couple of items the characters may want to invest in.

Secret Cargo Compartments: These hidden cargo holds come in three types. There's *concealed*, which requires a Difficult *Perception* roll to detect, but a scanner will pick it up instantly. *Hidden* compartments require a Very Difficult *Perception* to spot with the naked eye and a Moderate *sensors total* with a scanner. *Scanner resistant* compartments require a Very Difficult *Perception* roll to spot and do not show up on scanners at all.

Each type of hold takes up five tons of cargo space from the ship's listed cargo capacity for every one ton concealed.

Automatic Cargo Jettisoning: A quick way to avoid Imperial customs (and get in trouble with your crime boss). Costs 1,000 credits and takes up one ton of cargo capacity.

Concealed	200 credits/ton
Hidden	400 credits/ton
Scanner resistant	1,000 credits/ton

Adventure Outline Two: The Treasure of Ancients

The Set-Up: Mal Biron asks the characters to rendezvous with a Hutt vessel on the outskirts of the Si'klaata Cluster. They are to pick up an ancient piece of technology found on the barren world Vontor and deliver it to an associate at Terman Station. Mal explains that the haul was intended for Jatayus Outbound, but that their boss wanted independents moving it instead.

Episode One: Hutt Hospitality

On the fringes of the Si'klaata Cluster, the characters dock with a massive Hutt vessel, the *Y'Tobba*. Before they can get their consignment, the Hutt commander invites them in. They must show a diplomatic front as Tobba the Hutt invites them to dinner and after-show entertainment, which consists of typical Hutt-style debauchery, gunplay and the feeding of former business associates to Krayt dragons. He had them imported from Tatooine at great expense to try to impress Jabba the Hutt.

Episode Two: The Switch

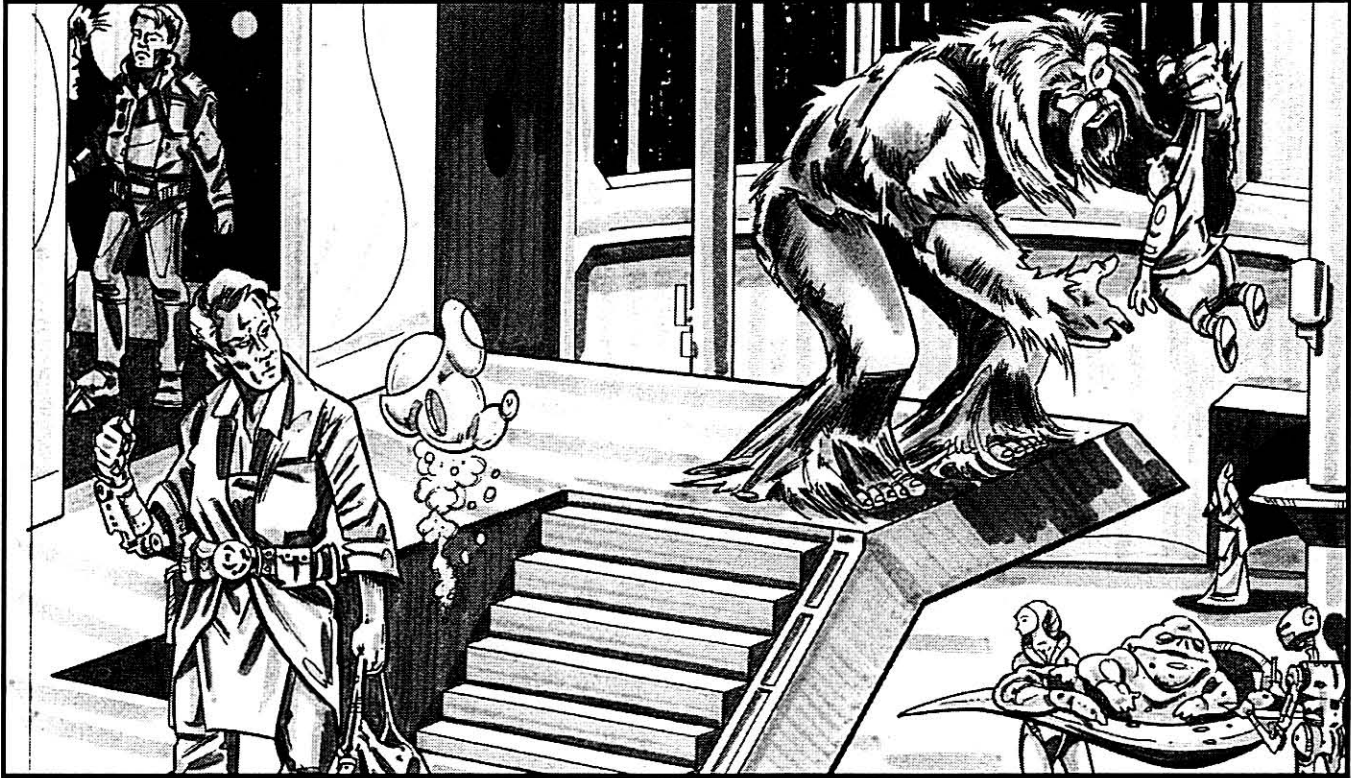
Shaking off the headache of the Hutt party, the characters arrive at Terman Station. There, they are to meet with Kisquar. They soon discover that while at the Hutt party someone stole their cargo! A traitor in Tobba's midst took the item for herself. The characters, searching for the item, spot someone from the Hutt party: a Twi'lek female. Shadowing her leads the characters deeper into the old station.

Episode Three: The Transformation

With the piece of abandoned tech, the Twi'lek—Kinsa Doroturo—hopes to activate the secret of Terman Station. Both an academic and an anti-Hutt activist, Doroturo stumbled across the truth of Terman Station among some Expansionist Era relics. Terman Station is actually one of Xim's orbital fortresses left behind from the Third Battle of Vontor. Doroturo hopes to get the juggernaut active again so that she can take on the Hutt warlords.

The task is nowhere as easy as she hopes. Placing the missing component in the core of Terman Station only partially activates it. Terman Station has been built over with layers of docking bays and habitat areas, and its former outer hull is buried behind meters of superstructure. The ancient weapon pods, now armed, threaten to destroy the whole station.

Kisquar explains to the characters that their boss owns Terman Station and would be quite angered if it was reduced to ash. Can the characters deactivate the station in time?



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Tips: Play up the age of the station and the whole region. This area of space is old, and reminding the characters that a war occurred here over 25 millennia ago will give them a sense of scope. If this is the first time the characters meet Kisquar, make sure his managerial style is different from Mal Biron. Biron is still a smuggler (although a wealthy one), but Kisquar has been out of the hauling trade for years.

Adventure Outline Three: Take Me Out At the Ball Game

The Set-Up: After a job well done, Mal Biron presents the characters with tickets to an upcoming shockball game to be held at the Innerdome Arena within Nwarcol Point. At last—a chance to relax!

Episode One: Pre-game Show

Kisquar approaches the characters as soon as they arrive at the arena. He explains that their boss, Sprax, is a gambler and has placed a sizable wager that the Dargul Dianogas would beat the Rampa Rancors. Trouble is, the star shock-back of the Rancors, an Abyssin named Hron, has refused to throw the game as he said he would. Kisquar tells the characters that if they want continued employment, they had best take Hron out of the game. Kisquar emphasizes that this job must be done *discreetly*.

Episode Two: Pep Talk

The first order of business is sneaking into the player locker rooms. Because of past shockball hooliganism, weapon detectors are set up at the arena. The characters will have to improvise.

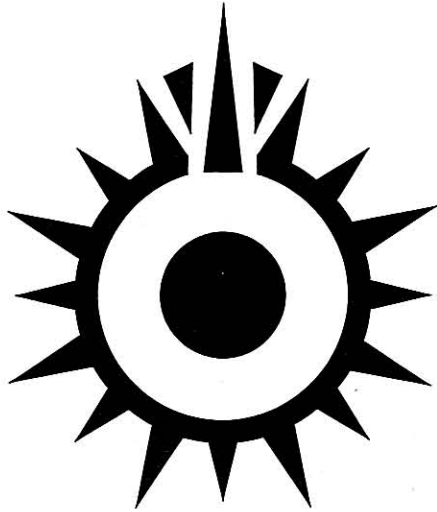
Remember that Abyssins are regenerative beings: Getting him drunk, hitting him with a chair or locking him in the closet are possible actions. Allow two or three schemes to fail before starting the next episode.

Episode Three: Play Ball

It's almost game time, and as the characters fret, the sports medical droid can't help but overhear their situation.

It can concoct a tranquilizer capable of knocking out even an Abyssin. By the time it is ready, the game has started. The characters have to find an inconspicuous way of getting onto the playing field and delivering the hypo to knock out Hron. There are six extra jerseys on the Dianogas' side and the characters could test the elixir on, say, players about the same size as them.

Tips: A lighter adventure, fixed sports games may be the first inkling the characters are working for organized crime. This may also be the first time they see their boss. You may want to confuse matters by having Kisquar only point to the exclusive box seats, and not indicate which one of the occupants is their boss.



The Barani Conspiracy

Good Help is Hard to Find

Bel Att, the Iotran, was like most of his species: dedicated, loyal and brutally efficient. His commitment to his employer had made him one of Vigo Sprax's favorite enforcers. He was even privileged enough to know just who he was working for—a rare favor in the secretive world of Black Sun.

Att was paid a handsome retainer to remain available for Sprax's assignments, though he was used only for select duties. Particularly those that required extreme violence administered with cold precision.

The transmission was no doubt sent by his employer's latest "personal companion," Millicent, rather than Kisquar, Att's usual contact. Sprax had a weakness for young lost souls. This one had spoken to Att only once before. Even then he had sensed her power-induced intoxication at giving someone else instructions.

The girl told him that a mining colony in the Verde system—Yen-2 was its unimaginative name—believed it didn't need Vigo Sprax's protection nor shipping companies. Either offense was punishable by extreme measures. The raw defiance shown by the colony's owner could be answered only by the most ruthless retaliation.

Att grunted and drank the last of his belaria juice. He did not enjoy death, but he did believe that beings needed to acknowledge their place in the universe. He had. And Vigo Sprax's new companion had, though with perhaps a bit more relish than the practical Iotran thought proper.

He turned his thoughts instantly to the operation. The mining colony was likely to have armed itself in anticipation of Black Sun's enforcers. Miners with blasters weren't particularly dangerous, but Att never took chances. He would assemble a team of killers to accompany him. Vigo Sprax's own retinue of thugs would not do. If they were somehow captured, the Empire could not ignore such a blatant attack. Att himself would never reveal the name of his employer,

but those who worked only for credits were not always so loyal.

He needed someone with little compunction for taking sentient life. Someone totally ruthless and savage. Someone with her own well-trained band of killers ready to strike at a moment's notice. Only one name came to mind: *Yith*.



An Imperial shuttle glided into Yen-2's docking bay. Its five occupants, a major of the Imperial Resource Procurement Bureau, four stormtroopers and an Imperial hover-probe droid emerged and moved briskly into the normally bustling loading bay. This transfer site had been shut down by the owner, Neil Barani, in anticipation of new endeavors.

"Mr. Barani?" Major Stipling asked of the burly man awaiting his arrival.

"Yes, sir. That's me." Neil Barani was a stocky human in his mid-forties. He had started this operation the hard way—working his way from system to system as a miner until he'd hit a few valuable strikes. From these he was able to buy into a new mining colony along with several wealthier off-site investors. Being the only co-owner with any experience, he was appointed Chief Engineer, though he preferred to call himself "Foreman." Barani ran the place well. Few living in his ferrocrete compound could complain about their wages or conditions.

"Where is the sample?" Major Stipling demanded.

Barani didn't particularly like Imperials, but he knew he could never keep word of his most recent find a secret. If he had tried, his operation would have been shut down and he and his miners might have been blasted to bits by the Imperial Fleet. "Here in my hand, Major." Barani handed Stipling a black, rough-hewn rod.

"I must run a few tests," Stipling sighed. The Major turned to the hover-probe. "Zeethreeone," he said passively. "Analyze the sample for impurities."

The vaguely insectoid droid opened its forward hatch and Major Stipling placed the rod inside. It closed slowly, leaving Barani and Stipling waiting anxiously.

After what seemed an eternity, the droid's analysis was complete. "This sample is 97.2 percent pure doonium."

Major Stipling glanced excitedly at Barani. Doonium was one of the fundamental metals used in Imperial Naval shipyards. With the escalating military build-up, the laws of supply and demand had caused raw materials to sky-rocket in value. If Barani's earlier message of a massive strike in the Verde Belt were true, it would make the miner rich and win Major Stipling valuable points for promotion. "This is quite a find," he studied the foreman, hoping to see the eyes of an imbecile easily conned out of his priceless discovery. But Barani's eyes were sharp. "I assume you desire an exclusive contract with the Empire?"

Barani nodded slowly, grinning. He had heard of another mine owner in a similar situation who'd arranged a deal worth more than he could imagine. Barani planned on sharing the profits with his crew, but he would still be fabulously wealthy in only a few months.

"That's right, Major. I want the same deal you gave Turlin Corp. No more, no less."

"That should be easy enough to arrange," Stipling answered quickly. Even Turlin's inflated price was cheap in the eyes of the Empire. Stipling waved at a lieutenant to start drawing up the electronic contract, then nodded and turned to go. He stopped briskly when he felt Barani's rough hand on the shoulder of his pristine uniform.

"We're not done yet, Major."

Stipling turned around in a way that made Barani drop his hand, then stared at the shoulder where the civilian had touched him. He said nothing, but raised his eyebrows in query.

"I've got something you might find even more valuable."

"More valuable than doonium?" Stipling scoffed.

Barani nodded his head, still grinning like a clever animal. "For years we've been forced to ship our ore through Jatayus Outbound or Xizor Transport Systems. I have proof that these companies are tied directly to Black Sun."

Stipling wasn't an Intelligence officer, but he'd suspected as much from the scuttlebutt he'd heard.

"I've got lists. Ships, operatives, enforcers and the big boss in this region. Now that we'll be shipping on Imperial haulers, I don't see any reason to pay Black Sun's blood money."

Stipling wasn't involved enough in Intelligence affairs to know just how valuable Barani's information was. Or how unwise the strong-willed foreman's maneuver was.

Barani pointed to a small black lockbox. It was nearly indestructible, the kind typically used to store company records in case of fire or deep-space disasters.

"That's a very interesting proposal," Stipling grimaced, unsure of how he should proceed on such an important matter so far out of his field.

"The Turlin Corp deal," Barani grinned, "plus a bonus of 12 million credits for me."

Stipling frowned, still unsure. "The Empire will pay handsomely for this information, Mr. Barani, but I'll have to refer the matter to the proper department before I can commit to your demands."

Barani nodded. He knew it would take little haggling to get the Empire to pay handsomely for such a complete report on Black Sun's operations in this region of space.



The *Harbinger* came out of hyperspace just outside the Verde asteroid field. Bel Att piloted the small assault ship. Seated behind him were two dozen of the most ruthless mercenaries he could find. Their leader was the infamous Kerestian assassin, terrorist and mercenary named Limna Yith.

"You mentioned nothing of an asteroid field," she said as the ship plunged into the belt.

Att did not respond. Instead, he focused all his attention on the spinning rocks before him. He piloted the assault craft as he ran his own life—efficiently. There was no wasted motion in his deft hands, no overcompensation. He would guide the ship precisely between two asteroids, then apply minimal spin to narrowly avoid the next.

Those behind him watched tensely. They sighed with visible relief when he broke into an "eddy" of sorts just above a giant, relatively stable asteroid.

"That *was* Yen-2," Att grunted as he powered up the ship's weapons, deliberately speaking in the past tense. The mining complex looked to house upwards of 40 individuals. Its shuttle bay was tucked beneath the loading area and command tower, while personal domiciles stretched out along four arms emanating from the circular center like a cross. Atop the command structure was a massive transceiver, likely powerful enough to send a tight beam broadcast through Verde's Belt.

Under the barrage of crisp green laser fire, the dish exploded in a brilliant but short-lived shower of sparks.

Next the *Lotran* strafed the docking bay, blasting its metal doors into twisted slabs so that none of the mine's shuttles could escape.

"We're going in," the enforcer grunted.



Bel Att was the first through the breach. He had landed the *Harbinger* a few meters from the nexus of the colony's four arms, next to the ruined shuttle bays. He and Yith's men wore space suits under their armor. This allowed them to blow holes in the compound's walls and use the vacuum as a weapon. The miners inside the shuttle bay were already dead or dying—decompressed and frozen. Those elsewhere in the station would likely have time to put on vac-suits before the mercenaries were on top of them, but they would not have time to orchestrate a defense.

Inside the landing bays, doors led to each of the four halls and a lift into the command tower above. Att quickly broke his mercenaries into four-person teams and sent them off down the hallways towards the miners' domiciles. Att, Yith, and two others headed up the lift into the command tower. As he suspected, the doors above were already locked down and sealed from the inside. A few charges from Yith's heavy blaster negated the flimsy doors in a heartbeat.

Att and the others rushed in. A few suited miners fired

from behind a bank of computers. One of the miners remained in front of the consoles and switched off the compound's artificial gravity. His clever trick sent two of the attacking mercenaries bouncing into view where they were quickly shot by the concealed miners. Att and Yith, however, were old veterans at the killing game. Yith blasted the exposed miner before he could regain cover. Att let go of his blaster rifle—allowing it to hover in the zero-gravity—and pulled a grenade from his belt. He tossed it underhanded at the ceiling and watched with

grim satisfaction as it rebounded downward and behind the cover of the computers. Several miners pushed off in an attempt to escape, rocketing from their positions recklessly, but it was too late. The grenade exploded, killing them instantly.

Yith launched herself through the gore, blasting at the doorway between the command booth and the loading bays as she went. The door crumpled under her attack and she rushed through.

Bel Att retrieved his still-floating rifle and followed immediately. He gasped as he raced into the room and saw—stormtroopers!

The four white-clad Imperials fired repeatedly at Yith but couldn't seem to score a hit. Att took advantage of the distraction to stop himself and line up a shot. He aimed carefully but quickly, then fired and took the lead stormtrooper.

Yith was more reckless but her larger weapon compensated for her wild aim. She blasted another stormtrooper, shattering his chestplate. The force of her weapon started the Kerestian spinning and sailing backward however, rendering further shots useless. Yith's bold maneu-



Marshall Andrews III

ver gave Att time to drop the two remaining troopers.

Then the Imperial hover-probe droid, flailing in the dying gravity with ineffectual repulsorlifts, appeared from behind a bank of computers. Yith waited until she collided with the adjacent wall, righted herself, and pushed off again. This time she let go of her heavy blaster and drew a double-edged hand weapon from her back. Its hyper-sonic vibrations made her arm tingle as she brought it forward. Yith collided with the droid and hacked at it savagely. Her first blow cut deep into the droid's chrome plating, cleanly separating its bulbous sensor-laden head from its finned propulsion system.

Though the robot was obviously out of commission, Yith was about to dismember it completely when a blaster caught her square in the back. Her armor took the brunt of the damage but the blast sent her spinning. Two men in deep-space mining outfits bolted past her and headed for the door back into the command structure. One of them had spun around backward as he glided and fired two blasters at Yith simultaneously. The kick of the two weapons seemed to be adding to his speed and he began to overtake the second man.

Then both of them ran smack into Bel Att—braced across the doorway with a long dagger in his hand. The lotran quickly sliced open the suit of the man with the two blasters and kicked him hard, spinning him back into the loading bay. The other man he held in his firm grip, grimacing when he looked through the clear faceplate to seeing the olive-drab cap of standard Imperial military design.

If it was known that Black Sun operatives had slain an Imperial detachment, Vigo Sprax, and Prince Xizor would be in great trouble.

"What are you doing here?" Bel Att shouted over the comlink.

"I-Imperial business!" the Major squawked. "If you kill me, the Empire will track you to the ends of the galaxy!" It was more bribe than threat.

"Not likely," Att grunted and hurled the officer against the wall. Several of his mercenaries were coming up the lift now and one of them grabbed the man roughly.

"There was an Imperial shuttle amid the wreckage in the docking bay," the mercenary said.

Att pondered the situation for a moment, the Verde Belt had obviously blocked detection of whatever larger ship had deployed the Imperial shuttle. He made his decision as rapidly as he realized his mistake. "Take the Imp and the bodies down to the loading bay and place them in the shuttle, then set it out into the belt. With luck, it'll look like they never made it here."

"No!" the officer cried wildly and tried to escape. The mercenary holding him snarled, threw him down the lift-shaft, then launched himself afterwards.



Yith was still in the station's command center when she thumbed on her comlink. "Come look at this, lotran."

Bel Att was in the loading bay overseeing the launching of the Imperial shuttle and its unfortunate occupants. He moved to the central lift—gravity had already been restored—and rode back up to the command room.

Yith was leaning on a computer console next to one of her mercenaries, her security specialist. Beside the mercenary was an empty black lockbox and in front of him was a glowing vid-screen of garbled text.

"What's that?" Att walked casually closer.

"Most of it's encoded, so I can't be sure," said the mercenary. "But the beginning says it's a list of all Black Sun operatives in the system. Including ties to XTS, Jatayus Outbound, Mal Biron and...Vigo Sprax."

Att grimaced, realizing what the human owner of this station had been about to do. "Destroy it," he said instantly.

"This is worth a thousand times what you're paying us," Yith hissed, an evil look barely hidden behind her faceplate.

"Yes," Att responded simply. This didn't bode well. "And what are you suggesting we do with it?"

Yith grimaced and yanked the datacard from the console. Then she stuck it back inside the lockbox and closed it shut. "I think there are people who would pay handsomely for this."

"No," Att said flatly.

Several other mercenaries emerged from the command room now. Yith pointed to the box. "What's inside is worth a hundred times what the lotran is paying us," she said to the mercenaries. "I say we take it. Att disagrees. There are only two sides here."

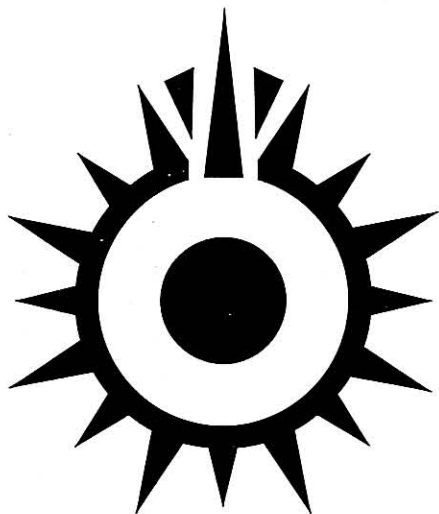
Att gritted his teeth at the potential mutiny. "You are under my employ," he said to the other mercenaries. They seemed unsure, so he turned to Yith. "And you should know your place, Kerestian."

Yith screamed and whirled her double-edged vibroblade in a wild arc. Att didn't even have time to scream. The issue had been decided.

The Barani Conspiracy

When dealing with an organization such as Black Sun, characters rarely have all the pieces of the puzzle in front of them. With so much scheming and counterplotting, it is difficult to tell friend from foe. Which is, of course, how Black Sun wants it. The consequences of having all the pieces—in this case, the Barani list of Black Sun operatives—can be very, very deadly.

The above story sets the background for a short campaign within Sprax's domain. The trilogy comprises three adventures that draw the characters deeper and deeper into the intrigues of Black Sun. The section below explains why things are happening and lets you know what's going on behind the scenes so you can improvise things if the players throw you a sudden curve. Be sure to read through all three adventures to be properly prepared.



The Barani Conspiracy

Part One

Hunting the Hunter

Episode One: Contact

Mal Biron and Kalend Thora have asked the characters to meet them in Mal's office aboard the luxury liner *Destination: Adventure!*, a cruise ship that skirts several locations along the Sisar Run.

You are seated around an expensive table in Mal Biron's office aboard the luxury liner *Destination: Adventure!* The office is tastefully decorated, with a large painted portrait of Mal, looking almost regal were it not for his simple smuggler's vest, dark trousers and low-slung holster. Decorating his large, wood-finished desk are gilded miniatures of the various ships Mal has piloted throughout his career. Lining one wall is the navigation computer from Mal's first ship. There are a few awkward moments when your compulsion to play with Mal's knickknacks is nearly overwhelming. Just in time, however, Kalend Thora enters. The lithe Duro woman wears a beige jumper with shiny black boots and a short jacket.

"Hello, again," she says as she takes the seat behind the desk. "Recently, an item of great significance to our mutual employer was stolen from the mining colony Yen-2, located in the Verde system. The thief's name is Limna Yith; she's a Kerestian mercenary. The nature of the theft is unknown to me, but I am told it can be found inside a small black box. Our employer tells me that what's inside is worth 10,000 credits to him."

Kalend will say no more until the characters have expressed their interest in retrieving the box. In any event, she truly does not know the contents of the box, nor will she directly admit their employer is Vigo Sprax.

Once the deal is made, Kalend will hand one of the characters a small datapad. When activated, it displays the Imperial file on Limna Yith. Allow the players to read the prop (or a copy thereof). Once the players are done, Kalend continues:

"You'll need to eliminate Yith and her thieves and recover the lockbox to fulfill your contract. I'm afraid we aren't certain as to her current location. Associates of ours believe her to be on Sriluur. In any event, you may contact me with this comlink at Meirm City on Sriluur when you have completed your mission to arrange a rendezvous."

At that, Kalend takes her leave. The comlink she hands the party will reach her only if the group is within 50 kilometers of Meirm City.

The Investigation

The characters will likely want to begin their investigation immediately. There are several ways they can learn more about the situation and Yith's whereabouts.

Existing Contacts

If, through the course of your campaign, you have developed existing contacts on Sriluur and Meirm City, you may want to adapt the following scenes to fit those contacts. If the characters remain on a friendly basis with the smugglers from "Running the Sisar," you may want one of them to provide clues and information as to Yith's whereabouts.

Scouring the City

If the players are at a complete loss, have them generate an *investigations* total. An Easy total suggests that the local enclaves of Weequays or Houk may know something. A Moderate total would lead them to a local spacer bar, the Deep Spacer. A Difficult total indicates to them that the Starport Registry is a very logical place to proceed. A Very Difficult total would lead them to the biggest speeder dealer in town.

Otherwise, take your cues from the players. All the information they can find on the streets is below, but where they find it and how easy it is, is up to you. If the characters want to contact Sandwind Team, for example, it will not be easy to find them but their intelligence may be a bit more reliable than a drunken spacer's.

Limna Yith

Species: Kerestian

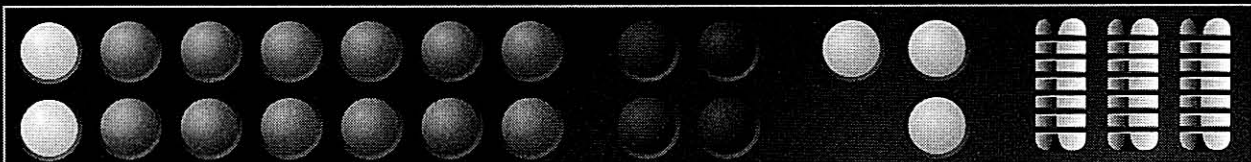
Sex: Female

Height: 2 meters

Age: Unknown

Limna is one of the Kerestians born in the blood of her planet's downfall. She survived in the savage wastes by murder and treachery, and it seems her methods have served her well in the intergalactic mercenary trade. Her loyalties have been questioned on several assignments, but few have been able to accomplish the tasks Limna has. It is said she is responsible for the bombing of the Alaspin casino that buried the leaders of the Kassandre crime family (along with several hundred of their patrons). She is also known to have led a ruthless attack on a spice freighter run by independent smugglers. The bodies of the smugglers were dropped piecemeal over the Meirm City spaceport as a lesson to those who would flaunt the local crime lord's power, the notorious Kutuab the Hutt.

Physically, Limna is a perfect specimen of her people. She is tall and muscular, yet with a wiry leanness that speaks of prowess won in battle. She is known to wear bounty hunter armor and carries a heavy blaster, though it seems she prefers a custom double-edged vibroblade for close combat. Limna cares nothing for personal honor. She will achieve her ends by any means necessary and has no compunction about murdering innocents.



Just the Facts

There are eight main facts out there to be found. Feel free to generate your own bogus leads if the characters are moving too quickly. Each of the below contacts know some, but not all, of the information. As the characters interact with each contact, have them roll *persuasion* or the most pertinent interaction skill. Difficulties vary but as an average, each fact requires a Moderate roll. Be sure to modify it in the characters' favor for good roleplaying or any bribes (or threats) offered. These scenes are supposed to be about interaction and roleplaying, not die-rolling. Be logical in your interaction. If the characters ask someone what they know about Limna Yith, they're unlikely to start talking about the Verde system mining colony. Each scene has staging tips to assist you.

Facts

1. Yen-2 is in the Verde system, named for a mineral-rich asteroid belt.
2. The mining colony, Yen-2, is independently owned but serviced by Jatayus Outbound for within-region transport.
3. The mining colony is also serviced by Xizor Transport Systems for out-of-region transport.
4. Jatayus Outbound is owned by Sprax, a Nalroni Merchant.
5. Some people suspect Sprax has ties of some sort to organized crime.
6. Limna Yith has often worked for Kutuab the Hutt, a local crimelord.
7. If Yith is looking to unload goods, she is likely to go to Kutuab.
8. Bel Att, a guard of Sprax's, was looking for Limna Yith just recently. He has not returned.
9. Kutuab fears Sprax. He will not cross Sprax, but he may kill Yith.

The Deep Spacer

A seedy spacer tavern on the outskirts of the Meirm spaceport, the Deep Spacer provides shade, cool drinks and a place to make deals. The tavern is fairly large, with a central "island" bar serving patrons. The bar features no music, since the sounds of the huge pump fans located in the ceiling drown almost everything out. The owner is too cheap to spend the money on a quieter, more efficient cooling system, citing the fact that most machinery on Sriluur breaks down anyway.

Facts one, four, five, seven, and eight can be found out here. No one in the bar has actually seen Yith recently, but they do point out that Kerestians are not common. Several of the spacers have worked Kutuab the Hutt and have no problems with telling the characters where his fortress is.

Staging Tips: Have the characters work for their information. The first spacer they ask is not going to divulge all the facts. One of them may be so drunk, that he is unintelligible. Others may think that the characters are undercover Imperials and forcibly remove them (this is a good complication for a failed roll).

The Starport Registry

The Starport offices are some of the few structures in Meirm city that doesn't show erosion from a harsh desert world. The interior is made up polished red marble, quarried from the Cueva Expanse. It is one of the few structures with windows—specially treated transparisteel that resists the scarring and pitting from the frequent Sriluurian storms. The Weequay braided signs that hang along corridor intersections are made of the finest silks, held together by gilded clasps.

A Difficult *computer programming/repair* or a Moderate *bureaucracy* roll allows the characters to access the starport's registry. Their success in finding anything depends on their search parameters. Searching for Corellian light freighters, for instance, will draw up hundreds of entries. Searching for a Kerestian will not draw up anything. Searching for Yith shows her listed under Kutuab the Hutt's list of licensed pilots, although the license and entry is almost a year old now.

Characters searching for something "out of the ordinary" will discover that two days ago, a Corellian freighter requested clearance to land not at the spaceport, but in the desert. When denied, the freighter destroyed its escort cloud cars and continued undaunted. There is now an open warrant on that freighter, named *Harbinger*, but with little to go on, the local police are not placing priority on it.

The Nimbanel clerks and Weequay security know facts one, two, three, four, and six. The Nimbanel does not really believe in Black Sun and thinks it is a myth. The Weequays are tight-lipped about Black Sun and will not reveal what they know.

Staging Tips: When dealing with a bureaucracy, have the characters jump through hoops of red-tape. If, for instance, they want to bribe the Nimbanel, he will produce purchase orders for the characters to sign, in triplicate, before taking the bribe. At all costs, try to avoid gunplay at the spaceport office, as this is a sure invitation to Sriluur's prisons.

The Speeder Dealer

A grizzled, wrinkled, blurry-eyed Ithorian named Torsha Dawun owns the Meirm Speeder Emporium (MSE). She has been here longer that most people can remember and she is one of the few non-natives that both the Weequay and the Houk colonists respect. While Torsha owns the speeder rental and sales depot, she no longer runs it. Her younger cousins handle the business, but she still offers prospective clients a warm meal, a cool beverage and a place to sit down and talk about the day's events while her fast-talking cousins try to soak them.

Torsha knows a lot about Sriluur, and will share with those youngsters she likes. She is privy to facts one, two, four, five, six, seven, and nine. She may also reveal that a bunch of "punks" (her word) stole a group of swoops from her shop two days ago.

If the characters ask specifically about Yith, describing her in detail (Torsha does not know a Kerestian by sight), she will blink and then realize that Yith was

the one who stole a group of swoops from her shop. Unknown to Yith, each of Torsha's vehicles has a locator unit in case of theft—the crime is a common one in Meirm City.

If the characters suggest it, Torsha will eagerly agree to give the group a tracker unit and offer them a reward of 500 credits for each vessel returned in "salable" condition. (She won't pay when she sees the modifications Yith's band has made to the bikes, however. She may be kind, but not stupid.)

The tracker picks up the locator if within 10 kilometers of it. While in Meirm City, the characters do not pick up the signal, but if they venture out to the desert, they may detect the stolen speeder bikes.

Staging Tips: Torsha is more than willing to part with the information about Yith and Kutuab. She will only talk about Sprax if the characters bring it up and if she likes them. For every useful fact that Torsha provides, have her tell three or four useless ones. She brings out holos of her grandchildren, tells the characters about her attempt to grow hradys trees in the desert, how long it's been since she has returned to Ithor, or stories about her first husband. If the characters humor her and listen to the stories, then she will be more willing to part with information.

The Local Enclaves

The local Weequay and Houk population centers are separated by a major speeder thoroughfare savvy commuters call the "front line." Although the civil war between the two species has ended, there is still simmering hostility among them, particularly with their young. Now Weequay street gangs often rumble with Houk youth gangs, using knives, vibroblades, blaster pistols, and even grenades.

While the younger set is belligerent, the typical shop-keep may provide the characters with some information. They know nothing of Yith, but they do know of Kutuab. If following up another lead, these residents may be able to provide the characters with rough directions to Kutuab's fortress. The youth gangs provide no information and do not take lightly to strangers asking questions on their turf. If the characters ask about Kutuab, that's asking for a fight: Kutuab sells arms to both the Weequay and Houk youth gangs.

Staging Tips: Be sure to describe the run-down sections of the city—gravel pileups obscuring store fronts, boarded up windows and doors, frayed and tattered signs. This is the part of town the tourism bureau does not want the average spacer to see. The above encounters are meant to spice up this opening episode with combat, though it should not be deadly. If the characters kill a gang member, it could make future trips to Sriluur difficult.

Weequay Punk. *Dexterity 2D+2, blaster 4D+1, brawling parry 4D+2, melee combat 5D, melee parry 4D, Knowledge 1D+2, streetwise 3D, Mechanical 1D+2, repulsorlift operation 3D+1, Strength 2D+2, brawling 4D+2, Technical 2D, security 4D.* Move: 10. Blaster (4D),

vibroblade (STR +3D), grenade (5D).

Houk Punk. *Dexterity 1D, blaster 4D, brawling parry 5D, melee combat 3D, melee parry 3D, Knowledge 1D+1, intimidation 4D, streetwise 3D, Mechanical 2D, beast riding 4D, repulsorlift operation 3D, Strength 4D+1, brawling 5D, Technical 1D+2.* Move: 8. Blaster (4D), vibroblade (STR +3D)

Episode Two: Kutuab the Hutt

Yith watched Kutuab's eyes glow as she finished explaining the contents of her stolen datacard. "It is worth 10 million."

Kutuab could not believe his ears. Such a prize, if it was real, was worth far more than 10 million credits. He would have paid it in a moment if it would not incur the wrath of Black Sun.

"Well" Yith snarled. She was growing impatient. It had taken her days to get the crime lord to come out of his stronghold. Now she had climbed aboard his converted caravel and he was stalling.

"I can offer you only one thing," Kutuab finally snorted.

Yith knew that tone. She had heard it a hundred times before. Kutuab was about to double-cross her. She should have seen it coming. There were 20 of his guards on his pleasure barge and twice that in his fleet of skiffs.

"Your life!" Kutuab spat loudly, obviously a signal to his minions. Yith growled and drew her vibroblade. A second later, a Gamorrean guard went shrieking into the sand below. "You'll regret this, Kutuab!" Yith drew a comlink from her belt and grunted into it, "It's a trap."

More guards moved in. Yith leapt from the yacht and landed on her own cargo skiff, tethered below. Kutuab's guards drew their blasters but were suddenly rocked from behind by blaster fire. They turned to see Yith's mercenaries mounted on swoops and skiffs rise from behind a nearby dune, weapons blazing.

"This isn't over!" Yith screamed to Kutuab as she escaped into the wastes with her warband.

Kutuab agreed.

Business Partners

The information the characters gathered last episode should suggest that Yith will attempt to sell her treasure to Kutuab the Hutt. This means the characters will have to speak with someone who is part of Kutuab's circle of thieves and bandits.

Again, this can simply be an extension of the contact scenes from last episode. Some of the Deep Spacer's clientele will know who to ask, as will Torsha. If the characters don't properly roleplay it out, it will require at least a Difficult *streetwise* roll and a 500 credit bribe to find Ivar.

Ivar the Gunrunner

Ivar, a displaced native of Tammuz-an who fled his world decades ago, is one of Kutuab's principle weapons salesmen. Ivar secretly equips the local Houk and



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Weequay youth gangs to keep the simmering tension between the two active groups. After all, war is good for business.

The characters' contacts point them to a run-down survivalist shop which sells desert gear and miniature vaporators. Everything in the shop is covered with a layer of dusty grime, including its owner. The shop's state of disrepair suggests it is not the primary means of income for Ivar.

When asked about Yith, he explains:

"Yith? That bloodthirsty merc came 'round a few days ago. She tried to sell somethin' to Kutuab—mind you, I don't know what. One of 'em pulled a double-cross, though. There's a fair amount of betting on which one.

"Yith's mercenaries managed to escape with her secret li'l item. Kutuab's angrier than a Mon Cal who bought vacation property here and has sworn to throw Yith into Temptation Canyon—feed 'er to the bandigos. He's got her ship locked up tighter than a Zeltron's kiss and word is it's rigged with explosives just in case Yith gets aboard.

"Can't say anybody knows where Yith and her men are now, but Kutuab has offered a reward of 10,000 credits for her head—and twice that for her secret doo-dad. If you want more than that, I'd suggest you speak to Kutuab himself. I can get you in if you want."

Few would ever choose to visit the infamous Kutuab the Hutt, but such a trip will be necessary to find out more. Fortunately, Ivar is indeed welcome in Kutuab's stronghold and can get the characters an audience.

Ivar. All stats 2D except: *streetwise* 4D+2, *streetwise: Kutuab the Hutt's organization* 6D, *value: weapons* 5D+1, *repulsorlift operation* 4D+1, *bargain* 5D. Move: 10. Desert survival gear, blaster (4D).

Kutuab's Palace

Kutuab's palace lies several hundred kilometers from Meirm City. The characters will have to buy or rent transportation (possibly from Torsha) or they can fly there if they have a craft capable of landing in the rocky desert. If they are traveling with Ivar, he will give them a ride in his speeder.

When they arrive, read the following aloud:

Kutuab's stronghold lies low and flat beneath the sand. In truth, it looks far more like a bunker than the domicile of an exotic crime lord. A single slit marks what must be the main entrance.

When the characters approach, a small electronic eyeball juts forth from the doorway and ask them their business. The eye is actually a droid with a direct audio link to Kutuab's guards. Only if the characters are with the Ivar or mention that they are hunting Yith will they be allowed to enter.

Inside, they see sparse metal hallways leading into darkness. From somewhere far below comes the sound of a live band. Several Gamorrean guards line the hallways, but they do little more than point the characters in the right direction to meet with their employer. It should be obvious that Kutuab emulates his superior, Jabba the Hutt.

At the end of the hallway is a thick blast door that opens as the party approaches. Inside is a large room filled with assorted aliens. Commanding the chamber is gristly green Kutuab himself, his immense weight sprawled over a hovering sled. Kutuab is somewhat sleek for a Hutt, and he keeps himself well oiled to cool off in the Sriluur heat. Like most Hutts, Kutuab speaks only in Huttese. He has a bright red protocol droid translate for him, however.

Kutuab. *Dexterity 2D, Knowledge 3D, alien species 4D+1, bureaucracy 5D, business 5D, intimidation 5D+1, law enforcement 5D+2, streetwise 6D+2, Mechanical 3D, Perception 3D, bargain 5D+2, command 6D, con 6D+2, gambling 6D+1, persuasion 5D+2, Strength 4D, Technical 3D.* Move: 2 (6 on hover-sled). Force-resistant (Hutts roll double their *Perception* to resist Force attacks), ForcePoints: 1, Character Points: 5.

Kutuab is more than a little embarrassed that his men could not take Yith but he is attempting to play off his failure as if Yith betrayed him and caught him off-guard. In truth, it was Kutuab that betrayed Yith, attempting to kill the renegade mercenary and return the list to Vigo Sprax.

Most important in the conversation with Kutuab is that the Hutt cannot afford to look foolish in front of his gang. He prefers to act as if he is offering the local populace the chance to bring in Yith because it amuses him. Kutuab fears little, but Yith's unorthodox ways have his great rolls of fat quivering. Most opponents might attempt to sneak or fight their way in and kill the Hutt—a tactic Kutuab fears little due to his own guards and numerous traps. Yith, however, would blow the entire palace to pieces from orbit just to kill Kutuab.

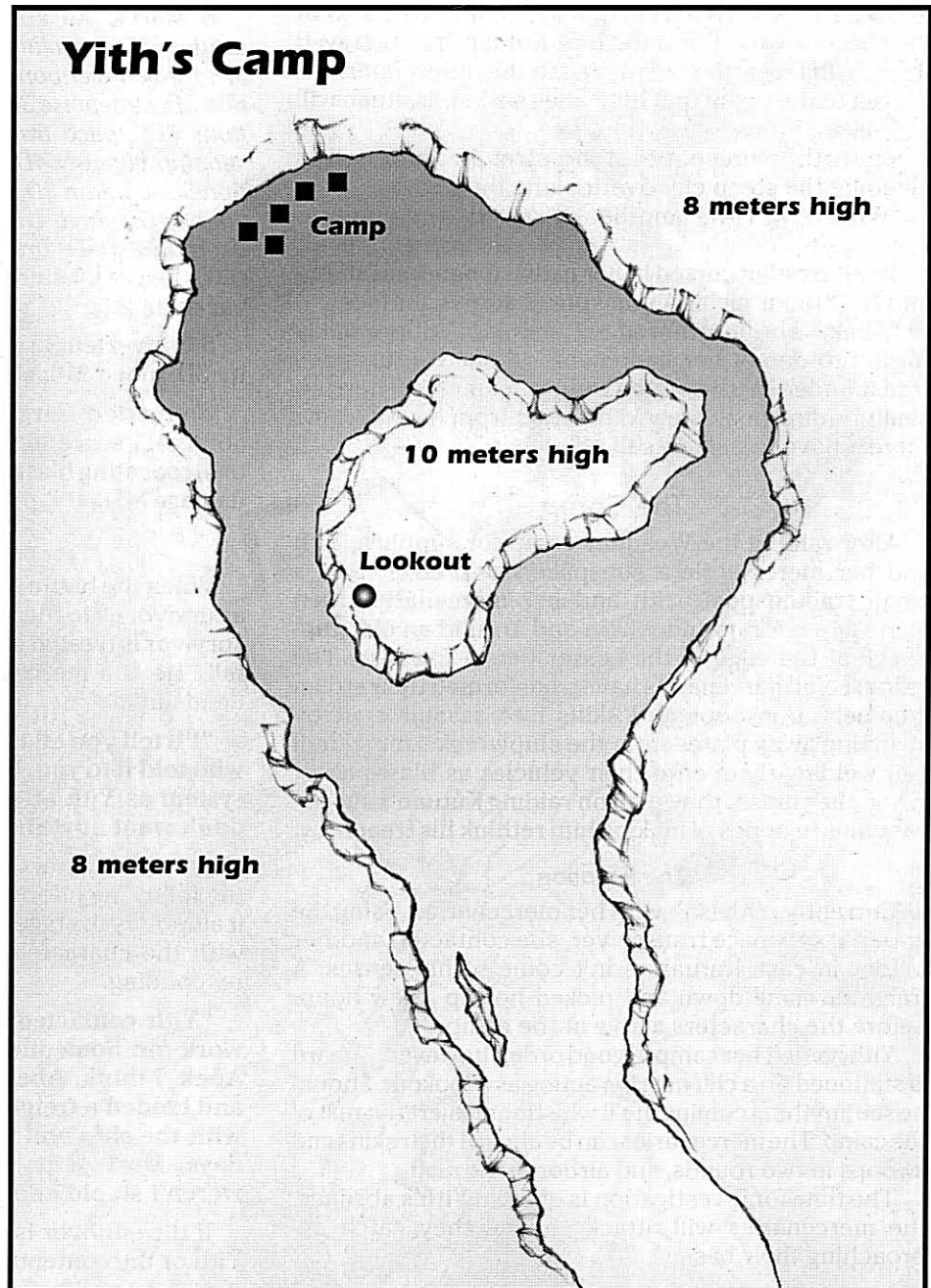
With that in mind, Kutuab will offer 10,000 credits for Yith's head and another 10,000 for the item she has in her possession. This item, Kutuab says, is in a small black lockbox. Under no circumstances will Kutuab reveal what was inside. If the characters do not have a vehicle to transport them into the wastes, he will provide them with one if the party somehow makes it known who their employers are.

He cannot provide them with additional men as this would make it look like Kutuab needed help, as opposed to his current ruse that he is simply allowing the locals to serve him.

As for information, Kutuab knows only that Yith's band arrived in several swoops stolen from a dealer in Meirm City. Kutuab's spies have not spotted them in any of the nearby settlements, so it is likely they have found a temporary hideout somewhere in the wastes.

Finding Yith

There are several ways the party can discover Yith's whereabouts. If you haven't done so, play the scene



involving Torsha now.

If the character's haven't thought to contact Torsha, after a few days, Yith will raid the village of Quay'kizac, a Weequay religious retreat, for supplies. When the characters travel to Quay'kizac, the local pilgrims will tell them that the raiders were riding swoops but that they had been modified with metal blast-plates. One of the villagers believes the plates probably came from an old shipwreck lying at the edge of the Lesser Cueva Expanse. This should point the characters in the right direction if they haven't already been able to locate Yith.

Episode Three: Yith's Camp

Yith blotted at the blaster wound with a rag. Her mercenaries sat around her quietly, waiting to hear what their leader would do now that Kutuab had betrayed them. Yith threw the bloody rag to the desert floor.

"Get to the top of that hill," she snarled. "Kutuab will be looking for us."

One of the mercenaries stood, stretched and started climbing the steep cliff overlooking their camp.

"What now, Yith?" another mustered the courage to ask.

The Kerestian cursed in her native tongue and stared into the Sriluur night. A grin spread across her face.

"Abek," she murmured. "The Nikto." She quickly turned to one of her lieutenants. "I need a subspace transponder." Yith pointed to another merc. "There's a small trading post a few kilometers from here. Get me there. I have to make a call off-planet."

The Camp

After raiding the Weequay camp for supplies, Yith and her mercs stole a subspace transceiver from a small trading post. Yith and her mercenaries then made a temporary hideout in and around an old shipwreck at the edge of the Lesser Cueva Expanse. The resourceful mercenaries have transformed their stolen commercial swoops and skiffs into assault craft by stripping away plates from the shipwreck's metal hull and welding them onto their vehicles as blast-plates. When they finish, they plan on raiding Kutuab's supply caravans in hopes of making him rethink his treachery.

The Situation

Currently, Yith isn't with her mercenaries. Using the Imperial subspace transceiver, she contacted another bidder in case Kutuab didn't come to his senses. A freighter came down and picked her up a few hours before the characters arrive at the camp.

Yith has left her camp in good order, however. A guard is stationed on a cliff nearby, acting as a lookout. Should he see anything coming, he'll whistle and alert the rest of the camp. The mercenaries can be aboard their skiffs and swoops in two rounds, and airborne the next.

The time for investigation is over. In Yith's absence, the mercenaries will attack anyone they catch approaching their base.

Running the Battle

The mercs take to their swoops as soon as they notice trouble. If the characters are on foot, they'll circle around and try to capture them alive. If this fails, they'll fight until it seems the characters have the upper hand, at which point they'll scatter in all directions. Yith has given them directions to separate if they get into trouble and rendezvous in a deep canyon just south of Kutuab's stronghold. The mercs' loyalty is to hard credit, not Yith, so they will not fight to the death.

Yith's companions are professional hunters and killers. They've spent the last few days getting familiar with their stolen swoops and modifying them with armor and ramming spikes.

8 Mercs. All stats 2D except: *blaster 6D, blaster artillery 5D, brawling parry 5D, dodge 3D, melee combat 5D, thrown weapons 4D, vehicle blasters 6D, intimidation 3D, streetwise 3D, astrogation 3D, repulsorlift operations 3D, space transports 3D, starfighter piloting 4D, starship gunnery 4D, starship shields 4D, swoop operation 3D, bargain 3D, command 4D, gambling 3D, investigation 4D, search 4D, sneak 3D, brawling 5D, stamina 5D, demolitions 5D, first aid 3D.* Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), heavy blaster pistol (5D), vibroblade (STR +2D), vac-suits.

5 Converted Swoops. Speeder-scale, maneuverability 3D, move 210; 600 kmh, body strength 2D.

Converted Cargo Skiff. Speeder-scale, maneuverability 1D, move 30; 90 kmh, body strength 2D+2. Weapons: repeating blaster (character-scale, fire control 1D, damage 8D).

Aftermath

When the battle is over, the characters can question a survivor as to the location of their missing boss. If the survivor is treated kindly—perhaps even paid—he will talk. He is a mercenary, so his loyalty is negotiable. Read aloud:

"I'll tell you all I know, but you'd better not repeat who told it to you. I don't even want to be in the same system as Yith after this. The lady's bad luck and I don't want anything to do with her anymore."

If the characters agree, the survivor continues with the following information. Rather than simply reading it aloud, try to stage it as an interchange of information, with the characters asking questions, and the merc responding.

"Yith contacted another crime lord she used to work for. Someone besides Kutuab. A Nikto named Abek, I think. Abek seemed interested in our cargo and landed a freighter a few hours ago. Yith took off with the ship and promised she'd be back in a few days. Most of us believed her. Those that didn't weren't stupid enough to say anything."

If the survivor is asked about his relationship with Yith or the contents of the box, he'll say the following:

“We were originally hired by an Iotran named Bel Att to hit a mining colony in the Verde system. I don’t know why. Rumor was the colony hadn’t paid its protection money to the local crime boss, but I don’t know if that’s true or not.

“As for the box, Yith is the only one that knows what’s inside. The rest of us were still attacking the miners when she and Att found it. It was already sealed and locked when we got there. That’s when Yith went rogue and killed Att. She said what was inside was worth a hundred times what he was paying us. She thought she’d have the box sold to Kutuab in a few days, and we should just consider ourselves hired on as her guards until then. Yith’s always kept her word with us, so we agreed.”

Each character present for the survivor’s tale should make a *Perception* roll. Those who roll Difficult or better will realize that while the survivor doesn’t appear to be lying, he is holding something back. If someone can then make a Difficult *intimidation* roll, the man will continue his story:

“Okay, okay. I don’t know much else, except that there were a couple of dead Imperials in the room where Att and Yith found the box. We dumped the Imperials in their own shuttle and sent them spinning off into the asteroid field. I guess Att didn’t want any trouble with the Empire.”

The man knows little else of value to the characters, other than perhaps a general description of Yith and her fighting style.

Snooping Around

When the group returns to Kutuab or more likely, Meirm City to contact Kalend, a little legwork and a Moderate *streetwise* roll reveals that Abek is a red Nikto who runs a shipjacking operation somewhere in the Sisar Run. Again, the previous contacts, a bribe of 500 credits, or a Difficult *intimidation* or *streetwise* roll reveals the precise coordinates for Abek’s compound. If the characters get a Very Dif-

ficult total, they can also learn that Abek is rumored to rank highly in the local crime organization. If the characters have previously learned about Vigo Sprax and his fondness for shipjacking operations, they might guess correctly that Abek is one of Sprax’s minions.

By using Kalend’s comlink, she will give them the above information, but will not accompany them to Abek’s Station. She has a previous engagement.

Episode Four: Abek’s Gambit

Yith flew the freighter into Abek’s Station and set it down roughly. The dead pilot beside her fell to the



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floor, jostled from the impact. It was a clean kill, albeit inspired by paranoia.

The Kerestian looked outside the freighter's tinted viewports and saw Abek's men moving quietly into cover, their weapons drawn. Abek obviously meant to double-cross her, just as Kutuab had done.

Yith checked her heavy blaster and secured her vibroblade. Then she turned off the ship's interior lights and walked down to the cargo exit. She shook her limbs and twisted her neck, priming herself for the coming carnage. She would let Abek capture her, but it would not come easily. Then she would tell him that her treasure was hidden and that only she could recover it.

Yith opened the freighter doors and stepped out into the dimly lit bay. "The treasure is not on board, urchins. You must take me alive or your boss will never know where I've hidden it." At that, Yith gave her war-cry and bounded into the bay. She fired her heavy blaster at the hidden pirates and watched them scatter like Ranats. Seven of Abek's minions were dead before they had a chance to regroup and tackle the wild Kerestian.

Nim Abek's Plan

Though the simplistic Yith is unaware of it, Nim Abek is one of Vigo Sprax's many minions. Abek wouldn't dare sell the list to the Imperials, but he does have another, more devious use for it. Abek is hoping to take advantage of the situation by keeping it hidden for a while. He figures that if Sprax cannot recover the datacard, Prince Xizor will show his displeasure in a most permanent fashion. Abek reasons that if he can then step forward with the list, Xizor might even name him as Sprax's replacement.

The only trouble is Yith. Abek sent a freighter to pick up the mercenary and her cargo, but Yith killed the pilot, hijacked the transport and then hid the list somewhere along the route. She then journeyed to Abek's spaceport hoping to make the deal from a new position of strength. As she suspected, Abek had no intention of paying for the list and was ready to have her killed when she stepped off the transport. But without the list, Abek has to be content with throwing Yith into the brig—which proved far more difficult than he imagined.

Now the Nikto plans on biding his time, allowing Sprax to meet his fate and patiently waiting for Yith to reveal where she hid the datacard.

Abek's Station

Abek's Station is a shadowport resting just beyond the intersection of the Sisar Run and the Ac'fren Spur.

From the shadowport, Abek and his gang attack or steal starships, reconfigure their transponder signatures and then resell them at less than standard price. The outpost also makes a healthy profit as a chop-shop and a place for "privileged" smugglers to receive less-than-legal modifications.

Abek's pirates are a cruel and capable lot. Below are the statistics of a few of his most important underlings. (For Abek's stats, see the "Into the Shadows..." section at the beginning of this book.)

Blalock

Blalock, a near-human, is in charge of Abek's security. He is ruthless and efficient hold-over from Abek's shipjacking days. Blalock is a perfect complement to Abek's boisterous and ambitious ways; he is a blocky humanoid with leathery, bluish skin and a bald pate.

Blalock. *Dexterity 4D, blaster 6D, dodge 6D, grenade 5D, melee combat 6D, melee parry 5D, running 4D Knowledge 2D, bureaucracy: Black Sun 3D, intimidation*



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5D, law enforcement 5D, streetwise 6D, value 4D Mechanical 3D, astrogation 5D, beastriding 4D, communications 4D, repulsorlift operations 5D, sensors 4D, space transports 5D Perception 3D, command 5D, investigation 6D, persuasion 5D, sneak 5D Strength 3D, brawling 4D, Technical 3D, security 7D. Move 10. Blaster rifle (5D), tool kit, electrobinoculars.

Beruga

Beruga is Abek's best pilot. A Wookiee he inadvertently freed from slavers, Beruga now serves Abek and is life-debted to him. It is her job to disable the ships Abek wants to capture by making pinpoint attacks on their engines. She's a real hot-shot and doesn't mind bragging about it in front of everyone. She is a thin Wookiee, with patchy black and brown fur.

Beruga. Dexterity 2D, blaster 4D, bowcaster 5D, dodge 4D, Knowledge 1D, intimidation 5D, streetwise 3D, Mechanical 2D, astrogation 5D, beastriding 4D, communications 4D, repulsorlift operation 5D, sensors 4D, space transports 6D, starfighter piloting 5D, starship shields 5D Perception 1D, Strength 4D+1, brawling 5D Technical 1D+2, space transports repair 5D+2, starfighter repair 6D. Move: 11. Berzerker rage (+2D Strength bonus when brawling enraged, -2D to non-Strength skills), climbing claws (+2D to climbing). Bowcaster (4D), blaster rifle (5D), tool-kit.

Typical Pirate

Abek's pirates are a varied lot, but they all are unscrupulous scum. They know life is good under Abek's care and so are loyal...at least until someone convinces them they can make their lives even better.

Abek's Pirates. All stats are 2D, except: blaster 3D, dodge 3D, bureaucracy 3D, intimidation 3D, streetwise 3D, astrogation 3D, sensors 3D, space transports 3D, starfighter piloting 4D, starship gunnery 4D, starship shields 4D, bargain 3D, con 3D, gambling 3D, sneak 3D, brawling 3D, security: starship systems 3D. Move 10. Blaster (4D), knife (STR +1D), vac-suit.

Level One: "The Pit" (Engineering)

The lowest level of Abek's Station houses the life-support systems, gravity generators, general stores, power and refueling cells, and spare fusion generator supply tanks. The lift doors will not open on this level without the proper security code. This level is a maze of gantries and walkways leading to the many systems interfaces. Doing anything with the machinery in this level requires a Moderate *Technical* roll just to find where things are. There are always at least two engineers down here; use the same stats as Abek's pirates, but with *Technical* 3D.

Level Two: Starport

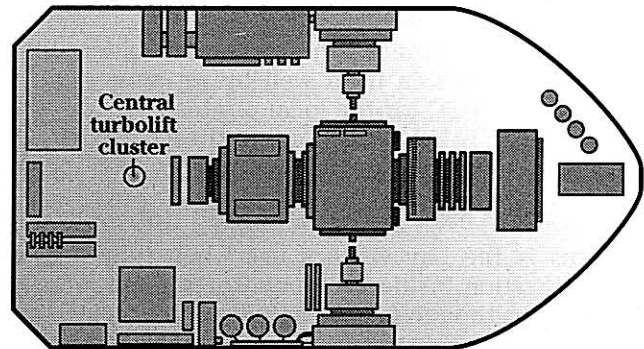
The second level of the station provides rooms for Abek's clients and houses his bar, The Thirsty Monoc. As can be derived from the bar's name, Abek cares little for Abyssins. Though the diagram shows only a single

level, there are actually two sub-levels. The dotted line shows the location of the balcony that provides access to the upper rooms and lounge area of the Monoc. The two small rooms on either side of the Monoc's entrance are single lifts to the upper level.

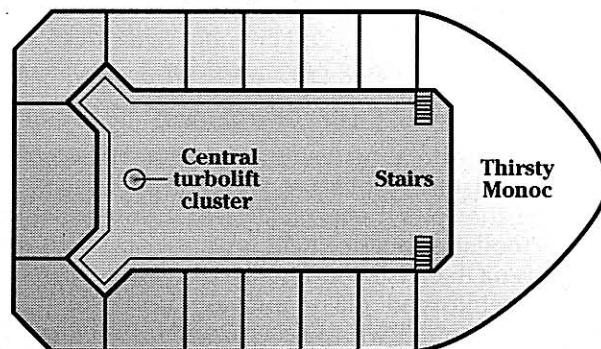
Abek's Station

Level 1: The Pit

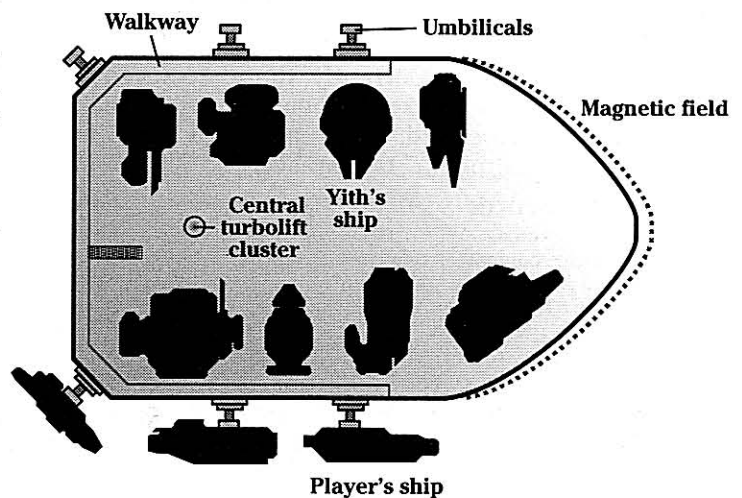
- Life support systems
- Gravity generators
- Storage
- Power and refueling cells
- Reactor



Level 2: Spaceport/Accommodations



Level 3: Docking Bay



Rooms

The rooms on this level are clean and tastefully decorated. The most frequent paying visitors are clients looking to purchase one of Abek's stolen ships and happy clients tend to pay better. The rooms are bugged, though Abek's gang does not continually monitor conversations unless something about a visitor has drawn their attention. The rooms rent for 200 credits per night and house up to six beings.

The Thirsty Monoc

The station's only bar is a rough-and-tumble place. Pirates, smugglers and criminals of all sorts sit lazily about the dark booths imbibing exotic drinks and making shady deals.

Abek has decorated the walls with blueprints of ships, memorabilia from well-known smuggler runs and a "kill chart" for the local pirates. The top ace is Beruga, with 14 kills. The Monoc is the most likely place to stage a meeting with Puchek. (See "Events," below.)

Level Three: Docking Bay

This is the bay visitors use when they come to Abek's Station. Inside are adequate refueling and repair facilities, although fees run at 20 percent above standard costs. There are an average of 10 to 15 ships in the bay at any given time. Most are light freighters—Ghtrocs and YT-1300s modified for piracy by their nefarious owners. Larger ships, such as bulk freighters, occasionally moor off-station and connect to airlocks staggered about the docking bay's exterior.

Level Four: The Arena

Abek's favorite amusement is gladiatorial combat. He pays handsomely for strange, exotic and dangerous creatures, then pits them against his personal enemies or those foolish enough to fight for a prize of some sort.

The arena itself is bordered by vibrowire stretched between reinforced plasteel beams. Anything that comes into contact with the wire suffers 3D damage. Hanging on the inside of the arena walls are melee weapons of all sorts—everything from archaic swords and axes to modern vibroblades and force pikes. The contestants may use these weapons when thrown into the arena, but they are rarely allowed to take their own weapons into a fight. Currently, there are seven two-handed sword- or ax-like weapons of various makes, and a single vibrosword. The arena stands empty until the event "Showtime..." takes place.

Axes and Swords

Scale: Character
Skill: Melee combat: ax or sword
Difficulty: Moderate
Damage: STR+1D

Vibrosword

Scale: Character
Skill: Melee combat: vibroblade
Difficulty: Moderate
Damage: STR+2D+2

The Creature Pen

The concave end of the level is the creature pen. Abek keeps his unusual beasts here. The sole occupant of the pen is a very angry Oskan blood eater. The characters should not likely encounter the beast until they are captured and forced to fight it.

Oskan Blood Eater

Type: Aggressive carnivore
DEXTERITY 3D+2
PERCEPTION 2D
Search: tracking 5D
STRENGTH 4D
Special Abilities:
Claws: STR+3D damage
Frenzy: The sight of a humanoid or other large creature causes blood eaters to go into a frenzy. This frenzy adds +2D to damage.
Tracking: Blood eaters do not have highly sensitive sensory organs, but they make up for it in determination. If a blood eater attacks a creature that manages to escape, then the blood eater will search for that creature for upwards of two standard weeks.
Move: 6
Size: 2.5 meters tall
Scale: Creature

The Airlock

When creatures are the main event, Abek usually has them off-loaded via shuttle from a small docking bay at the front of the level. The airlock can only be opened by someone with the proper security code.

Level Five: Abek's Dock

This is where the crime lord and his pirates dock their own ships and sell stolen ships. Stolen ships are not brought here for sale until their transponder codes have been recoded in the chop-shop. There are four Z-95 fighters, two YT-1300 freighters and a Ghtroc freighter currently in the bay. One to six mechanics will be working in this bay at any given time.

Mechanics have the same stats as Abek's pirates, but with *Technical 3D*, and the following skills: *capital starship repair 4D*, *capital starship weapons repair 4D*, *space transports repair 5D* and *starfighter repair 5D*.

Level Six: The Pirate's Quarters

Abek's band of over 100 thugs lives on sublevels 6A and 6B. Access to each sublevel is via the central lift, but the pirates have also welded two ladders near the lounge area for convenience.

Quarters

Each of the pirate rooms contains six beds, footlockers, video monitors, and shelf space for personal effects. As might be expected, most of the pirates have far too much junk and loot for their small rooms.

A character who spends a few minutes searching one of these rooms can find 5D credits worth of contraband, 2D x 100 credits in jewelry or other valuables, and on a roll of 5-6 on 1D, a blaster rifle. None of the pirates are dumb enough to leave cash lying about.

Kitchen

The ship has an automated food generator, but there

are also a few working nano-wave cookers for those who wish to cook for themselves.

Communal Refresher

The entire floor uses this refresher, which includes showers and a large spa. It is not pretty.

Lounge/Mess

The far side of the lounge is all reinforced transparisteel, making for a spectacular view of space. The pirates take most of their meals here, play sabacc, dejarik and other games, and generally hang out in this communal area. Though fairly new, the lounge is already beginning to reek of smoke, spice and cheap spirits.

Blalock's Quarters

Abek's head of security dwells in this large room. He keeps little of value here.

Beruga's Quarters

The top pilot of Abek's Station is Beruga, a Wookiee. Her room is filled with models of starfighters, as well as holovids on tactics and dogfighting. One wall has a poster of famed starfighter tactician Adar Tallon, while on another wall she has drawn 14 ship silhouettes of various shapes, including information on technical specs and common maneuvers. If a character takes Beruga's holovids and eventually reads them, the next time he improves his *starfighter piloting* skill, he can do so at one-half the normal Character Point cost. (This bonus can be applied only once.)

Private Lounge

Abek's two favorite underlings, Blalock and Beruga, share a lounge between their quarters. It is clean and tastefully decorated, though the large sofa is littered with Wookiee hairs. In the back of a closet on the back wall is a secret entrance to Abek's private lift.

Level Seven: The Chop Shop

The chop shop can only be reached by entering the front-most compartment of the multilift and pressing the button for Level Six, then Level Five, then both together. All of the station's pirates know the bay exists, but only Abek's mechanics and pilots and Blalock know the code.

Inside the bay is where Abek hides pirated ships until he can reconfigure their identification systems. Currently there are several ships in various states of reconfiguration. None are operable without several hours of work, however.

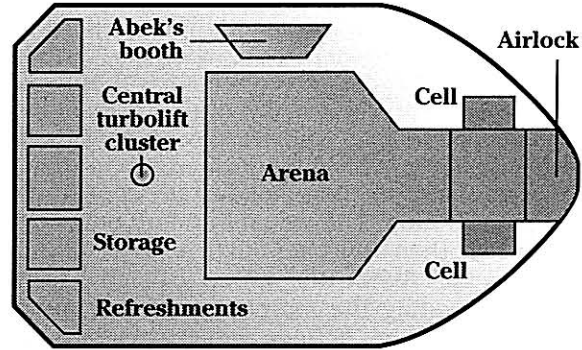
There are always one to six mechanics tinkering around in this area. These mechanics have the same stats as those on Level Five.

Level Eight: Abek's Quarters

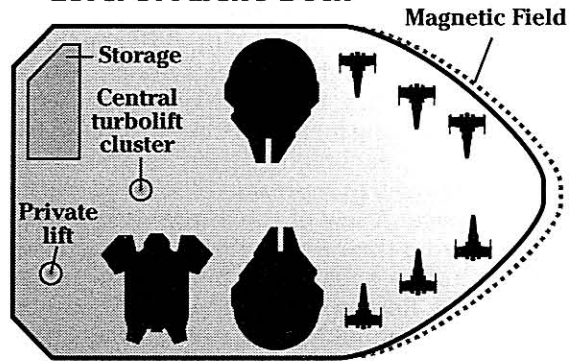
In the unlikely event the characters make their way to Abek's quarters, they will find that it is loud and overdone—much like their occupant. Scattered

Abek's Station

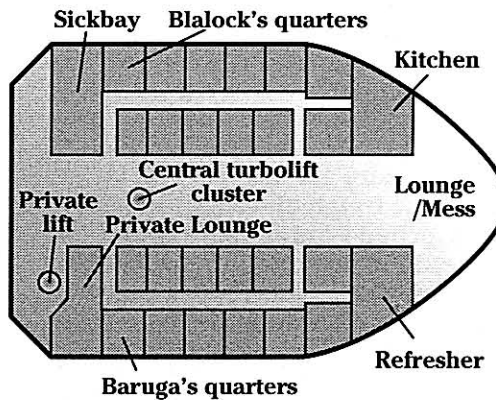
Level 4: Arena



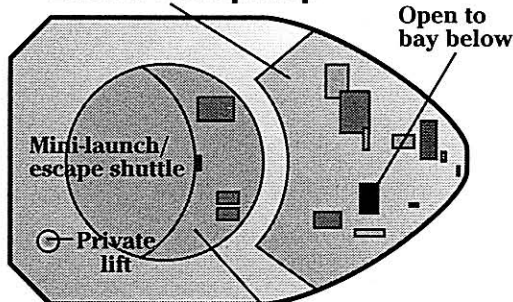
Level 5: Abek's Dock



Level 6: The Pirate's Quarters



Level 7: Chopshop



Level 8: Abek's quarters

throughout his rooms are rare and illegal spices, exotic birds in gilded cages, and souvenirs from some of his most successful raids. A party bent on looting the pirate king's quarters could make 1D x 1,000 credits with a good fence. Abek himself spends most of his time here, plotting new raids with Blalock or evaluating holoprojections of past raids.

Events

The characters have their hands full when they arrive at Abek's Station. They must first find out what happened to Yith, then break her out of Abek's cell and make their escape. While the group can go about locating and liberating the mercenary in their own particular fashion, their actions will trigger certain events. Each of these events is detailed below.

Event One: Puchek

Only Abek's pirates know about Yith. Other spacers know that a battle was fought in Abek's docking bays sometime the previous day, but they have no idea who was involved. Abek's gang members can be spotted by the red splotch each wears high on their left shoulder. The splotch is supposed to represent blood freezing in the vacuum of space. A few of the pirates also sport fresh bandages (from their fight with Yith.) When the characters attempt to speak with one of the thugs, they'll encounter a Rodian named Puchek. Whoever speaks with Puchek should make a *persuasion* roll. With a Moderate total or better and a bribe of at least 100 credits, Puchek will say the following:

"Yith? The Kerestian? She's a nasty one, all right. We sent a freighter to pick her up on Sriluur, but she killed the pilot and hijacked our ship. If I understand things correctly, she dropped off something Abek wanted before coming here. It was a good thing for her she did, 'cause Abek told us to blast her as soon as she stepped off the ship. Since she hid the cargo, though, we had to capture her instead. Yith knew she couldn't escape in the freighter—we'd just shoot her down once she launched—but she sure made it tough to take her in. She killed seven of us before we finally took her down. Now she's locked up somewhere. I suspect the boss will find out what he wants to know eventually. Yith's tough, but Abek's patient. And mean."

Puchek has nothing more to say at this point, but has not revealed his entire role to the characters.

Puchek

Type: Rodian lackey

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 5D, brawling parry 4D, dodge 5D, melee combat 4D

KNOWLEDGE 1D+2

Intimidation 4D, streetwise 5D, value 4D, willpower 4D

MECHANICAL 1D+2

Astrogation 3D, repulsorlift operations 3D, sensors 3D, space transports 3D, starfighter piloting 3D, starfighter shields 3D

PERCEPTION 2D

Bargain 3D, con 5D, gambling 5D, hide 5D, search 5D, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 2D+2

Brawling 4D, climbing / jumping 3D

TECHNICAL 1D

Security 3D

Move: 10

Equipment: blaster pistol (4D+1), comlink, blast vest (+1D physical, +1 energy)

Puchek's Move

Immediately after Puchek is contacted, he alerts his boss that someone is looking for Yith. Some time after Puchek is contacted, run the event "The Trap!"

Event Two: The Trap!

Abek thinks that the characters are Yith's fellow mercenaries. He plans on capturing them alive and throwing them into the pen with the Oskan blood eater (see Level Four) to teach a lesson to those who might think of opposing him.

If Abek learns the truth—that the group is actually working for his own boss, Vigo Sprax—he'll feed them to the beast that much faster. The Vigo would not treat Abek kindly should word get out that he deliberately killed Sprax's agents. If the group demands an audience with Abek, he'll pretend to agree, but actually sends Puchek to lead them into the trap outlined below.

Assuming the characters can't convince Puchek or Abek they are serving the same master, the bait for Abek's trap is Yith. Abek will send Puchek to speak with the characters again. If they are interested and have credits to spare (say, 500—but everything's negotiable), Puchek pretends to "sell out" his gang and accesses the station's computers. From here he pulls up a schematic of its heating ducts and plots a route into Level Six, where he claims Yith is being held.

Regardless of when, how, or why they get here, the characters are eventually led to the private lounge between Blalock and Beruga's room at the rear of Level 6A. Once the characters have thrown this door wide, four pirates in this room and 11 more from the doorways around it (including the hallways) appear, weapons drawn and life-support masks on their faces. If the characters put up a fight, Blalock detonates a canister of stun gas that knocks non-droid characters out in two rounds. This is the same gas the pirates use when boarding ships to keep their crews from fighting back.

Event Three: Showtime...

When the characters awaken, they find themselves inside Abek's arena. Read the following as they come to:

You awaken with a slight headache. As your eyes focus, you realize you are surrounded by scores of spacers and Abek's own gang. The mob jeers loudly, and it appears you are inside some kind of arena. The sides and even the ceiling are sealed with what looks like vibrowire strung between plasteel beams. Crude hand-to-hand weapons hang about the walls. Suddenly a loud buzzer sounds and all eyes turn towards a high booth to one side of the arena. A red Nikto glares down at you and speaks, his voice amplified over a hidden sound system. "Welcome to my humble

station, mercenaries. I trust you slept well?" he laughs. "This is my arena," the being—obviously Abek—sweeps his arms at the construct about you. "You will amuse us by fighting for a short time. A very short time," he says grimly, eliciting a black-hearted roar from the audience. "Blalock, the blood eater if you please."

At that, Blalock, standing beside his boss in the booth, pushes a button on a hand-held remote control. This causes the bay doors at the short end of the level to open. Then Blalock presses another button and the cage holding the blood eater opens as well. A character who makes a Difficult *Perception* roll will see that a Kerestian resides in the cell opposite the blood eater.

Now the group must battle the Oskan blood eater. The creature, frenzied by the characters and the cheering mob, attacks a random character if no one attacks it first. Though it is deadly, they will most likely defeat it: Don't forget the assortment of weapons scattered in the arena.

When the creature is defeated, Abek stands and speaks once more:

"An incredible performance! I commend the warriors on a battle well-fought. Ordinarily I would release you. I might even have rewarded you. But I'm afraid I have one more trial I must put you through today. I have a guest who's just dying for fit challengers such as yourselves. Blalock, release the Kerestian."

The crowd goes wild once again. The group hears another cage door slide open in the creature pen and

then the blast doors open. Standing in the dark doorway, double-edged vibroblade in hand, is Yith. The characters notice, on a Moderate *Perception* roll, that she wears some sort of metallic collar around her neck. Abek plans on making the "friends" fight one another—a move he considers "classic villainy."

If he has somehow become aware that the characters aren't truly in league with Yith, he'll simply see the match as an entertaining and expedient method of eliminating them all. He can always claim he destroyed the Barani list if need be, after all.

Limna Yith

Type: Kerestian Assassin

DEXTERITY 4D

Blaster 6D+2, brawling parry 6D+2, dodge: energy weapons 6D+2, grenade 5D+2, melee combat 5D, melee combat: vibroblade 9D+1, melee parry 7D+1, running 5D+2, thrown weapons 5D+2

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Alien species 4D, cultures 4D+2, intimidation 6D+2, languages 5D, law enforcement 5D, planetary systems 4D+2, planetary systems: Sisar Run 6D, streetwise 5D, streetwise: BlackSun 5D+1, streetwise: Kutuab's organization 6D+2, survival 7D, value 4D+2, willpower 6D+1

MECHANICAL 2D+1

Astrogation 5D, beast riding 4D, communications 5D+2, repulsorlift operation 6D+2, sensors 4D+1, space transports 5D, starfighter piloting 4D+2, starship gunnery 4D+2, starship shields 4D+1, swoop operation 4D+2

PERCEPTION 3D+1

Bargain 4D+1, command 5D, con 4D+2, forgery 4D+2, hide 5D+2, investigation 5D+2, search 6D+2, sneak 6D+2

STRENGTH 4D+1

Brawling 6D+2, climbing/jumping 7D, lifting 5D+2, swimming 6D+2

TECHNICAL 2D

Armor repair 5D, blaster repair 6D+1, computer programming/



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repair 6D, demolitions 6D+1, droid programming 3D+2, droid repair 4D, first aid 5D+1, first aid: Kerestians 6D+1, repulsorlift repair 6D, security 6D+2, space transports repair 6D

Move: 11

Force Points: 2

Character Points: 12

Dark Side Points: 4

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), blaster rifle (5D), double-edged vibroblade (STR +3D+2). (Note that in the arena, Yith only has her blade.)

The Battle

Unfortunately for Abek, just as Yith stalks into the arena, an Imperial *Strike*-class cruiser begins bombarding the station. Move on to the next event immediately.

Event Four: Game Called on Account of the Empire

Commander Surlev, one of Governor Streeg's most loyal officers, commands the *Strike*-class cruiser *Ion Storm*. Surlev believes firmly in Streeg's vision in cleaning up the Sisar Run and secretly suspects that the Imperial forces at his command may have become infested with underworld influence.

It was Surlev's mission to escort the Imperial Resource Procurement Bureau team to the Barani colony. Because communication is always difficult through an asteroid field, Surlev sat at its edge for some time awaiting the return of Major Stipling. When he finally realized something was wrong, he sent in a TIE scout, which discovered the wreckage of Major Stipling's shuttle.

Surlev then ordered a larger force to Yen-2 only to discover it in ruins. Suspicious at the timing of Major Stipling's "accident" and the destruction of Yen-2, Commander Surlev ordered a full investigation. He didn't feel the need to tell the governor just yet—not until he had amassed more evidence.

Fortunately for him, Yith, in her haste to escape with her prize, forgot to destroy Yen-2's observation holocams. Surlev quickly matched the mercenary's picture to her file in Imperial databanks and put word out among Imperial spies that he was looking for her. Word soon reached him about incidents on Sriluur and Yith's arrival at the shadowport.

Yith's criminal blood-spree had to end. Surlev reported everything to Streeg and the governor gave him the emphatic approval to destroy the shadowport.

Timely Arrival

The cruiser bombards the station and demands that Abek turn over his prisoner and her cargo. The opening salvo rocks the station seconds after Yith moves out into the arena. The impact causes a large section of floor above the arena to collapse, taking part of the vibrowire cage with it. Yith immediately leaps through the breach and forces her way through the panicked crowd to the multilift. Two of Abek's gang are holding the characters' weapons here, but they have been pinned to the floor by the falling vibrowire arena. An Easy *lifting* total removes the vibrowire and debris, but the characters have to face the thugs before reclaiming their weapons. The weapons are in a sack, along with an odd-looking remote control director unit.

When the characters follow Yith, they'll see that she makes her way to the docking bay on Level Six, where both her ship and the characters' ship are docked.

Once on Level Six, Yith will attempt to steal the YT-1300 she arrived on and make her escape. If she succeeds, the party will have to follow her. If they can apprehend her or somehow persuade her to join them (for the time being at least), Yith will tell them that the coordinates of the box are stored in the YT-1300's nav computer. The group will have to follow her, or a droid can quickly download the coordinates with a Moderate *computer programming/repair* roll.

At any rate, once the characters manage to take off, move on to "The Great Escape."

Event Five: The Great Escape

The station is in chaos. Describe the action as the lights flicker and the dull thud of turbolaser impacts occasionally drowns out the screams of panic from the crowds. Engines whine and flare as all the docked ships clamber for a mass exodus. Off in the corner is a massive crash and a wave of heat as two freighters collide in the docking bay.

Leaving the bay without colliding with anything requires a Moderate *space transports* roll. Failure incurs 3D damage from scraping another freighter or from hitting a gantry. Abek's fighters are in hot pursuit one round after the characters are spaceborne. The spaceport exerts enough gravitational pull to interfere with navigational computers, so ships attempting to go into hyperspace must first travel 50 units away from the station. This means the characters will have to fight off Abek's pursuing fighters and the *Strike* cruiser's TIE interceptors for several rounds before they can make their jump.

Abek's pilots use stolen short-range Z-95 Headhunters.

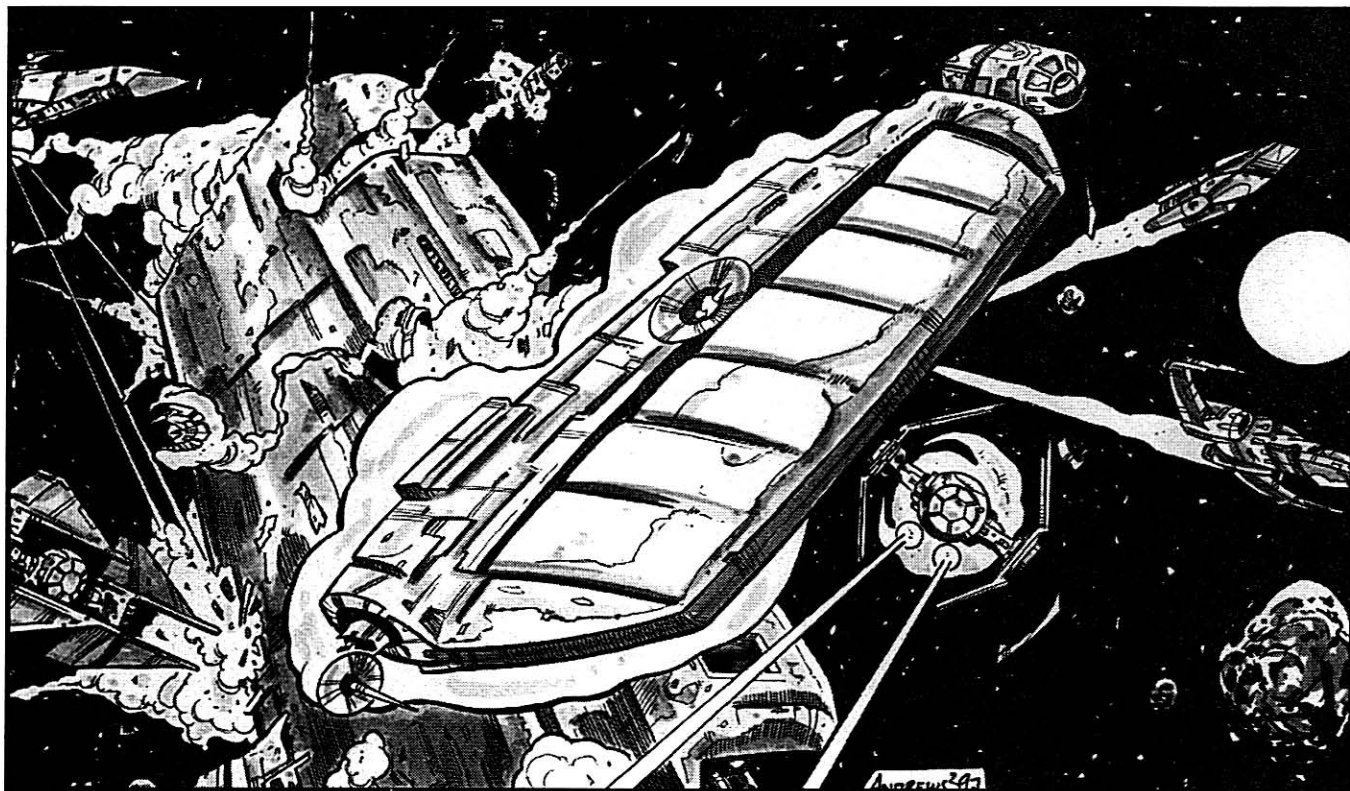
4 Z-95 Headhunters. Starfighter-scale, *starfighter piloting* 4D, *starship gunnery* 3D+2, *starship shields* 3D+1. Maneuverability 1D, space 7, atmosphere 400; 1,150 kmh, hull 4D, shields 1D. Weapons: 2 triple blasters (fire-linked, fire control 1D, damage 3D), concussion missiles (fire control 1D, damage 7D).

The *Ion Storm*, meanwhile, has deployed a group of eight TIE interceptors to stop any ship that tries to run for it. Fortunately, scores of spacers are making a run for it anyway, drawing most of the TIEs away from the characters. Only one of these ships attacks the pirate fighters, while another attempts to stop the characters and Yith.

2 TIE interceptors. Starfighter-scale, *starfighter piloting* 5D, *starship gunnery* 4D+2. Maneuverability 3D+2, space 11, atmosphere 435; 1,250 kmh, hull 3D. Weapons: 4 laser cannons (fire-linked, fire control 3D, damage 6D).

If Yith is still free, she will pilot her stolen freighter at top speed to escape the station. She will calculate a jump to Sedri, and depart as soon as possible.

Hornclaw. Modified YT-1300 freighter, starfighter-scale, maneuverability 1D, space 5, atmosphere 295;



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850 kmh, hull 4D+1, shields 1D+2. Weapons: 2 double-laser cannons (fire-linked, fire control 2D, damage 4D+2).

Finale

As the characters escape, allow them one last look at Abek's shadowport. Read aloud:

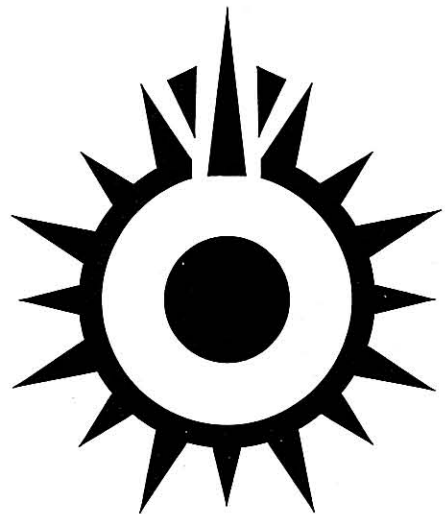
The Strike cruiser takes a couple pot-shots at the escaping freighters, one of them winging a Lantillian short-hauler and sending it spinning into a pirate fighter. Then, all of the cruiser's turbolasers fire like green lances, hitting the shadowport and utterly destroying it.

If the characters have Yith with them, they will note that the markings on her collar match those of the

director unit that was with their weapons. Yith wears a collar similar to the type used by slavers, and the control box can administer incapacitating-to-lethal pain in a subject. The collar is scratched where Yith tried to pry it loose with her vibroblade.

Adventure Rewards

The characters should receive four to six Character Points plus individual awards for finishing the first adventure of this trilogy. If they performed exceptionally well during their investigation, award an additional Character Point. If the characters captured Yith, add two Character Points to the total.



The Barani Conspiracy

Part Two

Sedri Intrigue

Commander Surlev watched as the pirates fled the expanding phosphorescent cloud that was their space station. Most of them would live, but he had made them pay for ignoring the Empire's authority.

A young lieutenant approached and pointed towards a large monitor on the *Ion Storm's* bridge, "Commander, four ships made the jump into hyperspace."

"Calculate possible destination coordinates along their last known trajectories. It seems we've smoked out the vermin we're looking for. Alert me when you've located the Kerestian."

Surlev smiled. Yen-2's holocams had captured everything. It hadn't taken long to identify the rogue merc as Yith. She had picked the worst time to flee, or rather, Surlev picked an opportune time to attack. The Novolek Beacon was active today, limiting her hyperspace jump options. Surlev's could dispatch probes or scouts to follow the fleeing freighters and find out which one held a Kerestian. The *Ion Storm* could then pursue and wait for Yith to recover the datacard...and Surlev would soon replace Neomen as captain of this ship.



"Have you heard from our agents yet?" Sprax asked the young girl.

"No, Master," Millicent couldn't help but smile. He was asking *her* for information. She was important. Maybe more important than Kisquar.

"I thought as much. And what of Yith?"

"She was spotted on Abek's Station a few hours earlier. But it seems she escaped. The Imperials were involved."

"Abek told you this?"

"No, master. Our—*your* spies contacted us. It seems Abek had captured Yith, though it's unclear whether he knew about the Barani List."

Sprax tapped his window and watched the sheets of rain envelope his villa. The Imperials had destroyed Abek's shadowport. Although he never cared much

for Abek, the port had shown its share of revenue. He would have to speak to Captain Neomen—or have one of his agents speak to him. Of course, there was the matter with Abek, too. The Nikto had survived this debacle. He needed to be...*debriefed*.

Sprax turned to his new assistant, "Send a communique, Millicent. Tell Abek I would speak with him at once. This conversation with the Nikto will be our last."



Prince Xizor flicked off the monitor. The report was disturbing at best. A possible conflict between Vigo Sprax and the Empire. And just as Xizor was about to engage the hated Dark Lord of the Sith in a game of intrigue. This would never do. "Guri," he spoke into a hidden comlink.

A few moments later, his loyal HRD servant entered the room. "Yes?"

"It seems our good friend Vigo Sprax is having difficulties that involve the Empire. My new agent tells me he is attempting to rectify the situation, but I cannot afford the embarrassment at this time. Contact Gyran's team through the usual channels."

Guri nodded coldly. "Shall our agent inform Gyran to work with Sprax's team?"

"I think not. A little competition works wonders with mercenaries. They hate to fail. They hate to lose even more."

Guri left without saying another word. Xizor turned his monitor back on and pulled up images of Darth Vader. "I wish only that this matter is settled quickly, lest it interfere with more important pursuits," he whispered to himself.



"We are almost there," Gyran glared back into the passenger compartment of his ship, the *Arc Razor*.

Most of his team lay listlessly about the hold, though their weapons remained in their hands. Only the droid, ERYX-4, hovered still, waiting for the hunt to begin.

"Wake me when we have landed," a near-human mercenary growled.

Ket Maliss, the most feared of the group, opened one of his reptilian eyes and snarled a similar warning.

Gyran was not one to argue. He shrugged as the ship dipped into Sedri's atmosphere. The *Arc Razor* dipped into the billowy clouds of the water world and then broke level. Gyran peered out his front viewscreen. The rain cast a screen of slimy drizzle on the transparisteel.

"What are you waiting for? Set us down!" one of the bounty hunters barked.

"It's a big planet, Scuz. I've got to find the target's ship," Gyran answered sharply. "Unless you want to spend the next 40 years treading water, looking for them."

ERYX-4 floated forward and extended a probe into Gyran's sensor system. "There," it said mechanically.

Gyran stared hard at the blip. The duranium and plasteel reflection lines of a familiar hexagonal structure; an Imperial garrison base. It was as good a start as any, and ERYX had apparently downloaded all sorts of personality profiles and performance records on Yith. It was more than an educated guess.

"Okay, there's the abandoned garrison" he turned his attention back to planetfall. "We don't know if she's got any of its systems up and running. I don't want to tangle with turbolaser defenses. I'm gonna skirt the edge of its sensor umbrella, find us a place to land. We're rafting it in."

A few of the younger, less-experienced hunters groaned at that prospect. Ket Maliss only stared forward with determination and ERYX made no indication as to its opinion of the matter.

Adventure Background

Months ago, the native inhabitants of Sedri, the Sedrians, had what might be called a "civil war." The population of seal-like humanoids had long-worshipped another inhabitant of their world, a mysterious glowing coral called Golden Sun. For years, the Sedrian High Priest would keep the Golden Sun contained in a Great Shell Dome, in the center of the main Sedrian town of Fitsay.

A group of dissidents, led by the charismatic Karak, broke away from the Sedrian populace. They believed that Golden Sun should be for everyone and not controlled by the High Priest and his collection of Sun Priests. The group, simply called renegades, lived in an encampment separate from Fitsay.

Golden Sun had numerous strange properties. It was Force-sensitive and seemed to bestow this ability to those near it, as many high-ranking Sedrians were also Force-sensitive. Those skilled in the Force could hear its voice, although the Sedrians never realized it was intelligent. The Golden Sun, when released, could manipulate the gravity shadow of the planet, making

approaching starships register Sedri as a sun. As a result, the planet had remained hidden for centuries.

An Imperial scout-ship discovered Sedri as a result of a navigational accident. When the ship reported to the Empire about a planet with a natural gravity well generator, the Imperials were interested. They established an aquatic garrison in Sedri's shallow oceans, though most of their supply ships failed to arrive due to the navigational instability presented by Golden Sun.

The Imperials, eager to get their hands on Golden Sun, teamed up with the renegades. A team of Rebel agents from Delta Base were able to stop the Imperials from acquiring the mysterious coral, and Karak and his followers were defeated.

The Rebels were able to convince the High Priest



Joe Corroney

that Golden Sun was indeed intelligent. The Sedrians then released the coral polyps from their imprisonment, spreading a golden glow to the whole planet. This lessened the gravitic effect of Sedri and the Empire lost interest in the planet, abandoning its garrison.

Now traders have come to Sedri, offering supplies to the Sedrians. The new High Priests want to establish contact with the outside galaxy, but slowly. The garrison, now leaking coolant and deadly pollution, is avoided by the Sedrians. This prompted Yith to hide her datacard within the darkened structure. However, the Sedrian civil war is not over. The followers of Karak believed the High Priests have foolishly ended Sedri's golden age and are stagnating Sedri's growth.

The characters will become entangled in the Sedrian conflict before they can escape Sedri. Worse, bounty hunters indirectly working for Prince Xizor have landed and are looking for the datacard as well. The party must deal with these obstacles while trying to control Yith and keep her from escaping and killing everyone in sight.

(For more information about the Sedrian conflict, see the adventure *Battle for the Golden Sun*.)

Getting Started

There are two possible ways to begin this adventure. If the players captured Yith in the last adventure, start with "To Sedri." If they failed to capture Yith, start with "The Assignment."

The Assignment

The characters can start conceivably anywhere, depending where they fled to after the destruction of Abek's Station. One way or another, they'll be contacted by Kalend about a potential job. If they haven't noticed already, the fact that Kalend can contact them out of the blue speaks of the power of their employer. Read the following once Kalend has introduced herself.

"It seems our saga continues, friends. Word has it that the higher-ups don't want Yith running about free. I trust you did everything you could to capture her, but the bottom line is, you didn't. The good news—if you can call it that—is that other co-workers have captured her. I'm giving you a chance to redeem yourselves. She has stashed her item somewhere and you're going to go find it. The reward has dropped down to 8,000 credits for the item. I don't have to remind you that our friend frowns on those who don't want to help him out."

Black Sun has learned Yith's location from the *Ion Storm's* bugged sensor systems. Another team of operatives were able to subdue Yith before she made planetfall. Kalend, disappointed that it wasn't the characters who brought her in, had Yith transferred to her and is giving the characters a second shot. Assuming the characters agree to help, Kalend continues:

"Good. We've got Yith tied up real good. Abek put a slaver's collar on her and we've rigged up a proper director unit. She's unarmed and you shouldn't have too much trouble with her, but don't take your eyes

off her. Yith has revealed only that she hid the item somewhere on Sedri, an off-the-run water world. My employer would like your team to escort Yith to Sedri and allow her to lead you to the object. Yith is a dangerous mercenary, though, even when collared. Mark my words, she will attempt to escape—or worse. Don't get careless. Once you have located the stolen item and loaded it back onto your ship, meet me in Meirm City on Sriluur. Contact me with that dedicated comlink I gave you."

If the characters have lost the comlink, Kalend will reluctantly give them another. With that, the characters are reunited with Yith. They are given the control unit for her slaver collar.

Adventure Synopsis

The adventure starts as the characters land on Sedri's abandoned garrison and allow Yith to lead them to Barani's datacard. Once there, they have to brave an empty garrison reclaimed by Sedri's ocean creatures. The card is missing and they are attacked by a giant gweld. The group then goes to Fitsay, the Sedrian village. They learn of the renegade element, and must head to their encampment. Sure enough, the renegades did steal the card and have hidden it in their camp. Unfortunately, Xizor's bounty hunters lie in wait and add to the chaos. As the bounty hunters are about to close in, Commander Surlev's Imperial strike force lands to claim the card for themselves.

Episode One: The Seas of Sedri

Pruss hobbled on the dry, plasteel floor. There were ghosts here, the others had said, ghosts in the old fish-killers' floating shell. He had seen the long-legger, the female with the weapon, hide something in one of the darkened rooms. She was gone now. He heard the blast of her flying ship. He felt the power of her engines.

Power...this place reeked of it. The long-leggers and the fish-killer had both harnessed it. Sun guns with deadly rays...powerful stone-skinned warriors. Pruss' camp could use these tools. He recognized the item that the long-legger hid. It was what off-worlders used to read and learn. Surely it told of secrets to power.

Pruss forced his awkward form through the door, and pried open the black box with his great strength. Inside, the plastic card sat...brimming with power, he thought. The Golden Sun was no more. It was up to the Sedrians to provide for themselves.

What if the long-legger returned? The thought tugged at his mind. She would be most surprised. He raised his hands to his muzzle, and emitted a sharp, whistling call that only Sedrian hunters knew.

To Sedri

Once the characters depart with Yith, the Kerestian will give them the coordinates to Sedri. A quick check of the party's nav computer will tell them that Sedri is a world of shallow oceans populated by aliens called Sedrians. It was the site of an Imperial base, but it has

been abandoned for undisclosed reasons. Sedri has only recently opened up to commercial traffic, thus the brevity of the nav computer file.

Playing Yith

Yith is not happy. When held captive by the characters, she will constantly berate them and not cooperate. She will insult them, calling them "puny farmers." If the characters did not actually capture Yith, she will add, "You lack the strength to capture me and in typical cowardly fashion, you reap someone else's reward." Depending on the make-up of the group, Yith will come up with other insults. Her goal is to get one of them close enough to fight her, especially the one with the control unit for her collar.

Sedri

- Type: Shallow Water-World
- Temperature: Temperate
- Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
- Hydrosphere: Saturated
- Gravity: Standard
- Terrain: Shallow oceans, coral reefs
- Length of Day: 18 hours
- Length of Year: 286 days
- Sapient Species: Sedrians (N), Golden Sun (N)
- Starport: None
- Population: Less than 10,000
- Planet Function: Home-world
- Government: Theocracy
- Tech Level: Special (technology provided by Golden Sun)
- Major Exports: Water
- Major Imports: Mid tech, high tech

Sedrians

Sedrians are large, powerfully built beings, with humanoid upper bodies and tapered finned flukes to propel them. They are fully amphibious with both lungs and gills. Sedrian arms end in three-webbed fingers and a thumb, and their tapered flukes have two large stabilizing flippers. Their entire body is covered in smooth fur, ranging in color from brown

to golden yellow. Sedrians can be awkward on land, but in the water they are among the most graceful of species. The Sedrian language is quite versatile, with barks and whistles, beautiful songs and even common enunciation in their deep, rumbling voices.

Sedrian society is simple and theocratic, with peasants and farmers at the bottom and the priests at the



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top. A fraternity of warrior monks protect the Sedrians, led by the Bishop of War. They are a religious people, worshipping Golden Sun. They have recently been enlightened as to their true relationship with Golden Sun and many now wish to explore the seas of space beyond their watery planet.

Sedrians

Attribute Dice: 10D
DEXTERITY 1D+1/3D+1
KNOWLEDGE 1D/3D
MECHANICAL 1D/3D
PERCEPTION 1D+1/3D+1
STRENGTH 2D/4D
TECHNICAL 1D/3D

Story Factors:

Separation Anxiety: Sedrians encountered away from Sedri will be easily agitated and unpredictable because of their separation from Golden Sun. This can usually only be cured by returning the Sedrian to Sedri.

Move: 15/20 (swimming underwater)

Size: 3 meters long, 1 meter tall (torso)

Ghost Garrison

Yith leads the characters to the abandoned Imperial garrison. From above, characters making a Moderate *Perception* roll notice a dark cloud hanging under the metallic base. This is a toxic coolant leak, spilling into the ocean.

As the ship closes in, it becomes obvious that the base is not inhabited. Its normally gleaming exterior has become darkened with huge blankets of barnacles. These mollusks have eaten away at the protective coating of the base, allowing the exposed surface to oxidize. The immense flotation collar has become covered with sea-moss, and gull-like avians swarm around the structure.

A flurry of birds flee the landing platform as the ship sets down. The garrison rocks and sways a bit, as its tractor beam anchors have long since broken down. Its flotation collar is slowly eroding, and the water pumps in the sub-levels have also ceased to function. Within a year, the garrison will sink to the ocean bottom.

Garrison Interior

A thorough description of the garrison interior has not been provided for several reasons. First, the characters have a set goal: finding the datacard. There are not likely to be exploring the whole station. Second, the garrison layout is very similar to the Imperial garrison plans on pages 120-121 of *The Star Wars Sourcebook* or pages 58-59 of *The Truce at Bakura Sourcebook*. The main difference is that the five-level-high vehicle bay opens out into ocean and the garrison sub-level has underwater launch ports and a central connecting pool. Third, this garrison was never completed, and many rooms stand empty and barren. Gull droppings spatter the normally dark hallways and other animals have since moved in.

Yith's Treachery

As Yith leads them through the garrison, she springs a trap on the characters. The landing platform con-

nects to level two. She leads them down a darkened hallway. Missing ceiling plates allow natural light to spill in from above. The slick floor-panels are actually resting on corroded temporary beams that were never replaced when the station was abandoned. If she is marched across first, she will wait until she reaches the other side, then kick at the floor plates. If she is marched



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Veterans of the Golden Sun

Gamemasters and players who have played *Battle for the Golden Sun* are at a bit of an advantage. They remember the setting and the staging tips from the first time around. First-time visitors to Sedri are not at a disadvantage, however. Enough time has passed that plot events from *Battle for the Golden Sun* do not give anything away in this adventure.

If your players have run through *Battle for the Golden Sun*, they are most likely using new characters for this adventure. The first adventure dealt with Rebel agents, whereas now they're Black Sun traders. You can evoke a sense of long-term continuity by having things they did the first time around have an impact in this adventure. For instance, if their Rebels were successful in defeating Karak and his renegades, maybe there are statues of them in Fitsay's town square. If, in the battle, they never killed Karak's goon Porm, but only incapacitated him, maybe he shows up in this adventure, complete with battle scars.

If the characters are somehow the same ones from *Battle for the Golden Sun*, then the Sedrians from town will recognize them and even offer to help them, although you may have to exaggerate how much time has passed since this first encounter.

second or last, she will wait until most of the characters cross, and kick at the plates before marching forward. Yith will then dive at the character with the control box. If the character with the control box is on the floor plates, all the better for her plans.

Once she kicks the plates, the beams crack, and one-by-one the plates start collapsing. There are four plates, each two meters long (for a span of eight meters). Each round, a plate collapses, starting at the one Yith kicked. Characters on a falling plate need to make a Moderate *climbing/jumping* roll to move to an adjacent plate. Note that running across the plates (cruising movement or higher) triggers their collapse.

Characters falling from the floor plates land two levels down, taking 5D falling damage. Using syntherope or something similar, the characters can improvise a rescue.

Yith will fight to reclaim the control box. She will use her *brawling* skill to overpower the character. If the character makes a Difficult *Dexterity* roll, he or she can squeeze off a jolt into Yith's collar. Yith will collapse in pain, letting out a scream. If the character is in physical contact with Yith when this happens, he or she also takes 5D stun damage.

In general, just pressing the control stud on the director unit will bring Yith under control. No die-codes are given since Yith will always yield to the stun shock. If you want to, secretly roll dice whenever the characters con-

trol her. That way, they may think that a particularly strong roll on Yith's part may overpower the collar.

The Gweld's Mate

After reigning in Yith, she agrees to take them to where she hid the datacard. She leads the characters to level four—the former armory. The area is large, and the walls seem incomplete, with large support braces appearing like the interior of a massive rib-cage. Characters making an Easy *Perception* roll smell something fishy.

As Yith leads them to where she stashed the datacard, the characters come across the blaster-riddled carcass of a native animal, a gweld. The shelled amphibian has long, muscled limbs, and large hinged jaws that the native Sedrians use to make spears. Inspection of the corpse and an Easy *first aid* roll reveals that the thing died recently—within the last day. The inspection also draws the ire of the gweld's mate, which attacks from the darkness. Characters who fail an Easy *Perception* check are surprised for the first round of combat. During the battle, Yith will do what she can to fight the creature and will not try to escape. Her current priority is to get the card.

Gweld

Type: Territorial amphibian

DEXTERITY 2D+2

PERCEPTION 3D

STRENGTH 4D

Brawling 4D+2

Special Abilities:

Long limbs: +1D to brawling attacks

Hinged jaws: STR +1D damage

Amphibious: Gweld can breathe both air and water.

Move: 7 (land), 12 (water)

Size: 1.5 meters long

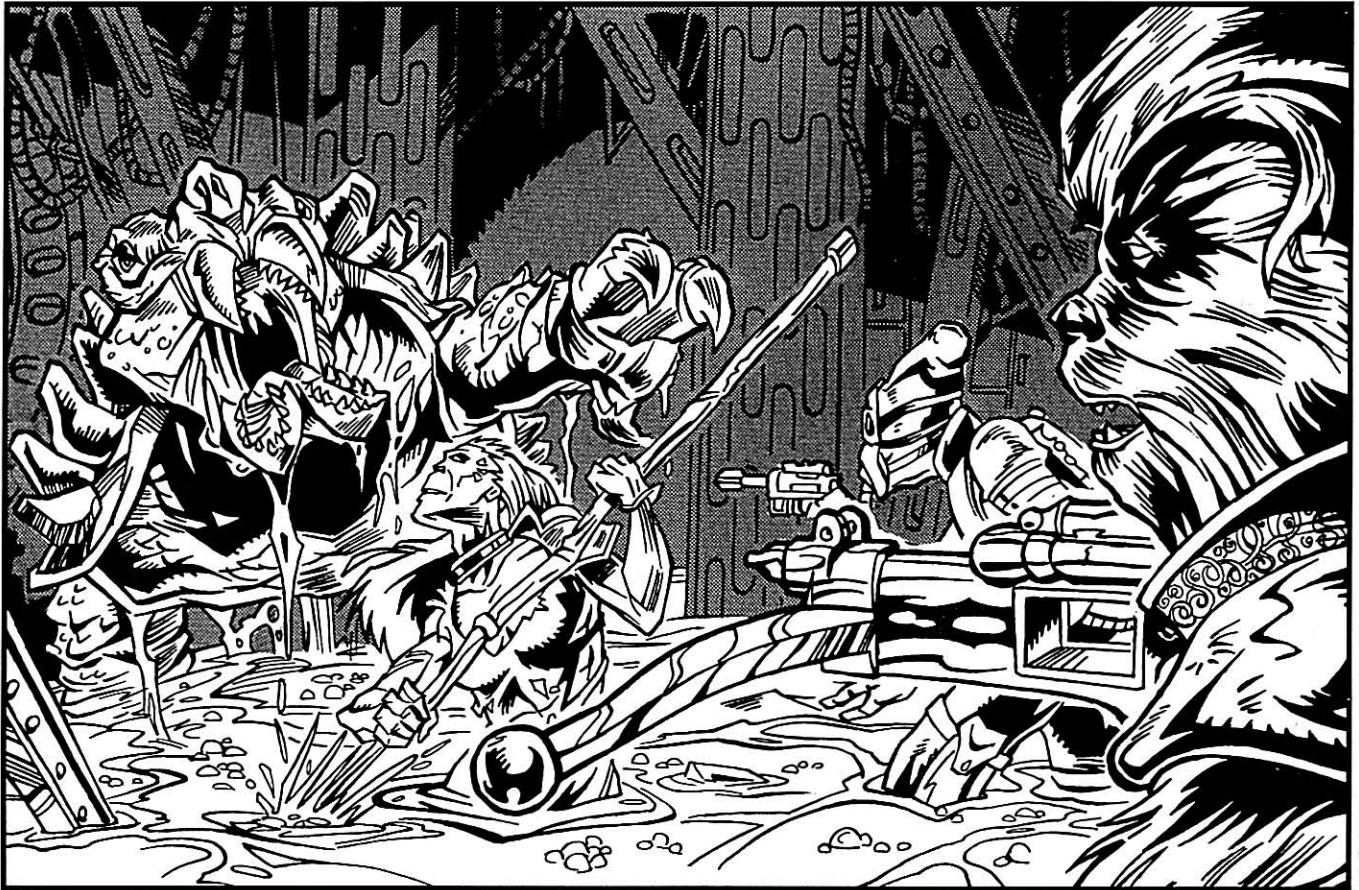
Don't Leave Home Without It

After disposing of the gweld, Yith strides forward to a safecube in the middle of the armory. The safecube was originally designed to store thermal detonators. Yith thought it would do just fine for a simple lockbox. She opens the safecube, pulls out the lockbox and opens the small black case.

“Verre d’n Nocka!” Yith curses at the top of her lungs. She throws the empty case to the ground with a clattering echo in the empty chamber. “Verre! Verre! Verre! Verre!” she curses in her native tongue. “It’s gone! The blasted card is gone! Of all the confounded...Yeaaaargh!” With a scream she lashes out with a streaking kick at the safe cube door. It swings on its hinges, smashes back into the safecube, and the hinges actually twist out of alignment.

It will take a Difficult *persuasion* roll to calm her down, although characters may want to keep their thumb ready over her control box. When she regains her senses, read aloud:

“Well, farmers? Any bright ideas? Any friends also fishing for this datacard? Any...” Yith stops, like something she said triggered a thought. “The natives...the Sedrians. They can talk to their fellow



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fish-eating creatures—at least some of them can. That’s how they got that thing up here,” she says, pointing to the two gweld carcasses.

If the characters ask for any ideas as to why the other gweld was blaster-burned, Yith has none. Perhaps, she offers, the Sedrians needed to “teach one a lesson.” At any rate, she insists that they proceed to the nearest Sedrian village and raze their underwater homes until the “sealmen” reveal where they hid her item.

It will take a Heroic (or more) *Perception* total to spot it, but as Yith plans, a tiny spider-shaped holobug detaches itself from the wall and rests itself in the folds of her jumpsuit.

Episode Three: Going Under

Gyran must have assembled and disassembled his blaster rifle 12 times. He polished its galven tubing, screwing in its components, rethinking his command. Maybe Yith was gone. Maybe the trap was little more than a decoy to throw anyone off her trail. If that was the case, why didn’t she just feign that she destroyed the chip or even that she was dead? Something was missing and that something was bothering him.

ERYX suddenly hovered into view. A hatch slid open on his chromed torso, making Gyran instinctively flinch. He hated working with droids, let alone droids armed to the servos. The hatch revealed a two-dimensional

flatscreen, with a live-feed of Yith and a group of traders standing in the abandoned armory.

“The Sedrians. They can talk to their fellow fish-eating creatures—at least some of them can....” said

The Hunters’ Actions

After the hunters rafted to the garrison, they scaled its five-level-high vehicle bay. With such a large area to look in, they first have ERYX target it for any visible heat signatures. The assassin droid picked up a large one, so the hunters entered the fourth level armory. There, they found the gweld. They blasted the animal—the source of the heat signature—and searched the area. In a room lined with the detritus of months of inactivity, there was one polished safe cube, where inside rested a lockbox—an *empty* lockbox. The hunters surmised Yith was baiting a trap, and ERYX determined that her profile indicated she would return to see if the trap caught anything. The droid hid a small articulated holobug to report while the hunters returned to their ship.

The hunters do not have the whole story, however. Yith did indeed hide the datacard here, but she did not remove it. Someone else removed the card and left the gweld to guard it.

the grainy image.

Gyran listened closely. So Yith had friends, and they were heading to the Sedrian village. “We’re suiting up for wetwork!” Gyran shouted into the hold of the *Arc Razor*. He then turned to the droid. “ERYX, sensor signature: Sedrian.”

ERYX’s processor began pulling up what it knew about Sedrians, and what sort of body temperatures the aliens had. Then he plugged into the *Arc Razor*’s sensor suite, searching for the nearest concentration of suitable targets.

Suifing Up

While the characters should realize that Yith’s suggested course of action—destroying the Sedrian villages—seems extreme, they do have little choice but to at least go there. Yith tells the characters that the Imperials left behind a number of small speeder rafts, which they can take to get to the nearest village she knows of—Fitsay. Also in the garrison are a number of wetsuits and breather masks that any human can use. The wet-suits are bodyhugging affairs that offer complete protection from the water. When Yith dons hers, she makes sure the suit covers her slaver collar, for she fears the water may set it off, killing her.

Until Yith recovers the datacard, she cooperates with the characters. She doesn’t know what she may face before she gets the card back, but at least she knows the characters aren’t out to kill her.

If anyone wants to look around for more supplies, have them generate a *search* total. Under the current time constraints, they are limited in what they might find. A Moderate *search* total produces two medpacs. A Difficult *search* total finds a fully loaded blaster pistol, while a Very Difficult *search* total finds a suit of seatrooper armor, which provides +1D armor with no Dexterity penalty, and increases *swimming* by +2D.

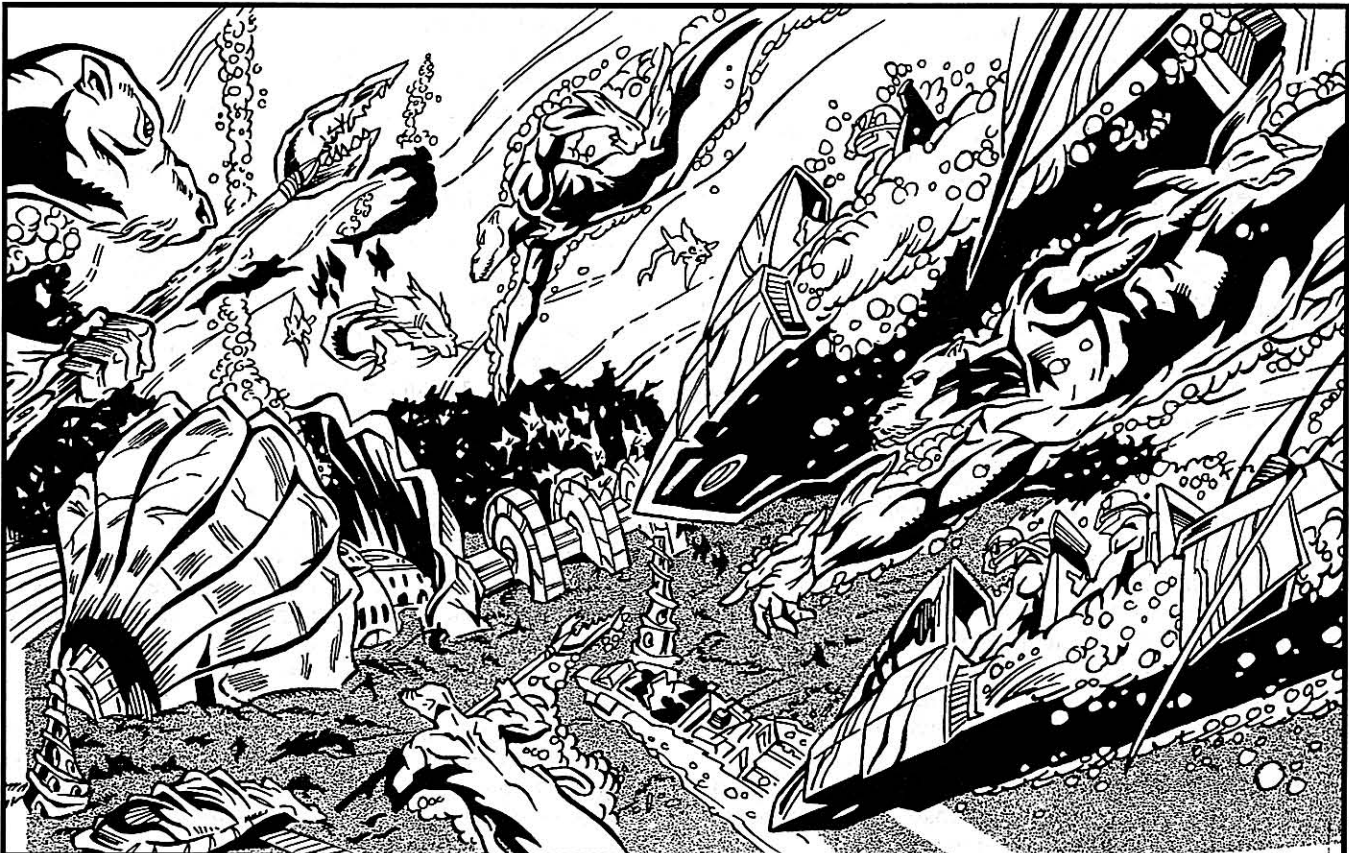
Speeder rafts. Speeder-scale, maneuverability 1D, move 35; 100 kmh, body strength 1D+2.

Sedrian Economics

Sedri has been in the “market” for only a few months. Being located off the Sisar Run, with no major trade routes close by and having a reputation as a world the Empire was once interested in is not doing wonders for its interstellar economy.

Sedri has a lot to offer the Sisar Run. It is a world of endless oceans and water is an extremely prized commodity on Sriluur. Hauling water is not a simple task, however. Water weighs a lot and ships have to be fitted with special tanks to carry it. Also, the water must be filtered and purified before being allowed to enter the biosphere of Sriluur. Very few spacers have yet made the overhead investments for this profitable run.

Sedri has an off-world diplomat in the form of Alliance dignitary Mors Odrion. Odrion, who was involved in the Golden Sun conflict, advises the High Priests as to galactic affairs. He watches for Imperial activity, and evaluates



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business proposals for commerce activities on the waterworld. He and the Priests are concerned about cultural and ecological contamination. Currently, the only project they have greenlighted was a Vaathkree repulsor company interested in developing a hydro-vehicles construction company with full Sedrian ownership.

Fitsay

As the characters approach Fitsay, cut to the following scene:

Spread across the gently curving ocean floor is a small city. Its center is dominated by an immense shell dome, split open. In this gargantuan maw rests a curved turbine, spinning steadily as the ocean currents stream through it. To one side, encased in thick green plastic cubes, are large capacitor banks, which connect to a series of pipes, spreading outward like a web. To the other side, a complex of interconnected stone buildings fill the watery depths. About half a kilometer to the northwest, the terrain begins to slope up toward a sheer, cliff wall.

As the characters take their raft to its maximum depth, they will have to debark and proceed by swimming. When the get to a certain distance, a group of burly Sedrians, warrior-monks, approach them with wicked-looking spear-guns.

Characters making an *Easy cultures* roll realize that if they explain that they are from off-world and would like to talk to their off-world diplomat (or some similar station) they should be let through. This roll also tells the characters that it is unwise to brandish weapons in front of local guards.

4 Warrior Monks. *Dexterity 2D+1, missile weapons: spear gun 3D+2, sun gun 4D+1, Knowledge 1D+2, Mechanical 1D+1, Perception 1D+2, command 3D+2, search 3D, Strength 3D+2, swimming 6D, Technical 1D+1.* Move: 18 (swimming underwater). Spear gun (3D+2).

Deep Sea Diplomacy

The monks lead the characters to the joined stoned buildings in the shadow of the turbine station. A *Difficult Technical* roll reveals the turbine as being Mon Calamari technology. As the characters enter the stone house, they may be surprised to note that a series of recessed magnetic containment field projectors create an invisible and permeable water-retaining wall in the inner houses—obviously designed with off-worlders in mind.

The walls of the dry-house are made of smooth, polished rock. Although dry, the rock has a natural sheen that makes it look slick. As you enter, a human male, tall and handsome, approaches you. He wears simple flowing robes over his pale-blue wetsuit. "Welcome to Sedri. I am Mors Odrion. How may we—" Mors pauses as he sees Yith. His eyes dart from Yith, to you, and back again.

"I am sorry. We do not deal with slavers. Now am I asking you, right now, to please leave without a scene or I will have to call security."

The characters must now explain that they are not slavers. Those characters making *Difficult Perception* rolls (roll in secret) will spot an Alliance sigil among Mors' office decorations. If the characters mention Sandwind Team, it will be a point in their favor in getting Mors to believe them. Roleplay this scene out, remembering that Mors' prime concern is that they not be slavers. The characters' best bet would be to tell him they are law enforcement agents, that Yith is a fugitive, and they are looking for evidence. If the characters in any way mention their association with Sprax or Mal Biron, Odrion will recognize those names as Black Sun (though he may not say so) and also recognize Black Sun's support of Sandwind Team.

Once the characters have convinced Mors that they do not deal in slaves, he will ask if they are bounty hunters. Regardless of their answer, he will continue:

"Reckless bounty hunters have attacked a separatist village not too far from here. Word just recently reached us. Do you know of this?"

(Allow the players to answer.)

"We are just opening our borders to allow newcomers, but we are not inviting this manner of violence. I am afraid we have enough of it in our own circle."

If asked, Mors will explain that there exists a faction of Sedrian dissidents—comprising much of Karak's old group—who disagree with the way the current High Priests are carefully treading into new galactic waters. The renegades believe that Sedri is entitled to a new golden age now that their reliance on Golden Sun is gone. They believe that the High Priests, now that they no longer control the golden power, are attempting to control the free enterprise that comes to Sedri.

It was one of these dissident camps that was attacked. Mors Odrion has no idea what the hunters want and has never heard of the datacard.

Mors Odrion. *Dexterity 3D, Knowledge 4D, alien species 6D, bureaucracy 6D+1, cultures 5D, languages 6D, planetary systems 4D+2, value 6D+2, Mechanical 3D, repulsorlift operation 5D, Perception 4D, command 5D, search 4D+2, Strength 2D, swimming 5D+2, Technical 2D, computer programming/repair 4D+1.* Move: 10. Datapad, wetsuit.

The High Priests

The High Priests have been left out of the character interchange, because depending on the outcome of *Battle for the Golden Sun*, they may not have survived. If the adventure played out as it was written, the title of High Priest is held by Pek, a massive Sedrian who wears a large golden crown and carries a coral-tipped staff, and Fala, a lithe Sedrian female who now wears a golden circlet.

Pek, in his younger days, was rash and quick to act. Now that his wife Fala is pregnant, expecting their first child, Pek has slowed down. He is overwhelmed by the new activity that has come to Sedri and is trying to get through it one day at a time. Fala has spearheaded

attempts to bring the dissidents back into Sedrian society, as she was once a renegade too. The renegades respect her, but she fears they believe that she is being "brainwashed" by her husband.

If you want, you can include them in the above scene with Mors Odrion, replacing some of the information revealed by Mors with Pek and Fala's views.

Pek. *Dexterity 3D+2, melee combat 5D, missile weapons 4D+2, sun gun 4D+2, Knowledge 2D+1, alien species 4D, bureaucracy 5D, cultures 4D+1, survival: sea 4D+1, value 5D, Mechanical 2D+2, Perception 3D, command 6D+2, persuasion 4D+1, search 4D+2, Strength 3D, brawling 5D, stamina 5D+1, swimming 6D, Technical 2D+1, first aid 3D+1.* Move: 20 (swimming underwater). *Force powers: Sense 2D.* Spear (STR +1D+1), crown, staff.

Fala. *Dexterity 3D+2, melee combat 6D+2, sun gun 5D, Knowledge 3D+1, cultures 5D, survival: sea 5D+1, Mechanical 1D, Perception 4D, command 5D+2, Strength 3D, swimming 7D, Technical 1D, first aid 1D.* Move: 20 (swimming underwater) *Force powers: Control 1D, sense 1D+2.*

Renegade Camp

Mors Odrion provides the characters with directions to the Sedrian dissident camp and sends a relief squad of five Sedrian warrior monks. He supplies the characters with medpacs and asks them to help any wounded Sedrians they do see.

As the Sedrians leave and the characters follow in their raft, cut to the next scene. Read aloud:

Set against a rocky outcropping carved with natural caves is the renegade camp. As you approach, you see inky clouds floating away from the cave opening. Its red tint speaks of horrors committed inside. You glance toward Yith and you see her eyes dance and her muscles clench as you dive into the murkiness.

The hunters have massacred the Sedrian village. They are now in the underwater caves, searching for the datacard. When ERYX's holobug revealed that Yith and her party were coming to the caves, the hunters set up an assault deep underwater. As the characters enter the caverns, they see the floating bodies of Sedrians, cut-down by blaster fire. The hunter attack has attracted more than a relief effort. As the characters debark and enter, they are attacked by blood-frenzied razorts.

A sudden thrashing stirs the water, sending clouds of murk in your direction. There, emerging from a feast, is a sharp-toothed creature. The look in its eye is comparable to Yith's, though it knows no cunning nor strategy. The razor-finned creature spins toward you, its massive jaw snapping shut.

There are three razorts to contend with. The Sedrians will help, but in the confines of the caves, only three characters may attack a razort at once.

3 Razorts. *Dexterity 5D, Perception 3D, Strength 4D+2.* Move: 12 (swimming). Teeth (3D+1 damage,) tail (5D damage).

Underwater Actions

When a fight occurs in or underwater, keep the following rules modifications in mind:

- Lightsabers don't work very well underwater. They boil up the ocean and spin around, requiring a Moderate *control* or Difficult *lightsaber* roll to hold onto or pick up.
- Characters use their *swimming* skill for movement, and for dodges they add +1D to their *swimming* skill.
- When a grenade goes off underwater, it does 4D damage to everybody within its entire range. The victims at close range take normal damage, while those in the surrounding range take stun damage.
- Blasters are not as effective underwater. The difficulty of any blaster shot is increased one level and a blaster does 2D less damage than normal.

The Assault

As the characters move deeper into the cave, they will come across a group of four renegades that believe them to be hunters. The doomed renegades attack with a vengeance, although they will be unarmed. After three rounds, characters making an Easy *Perception* check will hear a blaster go off in a deeper cavern. It is one of the bounty hunters disposing of a razort. The hunters, realizing that their cover has been blown, then attack. The renegades stop the attack once the crossfire begins. When they notice the off-worlders fighting, and that one side fights alongside Sedrian warrior monks, they will join the fight on the characters' side if somebody arms them.

3 Renegades. *Dexterity 2D, Knowledge 1D+2, Mechanical 1D+1, Perception 2D, Strength 2D+2, swimming 3D+2, Technical 2D+1.* Move: 15 (swimming underwater).

For combat, see the map. While under Gyran's command, the hunters will disrupt the renegade fight with a grenade or two first. Then Gyran and two of the hunters will lay down a covering fire while Ket Maliss and ERYX charge through for a close assault, hoping to kill anyone stunned by the grenade. The hunters try to bring in Yith alive. During the battle, Yith grabs any discarded Sedrian weapons (she finds a spear, STR +1D+1), and charge into battle, killing as many hunters as she can.

Gyran

Type: Bounty hunter

DEXTERITY 4D

Blaster 8D, blaster artillery 5D+1, brawling parry 5D, dodge 7D, melee combat: vibroblade 6D+1, melee parry 5D, thrown weapons 6D+2

KNOWLEDGE 2D+2

Alien species 4D, intimidation 4D, streetwise 5D+2, value 4D, willpower 4D+1

MECHANICAL 2D+2

Astrogration 4D, beast riding 4D+1, communications 4D, repulsorlift



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operation 5D+2, sensors 4D, space transports 5D+1, starfighter piloting 5D, starship gunnery 5D

PERCEPTION 3D

Command 5D, hide 3D+2, search 5D, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 3D+2

Brawling 4D, stamina 4D+1, swimming 4D

TECHNICAL 2D

Armor repair 3D, blaster repair 3D+1, demolition 4D, first aid 3D, security 4D+2

Character Points: 7

Move: 10

Equipment: 2 fragmentation grenades (5D), blaster pistol (4D), wetsuit, breather mask

Capsule: Gyran was once a royal bodyguard to one of the spice lords of Sevarcos when Xizor "purchased" his service while on a business trip. Gyran, who had always

longed to visit other worlds, relished the opportunity. While on Coruscant, Gyran frequently took long trips into the undercity, inviting violence. He has since developed a mild form of agoraphobia, hating open places or wide open planets. While on Sedri, he finds the vast oceans daunting, but is more comfortable fighting in the caves.

ERYX

Type: Assassin Droid

DEXTERITY 3D+1

Blaster 7D, dodge 5D+1, missile weapons 5D+1

KNOWLEDGE 1D

Survival 5D

MECHANICAL 2D

Astrogation 4D+2, communications 5D+1, sensors 6D

PERCEPTION 3D

Search 5D+2, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 2D**TECHNICAL 1D**

Blaster repair 5D+2, demolitions 5D+2, security 6D

Move: 10

Equipped With:

- Laser cannon (6D damage, 3-30/50/120)
- Grenade launcher (5D damage, 3-10/25/100, ammo: 4)
- Repulsorlift motion system (no movement penalties for underwater movement)
- Sensor system interface (+1D to sensor modes)

Kef Maliss

Type: Dashade Shadow Killer

DEXTERITY 5D

Blaster 7D+1, dodge: energy weapons 6D+2, grenade 5D+1, melee combat 6D, melee parry 5D+2

KNOWLEDGE 2D+1

Alien species 5D+1, languages 4D+2, streetwise: BlackSun 6D+2, survival 5D+2

MECHANICAL 2D+1

Astrogation 5D+1, beast riding 4D, space transports 6D+1, starship gunnery 6D+1, starship shields 4D+2

PERCEPTION 3D

Command 5D+2, investigations 6D+2, search 6D+2, sneak 6D+2

STRENGTH 4D

Brawling 6D+2, climbing/jumping 5D+2,

TECHNICAL 1D+1

Armor repair 4D, blaster repair 5D

Force Points: 4

Dark Side Points: 6

Character Points: 16

Move: 10

Special Abilities:

Heat Dissipation: The Dashade are able to dissipate the heat emanated from their bodies, making them difficult to detect with sensors. Add +2D difficulty to any sensor attempt to locate.

Equipment: Blaster rifle (5D), wet-suit, breather mask.

Capsule: A rare species of killer from the supernova-cooked world of Urkupp, the Dashades have become little more than legend. The species died out during the Sith War, 4,000 years ago, when the Cron Drift explosion shattered their world. At the time, one of Xizor's ancestors took his remaining 38 Dashade enforcers and had them cryogenically frozen. Once each century or so, a new one is released and put in the servitude of the Falleen royal family. Now Xizor's last Dashade, Maliss, has been activated and has served his master well these past few decades. If the battle seems hopeless, Maliss will attempt to escape, using Force Points and Character Points to fight another day.

3 Bounty Hunters. All stats are 2D except: *blaster* 4D+2, *dodge* 4D+1, *grenade* 4D, *melee combat* 4D+2, *melee parry* 3D+1, *streetwise* 3D, *survival* 2D+2, *investigation* 3D+1, *sneak* 3D+2, *brawling* 3D+2. Move: 10. Blast vest (+1D physical, +1 energy), heavy blaster pistol (5D), grenade (5D), wetsuit, breather mask.

The Renegade Caves

Once the battle is over, the characters will need to enter deeper into the renegade caves to recover Barani's datacard. Yith will require a Moderate *persuasion* roll to calm down, but she seems to be in remarkably better spirits after the combat. Allow characters to patch themselves up if wounded. If using medpacs other than the ones Odrion gave them, increase *first aid* difficulties by one level for working underwater.

As the characters move deeper into the caves, they find more dead renegades. In all, the hunters killed more than 35 Sedrians. The sound of the battle has chased off all remaining razorts. As the characters move down the murky caves, have them generate a Moderate *Perception* check. If successful, they will notice a break in the cloudy water, indicating recent movement.

The Survivor

Inside the small room, an adolescent Sedrian cowers behind a tarp of giant sea-leaves. It takes a Difficult *persuasion* roll to calm him down, or an Easy one if the warrior monks accompany the characters.

The boy is Pruss, the son of a Sedrian renegade. He had heard his father speak of how off-world technology would empower their people, so he braved the "cursed" garrison to retrieve an item of technology. He had no idea it would result in the slaughter of his village. Pruss will communicate this in broken sobs. If asked for the datacard, he points to a clear, glassy curved shell containing a rounded fish. The shell, overturned in the ran-

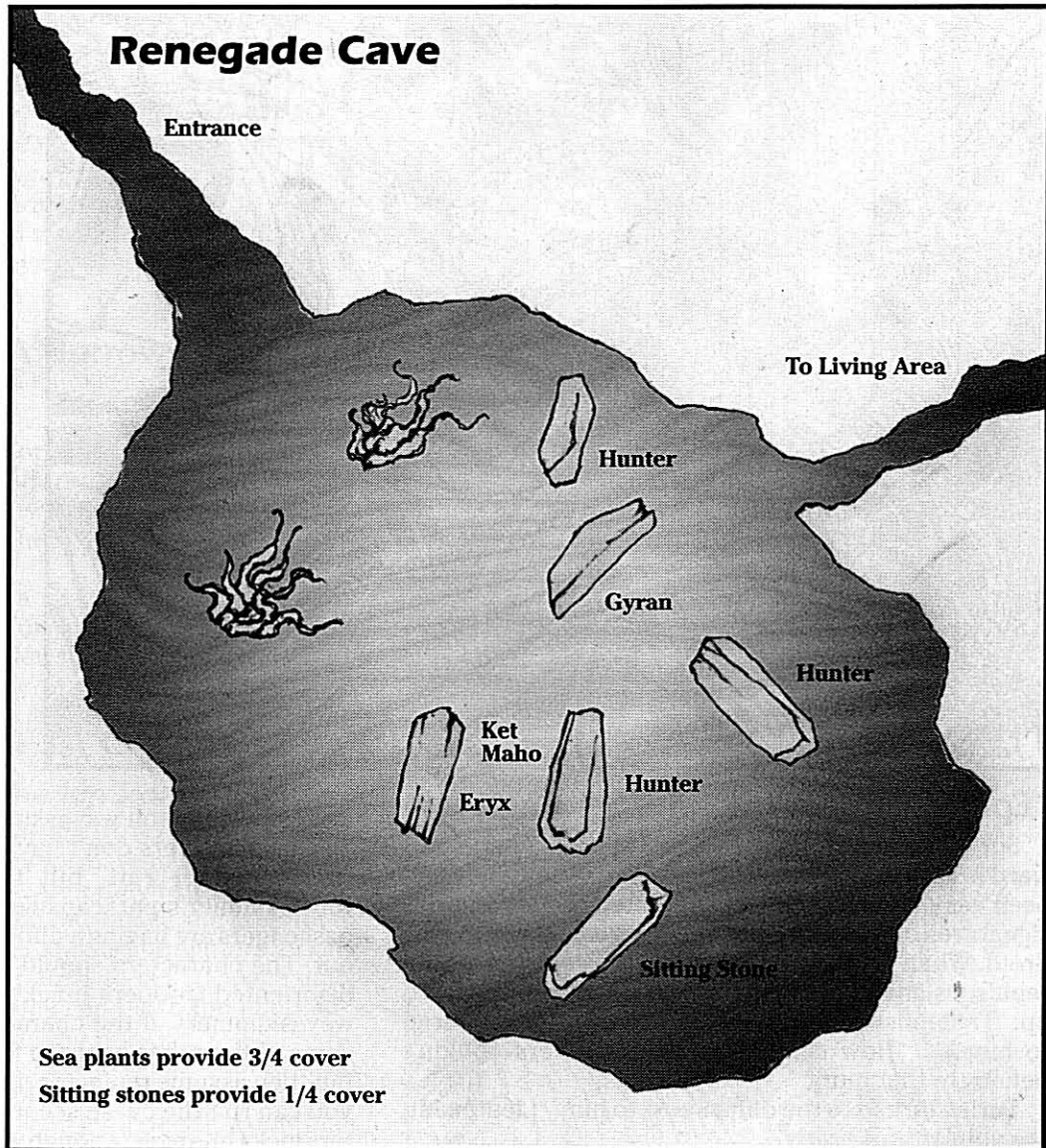
sacked room, parts easily. The fish, startled, tries to flit away but can be caught with an Easy *Dexterity* roll.

The fish is a pouchfish, and when rubbed behind the gills, opens a rounded brood pouch. Inside rests the plastic datacard.

Throughout the proceedings, Yith must be forcibly stopped from throttling the young Sedrian (Moderate *Strength* rolls, or use the slaver collar).

Healing Time

If the characters fulfill Odrion's request of aid, they can first roll *search*. A Moderate roll produces nine survivors, a Difficult roll produces 12 survivors, while a Very Difficult roll finds 24 survivors. Two-thirds of the Sedrians are wounded, while the final third are incapacitated. Pruss is also wounded. The warrior monks help with the healing, remaining behind to watch the wounded and wrap the dead in sea-leaves.





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Episode Three: Imperial Splashdown

Surlev smiled as he glanced at the *Ion Storm*'s forward sensor array. The battle in the shallow seas had been easy to find once he pinpointed the repulsorlift signatures of a speeder raft and what appeared to be a droid. When the blaster-fire finally ceased, he saw the repulsor signature flare again as the speeder raft started up. "That must be where Yith hid the list," he muttered to himself. "How clever. Even our sensors couldn't penetrate that murk."

Surlev turned to the officer next to him. "Lieutenant, are your troops ready?"

Surlev's young assault officer answered briskly, "Yes, sir. The new equipment is fully charged, inspected and ready for use. The mercenaries won't have a chance, Commander."

"Excellent. Order the drop," Surlev wrung his hands nervously. He wouldn't rest easy until the list was safely delivered to Imperial Intelligence, no matter how great the confidence of his subordinates.

Sea Chase

The beleaguered characters should now have the card out of the renegade cave and up on the surface. Unfortunately, this is just what Commander Surlev, watching above from the *Ion Storm*, has been waiting for. Surlev's orbital spyprobes easily detect the characters' actions and he dispatches a strike team immediately.

Surlev's seatroopers have outfitted themselves for this mission, having stopped by an Imperial depot en route to requisition the appropriate equipment. The seatroopers and their gear fall out of the sky around the renegade camp just as the characters have pulled the datacard out of the murky depths. As soon as they cut free from their twinpod paracapsules, the troopers give chase with their single-person waveskimmers.

The characters don't have a chance of escaping on their speeder raft, but fortunately, one of the waveskimmer's paracapsules malfunctioned, and the passengers are having a difficult time cutting their way out. The characters should be able to take out these disoriented troopers quickly and capture two of the waveskimmers. If the characters attempt to take out some of the other boats to forestall pursuit, let them, but then assume replacements fall from the sky so that you can run the chase scene below. Allow the characters lucky hits to get enough waveskimmers: two people

can ride a skimmer. Be sure to award the characters for their quick thinking later on.

As soon as the characters start moving, the chase is underway. The sea is fairly open terrain, but the wind and tide have picked up, creating ocean waves moving laterally across the characters' vector. This creates a terrain varying from Easy to Moderate.

It is recommended you run this chase cinematically, forgoing accurate measure of placement and location, since all involved are using the same vessels with the same performance. Have the characters generate *repulsorlift operation* totals, keeping rough track of their relative distances. Describe the crashing waves and whitecaps that speed by, how one of the character's blaster shots takes an Imperial repulsor, dashing the speeder and its pilots in the drink, and so forth. The characters have just come out of a tight, gruesome firefight underwater. Let them have fun and excitement with this water chase.

6 Imperial Waveskimmers. Speeder-scale, maneuverability 2D+1, move 70; 200 kmh, body strength 1D+2.

6 Aquatic Assault Stormtroopers. *Dexterity 2D, blaster 4D, brawling parry 4D, Knowledge 2D, Mechanical 3D, repulsorlift operation 3D+2, Perception 2D, Strength 2D+2, brawling 3D+2, swimming 4D+2, Technical 2D.* Move: 10, 12 (swimming). Blaster speargun (blaster: 5D, 0-10/50/100 [air] 0-5/25/35 [underwater], speargun: 3D, 0-5/15/25 [underwater]), concussion grenades (5D/4D/3D/2D), seatrooper armor (+1D physical and energy, increases *swimming* by +2D).

Episode Four: A Narrow Escape

"S-sir?"

Surlev glared into the viewscreen. The overconfident lieutenant stood before the transmitting lens. "I already know of your failure, Lieutenant," he said through gritted teeth.

The young officer searched desperately for excuses. There were none.

Surlev hesitated only a second before he quietly growled, "We will return for you later."

Surlev flicked off the viewscreen and turned to his flight officer. "Launch the StarWings. Tell them ion weaponry only. And don't fail me or the governor. I've had enough failure for one day."

Escaping the Ion Storm

The characters should be able to return to their ship without incident. Now, they will have to run an Imperial gauntlet, this time in space. After they're secure aboard their craft, they can blast off into space and attempt to escape the Imperial cruiser and its starfighters lurking above. As usual, ships will have to get 50 space units away from Sedri before they can make the jump into hyperspace.

Surlev, in an attempt to disable the thieves' ship without destroying it and its precious cargo, has dispatched two StarWings assault gunboats. His only plan

is to rely on his best pilots to disable the ship's engines and then board the drifting vessel once it is defenseless.

Assault Gunboat

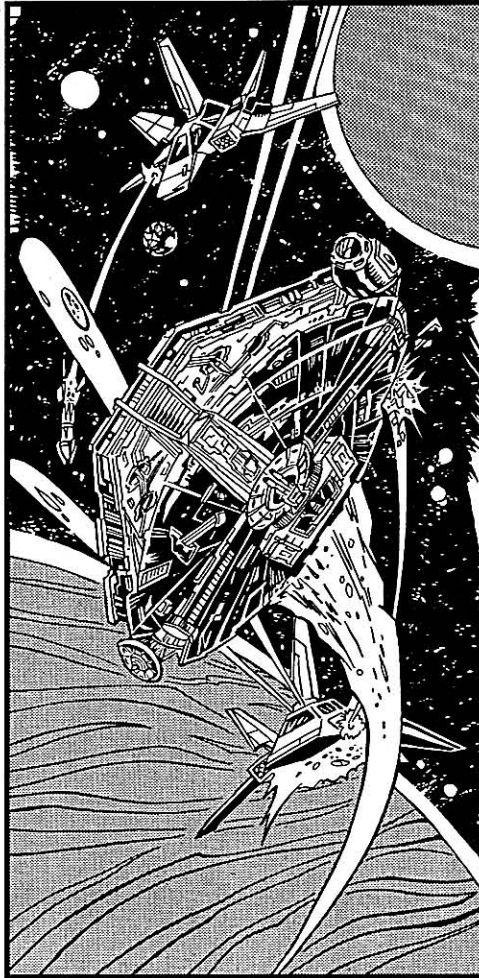
Craft: Modified Cygnus Spaceworks Alpha Class Xg-1 Star Wing
Type: Assault fighter/gunboat (refitted weaponry)
Scale: Starfighter
Length: 15 meters
Skill: Starfighter piloting: Star Wing
Crew: 1
Crew Skill: Starfighter piloting : Xg-1 Star Wing
Cargo Capacity: 110 kilograms
Consumables: 1 week
Cost: 125,000 (new), 75,000 (used)



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Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1
Nav Computer: Limited to four jumps
Maneuverability: 3D
Space: 8
Atmosphere: 365; 1,050 kmh
Hull: 3D+2
Shields: 2D
Sensors:
Passive: 20/0D
Scan: 40/1D
Search: 60/2D
Focus: 3/3D
Weapons:
1 Double Laser Cannon
Fire Arc: Front
Crew: 1
Skill: Starship gunnery
Fire Control: 1D+2
Space Range: 1-3/12/25
Atmosphere Range: 100-300/1.2/2.5 km
Damage: 4D
1 Double Ion Cannon
Fire Arc: Front
Crew: 1
Skill: Starship gunnery
Fire Control: 1D+2
Space Range: 1-3/7/36
Atmosphere Range: 100-300/700/3.6 km
Damage: 4D+2
1 Ion Torpedo Launcher
Fire Arc: Front
Crew: 1
Skill: Starship gunnery
Fire Control: 2D+1
Space Range: 1/3/7
Atmosphere Range: 50-100/300/700
Damage: 7D (ionization)

Joe Corroney



Episode Five: The Payoff

The two lieutenants stood at attention on the flight deck, Surlev with his back to them. The rest of the bridge crew waited nervously, trying not to get caught staring up at their livid Commander.

"You have both failed me," he grunted. "There are other commanders in this Navy who would drop you from orbit back onto that pitiful excuse for a planet." Surlev turned to face them and shook his head at the shamefaced flight officer and assault leader.

"And don't think I'm not tempted. But right now I need every trooper I can find. We've got to figure out where these...mercenaries have gone and recover that datacard. If you can make up for your mistakes, I'll leave the Sedri incident off your records. If you don't, you'll have no need for future records.

"Do we understand each other, gentlemen?"

A Safe Respite

Having eluded the Empire's grasp, the characters need only make the jump back to Sriluur. Once in Meirm City, they can call Kalend on the comlink she gave them. Yith will protest violently, urging the group that the card is worth far more than whatever their agent is paying them. Should they become convinced and contact Kalend with new demands, she will insist

on meeting them in person. Kalend will come to their ship if the party suggests no other location.

Kalend will pay the party their reward and be on her way unless Yith has persuaded them to ask for more. In this case, Kalend has been authorized to give the group up to 20,000, but not a credit more. Should they stonewall her, Kalend will become very agitated and threaten to spread the word that the characters are unreliable and treacherous agents. If that threat doesn't work, she'll storm off, claiming that she will attempt to contact the client and negotiate the group's demands. This will incur the wrath of not only Kalend and Mal Biron, but Vigo Sprax as well. This had best be avoided.

Yith's Last Chance

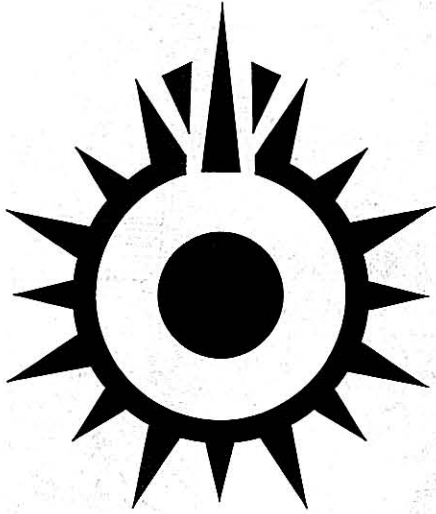
Yith knows this is likely the best opportunity she'll have to get the datacard back. As soon as she gets the chance, she'll try again to attack the character with the control box, get a weapon and hold one of the characters hostage. If successful, Yith demands the group give her the card and a speeder. Given the chance, she'll kill everyone and escape. Otherwise she'll be more than happy to jump in a speeder and make a run for it.

Yith will probably not be successful. If she is, she'll head out to the camp where she last left her mercenaries. The characters can catch her there if they hurry.

The goal for the gamemaster is to eventually get the datacard back into Kalend's hands. With luck, the characters will receive their payment and turn over the card after only a short battle with Yith. The characters should be rid of the Barani List and gained greater favor with the watchful eyes of Mal Biron and Vigo Sprax. Until the next adventure, that is....

Adventure Rewards

Give the characters six to ten Character Points for finishing this adventure. Don't forget to add in any individual awards for good roleplaying. If, during the numerous combat scenes that occurred in this adventure, the players came up with something truly innovative—an alternative to simple shooting and dodging—award extra Character Points as appropriate.



The Barani Conspiracy

Part Three

Code- breaker

"The bounty hunters our agents employed were defeated, Prince Xizor," Guri said flatly.

"Mal Biron's crew is a resourceful bunch." Xizor folded his fingers and studied the monitor set into his marble desk. "No matter. Sprax will have the list back soon enough. I will reprimand him severely for this inconvenience, but he will not be removed from his position."

Guri nodded, sensed that Xizor was finished with her and left the room.

Prince Xizor turned on his personal HoloNet node and contacted his new spy in Vigo Sprax's organization. "Are you there?" he said quietly.

The voice answered immediately. "Yes, sir."
"Report."

"The Empire hired a group of bounty hunters to hunt our team, but our team escaped. They then outran an Imperial cruiser."

Xizor grinned, amused at the spy's error. It was not Imperial hunters, but his own that faced off against Sprax's underlings, but he did not expect a girl as young as her to understand such machinations.

Xizor would not quibble over this minor mistake, however. Vigo Sprax's weakness for taking in street youths had provided the Falleen Prince with an otherwise excellent spy. It was rare that Xizor communicated directly with one of his spies, but Millicent did not know with whom she was speaking, and it amused Xizor to watch the youth's naked ambition grow as she became more entangled in Sprax's affairs.

"Thank you, Millicent. That will be all for now." Xizor turned off his HoloNet node and smiled as he turned his attentions away from this minor misadventure and back to Darth Vader.

Schemes within schemes, he thought.

Adventure Background

Prince Xizor has followed the trail of the Barani List closely. Fortunately for Vigo Sprax, his scheme to recover the list through the characters has so far gone

well enough. Xizor did not want to replace the loyal Sprax, but had the Vigo's agents failed, he would have had little choice but to disassociate himself in case the Empire discovered Sprax was the head of a criminal empire that secretly ruled the Sisar Run—among many others areas.

However, Sprax is again in peril. Shortly after Kalend took possession of the datacard, she was forced to turn it over to Ujin Voli, Jatayus Outbound's bitter enemy. When the pirate tried to read the card, he discovered that it was encoded and could only be read by joining it with a codebreaker card. Voli is convinced, correctly, that the card will be found back on the ruined colony of Yen-2.

Adventure Synopsis

Soon after turning over the datacard to Kalend, the characters get word from Mal Biron that she has gone missing. This leads them to Kalend's apartment in Meirm City where they find the coordinates to one of Ujin Voli's hideouts deep in the Sriluur wastes.

The minions left at Ujin Voli's hideout have no idea what's going on. They claim their leader blasted off into space only a few hours earlier, with no word as to his destination. All they know is that he was brought a datacard and soon after blasted off into space. The minions also reveal that the agent who brought him the card was sent out into Temptation Canyon to die.

The agent is, of course, Kalend Thora, who knows exactly where Ujin Voli has gone. When she is rescued from a bandigo attack, she tells the characters that the card she brought to Ujin Voli was only half of an encrypted file. The pirate threw her into the canyon and set off for Yen-2, convinced the other decrypt card was still somewhere amid the ruins of the blasted station.

The action moves to Yen-2, the ruined mining colony deep in the Verde asteroid belt. The characters must beat Ujin Voli and his minions in a scavenger hunt for the codebreaker. Both sides must then contend with



Joe Corroney

the codebreaker. Both sides must then contend with Imperial spacetroopers from the *Ion Storm*. Surlev follows the same trail the characters followed and refuses to let the Barani List slip through his grasp again.

The winner of the scavenger hunt is the team who discovers that not only is Barani's decrypt card still on station—but so is Neil Barani himself.

And another team searches the station...a party whose role will lead to the shocking conclusion of the trilogy.

Episode One: A Friend in Need

Play this episode as a direct continuation from the last adventure. Perhaps the characters went to the Deep Spacer or have an afternoon tea with Torsha. Maybe they're sitting in their ship, dabbing at any wounds Limna Yith inflicted. No matter where they are, a scaled-down humanoid droid with exposed piston workings—an ASP or "thindroid"—approaches the characters. It hobbles forward, its silvery skin pock-marked and dented from Sriluur's winds, and hands them a datapad.

The characters can question the ASP droid all they like, but the simple machine only answers "affirmative" or "negative." The droid is a courier from a local

subscriber house of Subscape Communications. The message came from a private node somewhere near the Salin Corridor.

Finding Kalend

There are several ways the characters can find Kalend's address in a hurry.

If the characters take their cue from Mal's message—that he tried to contact her—they may follow the droid back to Subscape Communications. There, in a simple one-story blockhouse with an immense armored transmission tower resting atop it, it takes an *Easy bureaucracy* roll—and deft roleplaying—to convince the Weequay technicians that the characters are friends and employees of Mal Biron. Once this is accomplished, they can find the location of Kalend Thora's private transponder, in her apartment.

The characters can take a less-direct approach, and search for her name in a local telecom directory. Unlike open-air signals that sometimes get lost with the ship-traffic and metal structures of the city, a telecom is a fiber-optic network buried beneath the Sriluur hardpan, connecting homes and businesses. Relatively few subscribe to this service. A *Moderate computer programming/repair* roll finds Thora's answering service. With this information, a character can then slice into the local

From the Databanks of Mal Biron
Subscape Communications message: DS22.44112 HLLJ. FF2

My friends,

My efforts to contact Kalend have failed. I am afraid she is missing and the object you delivered to her has been lost.

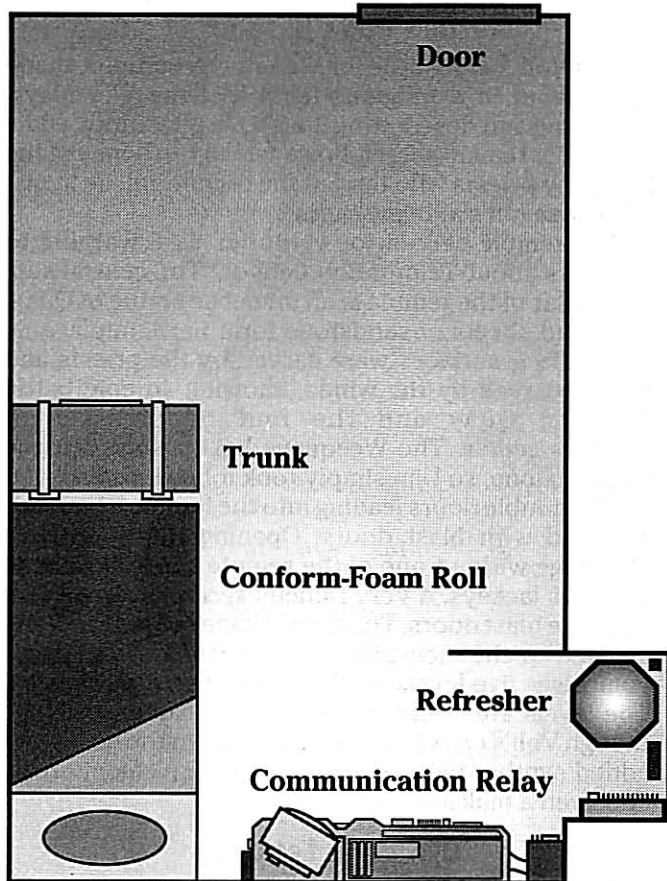
I am currently en route to help, but by the time I arrive, I fear that Kalend could be lost as well. You are those closest agents there. Please find her immediately.

Mal Biron.

telecom databases and find her address (Difficult *computer programming/repair* roll, +1D if a computer-interface droid attempts the task.)

As a final option, the characters can attempt to use the network of contacts they have built in Sriluur. While few will know the address, they will know the above procedures and suggest them; if the characters have

Kalend Thora's Apartment



already been unsuccessful at slicing into the networks, one of their contacts can provide directions to Kalend's apartment.

Kalend's Home

Near the center of Meirm City stands an apartment complex made up of little more than sleeping cubicles. The thick structure's slightly curving, windowless walls provides good protection from the frequent gravel storms.

Kalend's apartment is on the third tier of the four-tier structure. Her entire apartment is 2.5 by four meters. It contains a sleeping conform-foam roll, a small autochef, a recessed refresher, a spacer's trunk and an impressive communications array. The trunk requires a Moderate *security* roll or a Difficult *Strength* roll to pry open. Inside is a selection of expensive wardrobe—shimmersilk dresses and capes.

The communications array includes a telecom port, with message display (three messages, all hang-ups). Beside that is a standard open-air comlink which is dedicated to receive the comlink she gave the characters earlier. Finally, a subspace transceiver unit, bearing the logo of Subscape Communications, is included in the array.

The single clue leading to Kalend's location is on a datapad tucked beside her bed-roll. A Moderate *search* total finds the hastily stashed 'pad. The pad openly displays a series of numbers and glyphs. Anyone making an Easy *astrogation* roll realizes that these are standardized planetary coordinates. If the characters have a map of Sriluur or can make a Difficult *planetary systems* roll, they will place the coordinates in the heart of the wastes, a sparse, rocky desert region 170 kilometers away from Meirm City.

Who Goes There?

Once the characters retrieve the datapad, a burly Houk female—brandishing a blaster carbine—squeezes herself halfway through the doorframe to the apartment.

"I thought I told you thieving pirates to stay away from my business... I'm giving you 30 seconds to get out!"

If the characters try to hide the datapad before she sees it, it will require a Moderate *hide* roll. Otherwise, the Houk will demand that the characters drop it. If the scene erupts in gunplay, the characters should not try to kill the Houk (she's only doing her job), and she will squeeze off one wild shot before running away and calling the cops.

Houk Caretaker. All stats 2D except: *Dexterity* 1D+2, *blaster* 3D+2, *Strength* 2D+1, *brawling* 4D+2. Move: 8. Blaster carbine (5D).

Episode Two: Temptation Canyon

Ujin Voli looked the female Duro over carefully. He admired the curve of her form, the smoothness of her face, the fire of her spirit. "Tell me," the pirate smiled, "how'd you like to live the pirate's life?"

Kalend spat at Voli's feet. "No, thanks."

"A disappointing answer," Voli sighed and shrugged his shoulders. If he had time, he would give her a tour of his desert hideout stronghold, built in a religious temple near Temptation Canyon. But he had other, more pressing priorities. He had some of his thugs drag Kalend inside.

There, he saw the assorted scum of his band waiting anxiously in the lower garage, trying to see what it was he had taken from Kalend. "Let's go on up to my room," the pirate smiled, with exaggerated body language. "I don't trust these scoundrels. I hear they're pirates!"

The bandits laughed. Kalend did not.

Voli and his closest companions, dragging the hapless Kalend along, finally reached the upper reaches of the hideout. "Now let's take a look at this." He slotted the datacard and peered at the screen of his 'pad as gibberish scrolled across.

One of Voli's band shook his head. "It's encrypted. From the look of the datapairs, I say it's split, too. There's got to be a decrypt card somewhere."

"Can't we slice it?" Voli growled.

The pirate shook his head. No doubt there were a few talented techs who could descramble the data on the card, but not in this group.

"Then we'll have to find the codebreaker. It's got to be on Yen-2." Voli tucked the card into the pocket of his flight suit and headed toward the exit. "Get ready to fly. We're going to the Verde system."

"What about her, boss?" said Voli's lackey.

"Feed her to the bandigos."

Back to the Wastes

Once again the characters must head out into the Sriluur wastes. The coordinates found on Kalend's datapad lead to a deep canyon halfway between Meirm City and Quay'kizac. The Weequay locals call this crevasse *Uurutche'zediev* or "Temptation Canyon" because of an ancient legend of water nymphs coaxing the moon god Quay into the crevasse and, transforming

into beasts and attacking him. In truth, the canyon does hold a large pool at the eastern end filled with valuable, drinkable water, but the length of the canyon and the creatures that inhabit it, including the legendary bandigos, are far too great a danger for most.

How the characters get to the coordinates is up to them. Flying in their ship requires a Moderate *bureaucracy* roll to get clearance to fly away from the spaceport and into the wastes. If the roll fails, the characters will have a 2,000-credit fine waiting for them at the spaceport. Conversely, the characters can rent a speeder from Torsha and proceed on land.

Ujin Voli's hideout is far from the bandigos' refuge. Kalend's coordinates lead directly to the pirate's lair, but finding a route into Temptation Canyon isn't easy. If the characters are land-bound they'll have to find the solitary trail leading into the canyon, some five kilometers distant. A character who makes a Moderate *survival: desert* or a Difficult *search* roll will be able to find the entrance in an hour. Otherwise it takes two hours to scout the many branches of the canyon.

If the group is airborne, they will see two of Ujin Voli's lackeys tinkering on a sailed skiff just outside their hidden stronghold. The group can set their ship down in the large open area just outside the pirate's hideout with an Easy *space transports* (or other *piloting* skill) roll. A Moderate roll is needed to land in more uneven areas of the canyon floor, but this will help the characters avoid detection.

Ujin Voli's Hideout

Ujin Voli, caring little for Weequay traditions, made his hideout in a religious temple of the Weequays, modifying and desecrating it with his pirate loot. Hideouts must remain secret, however, so the bones of the few Quay priests who tended the temple still lie in one of the canyon's side passages.

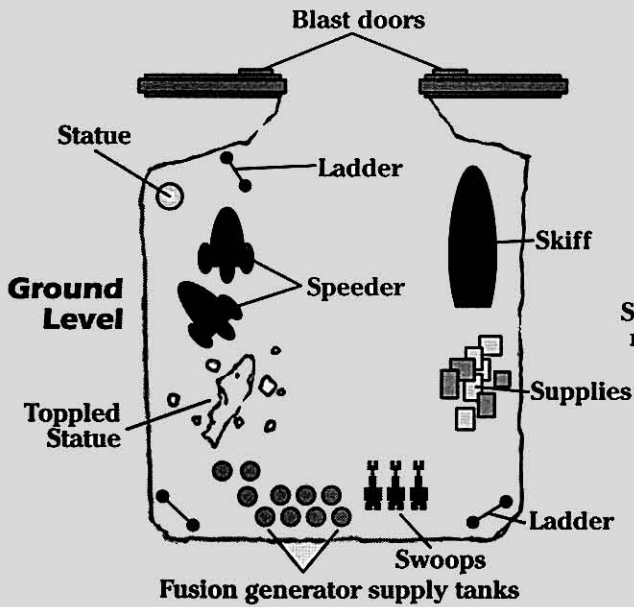
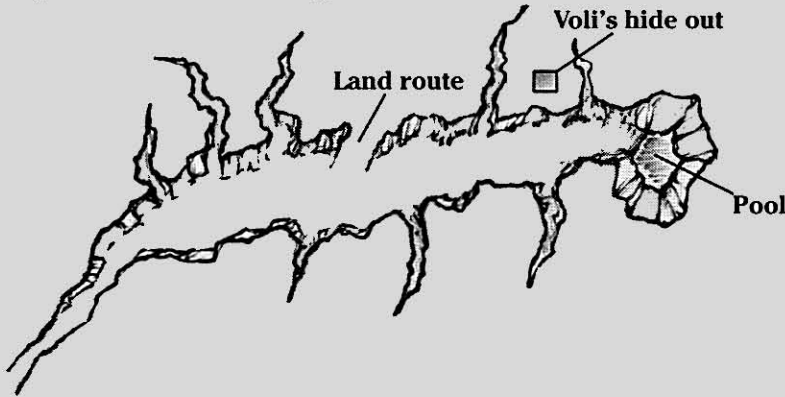
The temple served for centuries as a warning to travelers about Temptation Canyon. The central support pillar of the temple is an immense statue of Quay, and solid sheets of sandstone form hard, implacable walls. Their surfaces were carved by the priests and then recarved by the winds, showing an epic battle between Quay and the foul temptresses of *Uurutche'zediev*. The Weequays have always left the canyon alone, so Ujin simply took it for himself.

The double doors leading into the temple have been replaced with blast doors. Opening the doors is a challenge without one of the remote controls carried by Voli's lackeys. A Very Difficult *security* roll will also open the blast doors. The alarms have ceased functioning due to the elements. The interior of the temple comprises five levels, each of hardened clay flooring. The levels are connected by simple ladder wells, although Voli's crew have blasted holes in the floors and added syntherope ladders in more convenient areas, and even a makeshift lift.

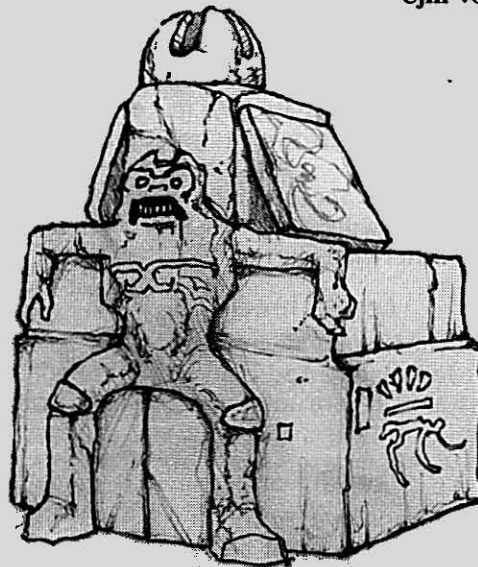
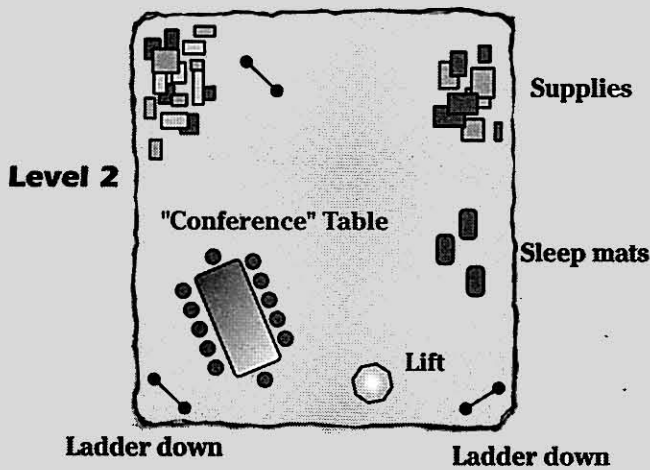
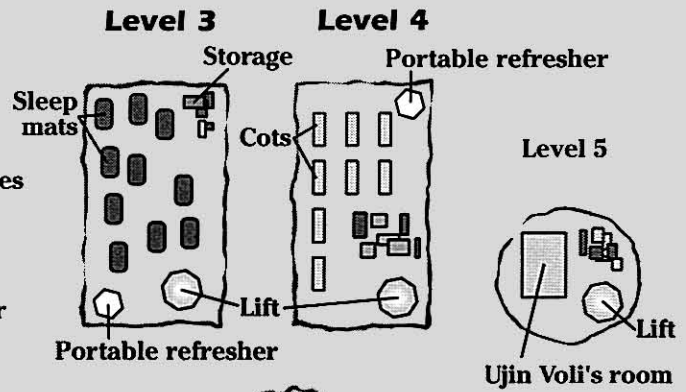
Ujin Voli's Leftovers

Ujin Voli and his crew left a few hours before the

Temptation Canyon



Uurutche'Zediev



lowest of his lackeys or his mechanics. The characters should have little trouble handling these pirates if they are clever.

A frontal assault might be more dangerous only because Voli has attracted quite a few hangers-on. If the characters make a lot of noise, the lackeys will make a barricade from the crates on level two and attempt to defend their home as best as possible. Running away is not an option since there is really nowhere to go.

The lackeys were around when Kalend brought her cargo to Voli, but he took it up to his personal quarters at the top of the hideout himself. Less than 10 minutes later, he had the girl thrown out into the canyon while he and the veteran pirates got the ships ready. As the characters progress through the caverns, have them learn about Kalend's fate through one of the lackeys. It may be from an injured, interrogated lackey, or (if the characters avoid combat) it may come from overhearing snippets of conversation.

12 Lackeys. All stats 2D except: *blaster 4D, brawling parry 4D, dodge 4D, melee combat 4D, melee parry 4D, repulsorlift operation 4D, search 3D, sneak 3D, brawling 4D.* Move: 10. Heavy blaster pistols (5D).

Ground Level

The pirates use the ground floor as a garage, hangar, and repair/modification facility. When the characters enter the complex, there are two landspeeders, three swoops and a cargo skiff. Assorted tools, ship, and vehicular parts also cover the floor. Large carved cairns have been knocked aside to make room for fusion generator supply tanks. Three lackeys are encountered in this area if the characters haven't alerted the entire hideout.

Level Two

This is one of Voli's many treasure rooms. Most of the crates packed in the level are filled with exotic spices, fabrics and blasters. The total value of all the merchandise in the room is well over 100,000 credits to the right buyers.

Besides the crates, the chamber also contains the hideout's generator, sleep mats for a few of the lowest lackeys and a beautiful hardwood "conference" table and mismatched chairs. The lift mounted near the southern wall provides access to the levels above.

Two of the lackeys will be found in this room unless they have been otherwise alerted.

Level Three

This is where the lackeys sleep. Most have their own sleep mat and a few assorted odds and ends. Four of the lackeys will be found in here unless they've been drawn into a fight.

Level Four

Ujin Voli's veterans live on this level. Each of the eight crew members has a cot and a footlocker. The footlockers require a Difficult *security* roll to open. Roll on the table below to determine any unusual contents

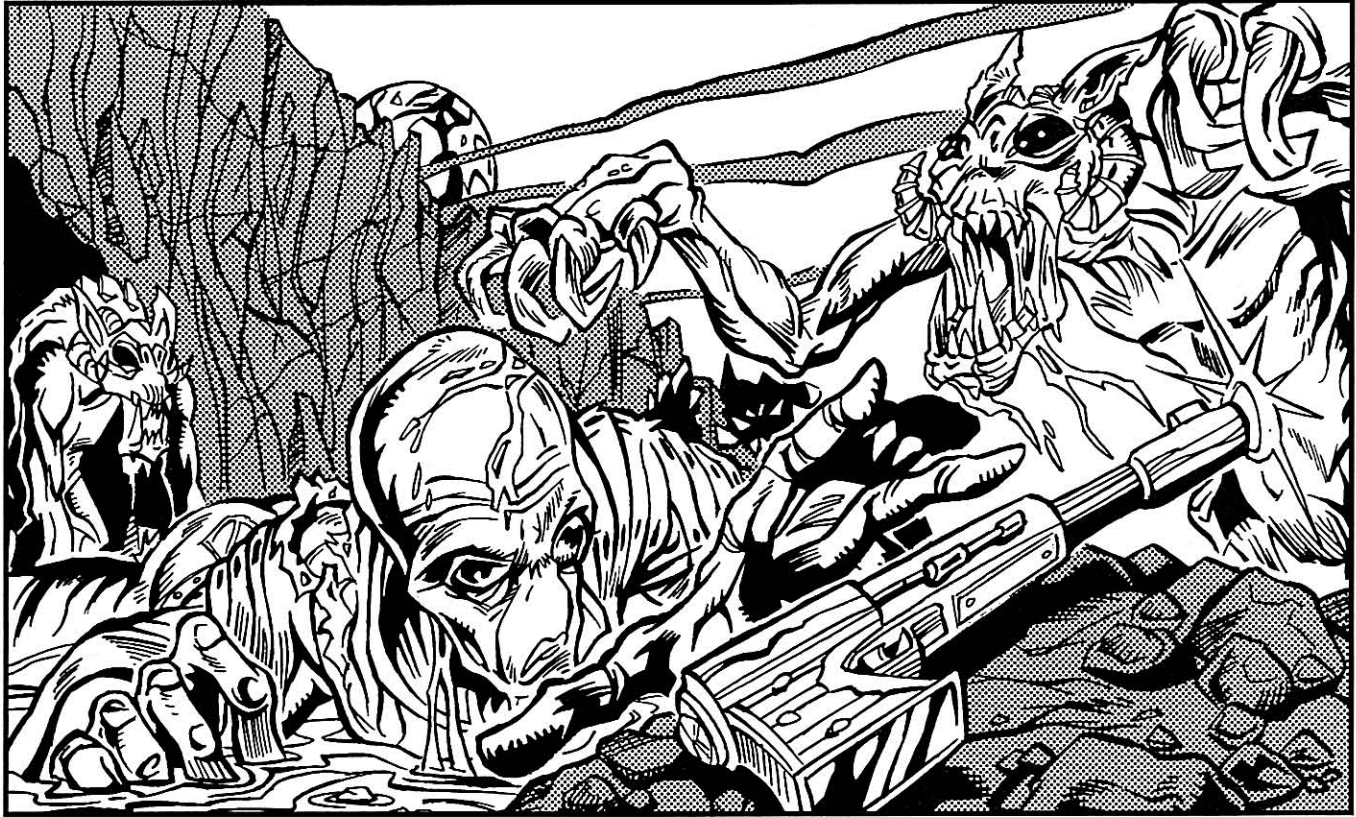
besides spare clothes and personal effects:

Level Five

This chamber, where the Weequay priests once communicated with Quay, is now Ujin Voli's chamber. An intricately carved open-air skylight tracks the moon's passage during the Weequay Month of Plenty. Voli's chamber has a beautiful antique brass bed, complete with plush red pillows and covers.



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Joe Corroney

with plush red pillows and covers.

Stacked atop a few empty crates are several objects of art worth 1D x 1,000 credits to a well-connected fence.

Episode Three: Canyon Rescue

Ujin Voli grabbed Kalend roughly, pulling her close. His head-cones registered her disgust, and it amused him all the more.

"I'm sorry to see you go, girl," he said with a less than sincere smile. "We could've had some fun together."

Kalend sat on the edge of an open-doored speeder. Voli had taken them into the back end of the canyon. Below her was a large pool of water, a fabulous treasure here in the wastes of Sriluur. It looked to be only a few centimeters deep all around, but there was enough water here to make a person rich in this region. Kalend absently wondered why no one had claimed it—but then she saw several creatures writhe from the sand.

"There's a few friends of mine I'd like you to meet," Ujin Voli laughed loudly and pushed Kalend out of the speeder.

She landed in the soft, sandy water with a splash. All around her, bandigos—large claw-armed, wrinkly-skinned sand-dwellers—started to move in. Kalend suddenly rolled over and pulled a hold-out blaster from her pant leg. She fired once at Ujin Voli and his speeder before the pirate managed to pull the vehicle away.

"I like a girl with spirit," he guffawed as he sped away. "Have you got a sister?"

Kalend spat at the diminishing form of the pirate. "Get away from me, you freaks!" she growled at the

bandigos, firing her blaster and dropping the closest.

"I'm not going to make this easy," she said and pointed her blaster at another one. She knew she only had four shots left.

Kalend's Predicament

Kalend was pushed out of the pirate's skiff into the pool near the nest of the feared bandigos. She managed to get atop a large outcropping and hide in a small crevice. She held the creatures off with her blaster as much as she could. When a bandigo approaches too close, Kalend heaves rocks at the creatures, which they return in earnest. When the characters arrive, a group of 11 bandigos have surrounded her and are just getting ready to make their move. Five others lie dead on the rocks below—the victims of her blaster.

11 Bandigos

Type: Aggressive omnivore

DEXTERITY 3D

Thrown weapons 4D

PERCEPTION 3D

Search 4D

STRENGTH 3D

Climbing/jumping: climbing 4D+2, digging 5D

Special Abilities:

Claws: STR+2D damage

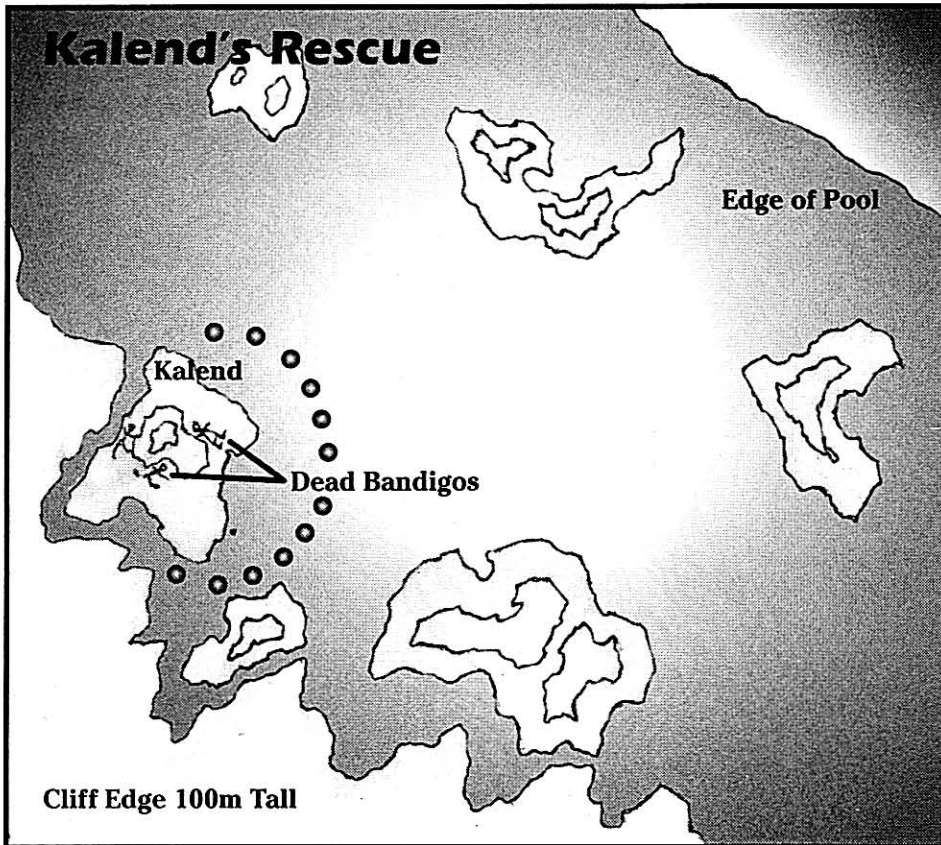
Stone: Bandigos hurl large stones for STR+1D damage. Use grenade ranges for throwing.

Move: 12, 9 (climbing)

Size: 1.4 meters at shoulder

Scale: Creature.

Capsule: Bandigos are long-necked quadrupeds with hooked



claws, wrinkled, dry skin and sinister howls. While they are incredibly fierce, they can also be incredibly cowardly. A bandigo will charge defenseless prey; however if the prey proves itself dangerous, the bandigo will turn tail and retreat to hurl stones at the target from a distance—preferably with the help of several companions.

Kalend Speaks

Kalend's rescue from the bandigos will make her more than willing to forego her usual discretion. She's battered and bruised from fighting with Voli and escaping the creatures, but she has suffered no lasting injuries. Kalend will try to straighten herself up and resume

- 1 Nothing of value.
- 2 A spare blaster pistol (4D damage).
- 3 An old broken lightsaber; a character can fix it in 1D days with a Moderate *lightsaber repair* roll. This item may only turn up once. If rolled again, re-roll.
- 4 A modified lectroticker lockpick that adds +1D to a character's *security* skill when at tempting to pick locks.
- 5 A thermal detonator (10D damage).
- 6 Jewelry or other valuables worth 1D x 100 credits.

Unless the hideout is alerted, one of the lackeys found in this room is attempting to get into the veteran's footlockers.

her cool professionalism as she tells the characters what happened, but her anger occasionally breaks through. Read the following as soon as she is safe:

"The datacard you brought me was encrypted! Ujin Voli roughed me up a bit to make sure I didn't have the codebreaker, but he knew I didn't. I was just as surprised as he was. He had his men drag me out here to die, but before he left he had to gloat in front of me. The fool told me he was going to Yen-2. He thinks the card we need to break the code is somewhere in the Verde system."

Episode Four: Asteroid Storm

"There it is, boss!" the navigator yelled excitedly.

Ujin Voli crawled off of his acceleration couch and wiped the sleep from his eyes. A giant asteroid swooped by as his ship, *Cones of Silence*, rolled right to

avoid it.

"By the Edge! You didn't tell me we were in the asteroid field!"

"We didn't want to wake you," the first mate grinned.

"Is there anything else you've failed to tell me?" Ujin Voli bellowed for effect.

The ship suddenly emerged into an "eddy" of sorts. Before them was the ruins of Yen-2.

The first mate's jaw dropped open. "Actually, it seems there is one more detail we forgot to tell you about. Look there, moving into the center. Imperials. Spacetroopers."

Ujin Voli cursed in seven different tongues. Which was worse, the Empire's elite troops or the vengeance of Vigo Sprax? There was no real question. If he could find the codebreaker he would at least have some leverage over Black Sun.

"Take her in," he said angrily.

A Target-Rich Environment

Ujin Voli has several hours head-start on the characters. Knowing this, they should rush back to Meirm City and head for the Verde system as quickly as possible. Kalend Thora opts to stay behind to meet Mal Biron when he arrives.

Meanwhile, on the *Ion Storm*, Imperial spies on Sriluur have learned of Ujin Voli's involvement, perhaps even from the characters' actions. Even though the pirate had a head start, Surlev's fast cruiser arrived outside the Verde asteroid belt only a few minutes later. Com-

mander Surlev has already sent in an assault craft loaded with spacetroopers to search for the codebreaker and capture the original from the pirates. His TIE interceptors are patrolling the fringes to make sure no one escapes. Once they see the characters' ship, they'll think they're more pirates and chase them into the field. There are four TIE interceptors close enough to chase the characters into the asteroid field.

The Verde Asteroid Field

The Verde asteroid belt stretches for thousands of kilometers. Smaller rocks race wildly through the field while larger ones lumber slowly along more predictable paths. Navigating the field is difficult, but veterans have learned how to ride the "eddies" caused by the larger asteroids. A character who knows this trick can reduce the difficulty level of all piloting rolls by one level.

Though the Verde Belt is deadly to the inexperienced, tough mining crews hauled a fortune out of the mineral-rich asteroids. Yen-2's crews were top-notch. They practiced rigorous safety procedures that kept the miners happy, healthy and alive. Neil Barani, the foreman, had been at the asteroid-mining game most of his life and knew how to run an operation without getting his people killed. His knowledge of how to deal with the Empire and Black Sun, however, was nowhere as complete.

Navigating the Field

The asteroid complex lies 45 units away from the characters. Each round, roll 1D. A roll of 1-2 means the asteroids are *light*, a roll of 3-5 means the asteroids are *medium* and a roll of 6 means *heavy* concentrations of asteroids. In addition to any combat maneuvering, each pilot must make a Moderate *space transports* roll,

modified by any other actions they are taking. Failure means their ship sustains damage. Damage from a *light* asteroid storm is 1D, a *medium* is 3D, and a *heavy* is 5D. Again, increase the damage +1D for every movement action beyond the first the ship was taking.

Yen-2

The mining colony is a prefabricated construction from Cirrus Colonies Incorporated. Barani recommended it to his fellow investors because of its cheap price, durability and efficient layout. The modules of the compound are anchored into the host asteroid and then connected to the central hub by flexible walkways. This allows the structures to be anchored against uneven surfaces so the builder doesn't have to attempt clearing a flat space on a spinning zero-gravity asteroid prone to strikes from other asteroids.

Cirrus Colonies structures are equipped with strong deflector shields to protect them from asteroid strikes. The colonies are often situated among large "mountains" to provide additional protection from lateral strikes. Even with the power out, Neil Barani's carefully chosen location has kept the station from suffering more than a few isolated strikes.

The Action

The characters must elude the TIEs and then make a landing in the ruined bay of Yen-2. Once inside, they'll need to avoid the Empire's spacetroopers and somehow capture the Barani List from Ujin Voli, all while trying to find the codebreaker. As they sneak and fight their way through the gravity-less station, the party makes a startling discovery—the Barani List is not what it seems. Also in the station is Neil Barani himself.



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Running such a large scene can get a little complicated, so this section uses a special system to help you keep track of all the gamemaster characters. You need to know where they've searched and where they'll go next. There are five teams to keep up with: the player characters, Voli's crew, two squads of Zero-G troopers, and another Black Sun team. You'll need a miniature for each team (or any other kind of marker) and a photocopy or quick sketch of the Yen-2 map.

Ujin Voli's Crew

Ujin Voli's ship is shown on the map. His crew starts in area A. Roll 1D to find out which room they are currently in. Every five minutes of game time, the pirates move on to the next highest numbered room. When they have finished in the A wing, they'll move to the B wing and so on. The pirates always use the wing tunnels as long as the Imperials occupy the docking bay (see below). Once the pirates finish searching areas A through D, they have no choice but to enter the docking bay. This means fighting the spacetroopers.

Voli's pirates open fire on anyone they see. They know they aren't a match for two teams of spacetroopers, however, so the pirates usually snipe for a round or two and then retreat. If it is impractical to continue their exploration in the direction they were previously moving, the pirates skip a wing and come back to it later. If they become trapped, the pirates blast a hole in the walls and move out onto the surface of the asteroid to seek cover.

8 Veteran Pirates. All stats are 2D except: *blaster 5D+1, dodge 4D+1, grenade 5D, melee combat 4D, melee parry 3D+1, streetwise 4D, survival 2D+1, sneak 3D+2, brawling 3D*. Move: 10. Vac-suit, blast vest (+1D physical, +1 energy), heavy blaster pistol (5D), knife (STR +1D).

Imperial Spacetroopers

Team One starts in the C wing. Roll 1D to find out which room they are currently searching. They then move as Voli's crew above, exploring the next highest numbered room every five minutes of game time. Once the team has finished searching the station, it changes its mission to "seek and destroy." They then go in search of the characters and pirates alike. They can sweep an entire wing (including all the rooms) every five minutes, starting with the A wing.

Team Two spends all their time searching the jumbled mess of the docking bay and the command tower.

The troopers are in two four-man teams. They have landed their assault craft away from the station, in the shadow of a nearby "mountain" for protection.

8 Zero-G Stormtroopers. *Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D, brawling parry 5D, dodge 4D, grenade 5D, missile weapons 5D, Knowledge 3D, survival 5D+1, Mechanical 3D, astrogation 4D+2, powersuit operation: spacetrooper armor 6D, repulsorlift operations 5D+2, space transports 5D+2, starship gunnery 4D, starship gunnery: proton torpedo launcher 5D+2 Perception 3D, search 5D+2, Strength 3D, brawling 3D, stamina 4D, Technical 3D,*

demolitions 3D+1, powersuit repair 4D+1, security 4D+1. Move: 11. Spacetrooper armor: +4D physical, +3D energy, -1D Dexterity. Space 1, Move 8, grenade launcher (*missile weapons* skill, 5-50/100/200 [in space: 0/1/2]), concussion grenades (ammo 30, 5D/4D/3D/2D, 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 torpedo launcher (*starship gunnery* skill, 6D, ammo 6, 25-100/300/700, 1/3/7 [space]), blaster cannon (6D, 10-50/100/150), laser cutters (3D starfighter-scale).

The Other Black Sun Team

A team of five operatives has been dispatched to recover the Barani List as well. Loyal members of Black Sun, their prime purpose is to locate the list and destroy it. Their employer, and the nature of the list, is explained in the last episode. Their current tactic is to seek and destroy, doing what they can to discourage those seeking the list. They begin in B wing, searching each room as described above. If they encounter anyone, they attack.

5 Team Members. All stats are 2D except: *blaster 5D, dodge 5D+2, grenade 5D+1, streetwise 4D+2, survival 5D+1, space transports 6D, brawling 5D+2, stamina 4D+2, security 6D*. Move: 10. Vac-suits, breath masks, blaster rifles (5D).

Maneuvering in Zero-Gravity

Yen-2 is without power. This means those who wish to explore it will need space suits to protect them from the vacuum. Maneuvering is also difficult if the group doesn't have the proper gear. There are basically three ways of maneuvering in zero-gravity: propulsion units, magnetic boots or the hardest method—pushing.

Normal propulsion units allow a character to move four meters per round if he makes any turns or pivots. A character going in a straight line with no turns or maneuvers can travel 10 meters. If he continues to accelerate, he will increase his Move by +2 each round, to a maximum of 30 meters per round. Moving over 10 meters a round can be dangerous inside the wreckage of Yen-2. Whenever a character does so, roll 1D. If the result is 5 or 6, the character has snagged a piece of twisted metal for 1D damage. Zero-G troopers can ignore this kind of damage, but characters wearing fragile space suits will have to be very careful.

Magnetic boots halve a character's Move. These keep the wearer firmly in place as long as he is within the station. They are useless on the surface of the asteroid. A character wearing magnetic boots can push off as well (see below).

Those without propulsion units or magnetic boots will have to push themselves along. Pushing characters must move from one surface or object to another in a straight line. A character pushing off the floor will hit the ceiling; someone that pushes off a wall will hit the opposite wall. As long as there are surfaces for the traveler to push off from, the character can travel half his Move per round. If an unanchored character is wounded,



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the force pushes him in the opposite direction the shot came from. This can occasionally send a victim flying into empty space, where he has no anchorage. In this case, the character had best have friends nearby.

The Station

Docking / Loading Bay

The center of the station bore the brunt of Bel Att's attacks. Bits of the station, rock from the foundation, scattered ore, and torn bodies form a thick and grisly cloud of debris. Team Two of the Empire's spacetroopers

is still milling about in here, blasting open storage crates and sifting through the wreckage. The guards watching the perimeter are very alert and will shoot anyone that isn't a fellow trooper on sight.

Ship Wreckage

Besides the smaller debris, four ships are still locked to the bay floor via their own magnetic skids. The largest is a short-range ore-barge. This ship picked up loads from each of the mine sites and brought them back to the station to await pickup from XTS or Jatayus Outbound long-range ore haulers. The ship is blasted apart from the inside—one of Bel Att's mercenaries threw a thermal detonator inside during the assault.

The second ship is a geologic scout vessel. It was directly under one of Bel Att's blasts and beyond repair. Barani's geological engineers used this craft to probe for valuable ores in the asteroids. It too lies in ruins.

The two other ships are shuttles used to take the miners from the station to their sites. Both of these are blasted as well.

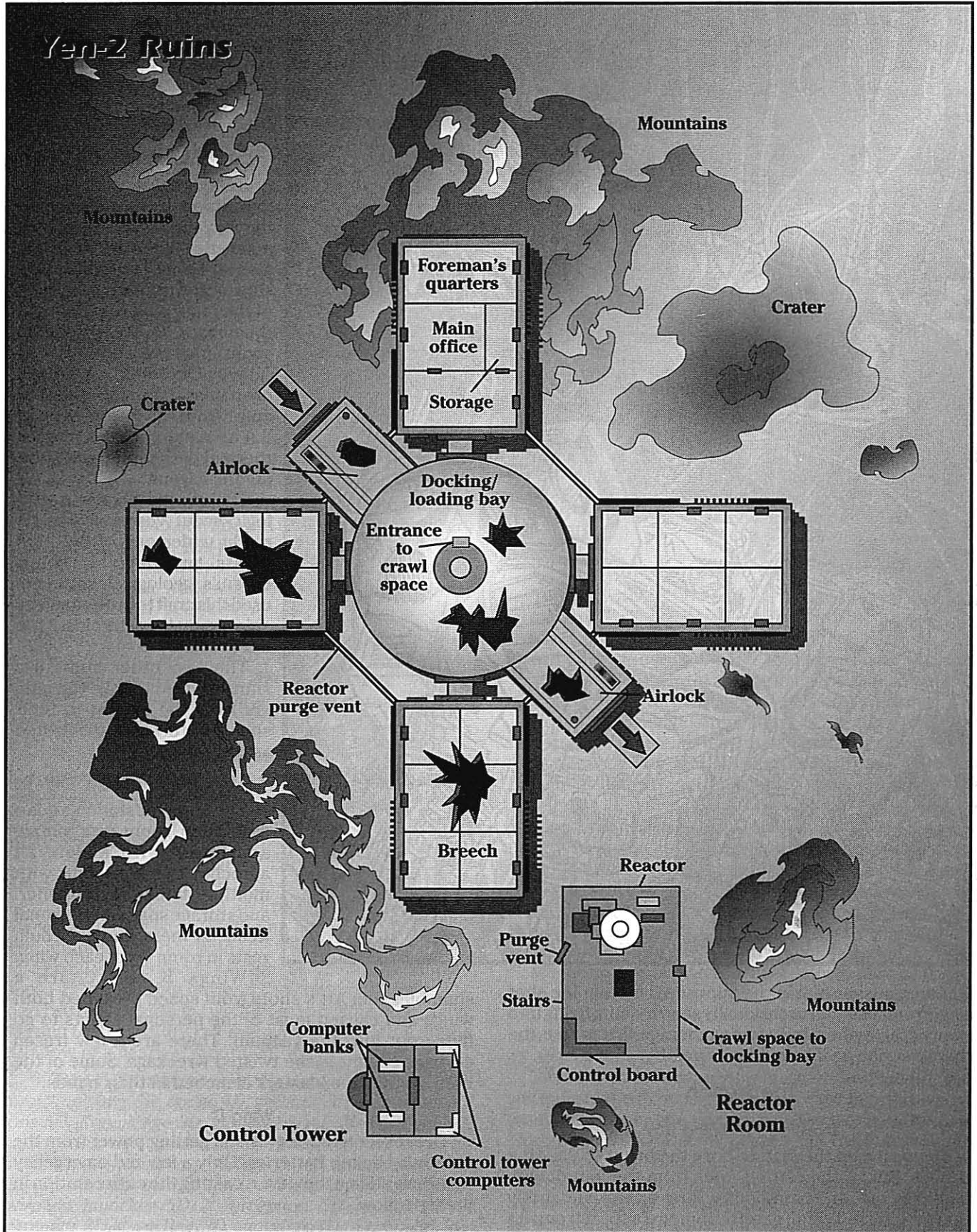
Wings A-C

These are the station's quarters. Each room is a simple apartment with a den, an autochef, two bedrooms with multiple bunks, a refresher, and storage space for personal items. A mess and rec-room rests in room six of each wing.

Wings B and C are a shambles. Bel Att's shots from space breached both wings and caused most of the personal effects to go flying out into the vacuum. There are a few frozen corpses caught in the twisted wreckage. Some of the bodies still have blasters clenched in their hands.

Wing D

The "executive wing" is still getting power from the station's backup batteries. Only a few red emergency lights are still on, however, casting the entire station in an eerie glow.



Conference Room

The middle of the floor holds 50 comfortable, well-spaced swivel-chairs complete with folding datapads. On the walls facing the chairs is a giant viewscreen. The mining staff used this room to brief their crews on new finds, procedures and even for entertainment. Now the conference area is in shambles. Seats still tumble slowly in the void, while glass on the ground kicks up into clouds when someone enters.

Storage

Life-support stores, air scrubbers and other sensitive gear are stored in this locked room. A Difficult *security* roll is required to temporarily route power into the lock and trigger it open.

Inside are some items the characters might find useful in defeating Ujin Voli and the Imperial troopers:

Weapons Locker: The first item the group sees is a weapons locker. Inside are eight fully-charged blaster pistols. It takes a Difficult *security* roll to bypass the keypad on the locker. It has a *Strength* of 6D, so a heavy weapon might also free the blasters.

Eight Mining Suits: Eight space suits are still folded in their original packaging. Strangely, all of the oxygen bottles are missing. (They're in the Foreman's Quarters.) The mining suits are tough and durable. Though they don't provide any real armor protection, they won't rip from scraping jagged rock or twisted metal.

Eight Pairs of Mining Boots: "Rockwalker" brand mining boots are renowned throughout the asteroid mining community for their durability and superb ability to grasp onto rough stone via metal hooks. These boots allow the characters to walk on the surface of the asteroid as if they were wearing mag-boots in the station.

Two Pairs of Mag-Boots: Repair crews use these when they have to temporarily disable power within the station. See the section, "Maneuvering in Zero-G" for a description of how these items work.

Four Cases of Flares: The miners often use magnesium flares to mark paths into new asteroid tunnels. There are 12 flares in each of the four cases. Flares can be used to blind Voli's crew or the other Black Sun team, but not the Imperial troopers (their helmets contain light-adjustment capabilities). If a flare is quickly thrown in front of a pirate's faceplate, the pirate must make a Moderate *Perception* roll; failure means he is blinded for 1D rounds. During this time all attributes and skills are reduced by -2D.

Six Laser-Cutters: These are the high-powered, short-range lasers the miners use to cut ore from massive, frozen asteroids. The cutters have a damage 6D, making them perfect for cutting through rock or walls. If used for combat, however, the laser-cutters are bulky and unwieldy, subtracting -1D from the attacker's *melee combat* roll.

Portable Fusion Generator: Nicknamed the "kettle" by those who swear by them, there are three Draxton-

Staging Tips: The Dead Mine

As the characters make their way through the wreckage of the mine, be sure to provide plenty of description. Remember, they're in vac-suits, floating along a canted hallway, the weak gravity playing tricks with their perception of "up" and "down." While they may be armed, one hand is assigned to carry a glowrod, which sends a shaft of light into the rock-dust, which is allowed to float free after years of resting on the deckplates. Have a piece of slowly tumbling furniture and other debris form a miniature star system, and describe the distant sounds of blaster fire, carried weakly in the very thin air. Describe the thud of back-up generators trying to come online, or the blood-red glow of rooms equipped with emergency lighting painting everything an infernal hue.

12 small-yield portable generators. With its wide array of adaptor cables, characters should be able to rig temporary power to most small systems (doors, computers, limited life support.)

Lifting Skeleton: This is the exoskeleton the crew used to lift cargo crates onto outbound ships. It has two extended arms ending in heavy clamps and a cage to protect the wearer from dropped cargo (1/4 cover, +1D armor.) The suit provides the user with 8D *lifting* power. The feet of the suit feature magnetic locks to give the user extra balance in gravity or to hold him down in zero-gravity, with a move of 8. The lifting skeleton is slow and clumsy, and is controlled by the *powersuit operation skill*. Characters using it must subtract -2D from *Dexterity* and all related skills. Powering up the suit requires an Easy *powersuit operation* skill. Use of the suit triggers its protective warning alarms. It will make little noise in the near-vacuum, of course, but its red flashing light will likely draw some attention.

Main Office

This was Barani and his executive staff's office. They kept their employment and geographic records on the computer systems here, as well as performing the mundane tasks of running the station. Two dead miners float in this room, killed by Bel Att's mercenaries.

Should someone want, they can rig backup power to the computer systems for up to 30 minutes. On the system is a map of the complex, as well as personnel files on all the miners. More importantly, in Neil Barani's personal database is a record of his transmission to the Empire several weeks prior to the start of this adventure. There is no record of the Empire's responses.

Foreman's Quarters

This was Neil Barani's quarters. The room was constructed with simple and functional furnishings. Its sole occupant added few personal effects: The foreman's work was his life.

When the characters begin exploring this area, they'll make a startling discovery. Read aloud:

Blankets from a bed, pillows and other items still tumble in the room. You have seen other objects moving in the station, but this debris spins faster than most.

A character who makes a Moderate *search* total can actually discern a "trail" through the myriad debris. It was left by Neil Barani. He patched the slash Yith cut into his suit after the attack that ruined the station, then passed out from his wounds for several days, during which time the Imperials searched the station and recovered the holocam images of Limna Yith.

Unfortunately for Barani, his unconscious form was believed to be one of the many dead miners floating in the wreckage and he was left alone. Since then he's survived only by switching batteries and oxygen tanks out of storage.

When the characters enter his quarters, Barani launches himself into the back bedroom and wedges himself against the ceiling. He won't be too hard to discover, however, as the spinning debris leads to him.

When he realizes he's pinned, the frantic-sounding Barani panics. Read the section below aloud, between gasps of air:

"Who are you? Which ones are you? You're not Imperials, that much I know... Are you Green's men? Huh? 'Cause if you are, then our deal is off!" At that, Barani makes a sick little chuckle, like what he said is very funny, and it should be obvious.

If the characters say they are from Black Sun or are employed by Mal Biron, Barani will continue.

"Oh...so you're not with Green...then you must be with the other Vigo...ah...what's his name...the alien one...the one that runs the Sisar. Blast it! You tell your boss! Tell him that Vigo Green's been trying to set him up! Tell him! Make sure he sends every hunter and pirate in his employ and that they fry that Green scum! He set me up!" (Barani begins to trail off) **"He set me up..."**

If the characters ask more about Green, Barani says:

"He said he had a way of making me rich. This station was gonna pay off big, but with what I had to pay Jatayus and XTS, I'd only be seeing a fraction of what I deserve. He said he had a way of getting out of your bosses' debt. He gave me a list...a list with all your names. He said that if I promised it to the Empire, they'd give me a single lump sum for the mine and the list...more money than I could ever have hoped to have made. Then Green would take back the list...but he never came...he never..."

Barani is fading quickly. The characters had best ask him where the codebreaker chip is.

"The codebreaker? Heh...breaking it in two was my idea...It's down in the core...there's a safe down there. But you know what?" (Barani, in his delusional

Maintaining the Drama

It is important for the dramatic ending of the story that it is the characters who discover Neil Barani. As such, you should fudge gamemaster character search attempts near this end of the station, and have them continue onward to the other wings. Or, if the player characters stumble across a gamemaster character search here, have a shoot-out take place in one of the outer chambers, and not near Barani.

state, motions a character forward, as if to share a secret) **"It won't be there much longer. I've got mining charges hooked up to the reactor...and they're set to go off any minute now...hee hee...hee..."** (His exhausted laughter disappears in a coughing fit.)

If the characters actually agree with Barani's original statement that they are agents of Green—his response will be:

"Well...tell your boss it's all over. And I really hope that he's here...cause I've got mining charges hooked up to the reactor, and they're set to go off any minute now...and your precious list is sitting right on top of it..."

Neil is close to death and his spacesuit is rapidly losing oxygen. If allowed, he'll wander out of the room and head onto the surface of the asteroid. Committed to his fate, Barani only wants for his life to end among the rocks he spent so many years digging away at.

Neil Barani is a human in his late forties. He has a sturdy build, chiseled features and pepper-gray hair. He is stern but fair, with intelligence gained from experience and hard knocks. When the characters meet him, he is considered wounded twice for game purposes, but is beyond healing.

Neil Barani. All stats 2D except: *blaster* 3D, *alien species* 4D, *bureaucracy: Empire* 4D, *business: mining* 6D, *intimidation* 6D, *survival: Zero-G* 5D, *value* 4D+1, *willpower* 4D, *astrogation* 5D, *communications* 5D, *ground vehicle operation: mining crawlers* 5D, *powersuit operations* 6D, *repulsorlift operation* 5D, *sensors* 5D, *space transports* 5D+2, *starship gunnery* 5D+2, *starship shields* 5D, *bargain* 4D, *command* 5D, *investigation* 4D, *search* 5D, *brawling* 5D+1, *stamina* 4D, *computer programming/repair* 7D+2. Move: 10. Space-suit, with mag-boots.

To the Reactor

With only the vague time frame of "a few minutes" the characters had best get to the reactor to disarm the charges. If the characters express doubt of being able to do anything down there, have them make an Easy *value* roll. That tells them that it is not the reactor set to explode, but rather the mining charges. Furthermore, mining charges have numerous failsafes to shut them down before they go off...if they hurry, they

Transmission 1

Independent Subspace Unit INDI.441 38:9:22
TRANS 1233 Proceeding... connecting ... established. SENDCODE NOW.
To: Imperial Outpost Aurek-Two
From: Yen-2, Verde system

Sirs,

We have discovered something of vital importance to the Empire and need to speak with someone in the Imperial Resource Procurement Bureau. Please forward this message to the appropriate authorities as soon as possible.

Neil Barani, Foreman, Yen-2 Mining Colony, Verde system

Transmission 2

Independent Subspace Unit INDI.441 38:9:33
TRANS 1234 Proceeding... connecting ... established. SENDCODE NOW.
To: Imperial ReProBu Major Stipling
From: Yen-2, Verde system

Major Stipling,

We have discovered a rich vein of doonium. We have decided to keep this discovery secret for fear of criminals in our system. Please contact me at once to discuss terms for the sale of our find.

Neil Barani, Foreman, Yen-2 Mining Colony, Verde system

Transmission 3

Subspace Unit INDI.441 38:9:34
TRANS 1233 Proceeding... connecting ... established. SENDCODE NOW.
To: Imperial ReProBu Major Stipling
From: Yen-2, Verde system

Major Stipling,

Your terms are unacceptable. We would require double that figure to set up an exclusive contract. If you could come to the station and test our find yourself, I believe you will understand.

Neil Barani, Foreman, Yen-2 Mining Colony, Verde system

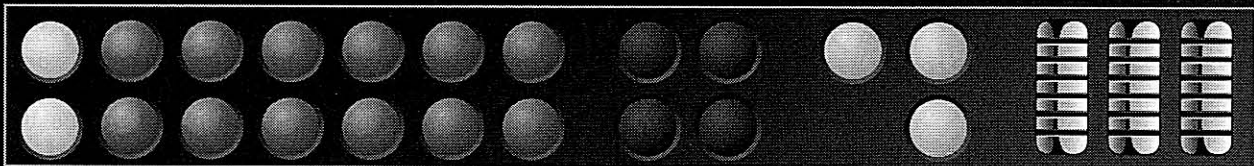
Transmission 4

Independent Subspace Unit INDI.441 38:9:35
TRANS 1235 Proceeding... connecting ... established. SENDCODE NOW.
To: Director Tasin, Jatayus Outbound, Novor system
From: Yen-2, Verde System

Director,

After careful consideration, I do not believe it in my interest to ship via Jatayus Outbound anymore. I am giving you three standard weeks notice that I am terminating our shipping contract, effective immediately. I have entered a new partnership that no longer requires your services.

Neil Barani, Foreman, Yen-2 Mining Colony, Verde system



should be able to stop the explosion.

Rather than going the long way to the reactor (through the docking bay), an Easy *Perception* check will alert the characters to an alternate path. Located between the wings are a number of recessed reactor purge conduits. These are emergency systems used to purge excess reactor build-up, which is then vented into space. These circular crawlways are smooth, and were it not for the zero-gravity, the characters would



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certainly tumble at a fast rate through the tunnels.

Sliding through the tunnels is an exhilarating but short trip, leading to a wire-mesh opening that must be cut open. The conduit opens up to an anteroom to the reactor. This area is almost completely devoid of atmosphere, but it is lit with deep-red emergency lighting. Off to one side, however, a sliver of brighter light indicates the presence of someone else.

Voli's Last Stand

As the characters leave the conduit, and head towards the light, read the following:

In the near-vacuum of the reactor chamber, there is a sudden crack that is more felt through the deckplates than actually heard. A flash accompanies the almost-sound, and over your general comlink frequency, you hear a gruff voice cackle.

"I've done it! I've done it! Give me the chip...."

Peering around the corner, you see a space-suited Gotal looking at a datapad. The small computer screen casts a green glow that pitifully attempts to compete with the lambent red lighting. "What's it say, boss?" asks the Gotal's henchman, the safecracker.

"It's decrypting...joining...there. Total Black Sun operatives, levels Vigo... Sisar Run operations, controlled through Jatayus Outbound, headed by Vigo Ujin Voli and Vigo Sprax...what?"

The safecracker asks, "What's wrong, boss? You're not a Vigo, are you?"

"Gahh!" The Gotal punches more keys on the datapad. "Lies! This is full of lies! Vigo Ackbar? Vigo Ploovo? This is worthless!"

With that, allow the characters to act. By now, they should know of Ujin Voli's reputation and that he is an enemy of their employers. They should know that they work for Jatayus Outbound in some degree and for Sprax. While they may not know for certain that their employers are Black Sun, this list should definitely add to some confusion.

During the battle with Voli, the red-emergency lighting cuts out completely and there are a few mechanical thuds that sound suspiciously like mining charges going off. Allow the characters a few moments of fear before bringing the lights, gravity and life support back on. Laser blasts cut through a door at the end of the corridor, and also cut down Voli and his safecracker.

Resolution

After the blaster bolts find their marks, four near-humans in sealed battle armor suits march out of the smoldering doorframe. They train their blasters on the characters but do not fire. Read aloud:

The armored men part as a stunningly beautiful human female walks into the reactor anteroom. She walks through the scalding heat of the door with no irritation and you cannot help but notice that she wears a simple spacesuit. She steps forward, looks at you, and says, "You are the agents hired by Kalend

Thora and Mal Biron. You are in the employ of Vigo Sprax and Black Sun." It is not a question. "You needn't worry about the reactor. The charges have been disconnected and the power restored."

She bends down, picking up Ujin Voli's datapad where it fell. "I see Vigo Green's attempt to discredit your employer has failed. He underestimated the resourcefulness of Sprax's hires. Unfortunately, Green chose a very foolish and very *spectacular* method in his plan. It will be hard to cover this one up. But we will. We always do."

The woman smiles, her full red lips revealing a glint of perfect white teeth. Her hand crushes the datapad as if it were paper. Plastic components litter the ground. "You have done well," she says. "Tell your employer that Guri has commended you." With that, she spins and heads back through the breach, her well-armed entourage following her.

Alternate Path

If the characters refuse to take the reactor conduits, and instead try to go through the docking bay, they will find a very strange site. The spacetroopers lie still, their armor cracked by heavy weapons. A group of four armored men stand around a figure-eight shaped vessel, very sleek in design. Eight sleek starfighters also line the bay, perched on their strange landing gear. The troopers train their weapons on the characters and order them to halt. If the characters refuse, the troopers go as far as to call them by name.

Then, from the reactor room below, Guri and the four other troops emerge, carrying a wounded Ujin Voli and his datapad. Have Guri and Ujin have a brief exchange, conveying the same information as in the above reactor room scene. Guri then kills Voli, and commends the characters on their diligence before departing.

The Truth

The scheming Vigo Green hatched a plan that would rid not only Vigo Sprax of his power, but also eliminate many other of his enemies. So secretive was this plan that not even Puhn knew. Green had his expert slicers concoct a false list of power, an ersatz organizational structure of Black Sun. Then he unleashed this list in Vigo Sprax's territory.

The slicers had made the list volatile so that it could only be scanned a handful of times and could not be copied. In a short while, the list would deteriorate to so much garbled data. When Green's spies told him of a disgruntled miner in the Sisar Run who was sick of paying protection money, yet sitting on a doonium mine, Green saw his "in."

He approached Barani, offering him a deal. Green explained Sprax ran XTS and Jatayus Outbound, and that if Barani gave Green a cut of the doonium profit, the Vigo would be able to make it so that the miner would never have to pay XTS or Jatayus again, make a handsome profit and retire somewhere safe and sunny. All Barani had to do was give the list to the Empire. The Imperials would scan the disk once, watch the data fall apart and pull what they could to destroy the criminals



Joe Corroney



Joe Corroney

counted on Barani skipping out on his Black Sun protection money a month early. He had not counted on Sprax's mercs double-crossing him and stealing the list. Finally, he had not counted on the list becoming such a popular item.

In desperation, Green sent a number of agents to hunt for the list and destroy it—the other Black Sun team aboard the station. Green hopes that word of this rather public failure has yet to reach Prince Xizor, before the human can rectify the situation himself.

Adventure Rewards

Give the characters 10 Character Points for concluding the adventure, plus up to an additional four if they retrieved the list and Barani's codebreaker without too much gamemaster intervention. You should also add in any individual awards for roleplaying and clever solutions to the myriad problems the characters have been presented with.

This adventure proves to the characters that they do indeed work for Black Sun and that Vigo Sprax is a powerful underworld figure. What the characters do with that information is up to the players. If they want to "come clean," helping Sprax through this scandal is enough to grant them their freedom, but he will definitely keep an eye on them.

Crime and Punishment

"The list is no longer a concern," said Guri, taking her seat beside Xizor in the opulent balcony.

The recital was at the point where the Taungs had slaughtered their enemies, yet in the process, destroyed their own world.

"Well done, Guri." Xizor said, staring through a miniature, delicate set of recital glasses older than the Republic itself. "I trust a full report awaits me back at the palace."

"Yes, my prince. The members of Sprax's smuggler outfit are to be commended for their diligence."

"Quite." Xizor refocused the glasses, peering at the balcony across the auditorium. There, surrounded by red-robed Royal Guards, sat the Emperor, listening to the harmonious strains of *Dha Verda Werda*. Next to him, in gleaming black armor, sat Darth Vader. Xizor grinned at the Dark Lord's discomfort. He was a military man who understood only violence, not culture.

"There is still the matter of punishment," Xizor said almost absently. For a moment, Guri wasn't certain if the Falleen was speaking of the Dark Lord or of Vigo Green. "Call the Vigos for an assembly. Guri, you will get to teach them a lesson. Make sure it is one that they do not forget."

"As always, my prince." said the beautiful woman.

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