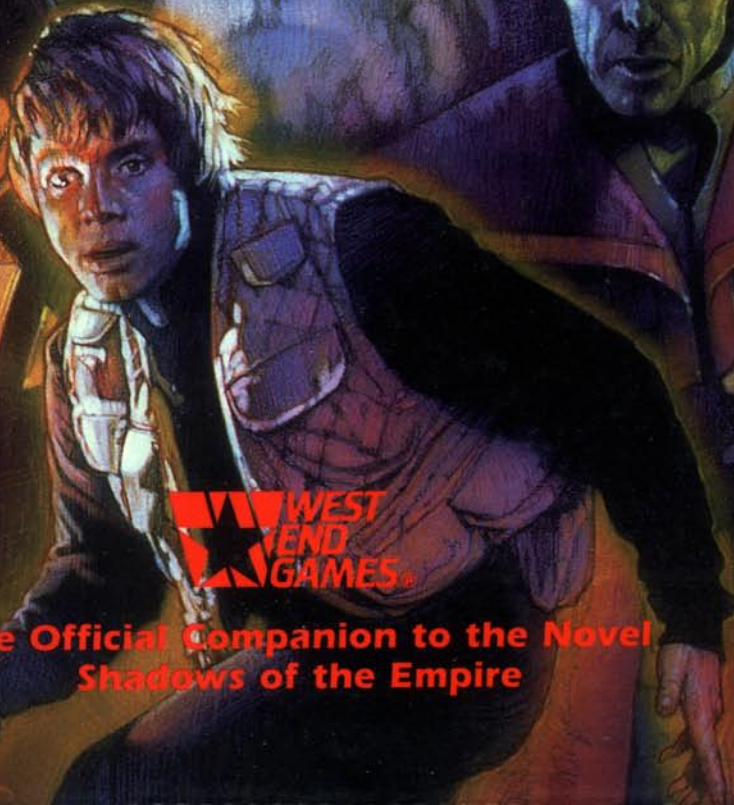


STAR WARS®

SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE

S O U R C E B O O K



The Official Companion to the Novel
Shadows of the Empire

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



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

Luke Skywalker, perhaps the first of the new Jedi Knights, slowly recovers from his devastating confrontation with his nemesis, Darth Vader, in the depths of Bespin's Cloud City. Intent on aiding the Rebel Alliance in its continuing battle against the Galactic Empire, Luke joins his long-time companions Princess Leia Organa, Chewbacca the Wookiee, gambler Lando Calrissian, and the droids C-3PO and R2-D2 on a desperate mission to rescue their friend, Han Solo. Captured by Darth Vader and given to the infamous bounty hunter Boba Fett, Solo was frozen in carbonite for delivery to Jabba the Hutt.

But elsewhere in the galaxy, Darth Vader prepares to continue his quest to find young Skywalker and draw him to the dark side of the Force. Vader's master, Emperor Palpatine, is busy overseeing his own intricate web of secret operations, bickering advisors, and carefully laid plans to crush the Rebels. And lurking beneath all of this waits another ... one who plots to force Vader from the picture and assume the role as the Emperor's most powerful servant. Prince Xizor, ruler of the vast criminal organization known as Black Sun, has waited long enough for this moment — a chance to take revenge on Darth Vader and play a much greater role in shaping the galaxy's destiny.

Prince Xizor's plot is set into motion ...

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STAR WARS

SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE™

S O U R C E B O O K

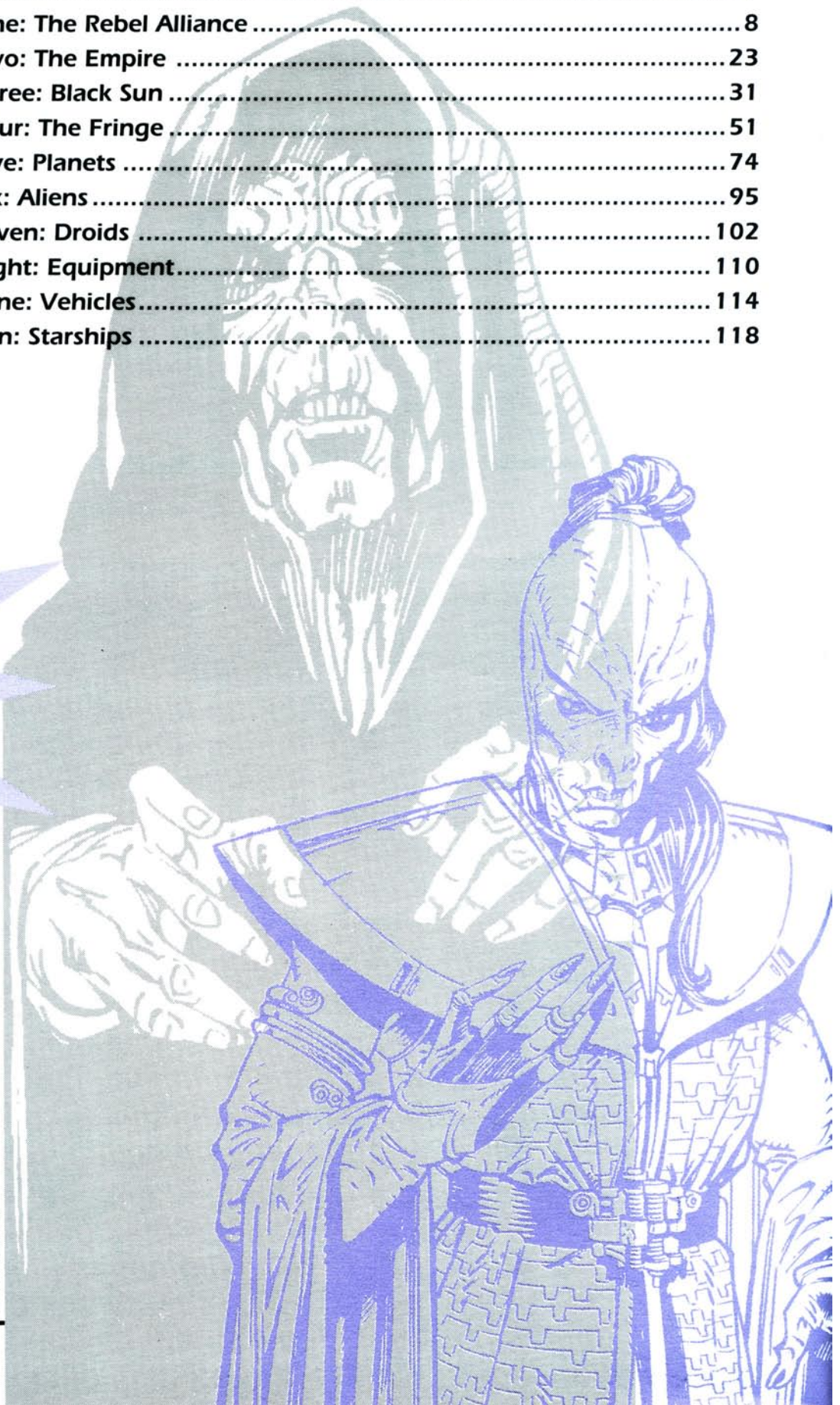
by

Peter Schweighofer



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Dark Horse Comics



Introduction

Between Empire and Jedi

The film trilogy comprised of *Star Wars: A New Hope*, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* follows a classic storytelling format. The first part introduces a grand setting, replete with heroes, fantastic starships and a climactic battle. In the second part, conflicts strengthen the heroes and bring them to the brink of defeat. And in the final act, the heroes emerge from the conflict, their resolve forged in the fires of combat and tempered like steel.

So where does a “fourth part” fit into this trilogy?

Shadows of the Empire adds another dimension only hinted at in the original films. For the most part, the on-screen conflicts in the *Star Wars* saga are between the Rebel Alliance and the Empire. In *Return of the Jedi*, audiences are treated to a brief view of the criminal underworld, as personified by Jabba the Hutt and his decadent court. It is from the depths of this underworld that the conflicts emerge which shape *Shadows of the Empire*.

One of the more enjoyable aspects of *Shadows* is that it develops plot threads only mentioned briefly in the films — similar to what *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game* and other *Star Wars* games, comics, and novels have been doing for many years. *Shadows of the Empire*, like these other stories, expands the *Star Wars* galaxy beyond the bounds of what is seen on the silver screen.

Who were those “many Bothans” who died to bring the second Death Star plans to the Rebel fleet? How did the Emperor plan the ambush at Endor? How did Luke Skywalker grow as a man and a Jedi between his defeat on Bespin and his

triumphant return to rescue his friend Han Solo from Jabba’s palace? The answers to these questions and many more can be found in the pages of this saga.

Shadows of the Empire takes readers to many worlds not shown in the movies. Locales include Rodia, homeworld of the late bounty hunter Greedo; Bothawui, homeworld to the Bothans who figure so prominently in Timothy Zahn’s *Star Wars* novels; and much of the action is set on Imperial Center (Coruscant), the heart of the Empire, during the height of Emperor Palpatine’s reign. *Shadows* draws readers into the center of the Emperor’s twisted web of intrigue, to Darth Vader’s castle, and into the lair of the underworld’s Prince Xizor, ruler of Black Sun.

Shadows of the Empire is an exciting companion piece to the original *Star Wars* trilogy.

The Shadows of the Empire Sourcebook

Much as the novel is to the movie trilogy, the *Shadows of the Empire Sourcebook* is a companion to the novel. It provides detailed information on the characters, locations, and other elements of the story, as well as additional information on how *Shadows of the Empire* fits into the greater *Star Wars* universe.

If you have not read *Shadows of the Empire*, it is strongly suggested that you do so now. Reading this sourcebook before reading the novel would be like reading the “making of” story before seeing the movie it’s based on.

The *Shadows of the Empire Sourcebook* is fully compatible with the *Star Wars* roleplaying game.



Tim Bobko



The Stage is Set

It is a dark time for the Rebel Alliance. Despite their victory against the Imperial Death Star at the Battle of Yavin three years ago, the Rebels have been driven back, defeated at Hoth and forced to relocate their main command center. Now, some months after that retreat, the Rebel fleet hides from the Empire's forces. Meanwhile, rumors are beginning to swirl of new and deadly plans being hatched by the Imperials.

Luke Skywalker, last of the Jedi Knights, is still reeling from his defeat by Darth Vader on Cloud City. During his battle with Vader, Luke confronted the dark side of the Force and came close to being swayed to the Sith Lord's side. Though he has recovered physically from the devastating battle, his spirit still struggles to deal with the revelation that Vader is his father. Rather than face his fears, he focuses on his duties — he longs to add to his knowledge of Jedi ways, and more, he knows the Rebel Alliance badly needs strong leaders. He is prepared to serve the Rebellion once more.

Princess Leia Organa would normally have her mind solely on the affairs of the Rebellion, as well. However, she is thinking of herself first. The capture of Han Solo preys on her mind, and though she sees his rescue as a priority for the Alliance, it would also help to resolve her feelings for him. Aided by Solo's friends Chewbacca and Lando Calrissian, Leia searches for Boba

Fett, the infamous bounty hunter who is holding the Corellian smuggler.

While all of this transpires, the forces of the dark are not idle. Emperor Palpatine puts into effect his master plan to eliminate the Rebel threat. Though his mercurial orders often seem contradictory, no one doubts Palpatine knows *precisely* what he is doing (or if they do doubt, no one is brave enough ... or foolhardy enough ... to give voice to it.)

For his part, Darth Vader is intent on finding Skywalker again. Turning Luke to the dark side would be a boon to the Empire and possibly give the Dark Lord the power to challenge the Emperor, but his efforts are hampered by intrigues, plots and counterplots brewing in the Imperial court.

A new player has taken the galactic stage. Black Sun, the mightiest organization in the underworld, vies for power in the midst of the civil war. Its leader, Prince Xizor, has the Emperor's ear and uses this to good effect. Safe in his fortress on Coruscant, surrounded by bodyguards, Xizor plots against Vader and prepares for the possible fall of the Empire. But for his plans to succeed, Luke Skywalker must die ...

Thus the stage is set for *Shadows of the Empire*.

Chapter One

The Rebel Alliance

With the bitter defeat at Hoth behind them, the heroes of Yavin turn their attention to rescuing Han Solo from the clutches of Boba Fett and Jabba the Hutt. Some wrestle with their own personal conflicts, while others wonder what the future holds for themselves and for the Rebel Alliance.

In the course of their adventures, the paths of Luke and Leia diverge. Before Solo is found, old allies will return and new ones will be discovered, all of whom will be of immeasurable aid to the cause of the Rebellion.

Luke Skywalker

A mere three years ago, Luke Skywalker was little more than a young moisture farmer on Tatooine. He dreamed of attending the Academy and becoming a top pilot, convinced that life must hold more for him than toiling away on a remote desert planet.

His wishes would be granted, but his dream would be born in tragedy. The murder of his aunt and uncle by Imperial stormtroopers and his meeting with Ben Kenobi would propel him into the heart of the battle between the Empire and the Rebel Alliance.

It was Kenobi who introduced Luke to the lore of the Jedi and the power of the Force. Prior to his death at the hands of Vader, Kenobi began Luke's training as a Jedi Knight. Since then, Skywalker has been educated by journeys to worlds such as Mimban and Ord Mantell and his courage has been tested by formidable foes such as Baron Tagge, Captain-Supervisor Grammel and Darth Vader. Luke has become a leader, playing a major role in the evacuation of Yavin Base and helping to establish major Rebel bases on Thila and Hoth. After the Battle of Hoth, Luke followed Ben's direction and traveled to the planet Dagobah to seek training with Yoda.

The Jedi Master pushed Luke to his limits,

exhausting him through rigorous exercises while Yoda's teachings challenged the way the headstrong young man looked at the universe. Luke learned much about his ability to tap into the Force, but he was still an angry and restless man. Despite Yoda's counsel, Luke was too eager to fight and still lacking in true self-confidence; he was slow to learn to act in the humble yet forceful manner required of a true Jedi Knight.

Luke interrupted his training — over the protests of Yoda and Ben — to save his friends. Had he stayed on Dagobah, perhaps the confrontation with Vader might have ended differently ... there is no way to know. Instead, he rushed into Vader's elaborate snare. During the confrontation, the Dark Lord of the Sith revealed that he was Luke's father. Luke was overwhelmed by emotions: fear of the truth; feelings of betrayal regarding his trusted mentor, Obi-Wan Kenobi; and the temptation of power ... the power to save his friends and perhaps even end the war between Rebels and Empire, if only he would join Vader.

In the end, it was all too much to bear. Hanging in Cloud City's wind tunnel, gravely wounded by Vader, Luke chose to let go and fall into the unknown, fleeing the battle and the dark truths it had unveiled.

Now Luke prepares to rescue Han Solo while trying to regain confidence, both in himself and in his Jedi abilities. He must learn to balance his head and heart — for following his heart alone almost led to disaster on Cloud City.

The spirit which allowed Luke to deliver the killing blow to the Death Star at Yavin has been wounded. He has thrown himself into researching Jedi ways, aided by an ancient tome found in Ben Kenobi's abandoned dwelling on Tatooine. He has also begun constructing a lightsaber to replace the weapon he lost in Cloud City. This is more than a simple test of skill — it is a means of healing his spirit.

In the end, none of this can truly allow him to escape the memory of Vader's words. "Luke ... I am your father ..." He can sense the dark side calling to him, pursuing him, just as it did his father. In his heart, he knows he could become what Vader is today, and the thought terrifies him.

Nothing Yoda or Ben Kenobi taught him could prepare Luke for the challenge he faces now. For he knows that, one day, he must confront Vader again ... and on that day, he will know his destiny.

■ **Luke Skywalker**

Type: Brash Pilot

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 6D+2, brawling parry 5D+2, dodge 7D+1, lightsaber 8D, melee combat 4D, melee parry 9D

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Alien species 4D, bureaucracy 5D+1, streetwise 6D, survival 6D, value 4D

MECHANICAL 4D

Astrogation 6D, beast riding 4D+2, beast riding: tauntaun 6D+1, repulsorlift operation 8D, repulsorlift operation: airspeeder 8D, sensors 4D+1, starfighter piloting: X-wing 9D+2, starship gunnery 7D+1, starship shields 7D

PERCEPTION 2D+1

Bargain 3D, command 5D+2, hide 4D+2, search 5D, sneak 4D+2

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 5D+1, climbing/jumping 6D, lifting 4D, stamina 6D

TECHNICAL 3D

Computer programming/repair 5D, droid programming 5D+1, droid repair 6D, first aid 4D+2, lightsaber repair 7D+1, repulsorlift repair 7D, security 4D+1, starfighter repair 5D+2

Special Abilities:

Force Skills: Control 9D+2, sense 7D+2, alter 6D+2

Control: Accelerate healing, concentration*, control pain, detoxify poison**, emptiness, enhance attribute**, hibernation trance, reduce injury, remain conscious, resist stun

Sense: Danger sense**, instinctive astrogation†, life detection, life sense, receptive telepathy, sense Force

Alter: Telekinesis

Control and Sense: Farseeing**, lightsaber combat, projective telepathy

Control, Sense and Alter: Affect mind

* This power described in the *Star Wars Movie Trilogy Sourcebook*.

** This power described in the *Dark Force Rising Sourcebook*.

† This power described in *Galaxy Guide 9: Fragments from the Rim*.

This character is Force-sensitive.

Force Points: 19

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 35

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, lightsaber (5D)

Princess Leia Organa

Raised as a member of the Royal Family of Alderaan, Princess Leia Organa has often been described as a natural leader. Once a member of the Imperial Senate, Leia used her position and



authority to aid the Rebel Alliance. When the Senate was disbanded, and she was forced into hiding, Leia guided the Rebellion through difficult times, taking on many military and diplomatic missions. Through it all, her dedication to the Alliance, and willingness to put it before her own interests, has never wavered.

Now all that has changed. Despite her initial dislike of him, Leia has found herself drawn to the smuggler Han Solo. His daring, his courage, and his heart slowly won her over. Just as she

realized that what she felt for him was love, they were torn apart. Betrayed on Cloud City by Han's "friend," Lando Calrissian, Leia and Han were captured as bait for Luke Skywalker. Darth Vader ordered Solo frozen in carbonite and turned him over to bounty hunter Boba Fett for delivery to Jabba the Hutt.

"I love you," Leia had said as they led Solo away. "I know," was Han's only reply. They were the last words she would hear him speak before he was frozen in carbonite.

After she rejoins the Rebel fleet, Leia knows her first duty should be to the Alliance. But like Luke, her head wars with her heart, and her heart tells her to do anything she can to save the man she loves. With her new "bodyguard," Chewbacca, and the aid of a repentant Calrissian, she has embarked on a search for Solo. It is a dangerous business, and there's no guarantee of success, but she feels compelled to save the smuggler ... if only to be sure that he loves her, too.

■ Princess Leia Organa

Type: Young Senatorial

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 7D+1, blaster artillery 3D+2, brawling parry 4D, dodge 7D, grenade 4D, melee combat 5D, melee parry 4D, vehicle blasters 4D

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Alien species 7D, bureaucracy 9D+1, cultures 9D, languages 6D+2, planetary systems 9D, streetwise 6D, survival 7D+2, value 6D+1, willpower 6D+1

MECHANICAL 2D+2

Astrogation 3D+2, beast riding 3D+2, repulsorlift operation 4D+2, starfighter piloting 5D, starship gunnery 4D, starship shields 5D

PERCEPTION 3D+1

Bargain 6D, command 10D, con 5D+1, gambling 4D, hide 6D, persuasion 7D, persuasion: debate 8D+2, search 5D+2, sneak 6D

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 4D, climbing/jumping 4D, stamina 6D, swimming 5D

TECHNICAL 2D

Computer programming/repair 4D+2, droid programming 4D, droid repair 4D, first aid 6D, security 3D+2, starfighter repair 2D+2

Permission Granted

Admiral Ackbar and Mon Mothma were examining the holographic star map floating above the desk in Ackbar's quarters when the hatch entry rang. Mothma stepped up and pressed the door control panel. The hatch slid aside, revealing one of the guards on duty in the Mon Calamari cruiser's corridor.

"Councillor, Princess Leia Organa here to see you."

"Send her in," Mothma urged. "Don't hold her up with all your security procedures." She turned to Ackbar. "This overbearing attention to my safety is becoming annoying, Admiral."

"I assure you these precautions are fully necessary to maintain security within the fleet," Ackbar replied.

Princess Leia appeared in the hatchway. "Come in, Leia," Mothma said. "Ackbar and I were just discussing the next series of fleet movements."

"In order to evade Imperial patrols and conceal our true strength, we're preparing several hyperspace jumps out toward the Minos Cluster," Ackbar said, pointing to the holographic system map above his desk. "We won't enter the Cluster, but we have allies nearby, and the adjacent systems have only a token Imperial military presence ..."

"I've come to discuss a matter which isn't really related to the fleet's plans," Leia began. "As you know, Captain Solo was captured by the Empire on Cloud City, and given to Boba Fett."

"Yes, we've been informed," Ackbar said. "Something about the poor man being frozen in carbonite for transport back to that vile gangster, Jabba the Hutt. A most regrettable development. I was hoping

Solo would help us coordinate the arrival of those new Corellian ships when we near Voorlach ..."

Leia's glance told Mon Mothma all the woman needed to know.

"I believe this problem has less to do with the Rebellion and more to do with the princess," Mothma said.

"Yes. I'd like permission to recruit a small group and go after Boba Fett," Leia finally said. "I believe with some of Lando Calrissian's contacts, and Luke and Chewie's help, we might be able to rescue Han."

"We could certainly use Captain Solo's leadership here with the fleet," Mothma said. "But I sense there are other reasons you wish to rescue him."

Leia's eyes dropped to the floor.

Ackbar smiled. "I see. Permission for your rescue mission is granted. Perhaps we can make some arrangements to support your efforts — in conjunction with existing Rebel operations, of course."

"Are you certain I'm not needed here?" Leia asked. "I know there's so much more that still needs to be done ..."

"Standard military theory holds that a force divided cannot win the battle," Ackbar noted.

"Admiral, this is no time to recite your tenets of military strategy," Mothma gently chided.

Ackbar turned to her. "Sometimes military theory can be a metaphor for matters of the heart. My dear," Ackbar said, resting his hand on Leia's shoulder. "Sometimes we must win the battle within ourselves before we fight the battle without."

"He is right, Leia," Mothma agreed. "Take the time you need. We will be assembling the fleet. When you return with Captain Solo, all will be ready to strike a blow against the Empire."



RAY KUWERT

This character is Force-sensitive.
Force Points: 6
Character Points: 23
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink

Chewbacca

The Wookiee Chewbacca has been Han Solo's partner for many years. Han's business savvy and ability to fly the *Millennium Falcon* despite any hazard, combined with Chewbacca's intimidating presence and technical skill, has made the pair an excellent team. They've roamed the galaxy together, making a living as smugglers and sharing countless adventures.

Then they got mixed up with an adventurous young farmer from Tatooine and the old man he traveled with. Next thing Chewie knew, a simple transport to Alderaan turned into a rescue mission aboard the Death Star. Soon, he and Han were devoting all their time to aiding the Rebel Alliance. The whole time, Han kept an eye out for bounty hunters, servants of Jabba the Hutt out to claim the price on the smuggler's head.

The Wookiee knew it was only a matter of time before Han's troubles caught up to him. All he could do was watch his friend's back and fight alongside Solo, helping him out of one trap or another. In the end, though, Chewie couldn't save himself, Han or Leia from the Empire's snare on Cloud City. The Wookiee faced imprisonment, which he knew meant slavery or death.

In truth, Chewie wanted to fight his way out of the carbon-freeze chamber. Instead, he listened to his friend. Han calmed him, assuring the enraged Wookiee that there would be another time, another place, where his power could save them all. Against all of his instincts, Chewie took his captain's advice and watched Solo's imprisonment in carbonite.

Eventually, Chewie escaped Bespin, but without Solo. He had pledged Han his people's highest honor, the Wookiee life debt, and feels that he let his long-time partner down. Now he keeps his pledge by watching out for Princess Leia, as Solo ordered. An independent person by nature, Leia is having difficulty adjusting to Chewie's constant presence but, through their friendship, each is helping the other cope with the reality of Solo's absence.



■ Chewbacca

Type: Wookiee

DEXTERITY 2D+2

Blaster 6D+1, bowcaster 9D, brawling parry 7D+1, dodge 6D+1, grenade 5D+1, melee combat 8D, melee parry 8D, vehicle blasters 6D+1

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Alien species 7D, bureaucracy 4D, business 4D+2, cultures 3D+1, intimidation 8D+2, languages 6D, planetary systems 7D+2, streetwise 7D, survival 7D, value 7D+1

MECHANICAL 3D

Astrogation 8D+1, beast riding 4D, communications 4D+2, repulsorlift operation 7D+1, sensors 6D, space transports 6D+2, space transports: YT-1300 transports 8D, starship gunnery 8D, starship shields 6D+1

PERCEPTION 2D

Bargain 5D, command 4D+2, gambling 5D, hide 3D+2, search 3D, sneak 3D+1

STRENGTH 5D

Brawling 10D, climbing/jumping 7D+2, lifting 10D, stamina 10D, swimming 7D

TECHNICAL 3D+1

Blaster repair 5D+1, bowcaster repair 5D+2, computer programming/repair 8D, demolitions 5D+2, droid programming 7D+2, droid repair 7D+2, first aid 5D, repulsorlift repair 6D, security 6D+2, space transports repair 8D, space transports repair: YT-1300 transports 10D+2

Special Abilities:

Berserker Rage: Chewbacca gains +2D to *Strength* when brawling in berserker rage. See page 84 of *Star Wars Sourcebook, Second Edition*.

Climbing Claws: +2D to climbing.

Force Points: 3

Character Points: 22

Move: 13

Equipment: Ammo bandolier, bowcaster (4D), droid tool kit, starship tool kit, waist pouch

Lando Calrissian

Lando Calrissian has always enjoyed his freedom. He's been roaming the galaxy since his youth, making deals, running scams and surviving by gambling. He suavely sauntered from one venture to another, never really spending much time in any one place — after all, even the Centrality and Nar Shaddaa get wearisome after too long. He's picked up dozens of friends and "associates" on the shady side of the law, and he's lived the good life, making and spending several fortunes in the process.

Calrissian liked that life. Tall, handsome and charming, Lando was quick to flash his smile, whether at a lovely young lady or at a table of sabacc players about to lose all their credits ... even if they didn't know it yet.

The most important thing to remember about Lando is that he is, and always has been, a gambler. Whether it's betting at the Trin sticks tables or gambling for larger stakes, he's happiest when it's all on the line. There are rumors that he lost the famed starship *Millennium Falcon* to smuggler Han Solo in a sabacc game, and he's the famous tactician behind the rout of the Norulac pirates at the Battle of Tanaab.

Lando was never one for putting down roots, but when a lucrative opportunity arose to run the Cloud City Tibanna gas mining colony on Bespin, the speculator inside him couldn't refuse. Lando, always the survivor, adopted the role of "Baron-Administrator" as if he'd been born to it, and Cloud City was soon turning a modest profit.

It didn't last. The Empire arrived on Bespin and Darth Vader demanded Calrissian betray Solo, Leia and Chewie as a means of luring Skywalker into a trap. Lando did as he was bidden ... but later, realizing the true scope of what he had done, he gave up everything he had built on Bespin to save Leia and the Wookiee.

It might seem strange that a man like Lando Calrissian would join the Alliance, but he feels it is a worthwhile gamble. Lando got Solo into this mess — and now he's determined to get the smuggler out of it, even if he has to call in every favor he's owed from the Outer Rim Territories right to the Emperor's doorstep on Coruscant.

■ Lando Calrissian

Type: Gambler

DEXTERITY 3D+2

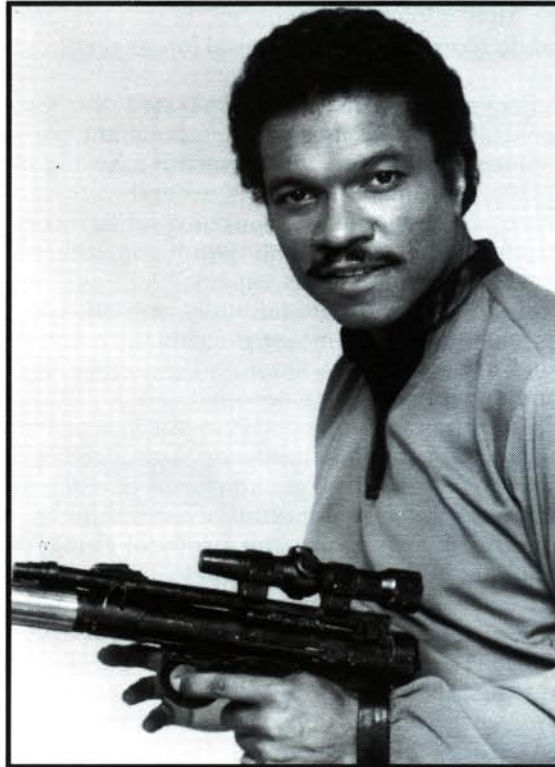
Blaster 6D+2, blaster: hold-out blaster 7D, brawling parry 5D+1, dodge 6D, grenade 4D+2, melee combat 4D+2, melee parry 5D+1

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Alien species 5D, bureaucracy 7D, business 7D, business: mining 10D+1, business administration 7D+1, cultures 6D+2, languages 5D, planetary systems 5D, streetwise 7D+2, survival 5D, value 5D+1

MECHANICAL 2D+1

Archaic starship piloting 3D+1, astrogation 6D+2, com-



munications 4D, ground vehicle operation 3D+1, repulsorlift operation 4D, repulsorlift operation: cloud car 5D+1, sensors 4D+2, space transports 8D, starfighter piloting 8D, starship gunnery 7D, starship shields 7D, swoop operation 4D+2

PERCEPTION 4D

Bargain 8D, bargain: Tibanna gas 10D+1, command 6D+2, con 8D+2, forgery 6D+1, gambling 9D+2, hide 6D, persuasion 6D+1, sneak 6D

STRENGTH 2D+2

Brawling 5D+1, climbing/jumping 5D, lifting 4D+2, stamina 5D, swimming 4D

TECHNICAL 2D+2

Computer programming/repair 4D, droid programming 3D, repulsorlift repair 4D, security 6D+1, space transports repair 6D+2, starship weapon repair 4D

Force Points: 1

Character Points: 14

Move: 10

Equipment: Comlink, hold-out blaster (4D), sabacc card deck

See-Threepio and Artoo-Detoo

Despite the fact that they are quite often taken for granted, the droids C-3PO and R2-D2 have been key players in many of the battles between the Rebel Alliance and the Empire. They were in part responsible for transporting the plans of the Death Star from Princess Leia's captured Rebel Blockade Runner to Yavin Base. They've been witness to the most important events in the history of the Rebellion: the destruction of the Death Star, the rout at Hoth, Luke Skywalker's training as a Jedi, and the capture of Han Solo. R2-D2 was even responsible for the repairs aboard the *Millennium Fal-*

con that allowed Chewbacca, Leia, Luke and Lando to escape from Imperial forces on Cloud City.

Recently, events have separated the two droids. R2-D2 has been Luke's constant companion, keeping the young warrior's X-wing in good condition. The recent excursion to the swamps of Dagobah was puzzling for Artoo — training to become a "Jedi" is not something a droid easily understands, especially one as skeptical as Artoo. Still, he faithfully accompanied his master, even if it meant slogging through the muck in Dagobah's swamps and being levitated (and unceremoniously dropped).

C-3PO has accompanied Princess Leia on her missions for the Rebel Alliance. Although he is fluent in more than six million forms of communication (and makes certain everyone he encounters knows that), the protocol droid is beginning to believe his primary purpose is to suffer through every conceivable difficulty. He is quite vociferous in his complaining, but when his skills are needed, C-3PO quiets down and gets the job done.

On the rare occasions when the droid counterparts are together, they share a sort of brotherly relationship. See-Threepio assumes the role of the bossy older brother, while Artoo-Detoo assumes the role of a feisty and rebellious younger brother. Despite their incessant bickering, the two droids are close friends who know that they can rely upon each other.

■ See-Threepio

Type: Cybot Galactica 3PO Human-Cyborg Relations Droid

DEXTERITY 2D

Dodge 4D+2

KNOWLEDGE 5D+2

Alien species 7D+1, bureaucracy 8D+1, cultures 8D, languages 12D+1, planetary systems 6D, survival 5D+2, value 5D+2

MECHANICAL 3D

Repulsorlift operation 4D+1

PERCEPTION 3D+1

Bargain 6D, con 5D, hide 3D+2, sneak 4D

STRENGTH 2D

TECHNICAL 3D

First aid 4D

Equipped With:

- Humanoid body (two arms, two legs, head)
- Two visual and two audial sensors — human range
- Broad-band antenna receiver
- AA-1 Verbo-brain
- TranLang III Communication module with over six million languages
- Vocabulator speech/sound system capable of providing an extraordinarily wide range of sound effects and exact impersonations of voices

Force Points: 1

Character Points: 13

Move: 8

Size: 1.67 meters tall

Cost: Not available for sale

■ Artoo-Detoo

Type: Industrial Automaton R2 Astromech Droid

DEXTERITY 2D

Dodge 4D, electroshock prod 4D+1

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Planetary systems 8D+2, survival 6D+2, value 6D+2

MECHANICAL 4D

Astrogation 10D+2, communications 6D, sensors 7D, starfighter piloting 6D, starfighter piloting: X-wing 8D+1, starship gunnery 4D+1, starship shields 4D+1

PERCEPTION 3D

Con 3D+2, gambling 6D, sneak 4D+1

STRENGTH 3D

Lifting 4D, swimming 3D+1

TECHNICAL 4D

Computer programming/repair 8D+2, droid programming 5D+1, droid repair 6D+2, machinery repair 5D+2, repulsorlift repair 4D, security 6D, space transport repair 5D+2, space transport repair: YT-1300 transports 7D+1, starfighter repair 6D+1, starfighter repair: X-wing 7D+2

Equipped With:

- Three wheeled legs (one retractable)
- Retractable heavy grasper arm (+1D to *lifting*)
- Retractable fine work grasper arm
- Extendible 0.3 meter long video sensor (360 degree rotation)
- Small electric arc welder (3D damage, 0.3 meter range)
- Small circular saw (4D damage, 0.3 meter range)
- Video display screen
- Holographic projector/recorder (one meter range)
- Fire extinguisher
- Small internal "cargo" area (20 cm by 8 cm)
- High pitch acoustic signaler
- One long range sensor array: includes radar, radiation counter, life-form sensor, infrared receptors, electromagnetic field receptor (+3D to *search* at ranges of up to 100 meters)
- Broad-band antenna receiver (can monitor all broadcast and communication frequencies)
- Information storage/retrieval jack for computer link-up
- One compressed air launcher (used for Luke's lightsaber or for flares)

Force Points: 2

Character Points: 19

Move: 5

Size: 0.96 meters tall

Cost: Not available for sale



LFL

Droids Can't Fly

"Don't touch that, Artoo! Captain Solo might be frozen in carbonite, but that doesn't give you permission to twiddle with his ship."

The barrel-shaped astromech unit beeped at his human/cyborg relations counterpart, then rolled himself toward the *Millennium Falcon's* cockpit.

"Where are you going?" Threepio protested. "You have no business going up there. Everyone knows droids can't fly, silly. Come back here at once, you arrogant little ..."

Threepio's insults were drowned out by a crass series of whistles and razzes from Artoo.

"Why, how dare you call me such things! Your insolence is astounding, Artoo ... wait for me!"

Threepio tottered through the corridor leading to the *Falcon's* cockpit, where he found Artoo jacked into the starship's computer. Through the cockpit viewport, he could see ships of the Rebel fleet cruising by — Nebulon-B frigates, Gallofree Yards medium transports, and X-wing and Y-wing starfighters on patrol. Try as he might, craning his stiff droid neck, Threepio could not see much of the medical frigate's hull to which they were moored.

Artoo beeped again, rotating his domed head to glare at Threepio.

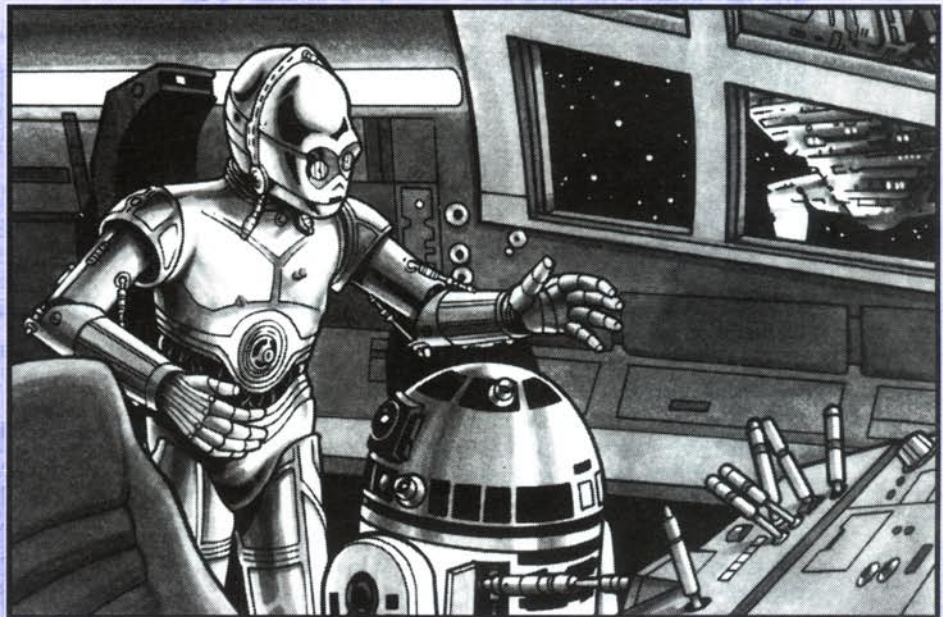
"I don't care what you've found," he said. "You've no business mucking about with the *Millennium Falcon*. Why, if Master Luke found out, he'd have a conniption. And if Captain Solo were here, he'd surely blast you into a thousand pieces. You know how he is about others tampering with his starship. Why, on Bespin he continually expressed that concern to —"

Artoo turned his head from Threepio, then beeped a response.

"What do you mean *you* could fly the *Falcon* just as well as Captain Solo? You're nothing more than an astromech droid. You can't even maneuver Master Luke's X-wing without knocking over some poor, unsuspecting bystander. What delusions of grandeur have you been dreaming up in that rusty processor of yours?"

The series of whistles and electronic moans from Artoo didn't seem to answer Threepio's question. Then the little droid disengaged its I/O jack from the *Falcon's* computer, rolled aside and bumped against Threepio, knocking the protocol droid into the co-pilot's command chair. Artoo emitted a series of amused beeps.

"What do you mean, now I'm your co-pilot?" Threepio sputtered. "I don't know any more about flying this starship than you do. You know how much I abhor space travel."

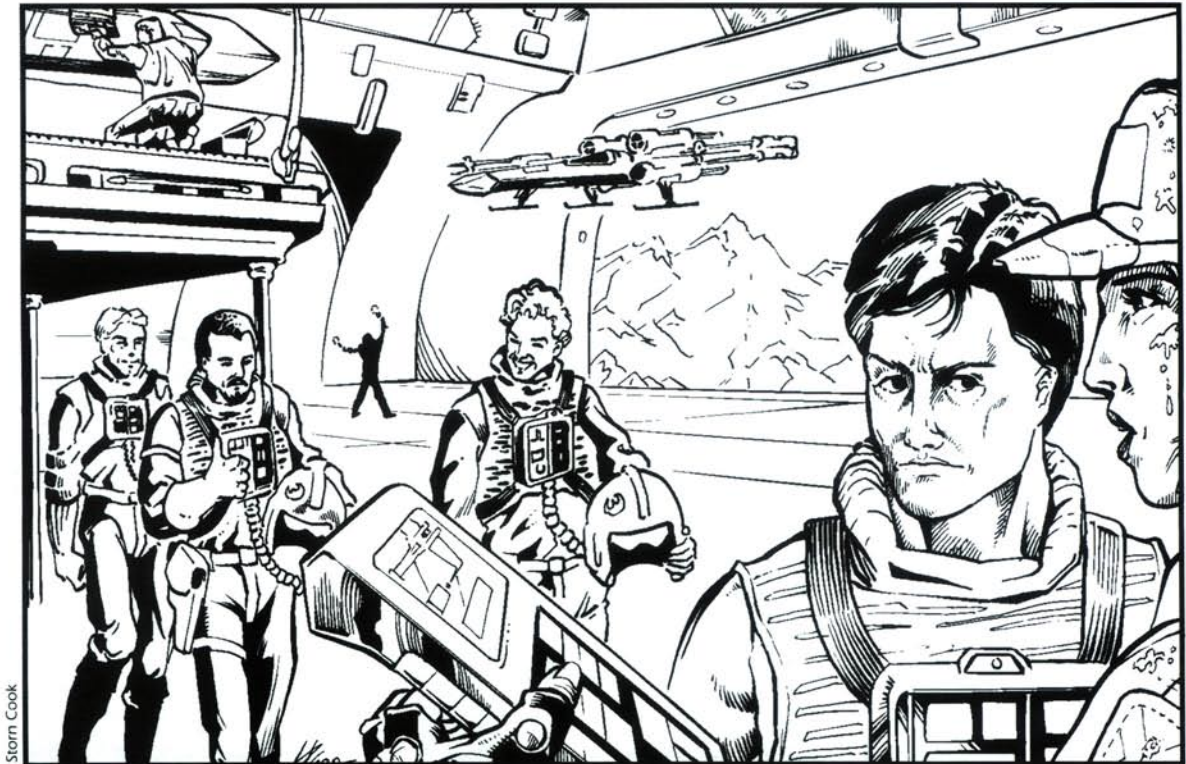


Chris Trevas

There was a questioning Wookiee growl from the *Falcon's* docking hatch. "Come away from there, Artoo," Threepio whispered as he stiffly rose from the co-pilot's seat. "We have no business here. And besides, it would take a lot more than two droids to competently pilot this starship. With you in command, we'd be certain to end up crashed against some star cruiser, or worse yet, flying through some starport building."

Chewbacca poked his head in the cockpit and growled at the droids.

"Oh, Chewbacca, no, we were just completing a maintenance check to be sure the *Falcon* was in working order," Threepio bluffed. He tottered past the towering Wookiee. "Come along, Artoo. We'd better see how Master Luke is faring. He didn't look too good after our last adventures on Cloud City. I certainly hope his current condition was not the result of your rash actions in abandoning him ..."



Rogue Squadron

An elite collection of pilots, Rogue Squadron was the lead starfighter unit protecting the Rebels' Echo Base. Formed by Luke Skywalker and Wedge Antilles, Rogue Squadron was composed of the 12 best pilots who had survived the fiercest battles against the Empire, from the Battle of Yavin through the Battle of Hoth. Although they principally fly X-wing starfighters, Rogue Squadron's pilots are renowned for their ability to fly practically anything, from cargo skiffs to snowspeeders.

Rogue Squadron is typically assigned the most challenging missions. They held off Imperial AT-AT walkers at the Battle of Hoth long enough for most of Echo Base's personnel to evacuate. Then they left their snowspeeders to fly escort duty for the remaining transports, protecting the ships from Imperial forces blockading the planet.

Since the defeat at Hoth, Rogue Squadron has been stationed aboard *Home One*, the immense Mon Calamari star cruiser serving as the Rebel fleet's headquarters frigate. Thanks to the influence of Luke Skywalker, the outfit was not split up — they remain a rapid response team able to be transferred to "hot spots" as needed. Skywalker — originally the unit's leader — has left to pursue his Jedi studies, leaving Wedge Antilles in command of Rogue Squadron. Though Antilles is officially recognized as Rogue

Squadron's commander, he still defers to Luke when the young Jedi flies with him.

Commander Wedge Antilles

Wedge Antilles — a veteran of some of the most ferocious battles in the war against the Empire — has always been a man of the stars. He grew up around starships on his parents' refueling station in the Corellian system. After his parents were killed by pirates, Wedge took the insurance credits he received and purchased a light freighter, intent on plying the space lanes as a free-trader. He wasn't very successful, and soon turned to smuggling cargoes and weapons for the Rebel Alliance. Eventually Wedge found himself in an X-wing cockpit, and he has proven himself an excellent combat pilot.

Wedge's service record is an impressive one. He flew beside Luke Skywalker at the Battle of Yavin, until damage to his X-wing forced him to pull out moments before Luke destroyed the Death Star. He piloted a snowspeeder at the Battle of Hoth and flew escort duty for transports fleeing Echo Base.

Most recently, Wedge has been promoted to commander and named leader of the famed Rogue Squadron. When Luke is present, however, Wedge defers the title of "Rogue Leader" to him and accepts the lesser designation of "Rogue One."

Antilles has earned the respect of his pilots, for he is more concerned with their well-being than with personal glory or heroics. He's squadron leader, first and foremost, uncomfortable with politics and bureaucracy. When the laser cannons start firing, his pilots know Rogue Leader Antilles will be right beside them, taking the same risks and sharing in victory or defeat.

■ Commander Wedge Antilles

Type: Brash Pilot

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 5D, brawling parry 3D+1, dodge 5D+2, melee combat 3D+1, vehicle blasters 3D+1

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Alien species 4D, bureaucracy 5D+1, cultures 2D+1, languages 3D, planetary systems 4D+2

MECHANICAL 4D

Astrogation 6D+1, space transports 5D+2, starfighter piloting: X-wing 6D, starship gunnery 5D+1, starship shields 4D+2

PERCEPTION 3D

Bargain 4D, command 4D+1, gambling 4D+1

STRENGTH 3D

Stamina 4D+1

TECHNICAL 3D

Computer programming/repair 5D, repulsorlift repair 3D+2, space transports repair 4D+2, starfighter repair 4D+1, starfighter repair: X-wing 4D+2

Force Points: 1

Character Points: 6

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, Rebel flight suit, tool kit

Will Scotian, Rogue Two

A native of the Core World, Brentaal, Will Scotian always dreamed of becoming a hero. Like many youngsters who grew up watching transports take off from Brentaal's immense starport, he yearned to find his fortune among the stars. He began by learning to pilot simple cargo skiffs for a freight hauler near his home, then apprenticed aboard bulk freighters before finally jumping ship and joining the Rebel Alliance.

His starfighter training was something of an adventure in itself. The young pilot likes to push his craft to the limit and his outstanding combat record at Oracle Base, Brak sector, convinced Wedge Antilles to request that he be transferred into Rogue Squadron. The blaster-sure pilot fit in well with the other Rogues, and while he's learning much from his fellow pilots, his own maneuvers still tend toward the reckless and unconventional.

If Will has a fault in combat, it is that he is too aggressive and often has to be ordered to withdraw. Even when his starfighter has been badly damaged, Will won't leave a fray. Scotian believes he's invincible ... saving the day in a crippled fighter is just a part of the challenge.

■ Will Scotian

Type: Brash Pilot

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 4D, dodge 4D

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Planetary systems 4D, streetwise 3D+2, tactics: starfighters 3D+1

MECHANICAL 4D

Astrogation 5D, repulsorlift operation 5D+2, space transports 4D+2, starfighter piloting: X-wing 5D+2, starship gunnery 5D

PERCEPTION 3D

Con 4D, persuasion 3D+2

STRENGTH 3D

Lifting 4D

TECHNICAL 3D

Character Points: 3

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, Rebel flight suit

Dix Rivan, Rogue Five

Dix is a quiet sort, affectionately known among the Rogues as "Dixie." A shy, private person, no one in Rogue Squadron knows where he comes from or why he fights — most assume his parents were killed by Imperials and he joined the Alliance to take revenge. Still, he doesn't seem the vengeful type, treating the Alliance, and especially his squadron, as if they are family. He enjoys the post-mission banter, the fabricated tales of past exploits, and the camaraderie of the other pilots, even if he listens far more than he speaks.

Dixie's role is Rogue Squadron's rear guard, whether in space or on the ground. He is always watching out for his friends and will come racing to someone's aid when they need it, but he doesn't watch his own back as much as he should; someday his reckless streak could cost him his life.

■ Dix Rivan

Type: Rebel Pilot

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 5D, dodge 3D+2, melee combat 4D+1

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Languages 3D, planetary systems 4D, streetwise 3D+2, survival 4D+1

MECHANICAL 4D

Astrogation 4D+2, repulsorlift operation 5D, starfighter piloting: X-wing 5D, starship gunnery 5D, starship shields 4D+2

PERCEPTION 3D

Search 5D

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 5D, climbing/jumping 4D

TECHNICAL 3D

Repulsorlift repair 4D

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, Rebel flight suit

Wes Janson, Rogue Six

Wes Janson is an experienced gunner and pilot who's accomplished much since his early training missions as a Y-wing gunner at the

remote Tierfon Rebel Base. While in Rogue Squadron, Janson has been in the thick of things. He crewed the rear-gunner station on Wedge's Rebel snowspeeder at the Battle of Hoth, and the two were the first to implement Luke Skywalker and Beryl Chiffonage's plan to topple an Imperial AT-AT with a snowspeeder's fusion disk and tow cable. During the final stages of the battle, he served as "Hobbie" Klivian's Y-wing gunner while escorting Rebel transports. Wherever he's served, Janson has been solely concerned with tagging his target, leaving the maneuvering of the starfighter up to his pilot.

After several Rogue Squadron pilots were shot down in the Battle of Hoth, Janson was transferred from a gunnery post to the pilot's seat of an X-wing fighter. Wedge had considerable confidence in the young pilot, who quickly adapted to being in full control of a starfighter. Having an R2 unit onboard helps. While the little droid doesn't fly the X-wing, he offers Janson some help in managing the starfighter's systems and compensating for damage, leaving Janson free to line up his shot and blast the enemy — just what he does best.

■ Wes Janson

Type: Brash Pilot

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 4D+1, dodge 4D+1, melee combat 4D+2, missile weapons 6D, vehicle blasters 6D+2

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Languages 3D, planetary systems 4D+2

MECHANICAL 4D

Astrogation 5D+1, repulsorlift operation 4D+2, starfighter piloting 4D+2, starship gunnery 6D+1, starship shields

5D+1

PERCEPTION 3D

Command 3D+2, con 3D+2

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 4D+2, stamina 4D+1

TECHNICAL 3D

First aid 4D, starfighter repair 4D+2

Character Points: 3

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, Rebel flight suit

Chief

"Chief," otherwise known as Chief Technician Viera Cheran, is Rogue Squadron's main technician and crew sergeant. She's responsible for directing the highly-skilled techs that maintain the outfit's X-wings. As the crew chief, she's also in charge of flight deck operations wherever Rogue Squadron is stationed, whether it's aboard a Mon Calamari star cruiser or on a makeshift base such as the temporary one on Kile. Chief does her job well, and it's not an easy one: the Rogues punish their X-wings in every way possible, and Chief and her techs labor around the clock to keep the rugged yet aging starfighters in an optimum state of combat readiness.

It's often a thankless task, and it's beginning to wear on her. The Rogues get all the glory and she and her staff get none. When a transfer is necessary, the pilots get to fly off in their X-wings, but the tech staff has to transport all the equipment and replacement parts and make sure everything is in working order when the hot-shot pilots show up.

"Let's Go!"

Wedge waited pensively, keeping his X-wing fighter floating in the sensor shadow of an immense droid-controlled cargo barge. He and the other Rogues were scattered among the barges on the outermost fringes of Coruscant's system. From here the planet's sun was little more than another dim star, but for Wedge, it seemed dangerously close.

The droid message pod had told him to bring the Rogues and wait for Dash's "signal." Wedge didn't exactly trust the smuggler, but he knew Luke, Leia, Lando and Chewie were on Coruscant somewhere, and could need their help at any minute.

Wedge glanced at the starfighter beneath the next barge and saw Janson dozing off in his cockpit. "Hey, Wes, it's time for the show."

He saw Janson's head bob in the cockpit before the reply came over the comm. "I'm okay, Boss. And don't worry ... we thoroughly checked out *this* R2 unit."

Wes sounded dead tired. It had been a tough few days. First the sabotage of his R2 unit, which had

nearly killed Luke and prevented Wes from sealing his flight suit and ejecting from his X-wing over Gall. Then the long and harried series of hyperspace jumps after abandoning the hastily built base on Kile. As soon as they'd gotten to the Rebel fleet, the droid message pod arrived with the request for their assistance on Coruscant. After some quick maintenance on the X-wings, the Rogues took off for another long flight — right into the dark heart of the Empire.

Wedge's X-wing's sensors couldn't even see a fraction of the way to Coruscant from here, but Dash promised he'd send a signal ...

The comm light on Wedge's X-wing started blinking — the unit tuned to the incoming transmission's frequency. The message from Dash's droid, Leebo, was two words: "Remember Hoth." Now, it didn't matter that they were fatigued. The only things that mattered were sharp eyes, keen wits and on-target laser shots.

"Wake up, Rogues!" he called. "Let's go!"

Recently, Chief was approached by an operative representing interests that wanted Luke Skywalker dead. They offered her a great deal of money to sabotage Skywalker's ship — 10,000 credits now, much more when his death was confirmed. With that much money, she could buy a light freighter of her own and make a living as a free-trader. No more patching ships for ungrateful pilots. No more dodging Imperials at every turn. It's a tempting prospect, indeed.

And with her talents, it would be so easy to turn a technical glitch into an assassination ...

■ **Chief**

Type: Rebel Technician

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 3D+2

KNOWLEDGE 2D+2

Business: starships 4D, value: starships 3D+1

MECHANICAL 3D

Astrogation 3D+1, repulsorlift operation 4D, space transports 4D

PERCEPTION 3D

Bargain 4D, con 5D+2, hide 4D+1, search 5D, sneak 5D+2

STRENGTH 2D+1

Lifting 3D

TECHNICAL 4D

Computer programming/repair 6D, demolition 4D+2, droid programming 6D+2, droid repair 6D, repulsorlift repair 5D+1, security 5D, space transports repair 5D, starfighter repair 6D, starfighter repair: X-wing 8D+1, starship weapon repair 6D+2

Move: 10

Equipment: Duty coveralls, hold-out blaster (3D), technical kit

The Bothan Spynet

The secretive Bothans operate an intelligence web that seems to stretch across the entire Empire, gathering information through agents, moles, bribes, surveillance and numerous other methods. If there's a secret out there, you can be certain the Bothans will discover it and find some way to profit from that knowledge.

The spynet has agents and bases on many worlds, maintaining so-called "op-fronts" — businesses, homes, and other hideouts from which intelligence operations are conducted. Most op-fronts are legitimate establishments, such as cantinas, shipping concerns, warehouses, and factories. Operatives at these locations coordinate various activities, from monitoring local newsnets for leads to computer slicing into local Imperial and industrial networks. Many op-fronts help transfer information and operatives across the spynet web.

The Bothan spynet also maintains dedicated bases and safehouses for its agents. Secrecy is vital, so most of these bases are stand-alone facilities concealed in small bunkers or cleverly disguised as geographical features, farms, or sections of unused power generators. It is rumored that the Bothans maintain several mobile bases on tramp and bulk freighters plying the space lanes.

The Bothans have found it wise to make use of agents of other species. In some parts of the



Ray Lederer

Safehouse Besh

Koth Melan waited around the darkened corner, a heavily armed Bothan bodyguard at either side. One of them pressed the small receiver nestled in his ear, then whispered, "Affirmative, SecOps Five." He turned to Koth. "We're cleared around the corner."

Following the lead guard, Koth slipped around the corner, drawing his small hold-out blaster. The bodyguards already had their weapons out. Even this close to Safehouse Besh, there could be trouble.

The bodyguard ahead held up his hand to halt the party. Koth noted the guard's fur rippling in a sharp pattern — "caution." He turned to Koth. "SecOps Seven's found something on the hatch," he whispered. "SecOps Four, move in to assist, possible demolitions situation."

Koth froze. If it were a grenade or even a block of detonite, it would only blow the hatch off and kill SecOps Four and Seven. But if it were something bigger — like a thermal detonator rigged to the hatch's security code lock mechanism — it would take them all out.

The fur on Koth's bodyguard relaxed as he received another whisper-comm message from SecOps Seven. He gave the signal for all clear, and they continued down the alley, around two more corners, and met one of the operatives at the hatch. SecOps Four had already cleared it and was searching inside Safehouse Besh. SecOps Seven handed a flexiplast flyer to Koth.

"It's okay," he said. "We already screened it for contact poisons, electronic devices and sharp edges."

Koth read the near-glowing letters printed on the sheet. "Krazy Khzam's Repulsor Lot — We Steal 'Em and Deal 'Em." He dropped the flyer, his fur rippling in irritation, and looked up at SecOps Seven. "Nice job," Koth said. "You can never be too careful. And have someone clean up the litter."

SecOps Four gave them the "all clear" signal from inside. "Proceed," Koth ordered.

SecOps Seven entered the safehouse, then waved Koth inside. Two bodyguards remained outside as the hatch sealed behind him.

"Can I pour you something, sir?" SecOps Seven asked.

"Yes, there's some Gruvian Tovash in the cabinet there," Koth replied. SecOps Four was already stoking up the burner in the fireside. Koth tucked his hold-out blaster into its hidden holster, then stretched out on the divan near the fireplace. "Home at last."

galaxy, Bothans are considered to be self-serving power-mongers, and that sort of reputation can make it hard to carry out covert operations or get much cooperation. Where a Bothan can't go, a member of the native species can.

Of course, keeping these agents loyal can be a problem. The Bothans are not above blackmailing an unruly agent into cooperation. They may not be proud of these methods, but what matters is getting the job done. For obvious reasons, the truth about these unscrupulous practices is kept under wraps.

The spynet is composed of many clan groups which operate with relative autonomy. Since suspicion and competition are at the root of Bothan society, it would be going too far to say any of these groups actually *trusts* the others. In addition, espionage, by its nature, can be a very dirty game: the Bothans have allied themselves over the years with criminal organizations, Imperials, Hutts and other unsavory elements to achieve their shadowy objectives.

In the past, the Bothan spynet has been a great help to the Rebel Alliance. No Rebel leader is so foolish as to believe the Bothans care about anyone but themselves. Even though the clan Alya, led by the prominent diplomat Borsk Fey'lya, has joined the Alliance, it will still place its own interests ahead of those of the Rebels when necessary.

While the Bothans make every effort to maintain the integrity of the spynet, enemy agents, moles, and even the rival clans and factions spy on each other. While the spynet has access to a great deal of sensitive information, counter-spies may be able to distribute that information to interested parties right under the noses of the Bothan operators.

Typical Bothan Spynet Operative. *Dexterity 3D+1, blaster 4D+1, dodge 4D+1, Knowledge 3D, intimidation 3D+2, languages 3D+2, planetary systems 3D+1, streetwise 4D+2, survival 3D+2, Mechanical 2D, Perception 4D, con 5D, forgery 4D+2, search 5D, sneak 5D, Strength 2D+2, Technical 3D, computer programming/repair 5D, security 5D. Move: 10. Comlink, hold-out blaster (3D), security datapad.*

Koth Melan

Koth Melan is an "assistant consul general for the Bothan Trade Mission," ostensibly representing Bothan commercial interests throughout the Mid-Rim. His position — an intricately crafted cover story — is ideally suited for his true role as a spymaster. Since Melan travels widely in the course of his consular duties, he frequently returns to Bothawui or Kothlis to log in reports and brief his superiors, ferrying infor-

mation from spynet operatives and op-fronts to other interested parties.

Although he has done a good job of maintaining his cover, Melan still has many enemies. He always travels with an entourage of “minor officials and bureaucrats” — all are hardened spynet operatives skilled in combat, counter-intelligence methods and surveillance techniques. Visitors don’t see Koth Melan unless the spymaster wants to see them.

When Melan must go out into the field — to retrieve information or check in with an operative — his entourage helps maintain his cover story (it is said his chief of security even doubles for him, and does a very credible impersonation). A personal appearance by Melan is often enough to indicate to an agent just how important the information he or she is carrying may be.

The spymaster’s concern for his own safety borders on rabid paranoia, and the only places he feels secure are in a few of the best-guarded spynet safehouses. Rival intelligence networks suspect there are only a few such boltholes, but no one outside of the spynet’s top operatives knows for sure where they are; it is also believed that at least one such safehouse is known only to Melan and his entourage.

Despite the Bothan spynet’s lack of true allegiance to any one group, Melan himself is partial to the Rebel Alliance. The Empire executed his father for espionage 20 years ago; the charge was untrue. Melan’s father was no spy — just a teacher trying to educate his students about the Empire. To this day, the subject is still a cause for disgrace to Melan — so much so that he refuses to accept the honorific suffix “lya,” indicating his membership in the prominent clan Alya. Melan will only acknowledge his clan status once he has avenged his father’s death by helping to cause the Empire’s downfall.

Koth Melan has recently happened upon an opportunity to do just that. His spies have discovered that the Empire has begun work on a new military project. The exact details are still unknown, but Melan’s agents have gathered intelligence indicating that the Emperor is diverting immense resources for this operation. Despite their best efforts, the Bothans have been unable to pierce the cloud of secrecy that surrounds the matter.

Recently, one of the spynet’s agents has learned that the plans for this project were to be copied and transferred from the Emperor’s secure computer vault on Coruscant to Bothawui, for dissemination to key personnel within the Imperial Intelligence community stationed there. If the secured computer which carries this data can be “acquired” — and if the computer’s



Starr Cook

security codes are cracked — the Imperial secret will be laid bare. Although the Bothan spynet itself might not be able to use this information as a weapon against the Empire, Melan knows who can: the leaders of the Rebel Alliance.

■ **Koth Melan**

Type: Bothan Spymaster

DEXTERITY 3D+1

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

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Alien species 5D, bureaucracy 5D+2, bureaucracy: Bothan spynet 9D, bureaucracy: Bothan Trade Mission 7D+1, bureaucracy: clan Alya spynet 10D+2, business 6D, cultures 6D+2, cultures: clan Alya 8D+2, intimidation 7D, languages 6D+1, law enforcement 5D+2, planetary systems 6D, streetwise 8D, survival 6D+2, value 5D+1, willpower 4D

MECHANICAL 2D

Communications 4D, repulsorlift operation 3D+1, sensors 4D

PERCEPTION 4D

Bargain 6D+2, command 7D, con 8D, forgery 7D+1, hide 5D, investigation 7D+2, persuasion 6D+1, search 8D, sneak 7D+2

STRENGTH 2D+2

Brawling 3D, climbing/jumping 3D+2

TECHNICAL 3D

Computer programming/repair 6D, droid programming 5D, first aid 4D, security 8D

Story Factors:

Opportunist: Bothans are very opportunistic and predatory.

Communication: Bothans can manipulate their fur to express emotions and further statements.

Force Points: 1

Character Points: 3

Move: 10

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



Hand-Off

SecOps Four had already failed in one mission; he was not going to falter this time. His mission orders had been explicit and concise: he *had* to get the case he carried in his shaking hands to the Rebel Alliance. The Bothan limped through a trash-cluttered back-alley in Kothlis' industrial sector. He looked over his shoulder to see if the bounty hunters were in pursuit. No, nothing. Nobody around. Good. SecOps Four slumped against the alley wall to rest for a moment.

It had happened so fast. The safehouse wall had exploded and bounty hunters swarmed in, their blasters blazing at anything that moved. The Jedi, Skywalker, seemed to be doing well on his own, deflecting blaster shots with his lightsaber. In the chaos, SecOps Four failed in his most important duty: Koth Melan had fallen. In his final moments, Melan looked to him. His expression was not one of disappointment, but one of hope. SecOps Four grabbed the case — containing stolen Imperial data — and fled down the escape corridor.

SecOps Four had been wounded as he dashed out the back corridor. His left leg sported a blistered and charred blaster wound. He'd used a piece of plastic pipe as a crutch as he headed toward the spynet's ship, hidden away in a concealed docking bay. The ship was several blocks away, through twisted alleys between factories, warehouses and automated distribution centers. Still, SecOps Four had to go on: whatever was in the case was valuable enough for bounty hunters to chase him, and important enough for Melan to give his life for. No doubt the Empire would soon join in the chase.

SecOps Four rose, hobbled down the passage a ways ... and found himself surrounded by Bothans. They were broad-nosed natives of Bothawui's eastern coastal cities and their blasters were aimed at him.

"We have been watching you," the leader said. "You have acquired something for the Rebel Alliance. We will take it from here."

SecOps Four started to protest, but he was cut off by the other. "Don't fear. We are all on the same side, one might say. This information will reach the Rebel Alliance, I assure you. This operation has all been planned with extreme detail."

"Then take me with you," SecOps Four said. "I

can be useful to the Rebellion."

"I don't think so," the lead Bothan, Vord'lya, said, shaking his head. Someone relieved SecOps Four of his weapon and the case, pressing a blaster into his back to ensure his cooperation ...

Vord'lya glanced at the case and then handed it to one of the others. "Open it. Make sure everything's there. Knowing Melan, he'll have sent out several decoys just in case."

The subordinate opened the case, inspected the contents, then nodded.

"If you are bringing that to the Rebel Alliance, why won't you bring me along?" SecOps Four pleaded.

"You are not part of my orders," Vord'lya said. "You see, it's not only a question of whether or not the Alliance gets this information. It's a matter of who gets the credit for delivering them. We can't have Melan's faction taking credit, now can we?"

SecOps Four gasped in astonishment, but the other Bothan only laughed. "My superior only cares about the contents of this case. He doesn't care how I acquire it and will not ask. As long as his faction gets the case into the Rebels' hands, he'll be happy."

Someone shoved SecOps Four roughly forward. A second later there was the sound of a blaster firing and the wounded Bothan fell into a bottomless well of darkness. Just as consciousness fled him, SecOps Four could faintly hear the words of his opponent:

"Come, my friends. Our ship waits and we must hurry if we are to break through the Imperial blockade." The Bothan agent paused, sneering at the prone form of SecOps Four. "No doubt Fey'lya will be quite pleased."

Later, SecOps Four stirred — aching but otherwise alive. Vord'lya's blaster had been set to stun, which made some sense. A good agent only kills when it is absolutely necessary, since it draws unwelcome attention. By now, the Bothans who waylaid him would have made it to a fast ship, dodged Imperial obstacles and no doubt intercepted a Rebel ship. The plans would be in the hands of the Rebel Alliance.

Perhaps there was some honor among the rival agents, SecOps Four considered. Perhaps, there will be a time when the truth is someday known.

Chapter Two

The Empire

When the heroes of the Rebel Alliance head off to rescue Han Solo, they stumble across the path of an old adversary — the evil Galactic Empire. Imperial forces continue their battle to crush the Rebellion, subjugate new worlds and maintain an iron grip on the galaxy.

At the Empire's heart is Imperial Center — the planet Coruscant — site of the former Imperial Senate and the world from which Emperor Palpatine rules the galaxy. He plots his next move against the Alliance from within the walls of the Imperial Palace, using his limitless fleets and armies and loyal servants like Darth Vader, hoping to ensnare and destroy the Rebels once and for all.

Darth Vader

One of the Emperor's most trusted underlings, Darth Vader, Dark Lord of the Sith, is perhaps the most feared man in the Empire. The sight of his mechanized facemask and his flowing black cape strikes terror into most beings, both those who have the misfortune of opposing him and those with the treacherous duty of serving beneath his exacting and unforgiving command. Darth Vader is the personification of the Empire's evils for the Rebellion, and he has often been personally charged with crushing the Alliance. Yet, despite his ruthlessness and fearsome appearance, Vader is no more than a servant of the Emperor and a slave to the dark side of the Force.

Although Vader knows better than to disobey Palpatine, he questions the Emperor's command to delay the search for Luke Skywalker. He has also voiced strong objections to the Emperor's increasing reliance on Falleen Prince Xizor.

Surprisingly, Palpatine has not disciplined Vader for these doubts. It often seems that the Emperor already knows every thought that crosses his servant's mind, and knows how

every event will unfold.

For his part, Vader has no time for games. Where the Emperor enjoys playing his servants off against each other, Vader prefers direct confrontation. He is no spy or diplomat — he is a warrior. While he is not above setting a cunning snare for his enemies, as he did on Cloud City, Vader would much prefer facing a legion of foes in combat than lower himself to subterfuge and deception. It is Prince Xizor's love for such intricate stratagems and manipulation that fuels Vader's distrust of him.

The Dark Lord of the Sith endures his service to the Emperor just as he endures his enslavement to the dark side of the Force. He relies upon the dark side for his strength, and in his heart, he knows that should the day ever come when he turns from the dark side, he will be crushed by his enemies. Vader knows that it is far too late to turn back, even were such a thing possible. He believes that if he can focus on his hate, the power of the dark side can heal his wounds, enabling him to leave his mask and body armor.

The man beneath the fearsome armor has undergone profound change. After the Battle of Yavin, Vader was obsessed with capturing the pilot who destroyed the Death Star. At last, he learned the truth: the pilot's name was *Skywalker*, a name almost forgotten by Darth Vader. Now Vader knew he had a son — a son strong in the Force, a son who might one day challenge the might of the Emperor himself.

His encounter with Luke on Cloud City awoke new feelings in Vader, reminders of the man he had been long ago. He remembered when he, too, was weak, foolish and idealistic, prone to setting off on grand adventures and deluding himself into believing he could change the galaxy. He sees these attitudes in his son, and more, he sees the blossoming of the powers of a Jedi Knight. Combat with Luke was a challenge, unlike any Vader had faced in many years.

At last, he had encountered an opponent worthy of him, swift with a lightsaber and powerful in the ways of the Force.

It was obvious during the battle, though, that Luke still had much to learn. With the right tutor there would be no limit to the power that could belong to the young Jedi. Vader feels compelled to seek Luke out and reveal to him the true power of the dark side. He knows that if Luke is not lured to the darkness, he could well destroy the Empire.

However, if Vader and Luke — father and son — were to combine their might against the Emperor, they could usurp Palpatine's power and bring a new era of peace to the galaxy. None could stand against them. Luke's only alternatives are a lifetime of service to the Emperor ... or death.

Vader knows he came close to achieving his goal on Bespin. He knows Luke slipped perilously close to surrendering to anger, hatred, despair ... all the tools of the dark side. Luke resisted — but in time, Vader knows he could overcome the young warrior's resistance. Vader feels compelled to find Skywalker again, and make the youth see his destiny.

At the same time, Luke's determination and ability sparks a feeling of pride in the Sith Lord, a feeling that confuses Vader. Could it truly have been relief he felt when the *Millennium Falcon* escaped the Imperial Fleet at Bespin? Why did the feared Dark Lord of the Sith, who had sent countless officers to their doom for lesser failures, allow Admiral Piett to live in the wake of that most egregious error of tactical judgment? No, surely such weakness was a remnant of his

life as Anakin Skywalker, and surely he has purged himself of that past existence ...

■ Darth Vader

Type: Dark Lord of the Sith

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 5D, blaster artillery 4D+1, brawling parry 7D, dodge 7D, lightsaber 11D+2, melee combat 7D, melee parry 9D, vehicle blasters 6D

KNOWLEDGE 3D+2

Alien species 7D+1, bureaucracy 9D+1, cultures 7D, intimidation 10D+2, languages 6D+1, planetary systems 8D, streetwise 7D, survival 6D, value 6D, willpower 8D+1

MECHANICAL 4D

Astrogation 7D+1, capital ship gunnery 8D, capital ship piloting 8D, capital ship shields 5D, repulsorlift operation 5D+2, starfighter piloting 10D, starship gunnery 8D, starship shields 5D

PERCEPTION 3D+1

Bargain 4D, command 11D+1, con 4D, gambling 4D+1, hide 5D+2, persuasion 8D+1, search 8D, sneak 5D+2

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 9D, climbing/jumping 7D+1, lifting 8D+1, stamina 8D+1

TECHNICAL 3D

Armor repair 6D+1, capital ship repair 5D, lightsaber repair 7D+2, security 6D+2, starfighter repair 5D

Special Abilities:

Force Skills: Control 11D+1, sense 12D+1, alter 11D

Force Powers (these are the known powers Vader possessed and it is believed that he had access to many other powers):

Control: Absorb/dissipate energy, accelerate healing, concentrate*, control pain, detoxify poison**, enhance attribute**, hibernation trance, reduce injury, remain conscious, resist stun

Sense: Combat sense**, danger sense**, instinctive astrogation†, life detection, life sense, magnify senses, receptive telepathy, sense Force

Alter: Injure/kill, telekinesis

Control and Sense: Farseeing**, lightsaber combat, projective telepathy

Control and Alter: Feed on dark side†, inflict pain

Control, Sense and Alter: Affect mind, telekinetic kill**



LFL

* Described in the *Star Wars Movie Trilogy Sourcebook*.

** Described in the *Dark Force Rising Sourcebook*.

† Described in *Galaxy Guide 9: Fragments from the Rim*.

This character is Force-sensitive.

Force Points: 21

Dark Side Points: 28

Character Points: 40

Move: 10

Equipment: Body armor (+1D all attacks, respirator is necessary to keep Vader alive), lightsaber (5D)

The Emperor

In the heart of the Empire, at the center of a twisted web of bureaucrats, advisors, admirals, and spies, sits Emperor Palpatine. A mysterious man, rarely seen save by the servants who carry out his often cryptic wishes, he pulls the strings which manipulate the Empire. He offers no explanations to underlings, and he confides in no one. Only one man may rule the Empire — and that man is Palpatine — and that rule must be absolute.

Palpatine uses contradictory orders and manipulation to keep his servants vying for favor, a means by which Palpatine prevents his underlings from becoming too powerful. By setting them against each other in the ruthlessly competitive Imperial court, he prevents any of them from advancing a private agenda and ensures all remember who is the master and who the servant.

Palpatine is a master of manipulation and has no qualms about using crime lords, Grand Moffs, or other powerful figures as pawns in his game. Strangely, it always seems that he knows how all of his pieces will move several turns before they do.

His newest tool is Prince Xizor. Granted, the leader of Black Sun is an alien, but Palpatine has used aliens for his own purposes before (the enigmatic Thrawn and the fiercely loyal Noghri being but two examples). Head of the immense Xizor Transport System as well as the mastermind behind a powerful crime syndicate, Xizor is a valuable ally ... and a potentially formidable enemy. By allowing Xizor to participate on the periphery of his operations, Palpatine is able to make use of the crime lord's vast resources as well as keep track of the Falleen prince. True, Vader objects, but it wouldn't hurt the Dark Lord to have a little competition, Palpatine reasons slyly.

The Emperor

Type: Jedi Master

DEXTERITY 2D+1

Dodge 7D

KNOWLEDGE 4D+1

Alien species 10D, bureaucracy: Empire 12D, cultures 9D, intimidation 13D, languages 8D, law enforcement: Empire 6D, military history 10D+2, planetary systems 7D, scholar: archaic library systems 8D, scholar: arcane technologies 7D, scholar: clone vat systems 7D+2, scholar: dark side lore 11D, scholar: Jedi lore 12D+1, scholar: lightsaber histories 12D, tactics: fleets 10D, tactics: ground assault 5D, willpower 12D+1

MECHANICAL 2D

PERCEPTION 4D+1

Bargain 10D, command 10D, command: Imperial forces 12D+1, con 8D, hide 5D+2, investigation 7D, persuasion 11D, persuasion: oration 13D+2, search 7D

STRENGTH 3D

Stamina 6D

TECHNICAL 2D

Lightsaber repair 8D

Special Abilities:

Force Skills: Control 13D, sense 15D, alter 14D

Force Powers (these are the known powers Emperor Palpatine possessed and it is believed that he had access to many other powers):

Control: Absorb/dissipate energy, accelerate healing, concentrate*, control pain, detoxify poison**, enhance attribute**, hibernation trance, rage††, reduce injury, remain conscious, resist stun, short-term memory enhancement**

Sense: Combat sense**, danger sense**, instinctive astrogation†, life detection, life sense, magnify senses, receptive telepathy, sense Force

Alter: Injure/kill, telekinesis

Control and Sense: Farseeing**, lightsaber combat, projective telepathy

Control and Alter: Accelerate another's healing, control another's pain**, feed on dark side, Force lightning**, inflict pain**, return another to consciousness, transfer Force

Control, Sense and Alter: Affect mind, control mind**, doppelganger††, drain life essence††, enhanced coordination**, telekinetic kill**, transfer life††

Sense and Alter: Dim other's senses

* Described in the *Star Wars Movie Trilogy Sourcebook*.

** Described in the *Dark Force Rising Sourcebook*.

† Described in *Galaxy Guide 9: Fragments from the Rim*.

†† Described in the *Dark Empire Sourcebook*.

This character is Force-sensitive.

Force Points: 33

Dark Side Points: 40

Character Points: 58

Move: 10



In the Emperor's Service

Moff Jerjerrod knelt before the Emperor in his vast throne room. He bowed his head and hoped he would leave the Imperial Palace alive.

"Rise, my friend. I have a special challenge for you," the Emperor said. "I want you to ease your campaign against the Rebels and leave your work in Logistics and Supply."

Jerjerrod shifted uneasily. He didn't dare voice his concern that he was needed in that ministry to make sure Imperial resources weren't overextended.

"Do not concern yourself with the logistical status of the Empire," Palpatine stated, as if he had read the Moff's mind. "I have a much more important task for you, far better suited to your talents." The Emperor told Jerjerrod what he was to do.



After Jerjerrod had left the Emperor's throne room, passing through the antechamber with the Royal Guards, he had to get through the Supplicants Waiting Hall. There they were, all lined up — every one of them waiting to see the Emperor. Advisor Golthan stood at the head of the line, with Alec Pradeux and Kren Blista-Vanee behind him. Various Grand Moffs, admirals and other dignitaries waited behind them.

"What did the Emperor want with you?" Pradeux asked.

"Certainly not much," Golthan sneered. "You're just a Moff, Jerjerrod — you couldn't possibly have been given any duty of significance."

Jerjerrod grimaced. "I've been named Director of Imperial Energy Systems, a new subdepartment of the Ministry of Energy. Not terribly exciting, I'll admit, but I'm still proud to be carrying out the Emperor's will."

Pradeux looked nonplused. "Why haven't I been told of this new subdepartment?"

"It looks as if you are about to be briefed," Blista-Vanee said, nodding toward the Royal Guards who were summoning Pradeux into the antechamber. "I'm sure there is a reasonable explanation for this appointment." He looked down on Moff Jerjerrod. "You are a competent overseer, but certainly not the sort to whom the Emperor entrusts vital tasks."

The Moff nodded humbly. "The Emperor has entrusted me with developing a line of large-scale portable power plants for use in disaster relief efforts."

"How quaint," Golthan sneered again. "It almost seems like a demotion for you, Jerjerrod. Were you not formerly an administrator in charge of Logistics and Supply?"

Yes, Jerjerrod thought. *And now I'm in charge of the project which will finally bring about the destruction of the Rebel Alliance.*



Ray Lederer

Coruscant Guards

Coruscant Guards are highly-trained peace officers found across Imperial Center. Also known as “Imperial Guards” or “elite stormtroopers” these troops are charged with protecting citizens and property from any criminal activity. While they can be found virtually everywhere on the planet, they are most likely to be assigned to protect transportation and communication facilities, important bureaucratic offices, and places where large gatherings are likely. Because of the high population of Imperial Center, maintaining order and security for all is a top priority: Coruscant Guards are granted “martial law” powers to accomplish that task. They have the right to search any facility — public or private — at any time; they may arrest any citizen on suspicion of illegal activities, regardless of a possible lack of evidence. In order to preserve “purity of civic thought” and to maintain “Human High Culture,” Coruscant Guards are often at work rounding up suspected Rebel operatives. In this way, they are as much a political force as a tool of law enforcement.

Coruscant Guards are culled from the ranks of Imperial stormtroopers, and receive specialized training in marksmanship, riot-suppression techniques and criminal investigations. They are also trained in threat assessment and small group tactics, while an intense regimen of physical conditioning gets them in peak shape. Finally, psychological conditioning is used to instill unwavering loyalty to the Emperor.

These officers are equipped with a heavily-armored duty suit, while the battle helmet has air filters, optic sensors and a sophisticated comlink, with scrambling equipment. Typical weaponry includes a blaster rifle and taser staff.

■ Coruscant Guards

Type: Coruscant Guard

DEXTERITY 2D

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

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Law enforcement 4D

MECHANICAL 2D

PERCEPTION 2D

Investigation 5D, search 4D+2

STRENGTH 2D

Brawling 4D

TECHNICAL 2D

First aid 3D+2, security 4D

Character Points: 5

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster rifle (5D), Coruscant Guard armor (+2D physical, +1D energy, -1D to *Dexterity* and related skills, with optic sensors — can see in darkness with no penalty), taser staff (5D stun or 5D regular damage)

Admiral Okins

If there was ever a by-the-book officer in the Imperial Navy, Admiral Okins is it. The middle-aged man seems older than he really is, mostly because he has weathered years of loyal service to gain the position he holds today. He made his mark not by taking great risks or by outwitting the enemy with his tactical genius, but simply by following orders. Okins rose through the ranks on sheer merit, without the help of ambitious allies wishing to place him into power for their own purposes. He owes no favors or loyalties to anyone but the Empire itself.

It is this unswerving loyalty that has brought Okins to the attention of the Emperor. Palpatine sees him as the perfect tool and he occasionally dispatches Okins to lead a small task force charged with dispatching pirates or subjugating worlds. Often, Okins is given authority over a fleet commander whose actions have sprung more from ambition and ego than Imperial regulations. An officer serving under Okins knows that *everything* that occurs will be reported back to the Emperor. Okins has even been assigned to some of the Emperor’s most trusted advisors (including Darth Vader) to ensure that Palpatine’s wishes are carried out.

The Admiral does not feel manipulated by the Emperor, instead seeing his work as just another way of serving the Empire. In his mind, being a loyal servant means doing what you are told, and not pursuing your own agendas or working toward the downfall of your peers. After all, if orders are ignored, the chain of command will collapse and the Emperor’s will won’t be carried out. Although Okins may be a small link in that chain of command, he sees himself as a vital one.

■ Admiral Okins

Type: Imperial Admiral

DEXTERITY 3D+2

Blaster 4D+2, blaster artillery 5D, dodge 4D

KNOWLEDGE 3D+1

Bureaucracy: Imperial Navy 6D, intimidation 4D, planetary systems 4D, tactics: capital ships 5D+2, tactics: fleets 4D+2

MECHANICAL 3D

Astrogation 5D, capital ship piloting 4D, communications 4D+2, sensors 4D+1

PERCEPTION 2D+2

Command 6D, investigation 4D+1



Ray Lederer

Temporary Reassignment

Admiral Piett stood before Darth Vader in the Dark Lord's chambers aboard the Super Star Destroyer *Executor*. He had an uneasy feeling this discussion would be very brief — and probably fatal — given his failure to capture the *Millennium Falcon* at Bespin.

He had been at Admiral Ozzel's side when the Dark Lord made clear his wrath for that officer's error on Hoth. Later, he had watched the guards drag away Captain Needa's lifeless body after his failed "apology." Vader did not tolerate anything but exemplary performance from those in his service, and Piett had failed him.

"Admiral Piett," Vader said, the booming voice echoing through the chamber. "I have been recalled to Coruscant to make my report to the Emperor. The *Executor* shall accompany me under the command of Captain Kallio."

Piett felt his throat tense — was it the Dark Lord's work, or his own apprehension?

Vader continued. "You shall remain in command of the Imperial fleet to continue the hunt for the Rebels. You shall carry the flag aboard the Star Destroyer *Accuser*."

"Yes, my lord," Piett said, stifling his sigh of relief.

"You will be reassigned to the *Executor* when I return from my duties at the Imperial Court." Vader glared at the Admiral. "I am entrusting the fleet to you, Admiral Piett. Do not permit yourself any failures — if any come to my attention, be assured a new admiral will be placed in charge of this fleet."

Piett understood completely. "Yes, Lord Vader." He did not release his sigh of relief until he was well away from the Dark Lord's chambers.

STRENGTH 2D+1

TECHNICAL 3D

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

Character Points: 8

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, datapad

Bentu Pall Tarlen

Some loyal citizens aspire to join the mighty Imperial Navy and rise to command a Star Destroyer. Others choose to serve the Emperor as Imperial Intelligence operatives, going deep undercover to ferret out Alliance spies and put an end to the Rebellion. Yet not everyone can be a hero — some must serve in other ways, doing the little jobs that keep the Empire running smoothly. Bentu Pall Tarlen is one such man.

Tarlen serves as chief of the Imperial Center Construction Contracts Division, the ministry responsible for planning public works, military facilities and Imperially-funded building projects on Coruscant. He oversees the bidding on contracts for these projects, and often has the final say when evaluating the lowest bidder.



Truly immense construction projects are rare on a planet mostly covered by thousands of levels of city. Even a minor job — such as gutting several city blocks and building a new palace for one of Emperor Palpatine's minor Advisors — could turn a small up-and-coming construction firm into a corporate industrial giant. Competition is fierce as companies bid against each other, trying to estimate the lowest possible costs while still making a healthy profit. And Tarlen, the happily anonymous bureaucrat, ensures his economic well-being by making sure certain firms get all the choice contracts.

Invariably, a major project will go to one of three firms: Core Construction, Durasteel Corporation, or the Hightower Conglomerate. What few people know is that all three are fronts for the crime syndicate Black Sun ... and those that do know have been paid off, blackmailed into silence, or killed. Tarlen sees to it that Black Sun knows the amounts of other firms' bids so they can come in lower. Later, cost overruns ensure that Black Sun will make a healthy profit off the Empire.

There's one other advantage to the partnership between Tarlen and Black Sun. Prince Xizor gets the plans for all newly constructed government building and military facilities, and can easily see to it that audio and holo devices are planted in them during construction (for espionage, should the need to gather intelligence from "official sources" ever arise).

■ **Bentu Pall Tarlen**

Type: Minor Imperial Bureaucrat

DEXTERITY 2D

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Bureaucracy: Imperial 7D, business: construction 7D+2, streetwise 4D+2, value 5D+1

MECHANICAL 2D

PERCEPTION 2D

Bargain 6D, command 4D+2, con 5D+2, forgery 5D, gambling 6D, investigation 7D, persuasion 6D

STRENGTH 2D

TECHNICAL 2D

Computer programming/repair 4D

Move: 10

Equipment: Datapad

General Harrid Sendo

To look at General Sendo, one would doubt he had anything in common with a man like Bentu Pall Tarlen. They share a common trait and a dark secret: both are in the employ of Black Sun.

The aging Imperial Intelligence officer has served the Empire long and well, but he's no

fool. He knows the Empire can't last forever. He's seen the Intelligence scandocs reporting increased Rebel activity. He can feel in his bones that this Rebellion won't be going away anytime soon. So he is already planning his retirement to the Mid-Rim world of Avenelle, where he can relax in the sunshine for his remaining years.

Of course, that kind of luxury costs credits. Lots of credits. When he was approached by agents of Black Sun and asked to personally keep Xizor apprised of developments inside Intelligence, Sendo agreed immediately. In return, Xizor pays a generous stipend each month, which is routed through various covert channels and finally "invested" in a spacious island villa on Avenelle.

Sendo is the perfect person to provide Black Sun with accurate reports on Imperial Intelligence activities. As a scandoc "review specialist" within Intelligence's Destabilization branch, he has access to his own bureau's communica-

Up the Intelligence Ladder

Lando Calrissian anxiously followed Lord Darth Vader as he stalked out of the Cloud City detention tower cell. "Lord Vader, what about Leia and the Wookiee?"

Vader stopped at the turbolift and turned. "They must never again leave this city."

Lando advanced. "That was never a condition of our agreement, nor was giving Han to this bounty hunter!"

"Perhaps you think you are being treated unfairly?"

Lando backed off. "No."

"Good," Vader snarled. "It would be unfortunate if I had to leave a garrison here."



Lieutenant Djirra was flustered. As Lord Vader's logistics officer, he had been responsible for preparing one of Cloud City's carbon-freeze chambers to place a human subject into hibernation. Now there was the possibility a garrison would have to be left behind here.

True, it might just be the idle gossip of stormtroopers with too much time on their hands. But the story sounded right — it was certainly the sort of threat Vader would make. If it proved to be more than a threat, Djirra would be the one charged with carrying it out, and Vader would want it done immediately.

Djirra had already decided that Captain Treece would make the ideal commanding officer. He was a veteran of several occupations and was strict enough to keep unrest to a minimum.

First, Portent had to be found. An undercover diplomatic agent for the Empire, he had helped to arrange the Imperials' expedient entry into Cloud City. His assistance in the subjugation of the local government would be invaluable if the Empire were to leave a presence here ...



General Sendo knelt before Xizor in the Prince's audience chambers. "Rise, my servant," Xizor said. "What vital news have you brought me?"

"My Prince," Sendo began. "We have received several scandocs through various channels confirming that Darth Vader has left a garrison behind on the Bospin mining colony of Cloud City."

Xizor nodded and filed the information away in his mind. It would be useful to know should Black Sun plan any operations at the little facility.

"There is more, your majesty," Sendo continued. "Apparently Lord Vader failed in his mission to capture the Rebel known as Skywalker. The Emperor has recalled him to Coruscant."

"Thank you, General," Xizor said smoothly. "You have been most helpful." Sendo bowed, turned and left the audience chamber under Guri's watchful eye.

So, Vader is returning again, Xizor thought. And he has failed to bring his son into the Imperial fold. None of this was news to him. Five of his usual informants on Lord Vader's affairs had already transmitted similar findings. Of course, word of Vader's failure was so sweet as to be worth hearing, again and again and again ...

tions, and those from other branches as well. Sendo transfers regular reports to Xizor through an ever-changing list of approved couriers. When more important data is in hand, he arranges to meet with Xizor personally. This commonly involves the use of a disguise and the aid of Black Sun agents to ensure he isn't traced. He also does favors for Xizor, such as erasing or "misplacing" scandocs whose data could harm a Black Sun operation.

Sendo's rank is little more than a title to distinguish his role within Destab from the lesser office bureaucrats and the field operatives who report to section chiefs. General Sendo is not a brave man — he did not rise through the ranks by distinction in battle — and he's never even used his blaster other than on the firing range. He was promoted for enduring years of tedious service without complaint, and he has enough cunning to make sure his tracks are covered.

Sendo visits Xizor at least once a month to accept his stipend and reaffirm his loyalty. Xizor's eyes always seem to look right through him, and he senses that any betrayal on his part would be spotted immediately, so he is careful

to make sure his reports are as accurate as possible.

Sendo considers himself a vital part of Black Sun's intelligence network. He doesn't realize that he is only one of hundreds of other Black Sun informants entrenched within the Imperial Army and Navy, Coruscant Guard and starport security forces stationed on Coruscant.

■ General Harrid Sendo

Type: Imperial Intelligence Bureaucrat

DEXTERITY 2D+1

Blaster 3D

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Bureaucracy: Imperial Intelligence 6D+1, intimidation 4D+2, languages 5D, law enforcement: Imperial 5D, planetary systems 5D, streetwise 5D+2

MECHANICAL 2D+2

Communications 4D, sensors 3D

PERCEPTION 4D

Bargain 5D, command 5D+2, con 6D, forgery 6D+2, investigation 7D, persuasion 5D, search 4D+2

STRENGTH 2D+1

TECHNICAL 2D+2

Computer programming/repair 6D, droid programming 4D+2, security 5D

Character Points: 3

Move: 10

Equipment: Datapad, recording rod

Chapter Three

Black Sun

The criminal organization known as Black Sun lurks in the shadow of the Empire, biding its time, maneuvering its pawns and preparing to seize greater power in the galaxy. Few know of Black Sun's existence, concealed as it is by layers of covert operatives, front organizations and bribed Imperial officials. In some ways, its anonymity is its greatest strength — like an assassin well-versed in stealth, there is no warning of Black Sun's strike until far too late.

The power and influence of Ploovo Two-For-One, the Klatooinan Trade Guild and even the mighty gangster Jabba the Hutt all pale in comparison to Black Sun. Smaller criminal organizations confine themselves to limited regions of space, or certain illegal trades. Black Sun's grasp encompasses everything: gambling, blackmail, smuggling, espionage, slaving, spice, racketeering, and many other illicit activities. If it isn't taking a profit from every illegal transaction in the galaxy, it at least knows of them all.

In the heart of the shadows sits Prince Xizor, an alien prince with almost immeasurable wealth. He waits and watches as the Rebels and the Empire tear at each other, playing both sides against each other to ensure that neither truly wins. In Xizor's mind, victory is *his* privilege alone.

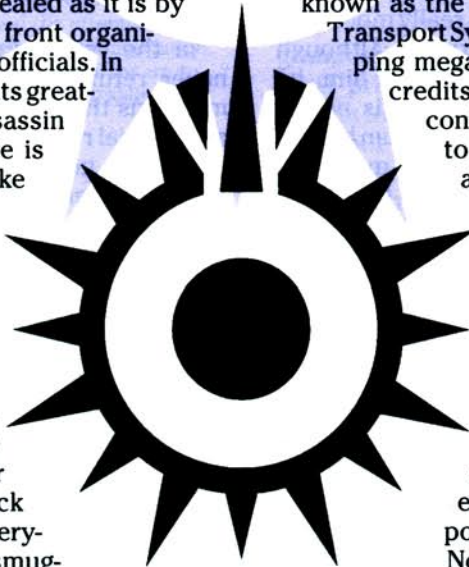
Many in the Empire would expect a human to be controlling the galaxy's most powerful crime syndicate, but Prince Xizor's personal charisma and brilliant grasp of strategy allowed him to become leader of Black Sun and gather power

great enough to attract the attention of Palpatine.

Descended from a royal house on his homeworld, the reptilian humanoid is publicly known as the owner and president of Xizor Transport Systems (XTS), an immense shipping megacorporation worth billions of credits. XTS maintains fleets of huge container ships and bulk freighters to haul cargo throughout the galaxy. The company makes a tidy profit by providing swift light freighters as courier ships for high-paying clients with small but valuable cargoes. Xizor Transport Systems provides substantial financial backing for Xizor's criminal enterprises, as well as being a convenient front for Black Sun's activities — a front no one has ever penetrated and lived to expose.

Not all of Xizor's credits, though, are poured into XTS or Black Sun. His luxurious and immense palace in Imperial Center is filled with guards, servants and creature comforts. He keeps a skyhook, *Falleen's Fist*, tethered in orbit above Coruscant. He delights in fine dishes from around the galaxy — the more exotic and dangerous, the better. Of course, with his wealth, Xizor thinks nothing of paying exorbitant prices to hire the best chefs available. He even owns a share of the Manarai, the famous luxury restaurant overlooking Imperial Center's Monument Park.

Xizor also has an eye for females of many species. As a Falleen male, he can produce powerful pheromones that make him alluring to humanoid women, although certain exercises and great concentration are required for these pheromones to work at full strength. Though



his companions may enjoy his company and the things his wealth can buy, they never enjoy his confidence or learn anything of Black Sun.

In fact, Xizor rarely spends more than a few months with any one female, regardless of how clever or beautiful she might be. With so many to choose from, he grows bored easily. He has yet to find a companion he considers his equal, and would not stay with her if he did — how could he ever trust someone as cunning as he?

Upon ending a relationship, the female receives expensive gifts (and occasionally even a fancy dwelling place on Coruscant) with the proviso that she never contact him again. Those who disregard this warning often meet with “accidents,” for Xizor refuses to tolerate those who do not obey his wishes.

Power over others means everything to Xizor — it is reflected not only in his control of Black Sun, but in his intimidating physical appearance. Though the Falleen Prince looks only about

30, he is really more than a century old. Although exercise bores him, he knows that it is necessary for optimum health. Xizor uses myostim units to keep himself in top physical shape while still allowing him to focus on Black Sun business. He also devotes himself to training in the martial arts and spends several hours per week at his personal firing range, honing his already formidable marksmanship skills.

Xizor is tall and imposing, with a topknot ponytail of hair adorning his bald head like a plume. He wears a second, smaller ponytail at the base of his skull. His regal stature reflects his personality — cool, calculating and glacially polite when it suits his needs. He comes across as a man whose power is so great that he has no need to prove himself ... a man who always gets his way.

Xizor's appearance reflects his royal up-

bringing. His father was a king on his homeworld of Falleen, and Xizor was raised to ascend to that throne. However, the Prince's interests lay offworld, in the much more ambitious universe of crime. Ironically, that was to save his life.

Ten years ago, an accident occurred at an Imperial research facility within his home city — the laboratory was developing a tissue-destroying bacterium for use in biological warfare. No cure had been developed for the disease. When the bacterium leaked out of the lab and began racing through the city's population, Darth Vader ordered an orbital strike against the lab and the surrounding countryside. After several hours of turbolaser bombardment, the bioweapon bacterium was eradicated — and 200,000 Falleen had been killed. Xizor's family was among the dead. He lost his mother, father, his nest-brother, two sisters and three uncles. Xizor would have died — *should* have died — but he was off-planet on Black Sun business at the time.

In the years since the disaster, Xizor has never returned to his homeworld. He never mentions the loss of his family and has erased all Imperial records connecting himself to them, but he has never forgotten his loss, nor has he ever forgotten or forgiven the man responsible: Darth Vader.

Xizor has been planning his vengeance on Vader for years. He taunts Vader with deceptions, misleading impressions, and underhanded dealings. He knows the Dark Lord of the Sith is an obstacle to his attaining greater power and prestige in the Imperial Court, and so Vader must be dealt with. And revenge shall be sweet, indeed ...

Challenging the Dark Lord openly, of course, would be foolish and no doubt suicidal. Xizor has crafted a plan that will not only cause Vader's fall from the Emperor's favor, but will leave the Falleen Prince in the Sith Lord's place. Xizor plots to kill young Luke Skywalker in such a way that the blame for the act falls on Vader. At worst, Vader will be perceived as having been afraid of the Jedi's powers. At best, depriving the Emperor of the young Jedi will cost Vader influence.

It is a perfect plan for destroying the Dark Lord of the Sith. Vader must be ruined — made to suffer — and his own son will be the instrument of his downfall. If this should lead to the improvement of Xizor's standing with Palpatine's — and manipulating the Emperor as he sees fit — so much the better.

■ Prince Xizor

Type: Falleen Crime Lord
DEXTERITY 3D



Blaster 9D+2, brawling parry 7D, dodge 8D, melee combat 6D+2, melee parry 6D, thrown weapons 6D

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Alien species 6D+2, bureaucracy: Black Sun 9D, bureaucracy: Imperial 8D+1, business: Black Sun 9D, business: XTS 9D, cultures 6D, intimidation 8D+2, languages 5D+2, law enforcement 7D+2, planetary systems 7D, streetwise 8D, streetwise: Black Sun 10D, value 8D, willpower 7D+2

MECHANICAL 2D

Astrogation 4D, space transports 5D+2, starfighter piloting 6D, starship gunnery 5D, starship shields 5D

PERCEPTION 4D

Bargain 8D+1, command 9D, con 8D+2, investigation 8D, persuasion 7D, persuasion: seduction 8D, search 6D, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 4D

Brawling 8D, brawling: martial arts 9D+1, climbing/jumping 5D+2, lifting 6D, stamina 7D, swimming 5D

TECHNICAL 2D

Computer programming/repair 5D, security 7D

Special Abilities:

Attraction Pheromones: Exuding special pheromones and changing skin color to affect others gives Falleen a +1D bonus to their *persuasion* skill, with an additional +1D for each hour of continuous preparation and meditation to enhance the effects — the bonus may total no more than +3D for any one skill attempt and the attempt must be attempted within one hour of completing meditation.

Amphibious: Falleen can “breathe” water for up to 12 hours. They receive +1D to any *swimming* skill rolls.

Force Points: 4

Dark Side Points: 13

Character Points: 15

Move: 10

Equipment: Comlink, modified hold-out blaster (4D), battle-shield (+1D energy, +2D physical, use *melee parry* or *dodge* skill depending upon type of attack)

Guri

The person most often associated with Black Sun is that of Guri, Xizor’s lovely chief lieutenant and bodyguard. Since Guri acts often acts directly on Xizor’s behalf, many of those who know of Black Sun’s existence assume she is the criminal syndicate’s Underlord.

Guri has blue eyes and long, flowing golden hair, with the trim, graceful figure of a professional dancer. Her voice is cool and even, and her beauty is a masterpiece of misdirection — no one expects to find deadly skill in such a lovely package. Guri has no need to carry a weapon, for she is a weapon herself, and she serves well as Xizor’s bodyguard and enforcer.

Guri never displays emotion, remaining focused on carrying out her master’s orders. Her calm is not due to iron discipline and steel nerves for she has no “nerves” — Guri is a highly sophisticated droid.

One of only a handful of human replica droids, and the only one known to have been programmed as an assassin, Guri is perhaps Xizor’s most prized possession. He paid nine million credits to have her constructed — an exorbitant sum, but one well worth it as far as Xizor is concerned. For a being who trusts no one, what better lieutenant than one programmed to be completely loyal?

Guri looks and acts like a human, her lungs breathe air and her heart pumps “blood.” Her

The Lesser Evil

Lord Darth Vader strode onto the *Devastator*’s bridge, peering out the viewports at the planet Falleen below. He paused a moment, looking down at the surface, where, even now, an invisible plague was quickly spreading.

“Lord Vader.” Captain Bolvan spoke up, gingerly approaching the Dark Lord of the Sith. “We have projections based on the information salvaged from the laboratories ...” He began punching up numbers on his datapad, then passed the device to Vader.

Reports estimated the necrotizing bacterium would tear through the population like wildfire. Only a few hours had passed since the accident, but projections showed that — if action was not taken soon — the plague would spread to every continent on Falleen. Vader handed the datapad back to Captain Bolvan.

“Sir,” the Captain offered. “If we requisition the ordnance from Project X271 in the Outer Rim Territories, we could incinerate the bacterium from orbit ...”

“And annihilate every living thing on the planet,”

Vader interrupted. “No. The Emperor may still have some use for the Falleen.”

“Lord Vader, there is no cure ...” Bolvan pleaded.

“Captain,” Vader snarled. “You must learn when it is appropriate to offer your counsel. Now is not the time.”

A lieutenant marched up to Vader and Captain Bolvan, saluted and stood at rigid attention. “You requested my presence, Lord Vader?”

“Yes, Lieutenant Hija. Prepare for an orbital bombardment of Falleen — centering on the research facility, and everything within 40 kilometers.”

“Yes, my lord.” Hija spun around on his heel and marched off to carry out his duties.

Vader turned from Captain Bolvan to look out the viewport again. In a few moments, the land directly below would be ablaze with turbolaser fire. Thousands would die, but billions would be spared the effects of the bacterium. The bioweapon project on Falleen had not been going well ... and in the end, all of this was a small price to pay for failure.

bone structure is constructed of high-strength alloys covered in polymers, mimicking human bones on scanner readings. Her major “organs” consist of bio-fibers which fool scanners into thinking they’re truly organic. Scanners also miss the thousands of carefully shielded micro-gyros imbedded in her joint housings, which give Guri her perfect sense of balance. Her clone vat-grown skin is flawless, if only 10 years old. Only her powerful muscles cannot fool the scanners — although they will scan as flesh, they do

not register as any known tissue. Overall, she looks like a perfectly normal and attractive young woman in her early twenties. Guri was designed to deceive, and she does so with deadly effectiveness.

Her strength, agility, speed and balance make Guri an efficient killing machine. Her processor — allegedly a *highly* modified AA-1 Verbo-brain — has been expanded to hold much of the programming necessary for her to act in a human fashion and it also helps her keep track of the numerous operations Xizor expects her to oversee.

One of her chief programming directives is to ensure her master’s safety and protection. Guri analyzes Xizor’s plans for potential dangers — especially on the rare occasions when he allows his passions to dictate his actions. Her extensive security programming gives her a healthy dose of paranoia. Whether it’s a threat to Xizor’s physical well-being or the security of Black Sun, Guri can be counted on to take steps to check any threat. Often, these steps involve violence and it often seems that the droid thrives on this conflict.

Little is known about Guri’s creator, an out-law tech named Simonelle the Ingoian. A brilliant doctor and droid engineer, he operated from a hidden enclave somewhere in the Minos Cluster. He managed to acquire a pirated copy of a new droid type designed by Rebel scientists, human replicas intended to be used as part of the Alliance’s “Project Decoy.” The original idea was to replace Imperial officials with the droids, who would be programmed to sabotage, delay, and otherwise obstruct Imperial operations. Somehow, the plans and the prototype wound up in Simonelle’s hands, possibly through the intervention of Black Sun. Only a few droids were produced prior to Guri’s construction, and none have been manufactured since.

■ Guri

Type: Customized Human Replica Droid

DEXTERITY 5D

Blaster 7D, brawling parry 11D, dodge 8D, melee combat 7D, melee parry 7D, thrown weapons 7D

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Bureaucracy: Black Sun 7D, business: Black Sun 7D, business: XTS 7D, intimidation 9D, streetwise 6D, streetwise: Black Sun 7D, survival 6D

MECHANICAL 2D

Astrogation 4D, repulsorlift operation 4D, space transports 5D, starfighter piloting 4D, starship gunnery 4D, starship shields 4D

PERCEPTION 4D

Command 6D, investigation 7D, search 6D, sneak 7D

STRENGTH 5D

Brawling: martial arts 10D, climbing/jumping 7D

TECHNICAL 2D

First aid: Falleen 6D, security 7D

Equipped with:



Only One of Her Kind

Guri entered Simonelle's workshop. Several work tables bore human replica droids in various stages of completion, but none were yet covered with the carefully grown skins. Computers lined the walls, programming the Verbo-brain processors for the unfinished droids. Guri looked around at the electronic mess, picking up droid components from a workbench and examining them as a child would a puzzle.

Simonelle looked up from his workbench in a far corner. "Guri, you have returned," he stated, scratching the clump of beard tentacles growing from his chin and raising the micro-magnifying goggles from his eyes. "Have you displeased your master?"

Guri advanced, an icy glint in her eyes. "No, Simonelle, I have pleased Prince Xizor very much. He hopes his nine million credits have gone to good use."

"Yes, yes," Simonelle purred, setting the micro-magnifying goggles on the workbench. "As you can see, I've begun construction of others like you, Guri. The droids I built before you were so primitive. I learned so much when building you. You are unique."

"And I shall remain unique," Guri said. With lightning swiftness, she struck the engineer's head with her open hand. Stunned, the Ingoian stumbled backwards into a computer console. Guri grasped his neck in both hands and began to squeeze. Blood

oozed from Simonelle's eyes, nose and mouth. In seconds, it was over.

Satisfied that she had carried out Xizor's orders, Guri let the body slump to the floor. "My Prince did not intend for you to lessen the value of his unique acquisition," she said. "I shall remain the only one of my kind. To create others with my abilities would compromise my utility to my master. That cannot be allowed."

Guri turned and stared directly at the security holocam in the workshop's corner. She gently removed the datacard recording the carnage and shut the unit off.

In a distant room, Simonelle stared at the vid-screen showing the broken Ingoian replica droid lying at Guri's feet. The screen went black. *At least she didn't vaporize the lab*, he thought, running a hand absently across his neck. *Not a very charitable way for a "child" to treat her "parent," but she had no choice save to serve Xizor.*

If only the prince knew that his nine million credits had also been spent on another replica droid, this one an Ingoian ...

Simonelle rose from his chair, already planning where he would go into hiding and for how long. *After all, no point in faking one's own death, only to turn up alive soon after ...*

- Humanoid body
- Highly modified AA-1 Verbo-brain
- Human bio-fibers
- Clone vat-grown skin

Special Abilities:

Human Replica: Human replica droids are designed to pass for humans in every aspect, including behavior and biology. A Very Difficult *sensors* roll is needed to notice "something odd" about a human replica droid masquerading as a human.

Move: 15

Size: 1.8 meters tall

Cost: 9 million

Black Sun Operations

Black Sun is an immense criminal organization employing tens of thousands of operatives throughout the galaxy, from seemingly legitimate free-traders, politicians and newsnet reporters to unsavory smugglers, gun-runners, slavers, assassins and spies. Black Sun agents infiltrate the Rebel Alliance, the Empire, wealthy corporations, powerful guilds and local governments. Like many spynets, each Black Sun operative knows only of those contacts necessary to fulfill any given mission. There are many cases when operatives don't even know they're working for Black Sun — which suits that organization very well.

Much of Black Sun's power comes from its ability to remain hidden in the shadows. Its operations are carefully masked behind legitimate business fronts and the use of mercenary and double-agents, so other syndicates or governments take the blame for them. Xizor is more than willing to let his enemies battle each other and then have Black Sun step in to pick up the pieces.

Exactly how Black Sun manages its widely varied criminal activities is not well known outside Xizor's small group of Vigos. However, by looking at certain individuals within the crime syndicate, one can piece together a well-defined chain of command. At the top, of course, is Prince Xizor. He rarely leaves his secured palace on Coruscant, and often summons his minions for personal reports. However Xizor is not the "public face" of Black Sun. The alluring woman known as Guri is widely (and erroneously) believed to be the leader of the crime syndicate — a deception Xizor enjoys, for it leaves him a certain freedom of movement. It also allows him the luxury of choosing which illicit activities to pay personal attention to, while overseeing Black Sun's political gamesmanship.

Below Guri are the Vigos, Black Sun's valued lieutenants. The importance of their responsibilities and the level of trust they enjoy from Xizor are evident in the meaning of their title — the term "Vigo" is derived from the Old Tionese word for "nephew." Each Vigo controls a vast criminal network of his own, supported by Xizor's vast wealth and power. None could exist without Black Sun, and few Vigos would dare betray their master's trust. Each Vigo has several sub-lieutenants of his own, from trusted advisors to minor crime lords, all of whom carry out Black Sun's directives through their own personnel and organizations.

A horde of criminals and contacts all serve the Vigos and their sub-lieutenants. All activities are masked through the use of drop-points, code-names, ciphers, double-agents, front companies, moles and other spynet tricks. Each Vigo has his own system, some more effective than others.

Many Vigos utilize Xizor Transport Systems' network of freighters to covertly move equipment, personnel, and contraband to different operations throughout the galaxy. XTS also helps funnel and launder money from Black Sun's other, less legitimate, operations. The company's extensive shipping operations include Imperial contracts for transporting supplies to garrisons and bases in the Outer Rim Territories, as well as supporting covert Imperial military construction projects. To supplement XTS, many Vigos have established their own transportation networks maintained by free-traders, smugglers, and small shipping companies.

Some Vigos unknowingly share contacts and spies, and this creates some interesting conflicts within the system. It is rumored that Xizor maintains his own network of spies within the Vigos' organizations to ensure he retains complete control of operations.

At the bottom of the ladder are the "grunts" — mercenaries, assassins, spies and thieves who do all of Black Sun's dirty work, who seldom realize who they are truly working for and who can be replaced by the dozen, if necessary.

The Anatomy of Assassination

To get a better look at how Black Sun operates, examine a typical operation — in this case, an assassination.

Xizor has determined that the Jedi Luke Skywalker must be killed. He must be dispatched in such a way that the blame somehow falls on Darth Vader — all part of Xizor's plan to disgrace the Dark Lord in the Emperor's eyes. Xizor summons Guri and tells her to alert their operatives to set assassins up in several key locations.

She is to have someone tailing Boba Fett, as Xizor believes Skywalker may try to rescue the captured smuggler Han Solo from the bounty hunter. Guri is also to retrieve information about Skywalker's whereabouts from within the Rebel fleet Admiral Ackbar is assembling. Finally, she is to find someone who can be bribed within the Alliance — someone in a position to arrange an "accident" involving Skywalker. And, of course, all this must be carried out with discretion as well as haste.

To track Boba Fett, Guri contacts one of the Vigos, the Rodian Clezo, who can employ several excellent bounty hunters through a "safari outfitting" service his organization operates — leaving no traceable connections to Black Sun. Since this is a scheme in which Xizor takes a great deal of interest, Guri personally contacts one of the bounty hunters and reports directly to Black Sun's leader.

Guri then contacts the Nalroni Vigo Sprax, whose sub-lieutenant runs a service stealing and salvaging starship parts and reselling them. She knows Sprax's people are in contact with Alliance techs, who frequently purchase starship parts for their aging fleet. (In the unlikely event the Rebels win the war, Xizor wants to make sure they regard Black Sun as an ally.)

Within days, Guri receives word from both Vigos. From Clezo, she discovers that Boba Fett is heading for the Imperial enclave on Gall, in the Zahr system, after a run-in with the infamous assassin droid IG-88 over Tatooine. From Sprax she hears even better news — Rogue Squadron, the fighter group Skywalker used to command and still occasionally flies with, is being transferred temporarily to a hidden fighter base on Kile, another moon in the Zahr system. Guri determines the chances of Skywalker appearing in the Zahr system are doubled: he'll either show up with Rogue Squadron, or with his friends trying to rescue Solo.

Another piece of news interests Guri. Sprax informs her that one of the Rebels is increasingly dissatisfied with her role as Rogue Squadron's chief tech.

Within two days — before the squadron's technical crews head out to construct the base on Kile — Guri has made the arrangements. One of Black Sun's moles within the Rebel fleet approaches the tech chief with an offer: if Skywalker should join the Rogues at any time, arrange for his death by "technical malfunction." The mole offers "Chief" 10,000 credits deposited to her account, with an additional 40,000 credits to be transferred after Skywalker's demise.

Meanwhile, Guri arranges for the credit transfers — indirectly, of course. Guri contacts the

Mon Calamari Vigo Perit, whose Nimbanese bankers and Verpine slicers have several dummy financial corporations set up for just such transfers. Perit ensures that his mole agent within Renik (Imperial Intelligence's counterintelligence branch) is well-paid to siphon off the Empire's own credits into some of Renik's dummy corporations — including Saber Enterprises, Celanon Finance, and Delcas HoloVid — and finally into Chief's account (with some help from Perit's slicing teams).

The trap for Skywalker is set. Even if this elaborate operation fails, Xizor has other options. He is much too smart to base all his future plans on one minor scheme ...

Black Sun's Vigos

Xizor entrusts his Vigos to handle most of the day-to-day operations that make the crime syndicate one of the most powerful in the galaxy.

Each Vigo is responsible for Black Sun activities in several regions of the Empire. Different Vigos have different specialties and each focuses on his area of strength. Each Vigo has his own intelligence-gathering apparatus, and most are probably aware that the Underlord has spies within their organizations.

The Vigos come from varying backgrounds in the criminal world. Some rose through the ranks, beginning as humble smugglers, spicers or even slavers, while others had been groomed to inherit their Vigo positions from their fathers or mothers. Within each Vigo's own organization lurk other sub-lieutenants and lackeys, all maneuvering to make their own bids for the revered title of Vigo when the current title holder moves on ... whether willingly or not.

Black Sun's Vigos maintain a loose alliance at best, held together by fear and Xizor's wealth. Each Vigo is incredibly wealthy, due to their generous salaries, awards and bonuses (and a certain amount of profit skimming) all of which is expected and acceptable. "To be a Vigo in Black Sun is to enjoy more power than all but a handful of beings in the entire galaxy," Xizor tells his Vigos often. And that power comes at a high price — for Xizor does not tolerate disloyalty among his most trusted sub-lieutenants.

Clezo

A member of the fierce Chattza clan of Rodians, Clezo is one of Xizor's less spectacular but reliable Vigos. He is not as flamboyant or greedy as some of his colleagues, and runs his branches of Black Sun as if they were businesses. Clezo's mode of dress certainly attests to the manner in which he operates — he wears conservative but finely-tailored suits one would

expect to see in a Kuat Drive Yards boardroom. What Clezo's operation lacks in opulent revenues and ruthless dominance, it makes up for it with steady profits and discreet activities — something Xizor can well appreciate.

While other Vigos concentrate on criminal endeavors they favor, Clezo tries to diversify his activities. He is known to be funding in part or in whole several bounty hunting groups, including the Granse Confederacy and the guild known as House Tresario (which was founded by former Imperial officers and maintains strong ties to the Imperial military). Clezo is also known for controlling much of the criminal activities on his homeworld, Rodia.

Clezo has learned much from Xizor since the Underlord of Black Sun rose above the Rodian, moving from being a peer to a master. Clezo has learned that resourcefulness and cunning — as opposed to rash action and swift vengeance — are the keys to success. Clezo prefers to plan ahead and formulate contingencies should his operations run into difficulties and result in lower income. Above all, he's developed a knack for choosing the right personnel for each job. Clezo maintains extensive datafiles on his own personnel and other independent operators, in case he ever requires their services.

While Clezo is not particularly ambitious, he does expend a great deal of time seeking new opportunities for Black Sun to increase its power and influence in the galaxy. The Rodian is currently involved in a plot to more firmly bring his homeworld under Black Sun's control. Once his clan leader, Navik the Red, is assassinated, one of Clezo's subordinates, Chorh-dha, will assume the position of clan chief — and will also act as Black Sun's puppet. Until then, however, Chorh-dha is working within Vigo Green's organization, keeping tabs on the human's operations and reporting back to Clezo.

■ **Clezo**

Type: Rodian Vigo

DEXTERITY 4D

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

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Alien species 4D+2, bureaucracy: Black Sun 8D, busi-



Storn Cook

ness: Black Sun 7D+2, intimidation 5D+1, law enforcement 5D+2, planetary systems 6D, streetwise 6D, streetwise: Black Sun 8D, value 8D, willpower 7D

MECHANICAL 2D**PERCEPTION 3D+2**

Bargain 7D+2, command 8D, con 6D, forgery 5D+2, gambling 8D, investigation 7D, persuasion 7D, search 5D, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 3D+1

Brawling 5D, stamina 4D

TECHNICAL 2D

Computer programming/repair 5D, droid programming 4D, security 3D+2

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 3

Character Points: 7

Move: 10

Equipment: Datapad, finely-tailored business suit, hold-out blaster (3D), knife (STR+1D)

Durga the Hutt

If there is one Vigo as crafty and deceptive as Xizor himself, Durga certainly comes close. He outwardly seems to play Black Sun's game of political maneuvering, rarely objecting to Xizor's orders and never intimating (or allowing to leak) his secret plans to rally the other Vigos to overthrow their Falleen master. Durga is used to scheming for increased power and his agents have already sown the seeds of revolt among sub-lieutenants on other Vigos' staffs (although most of the other Vigos remain loyal to Xizor out of respect or fear). Durga has manipulated the Vigo Green into doing his bidding, although Green naively believes he is acting to further his own ambitions. Durga is using a careful touch — just enough to push Green in the desired direction,



while staying far enough away that when the inevitable happens and the human slips up, Durga will not be implicated in the plot.

Durga is typical of Hutts, preferring to lounge on a repulsorlift platform rather than move about under his own. He surrounds himself with sundry pleasures — slave girls, servants fanning his immense body, pots of juicy delicacies — except when in the presence of his master. Appearances are everything when deception is afoot, and Durga makes sure he plays the part of the humble servant in his dealings with Prince

Xizor.

Durga's branch of Black Sun dabbles in many activities normally associated with Hutt crimelords. Durga makes sure he has his pudgy fingers in a portion of the smuggling trade that passes through the Hutt moon of Nar Shaddaa, and he has allies and operatives within the Hutt-controlled Klatooinan Trade Guild. Durga also makes sure his endeavors include the ever-lucrative businesses of slaving and gun-running.

While the other Vigos often wonder whether Durga's allegiance rests firmly with Xizor or with his fellow Hutts and their infamous *kajidics*, the truth is Durga knows only one loyalty: to himself.

■ Durga the Hutt

Type: Hutt Vigo

DEXTERITY 2D**KNOWLEDGE 5D**

Bureaucracy: Black Sun 7D, bureaucracy: Imperial 6D, business: Black Sun 7D, intimidation 6D+2, law enforcement 6D+1, streetwise 7D, streetwise: Black Sun 9D, value 7D, value: slaves 9D

MECHANICAL 2D**PERCEPTION 5D**

Bargain 8D, command 7D, con 8D, gambling 6D+2, investigation 6D, persuasion 7D+2

STRENGTH 4D**TECHNICAL 2D****Special Abilities:**

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

Dark Side Points: 4

Character Points: 5

Move: 3

Green

Green is the only human among the Vigos, and for good reason — Xizor has always maintained that humans are prone to treachery and can rarely be trusted. Green always seems to be struggling to outdo the other Vigos, as if he has something to prove. He is perhaps the most foolishly ambitious of Xizor's Vigos, and, egged on by his supportive sub-lieutenants (who are secretly working for Durga the Hutt), believes he can soon usurp his master's power and take his place as head of Black Sun.

Green's incessant plotting to undermine Xizor's authority has led him to neglect his business, so his monies paid to Xizor have decreased, as has his effort in carrying out Xizor's wishes. This has been brought to the Falleen Prince's attention by his spies in Green's operation, and the human is rapidly falling from favor.

Oddly enough, Green's greatest contribution to Black Sun is his vast spynet, which specializes in racketeering and blackmail. Most of this activity is concentrated in the Core Worlds,



STORM LOOK

although he has branched out into other regions in feeble attempts to expand his power base. Like his Vigo peers, Green also has his fingers in various other criminal endeavors in the Core Worlds, including spice dealing and slavery. Forbidden from smuggling spice directly to Coruscant, Green is not particularly happy that Wendell Wright-Simms has somehow

been able to monopolize spice distribution within Imperial Center.

Green's appearance reflects his inner nature. He wears fancy robes one might expect to see on an Imperial Advisor, and has the sallow and vaguely guilty look about his face of one who knows he's done something underhanded. Although he's of middle age, his hair has prematurely grayed, and is beginning to thin on top — this has the effect of leaving wild tufts arcing out from the side of his head, which further reinforces the hunted look about him. And while his spies and sub-lieutenants might know, Green is most certainly unaware that his seditious activities have come to Xizor's attention ...

■ **Green**

Type: Human Vigo

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 5D, dodge 6D, melee combat 5D+1, pick pocket 4D+2

KNOWLEDGE 3D+2

Bureaucracy: Black Sun 6D+2, bureaucracy: Imperial 5D+1, business: Black Sun 5D, cultures: Core Worlds 7D, intimidation 4D+2, law enforcement: Imperial 6D, planetary systems: Core Worlds 5D+2, streetwise 6D, streetwise: Black Sun 7D, value 6D+2

MECHANICAL 2D+1

Communications 4D+2, sensors 5D

PERCEPTION 3D

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

STRENGTH 3D

TECHNICAL 3D

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

Dark Side Points: 2

Character Points: 4

Move: 10

Equipment: Comlink, datapad, fancy robes, hold-out blaster (3D), knife (STR+1D)

Kreet'ah

Kreet'ah is rare among Black Sun Vigos in that he *inherited* his position. The Kian'thars' ability to sense emotion has kept them among Black Sun's Vigos since the species was first encountered some three centuries ago. Kreet'ah's mother served Xizor well, and, as her son proved to be a keen judge of character, Xizor allowed him to inherit her position.

While his mother served Xizor, Kreet'ah was raised by his father and family on his homeworld of Shaum Hii. Kreet'ah spent his youth helping to manage the family's immense derlac cattle yards, handling all aspects of the business from corralling the beasts to finally selling the product to large corporations, merchants and free-traders for export throughout the galaxy.

His corporate experience would later serve him well in Black Sun.

Since becoming a Vigo, Kreet'ah has concentrated most of his operation's attention on the immense mega-corporations which serve the Empire. His spies have infiltrated many companies, from Galentro Heavy Works and Dynamic Automata to Senar Fleet Systems and the SoroSuub Corporation. In addition to stealing company secrets, Kreet'ah's spynet operatives can misroute shipments, blackmail corrupt executives, and keep Xizor generally well-informed about the goings-on in the galactic corporate scene. Kreet'ah's most recent maneuvers have caused



unrest and some economic difficulties for the Core Worlds-based Salliche Agricultural Corporation, which aggressively resisted takeover attempts from a rival company secretly backed by Black Sun.

The Kian'thar comes across as rather humble, frequently dressing in the typical nondescript garb of a Shaum Hii rancher. He does not speak his mind unless asked to by Xizor, and does not tolerate unfounded gossip among his own staff. Kreet'ah seems very stern and businesslike, and

he does not participate in the expected in-fighting between the other Vigos. His place as a Black Sun Vigo is assured — and when he leaves his position, for whatever reason, his daughter shall no doubt take his place.

■ **Kreet'ah**

Type: Kian'thar Vigo

DEXTERITY 2D+1

Archaic guns 4D, blaster 3D+2, brawling parry 4D+2

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Alien species 5D+1, bureaucracy 7D, bureaucracy: Black Sun 8D+2, business 6D+1, business: Black Sun 7D, law enforcement 5D+2, streetwise 5D+2, streetwise: Black Sun 7D, survival: aquatic 5D, value 6D, willpower 5D+1

MECHANICAL 2D+2

Beast riding: bentail 5D+2, repulsorlift operation 4D

PERCEPTION 4D+1

Bargain 6D+1, command 7D, con 6D+2, forgery 5D, investigation 8D, persuasion 6D

STRENGTH 2D+2

Brawling 5D, swimming 6D

TECHNICAL 2D

Computer programming/repair 5D, repulsorlift repair 3D+1, security 4D

Special Abilities:

Emotion Sense 5D: Kian'thar can sense the intentions and emotions of others. When trying to use this ability, the base difficulty is Easy, with an additional +3 to the difficulty for every meter away the target is. Characters can resist this ability by making *Perception* or *control* rolls: for every four points they get on their roll (round down), add +1 to the Kian'thar's difficulty number.

Force Points: 3

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 11

Move: 10

Equipment: Datapad, derlac whistle, rancher clothes

Lonay

While many Vigos work diligently to broaden their power base, Lonay has confined his activities to several sectors in the Outer Rim Territories — which is undeniably unusual behavior for a Twi'lek. He concentrates on the criminal trades one would expect to find out there — gambling, gun-running, spice smuggling and slave trading. Lonay has many allies within his sectors, some associated with Black Sun and others allied with other criminal and corporate concerns. Perhaps Lonay feels safest operating on the periphery of the Empire.

Lately, Lonay has desperately needed the assistance of his vast network of contacts. With Rebel activity on the rise, several of his agents have fled or gone over to the Alliance. Rebel ships have occasionally carried out strikes against his slaving vessels, and several systems under Alliance influence have passed local laws forbidding slavery. All of these actions have sliced into Lonay's profits.

Although many of his lesser slaving syndicates are suffering, his powerful Mytaranor Slaving Council remains rather lucrative. Gaining

authority over the group several years ago required some careful maneuvering and many credits, but the long-term profits have been well worth the effort. Lonay was the one who allowed the Mytaranor group to acquire an ancient Mandalorian Dungeon Ship, as well as several other vessels, but the slavers have more than earned their keep. (The Mytaranor Slaving Council is detailed on pages 53-57 of *Alliance Intelligence Reports*.)

Lonay has compensated for losses in the slaving trade by increasing his spice trade — sapping his ryll sources on Ryloth — and capitalizing on the brisk arms trade spurred by the conflict between the Rebels and the Empire. Such actions are desperate measures in tough times, and they have not been able to totally offset Lonay's losses. Xizor has been extremely tolerant of the Vigo's reduced revenues, but he may not be so understanding if the situation is not resolved soon.

Lonay makes an effort to outwardly show he's just as good as the other Vigos. He often decorates his head-tails with colorful skin-painted decorations, and is fond of garish jewelry and robes. Some say this ostentatious display originates from Lonay's rumored background. His subordinates believe he was the son of a clan-chief in a Twi'lek city, but was sold into slavery to support his father's expensive taste in tawdry bits of art from around the galaxy.

Lonay could be called a typical Twi'lek — sly, clever and somewhat cowardly. He may be devious in his dealings with underlings and customers, but he knows enough to cower in Xizor's presence (to show the proper deference a slave should show his master). He knows his place in Black Sun — to hold ambitions higher than that of Vigo would be to invite Xizor's wrath.

■ **Lonay**

Type: Twi'lek Vigo

DEXTERITY 3D

Brawling parry 5D, dodge 4D+1, melee combat 5D, melee parry 4D+2, pick pocket 5D+2, thrown weapons 3D+2

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Alien species 7D, bureaucracy: Black Sun 6D+2, business: Black Sun 7D, cultures 5D, languages 4D+1, law enforcement 5D, law enforcement: Imperial 5D+2, planetary systems 7D, streetwise 6D, streetwise: Black Sun 7D+1, value 5D, value: slaves 6D+1, value: weapons 6D, willpower 4D+2

MECHANICAL 2D

PERCEPTION 4D+1

Bargain 7D+2, command 6D, con 6D+2, forgery 5D, gambling 5D+2, persuasion 6D, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 2D+2

Brawling 5D, lifting 4D+2, stamina 4D

TECHNICAL 2D

Computer programming/repair 3D+2, droid repair 3D

Special Abilities:

Head-Tails: Twi'leks can use their head-tails to communi-

The Regalia of Office

Xizor had summoned his Vigos, and — like any good lackey — Lonay had made the long journey from his stronghold in the Outer Rim Territories in record time, slipping unnoticed onto Coruscant. Xizor's long-standing order about avoiding detection when travelling to Imperial Center was well-known, and the penalty for disobeying this edict was quite ... *severe*. Lonay had no desire to face punishment at the hands of Guri, Prince Xizor's ice-hearted companion, and — as always — he was scrupulously careful when he landed on Coruscant.

Lonay and his meager entourage took up residence in the palatial apartments Xizor had furnished him with when the Twi'lek first became a Vigo, awaiting Xizor's inevitable summons.

It was not a long wait. Howzmin soon came to tell Lonay when Xizor would meet his sub-lieutenants. Lonay retired to his private chambers alone, to prepare.

After dressing in his finest robes and sashes, Lonay opened the chest. The lid swung up to reveal a mirror set within it — in the box beneath were wrapped the finest riches Lonay could find, each a reminder of his station as a Black Sun Vigo.

He first removed the pectoral, draped it over his shoulders and breast, and snapped it behind his neck. The piece was made from thousands of gems, each pierced by the finest saava silk and strung in decorative patterns with disks of precious metals. It was a vestment worthy of a thousand kings — a symbol of the high rank Xizor had bestowed upon him.

One by one he adorned several fingers with opulent rings, each with a different stone. "Such rings would decorate the hands of many successful merchants," Lonay spoke softly to himself. "I must remember that I, too, am an entrepreneur of sorts."

Lonay then strapped the scabbard sheathing his jeweled dagger to his sash. It would be removed in the antechamber before Xizor's audience hall, but it was a symbol of his power over the life and death of his subordinates — and his victims.

Removing several brooches and pins from their wrappings, Lonay examined each one, then fastened it to his robe. Each commemorated an event or alliance he had made. The Wroonian brooch was a gift from Mako Spince, in payment for protecting Spince from the Na-Qoit bandits, and providing him with a job as a traffic controller (and Black Sun informer) on Nar Shaddaa. The Corusca stone pin was presented to him when he saved the members of the then-fledgling Mytaranor Slaving Council from destruction at the hands of Moff Julstan's sector fleet. And the ancient Twi'lek brooch, de-

signed to hold a pinch of ryll, was a gift from a distant relative, Tru'eb, a Twi'lek outcast like himself and an adept gun-runner.

Next came the small jars of blue and brown body paint. Watching himself in the chest's mirror, Lonay dipped his finger into the jars and carefully adorned his head-tails with the ancient characters of his people's language. When he was finished, he wiped his finger on a nearby cloth and read the artfully-applied pictographs aloud: "I am Lonay, son of Mogra'daal, nothing but a clanless wanderer in the sea of stars."

The last item Lonay removed from the box was a golden wristband, hinged to allow it to be fastened or removed with ease. Lonay clamped it around his wrist with a click. He stared at it for a moment, then allowed his robe sleeve to fall over it, concealing the expensive manacle. Many of his own people wore different bracelets — the bonds of slavery — as an accepted as a part of Twi'lek life. His armband was no different. "One's master is another's slave," Lonay often said. "Such is the way of the universe."

Lonay was ready to join the other Vigos and bow before Black Sun's master.



cate in secret with each other, even if in a room full of individuals. The complex movement of the head-tails is, in a sense, a "secret" language in which all Twi'leks are fluent.

Force Points: 5

Dark Side Points: 2

Character Points: 16

Move: 10

Equipment: Jeweled dagger (STR+2), robes and jewelry

Perit

Like Lonay, Perit, the Mon Calamari Vigo, was once a slave. Pressed into the service of the Empire, he found himself as a servant in the household of a prominent Sienar Fleet Systems executive. Perit's master was the highest ranking executive at Sienar's immense facility on Byblos and responsible for all corporate operations and TIE fighter production in that sector. Perit served his master dutifully, but also exhibited a keen sense around computers and droids. Perit's master soon removed him from household duties and put him to work as his personal assistant. Perit managed many aspects of his master's business, and gained extensive experience with Sienar's corporate datanet, as well as the innumerable droids employed as assistants and messengers. Although he was not privy to Sienar's many secrets, Perit soon learned enough slicing to break several codes and snoop around.

Perit found a virtual treasure trove of information in Sienar's datanet — production schedules, research projects, personnel records, high-level executives' "dirt files," on their peers, but

there was little Perit could do with this data. Then, he received an official Imperial slave reassignment. Such things were usually reserved for extremely intelligent and useful slaves ... or it was a euphemism for the deportation and later execution of certain troublesome sorts. Had Perit's datanet slicing activities been discovered and monitored?

Perit soon found himself in the Empire's center, Coruscant, working in the Imperial Center Construction Contracts Division. Then he was transferred into the care of a new master, Vigo Xizor of the Black Sun crime syndicate. Xizor took Perit under his

wing, showing him how to use his abilities for criminal gain. Perit learned all he could, becoming a close sub-lieutenant. When Prince Xizor became Underlord of Black Sun, it came as no surprise that he named Perit a Vigo to take his former position and supervise his more mundane criminal operations.

Since then, Perit has run his branch of Black Sun efficiently, with an emphasis on technology and computer crime — bank fraud, laundering credits, stealing corporate secrets, bugging company datanets, even electronic tinkering with the economies of small sectors. Perit has cultivated his own field of technology experts, from Verpine slicers to Sullustan starship mechanics. He also retains many business contacts, among them a team of shifty Nimbanese bankers allied with financial concerns across the galaxy. Perit's own technological abilities are still sharp, and he takes a certain degree of pride in personally overseeing certain slicing operations.

While Perit and Xizor reportedly still maintain a good rapport, the Mon Calamari is not popular with the other Vigos, who are jealous of his position with Xizor. Perit depends on elaborate computerized security systems for secrecy and protection, and it is rumored that he also keeps a stock of assassin droids carefully hidden in strategic locations, for emergencies. Still, perhaps his greatest protection is his friendship with Prince Xizor.

■ Perit

Type: Mon Calamari Vigo

DEXTERITY 3D

KNOWLEDGE 3D+2

Alien species 4D+2, bureaucracy: Black Sun 6D+2, bureaucracy: Sienar Fleet Systems 7D, business: Black Sun 6D, business: Sienar Fleet Systems 7D, intimidation 5D, streetwise 6D+2, streetwise: Black Sun 8D, value 6D, willpower 5D+1

MECHANICAL 2D

Communications 3D+2, repulsorlift operation 4D, sensors 3D+1

PERCEPTION 3D

Bargain 4D+2, command 6D, con 4D, forgery 8D, investigation 7D+1, persuasion 5D, search 5D+2

STRENGTH 2D+1

TECHNICAL 4D

Computer programming/repair 9D, droid programming 7D, droid repair 6D+1, security 6D

Special Abilities:

Moist Environments: When in moist environments, Mon Calamari receive a +1D bonus to all *Dexterity*, *Perception* and *Strength* attribute and skill checks. This is a purely psychological advantage.

Dry Environments: When in very dry environments, Mon Calamari seem depressed and withdrawn. They suffer a -1D penalty to all *Dexterity*, *Perception* and *Strength* attribute and skill checks. This is a purely psychological disadvantage.

Aquatic: Mon Calamari can breathe both air and water and can withstand extreme pressures found in ocean



Tim Bobko

depths.

Force Points: 4

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 15

Move: 10

Equipment: Comlink, datapad, portable computer

Sprax

The Vigo Sprax was recruited into Black Sun's ranks when he was still only a young heir to a trading consortium on his homeworld of Celanon. The young Nalroni was tutored in Black Sun operations, then apprenticed to the guildmaster of a prominent Brentaal merchant house. Although he faithfully served his Brentaal masters — learning much about interstellar shipping and the galactic economy — he also used his position to advance Black Sun's interests. After his apprenticeship ended, Sprax was hired by Xizor Transport Systems as a division supervisor, overseeing freighter operations in the Outer Rim Territories. A few years later, having accumulated a hefty sum from his exorbitant salary, Sprax "retired" to an undisclosed system in the Core Worlds.

Sprax's retirement from XTS was little more than a cover for his induction into Black Sun as a Vigo. Xizor put the Nalroni's extensive experience in the shipping field to work, allowing Sprax to create his own criminal businesses centered around galactic trade. The keen Nalroni quickly and forcefully coerced several bands of smugglers, shipjackers, black market dealers and crooked manufacturing corporation officials to join his syndicates — most of them unaware they were actually working for Black Sun. Using these newly cultivated resources, as well as XTS' immense shipping network, Sprax's operations soon stretched from the Outer Rim Territories to the Core Worlds.

Most of Sprax's endeavors center around the transfer of goods from one party (or victim) to another, often including an exchange of credits, information or other resources in the deal. Several groups working for the Nalroni do nothing but steal shipments of goods or misroute them from their intended recipients to other interested parties. "Resource specialists" find prospective buyers, then transmit their "orders" to "acquisition agents." A legion of bribed corporate executives, crooked starport officials, shipjackers, pirates and con artists ensure the goods part from their rightful owners and end up elsewhere. Sprax's agents have stolen everything from light freighters filled with medical supplies to super-transport cargo containers packed with starship components.

Sprax is intelligent enough to diversify his operations. He marginally participates in the spice and slave trades, although he is careful to

keep these activities well away from the similar business ventures of his Vigo peers. With the continuing conflict between the Rebel Alliance and the Empire, Sprax is doing a brisk trade in weapons, medical supplies, starship parts and, in some cases, starships themselves. It is not known whether he maintains Alliance sympathies, but it seems that many of his deals are with Rebel contingents. Indeed, Sprax has several agents amongst the Rebel, to keep him apprised of the Rebel's activities. It doesn't matter that the Vigo just might be contributing to the Empire's downfall — he has received orders to do so from Xizor himself, who apparently wouldn't mind appearing as the Alliance's friend in the unlikely event that the outlaw group comes into power.

Sprax has affected the mode of dress typical of the great Brentaal merchants: long-tailed jackets over longer tunics, all embroidered in fine decoration — and he frequently uses their style of speech. He often dyes his graying hairs a darker shade to retain some semblance of his youth — a good idea when it is important to appear young and strong. Sprax seems intelligent because he is, but Xizor knows his Vigo is *too* smart to attempt disloyalty.

■ 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)



Tom Rohrer

Vekker

This Quarren Vigo is perhaps the most non-descript member of Xizor's inner circle of sub-lieutenants. While his isn't the ideal criminal organization that expands its sphere of influence, it brings steady revenue to Black Sun and its leader poses little threat to Xizor's power. Xizor knows one's criminal organization often mirrors one's ambitions—and as long as Vekker does not try to unduly expand his branch's power, the Underlord knows the Quarren has little ambition to expand his power within Black Sun. An unremarkable and relatively average Vigo is an unremarkable and average competitor.

Vekker began as a servant to a Vigo's sub-lieutenant. His philosophy has always been to serve his master and he does not hold advancement as one of his personal goals, nor does he employ treachery to increase his status. Eventually, through the subterfuge of others, Vekker attained the position of sub-lieutenant when his superior was eliminated. When his Vigo master tried to betray Xizor, the master was eliminated and Vekker the servant was elevated to that rank. In Vekker's eyes, his place in life didn't really change. While his personal power increased in relation to his subordinates, he was still subject to a greater master ... which was fine by Vekker.

The Quarren Vigo inherited a crime syndicate of casinos and entertainment industries his predecessor had built up over many years. While

many of these establishments were perfectly legal, they also served as screens for Black Sun's operations. The business practically runs itself, so Vekker has found little reason to involve himself or his organization in risky schemes that could lead to disaster.

Vekker revels in the status quo. The entertainment industry as a whole is rather stable. What does it matter whether patrons spend their credits on drinks in his clubs, luxury hotel suites or paltry flop-rooms, swoop races in his arenas, or games of chance in his casinos? The beings of the galaxy

will always need entertainment and leisure activities — and Vekker has a diverse enough presence in that industry and its shadowy underworld cousin to guarantee sizeable revenue for Black Sun.

Since Vekker's position is relatively stable economically, he has little reason to plot against his master, or to plot the downfall of his more ambitious Vigo peers. To do so would be to undermine his own security. For Vekker, trading any dreams of power in exchange for a stable existence is just good business.

■ Vekker

Type: Quarren Vigo

DEXTERITY 3D

Pick pocket 5D

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Bureaucracy: Black Sun 6D, business 5D+2, business: Black Sun 6D+2, cultures 5D, law enforcement 5D+2, planetary systems 5D, streetwise 6D, streetwise: Black Sun 7D, value 5D

MECHANICAL 2D+1

Astrogation 3D, repulsorlift operation 4D, space transports 3D+2

PERCEPTION 3D+2

Bargain 4D+1, command 5D, con 6D, forgery 4D+2, gambling 7D, investigation 4D, search 5D

STRENGTH 3D

TECHNICAL 2D

Computer programming/repair 3D+2, droid programming 4D

Special Abilities:

Aquatic: Quarren can breathe both air and water and can withstand extreme pressures found in ocean depths.

Character Points: 6

Move: 10

Wumdi

The human Etti named Wumdi is Xizor's vital link to activities within the Corporate Sector. Although other Vigos conduct business within this region of space, his operations are by far the most comprehensive and productive.

Wumdi's vast network of operatives, paid-off CSA officials, spaceport workers, crooked Espos and reprogrammed droids all help ensure that Black Sun operations within the Corporate Sector are successful. The Etti Vigo's knowledge of the CSA's inner workings allows him to profit from the sudden changes that tend to sweep the sector's economy.

Wumdi engages in various criminal endeavors which take advantage of the unique opportunities found in the Corporate Sector. He runs casinos and pleasure palaces to accommodate those unfortunate workers indentured to the CSA; often contract laborers can "win" brief visits to these resorts as a reward for exceptional productivity. Wumdi freely dips his hand into the lucrative commerce trade, stealing, misrouting or pirating merchandise and industrial shipments. His agents and slicers within



Ray Lederer



STARFLY LOOK

the CSA executive hierarchy are always siphoning off critical corporate secrets for re-sale to the highest bidder, or finding incriminating data with which to blackmail corporate officials. Some say the Corporate Sector Authority does the most efficient job of wringing every credit out of the CSA, but in truth, that dubious honor belongs to Wumdi the Etti.

Unlike Lonay, Wumdi truly basks in his wealth, al-

though he's careful not to overplay it in front of Xizor or the other Vigos. A typically lithe Etti, Wumdi indulges in adorning his slim form with light fabric tunics and robes, although he limits his personal jewelry to a single circlet of electrum around his head. The Etti often seems cheerful and optimistic, but it is not known whether this is simply a facade. He maintains a palatial estate on Etti IV, where he can monitor and hobnob with the affluent CSA executives living there.

Of course, greed may prove Wumdi's undoing; he has been skimming large sums from Black Sun's revenue. The Etti Vigo doesn't worry much about Xizor discovering the embezzled

funds — largely because Wumdi's spynet is not terribly adept at spotting Xizor's informants within its own ranks ...

■ **Wumdi**

Type: Etti Vigo

DEXTERITY 3D

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

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Bureaucracy 6D, bureaucracy: Black Sun 7D+1, bureaucracy: CSA 8D, business: Black Sun 6D+2, business: CSA 7D, cultures 4D+2, intimidation 5D, law enforcement: CSA 7D, planetary systems: CSA 6D+2, streetwise 6D, streetwise: Black Sun 7D+1, value 6D

MECHANICAL 2D+2

Astrogation 3D+1, communications 3D+2, sensors 4D, space transports 4D

PERCEPTION 3D+2

Bargain 5D+1, command 6D, con 6D, investigation 6D+2, persuasion 6D

STRENGTH 2D+1

TECHNICAL 2D+1

Force Points: 2

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 5

Move: 8

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, datapad

Underlings, Guards and Assassins

Black Sun has many agents besides the nine Vigos. Not only do Xizor's sub-lieutenants maintain immense networks of contacts, but the Underlord keeps many talented individuals on retainer for his personal endeavors.

Avaro Sookcool

Avaro Sookcool is Black Sun's most prominent representative on Rodia. The casino manager is one of several important Black Sun operatives on that world — unlike his peers, however, Sookcool's job entails a great deal of pub-



Dark Horse Comics



The Obvious Scapegoat

The nine Black Sun Vigos waited pensively in the antechamber outside their master's private meeting hall. Xizor's servant, Howzmin, had supervised their search and the bald man and several gruff palace guards had removed their weapons, including the usual stash of hidden knives and concealed hold-out blasters.

As they anxiously waited for their master's summons, each Vigo looked to the others, wondering who wasn't going to leave the meeting chambers alive. Xizor was no fool — he wouldn't call for all of them simply to hear their reports. No, what Xizor wanted was a demonstration, one which exposed a traitor and showed the others what their own fates would be if they tried to cross Black Sun's Underlord.

Green glanced around at his colleagues. He was certain they were all guilty of something — spying on Xizor, skimming off too much of the profits, allowing their operations to become disorganized and unproductive. But had his own plans against the Falleen Prince been discovered? Green ruffled his hair and peered over his shoulder, as if he were afraid Xizor had installed some kind of security device in the wall which could read his thoughts.

Wumdi the Etti was his usual charming self. He knew something was up, but it couldn't concern him — if it did, he would already know about it. Wumdi stood before one of the ornately framed mirrors in the antechamber, running his fingers through his hair to make sure it was in place, straightening the conservative corporate tunic he had purchased for this audience with Xizor, and trying to seem as unconcerned as possible.

Vekker the Quarren was pretty sure he had done nothing wrong. Change brought about difficulties, and Vekker was certainly not an agent of change. The others were more ambitious, more power-hungry, and certainly more devious. Still, Vekker wondered who could have roused Xizor's ire so much as to cause him to summon all the Vigos to Coruscant.

Sprax had many things on his mind — including various shipping operations he personally wanted to oversee — but Xizor's summons took precedence over everything. He had a positive report to make, but Sprax knew something else was in the wind. One of them had betrayal in mind. Who, he didn't know, nor did he wish to speculate.

Durga the Hutt wiped a bit of sweat from his broad and crinkled forehead. Had Xizor caught wind that

the Hutt's agents had secretly approached the other Vigos' sub-lieutenants, trying to rally them against the Falleen head of Black Sun? Durga had gone through great pains to ensure his offers of greater power to the others had been shrouded in secrecy. He looked around at the others, most of whom looked relatively confident, if not totally unconcerned. Durga's only consolation was that his Hutt clan members would avenge him should he be killed.

Kreet'ah waited patiently. To the Kian'thar, it was good business to eliminate those competitors or allies who hindered one's operations. If he were the one chosen to be dispatched today, that would have to be accepted. However, he knew Xizor valued good management, and the Kian'thar Vigo had certainly delivered that. No, Xizor had in mind someone who had committed a far greater offense ... something that was *not* good business.

Perit was almost certain this meeting did not directly concern him. His electronic spies within the other Vigos' organizations and Xizor's own palace had helped reassure him of that. But what if Xizor had discovered those spies, and the other surveillance methods the Mon Calamari used to keep an eye on his master? He knew Xizor liked spying on his servants, but would he appreciate them doing the same to him? Perit didn't know, and his chin tendrils quivered at the thought of facing Xizor's wrath.

Lonay did not smile, did not gloat. He knew he wasn't in trouble. True, the slave trade in his area was down significantly, but that would no doubt be resolved in time. The Underlord of Black Sun could tolerate that — but Lonay knew he could not tolerate betrayal. And the Twi'lek Vigo valued his service to Prince Xizor, so therefore there was nothing to fear.

Clezo glanced around, not even looking at Green. He knew the human was the traitor, but he would not say a word. To do so now would be to admit that he had known and not told Xizor, a crime as serious as Green's treachery. No, he would wait and watch the drama unfold.

The tall doors leading to Xizor's private meeting hall opened and his lieutenant, the lovely Guri, stepped forward. "Prince Xizor will see you now," she said with a somewhat menacing glare. "All of you."

lic relations and meetings with those interested in dealing with Black Sun. While he reports directly to the Vigo Clezo, Sookcool maintains channels of communication with Xizor himself.

Sookcool runs a modest casino (by Rodia's standards) in his homeworld's entertainment and pleasure complex in Equator City. Although there are much larger, flashier and successful casinos nearby, he seems content with the size of his establishment, Flip of the Credit. Few suspect the Rodian coordinates most of Black Sun's operations on the planet. Most of the other casinos and pleasure halls are run by Sookcool's subordinates, and they are happy enough to attract the majority of gamblers, rake in large profits, and shear off their cut from the top.

All visitors to Flip of the Credit are scanned and monitored by an intricate electronic surveillance web. Armed guards mingle undetected with the regular patrons. Black Sun agents, clients and mercenaries receive their payoffs through rigged gambling machines — or launder filthy credits by “losing” to those same machines. Syndicate business takes place in the casino lounges, and Black Sun operatives keep an eye on their enemies, competitors, and each other over hands of sabacc cards and through clouds of heavy cigarra smoke.

Sookcool is very much like his casino. On the outside, he appears to be an innocuous Rodian entrepreneur who runs his establishment efficiently. His faded, dull-green skin hangs heavy around his face, his chubby features reflecting the sedentary lifestyle of a content business owner. His weak Basic might give others the impression that the Rodian is somehow dumber than he looks, but he is in fact rather intelligent.

Sookcool is a skilled servant of Black Sun. Diplomatic and evasive, he places a great deal of stock in appearances, knowing that they can be the key to defusing a difficult situation. Although he may seem pleasant and open, he knows that information is power. It should never be given away, but rather, sold; when you have no more to share, you have lost all advantage. Although he is not as ambitious as some in Black Sun, he does value his rank in the organization and will

strive to retain it.

Sookcool's presence on Rodia is rather unprecedented, and only reaffirms the respect in which others hold Black Sun's power. He is a member of the Tetsus clan, a group hunted and virtually exterminated by Rodian warlord Navik the Red for political reasons. Sookcool's ties to Black Sun earned him political amnesty — Navik knew better than to cross the syndicate. Besides, with most of the Tetsus enclaves already wiped out, there is little Sookcool can do to threaten Navik's position. And the casino owner knows better than to tempt fate ... or warlords.



Ray Lederer

■ **Avaro Sookcool**

Type: Rodian Casino Boss

DEXTERITY 4D

Blaster: hold-out blaster 6D, dodge 5D, pick pocket 6D+2

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Bureaucracy 5D, business: casinos 6D, cultures 4D+1, languages 4D, streetwise: Rodia 6D+2, value 5D+1

MECHANICAL 2D

PERCEPTION 3D+2

Bargain 5D+2, command 4D, con 5D, gambling 6D, investigation 6D, persuasion 6D+2

STRENGTH 3D+1

TECHNICAL 2D

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

Character Points: 7

Move: 10

Equipment: Datapad, hold-out blaster (3D)

Howzmin

The squat human known as Howzmin is chief of security and operations within Xizor's palace on Coruscant, and he reports directly to the Falleen Prince. He is informally “captain of the



Dark Horse Comics



guard,” overseeing their hiring, training and deployment.

From his surveillance information center, Howzmin watches, listens and records activity throughout the palace (except in those areas his master orders him to avoid). He coordinates the efforts of dozens of counter-espionage agents working to ferret out operatives hired by Xizor’s enemies, peers, and even his Vigos.

Howzmin is also the palace’s gatekeeper. He monitors the network of high-speed repulsorlift tubeways leading to and from the main entrances, controls knowledge of the entry gates, and changes the blast door

codes to limit breaches in security. For many important guests — and Xizor has few who are not — Howzmin personally meets them outside the palace and guides them inside, often masking their eyes to keep them sufficiently disoriented. Nobody enters or exits Xizor’s palace without Howzmin’s knowledge, and in many cases, without his personal guidance.

Howzmin’s physical features induce a sense of unease. He is short, squat and bald, and is rarely seen without his gray jumpsuit and a blaster strapped to his hip. His unnerving smile that reveals black-chromed teeth. He baffles visitors by rarely speaking, preferring to command by gestures and nods. Some believe these awkward social traits stem from cybernetic implants which allows Xizor to summon him at a whim. Howzmin is also able to see in darkened or obscured conditions, the result of surprisingly life-like visual implants enabling infrared vision.

Although few would question Howzmin’s abilities or loyalty, it sometimes seems that he is little more than a zombie under Xizor’s control.

■ **Howzmin**

Type: Security Lieutenant

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 7D, brawling parry 6D, dodge 5D, melee combat 6D

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Bureaucracy: Xizor’s Palace 7D, business 5D, intimidation 5D+2, streetwise 5D, streetwise: Black Sun 7D

MECHANICAL 2D

Communications 3D+2, repulsorlift operation 5D, sensors 4D

PERCEPTION 3D

Investigation 5D, search 6D, sneak 5D+1

STRENGTH 4D

Brawling 7D, climbing/jumping 5D+2, lifting 5D, stamina 6D

TECHNICAL 3D

Computer programming/repair 6D, droid programming 6D, security 7D

Special Abilities:

Infrared Cyber-Optics: Adds +1D to *Perception* in darkness or obscured visual conditions

Pager Implant: Howzmin has a cybernetic pager implant that can be remotely activated by Xizor. The implant allows Xizor to silently call Howzmin regardless of where he is in the palace.

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 2

Character Points: 4

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), security code card

Pike Sisters

This deadly and beautiful duo are prime examples of the kind of operatives Xizor hires — well-trained, among the best in their field, and with no ties whatsoever to Black Sun.

The Epicanthix twins Zan and Zu Pike are professional fighters in the remote Pacanth



Strength Skills

Brawling: Teräs Käsi Martial Arts

(Each martial art has different elements, so each *brawling: martial arts* specialization's game play effects are handled differently.)

Brawling: teräs käsi martial arts is a rare specialization. A person must study full-time under a master of *teräs käsi* for six months to acquire the first pip in the specialization. Improving *Teräs käsi* costs Character Points equal to the number before the "D"; the training time one day for every Character Point spent; the cost is doubled if the character does not have a teacher. The training time may be reduced by one day for each extra Character Point spent.

Example: *Jodd has a brawling skill of 4D. She decides to study teräs käsi under a master. Six months later, she has completed her training. It costs her four Character Points to get her first pip of teräs käsi — her brawling skill remains at 4D, but her brawling: teräs käsi martial arts skill is now 4D+1.*

If Jodd wants to improve her brawling: teräs käsi martial arts from 4D+1 to 4D+2, it costs four Character Points. If she has a teacher, it takes her four days of training.

To use *teräs käsi* in combat, the character may do nothing else in the round other than performing the *teräs käsi* attacks — the character may not even *parry* or *dodge*. Before making the attack, the player splits the *brawling: teräs käsi martial arts* skill dice into two groups: attack dice and damage bonus dice.

The character rolls to attack using only the attack dice. If the character succeeds in the attack, add the damage bonus dice to the character's *Strength* roll when determining damage. Characters may not allocate more than half of their *brawling: teräs käsi martial arts* dice to their damage bonus dice.

Jodd has progressed far and improved her brawling: teräs käsi martial arts skill to 6D. When she attacks with brawling: teräs käsi martial arts, she decides to split her 6D into 3D attack dice and 3D damage bonus dice.

Jodd rolls only 3D to hit her target. If she hits, she now gets to add her 3D damage bonus dice to her normal Strength die code for damage (she has a Strength of 3D+1, so she would roll 6D+1 damage).

If a character wants to make multiple *teräs käsi* attacks in one round, multiple action penalties apply to both attack dice and damage bonus dice.

Jodd again chooses to split her brawling: teräs käsi martial arts of 6D into 3D attack dice and 3D damage bonus dice. However, she chooses to attack two targets in the same round — since this is two actions in a round, she suffers a -1D penalty to both actions.

Therefore, she only rolls 2D for each attack, and she only rolls her Strength plus 2D — for a total of 5D+1 damage — for each damage roll.

Reach, a small cluster of stars in the Outer Rim Territories. The two are just now emerging on the galactic combat scene, fighting opponents in hidden arenas and high-class pleasure halls where such illegal sport can be properly concealed. The two are shrewd as well as combat-wise, and they act as their own booking agent — they don't trust anyone who doesn't have the credits to win them over, and they certainly don't trust middlemen interested in shares of their profits.

The sisters are masters of the Bunduki martial art called *teräs käsi*, or "steel hands." When they were young, their mother sent them to Bunduki — a world in the Pacanth Reach conquered by the Epicanthix — for an education with the learned Followers of Palawa, a secretive group of hermits highly revered there. While the twins learned much about the history, great literature and philosophies of the Pacanth Reach cultures, they also learned physical discipline and the art of combat without weapons. The

Pike twins mastered these martial arts and quickly rose through the ranks of *teräs käsi* students, receiving many honors from their teachers. Instead of using this martial discipline for the better good of society, as they had been instructed, the Pike sisters set out to use their talents for personal profit.

The women are just as beautiful as they are deadly. They dress in the form-fitting tunics of their Palawa teachers, which allows them freedom of movement, and they have the lithe yet powerful bodies typical of Epicanthix. The sisters generally wear their black hair in braids, occasionally augmented with small blades tied into the tips (which can be used to lethal effect in combat). Their eyes betray no emotion, just cold precision. To the Pike sisters, it is a point of pride not to carry weapons — for the deadly pair's skills are more than sufficient to defeat any foe.

■ Zan Pike

Type: Martial Arts Assassin

DEXTERITY 4D+2

Brawling parry 6D, dodge 7D, running 5D+2

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Cultures 5D, intimidation 4D, languages 3D+2, planetary systems 4D, streetwise 3D+2, survival 4D+2, willpower 5D

MECHANICAL 2D

PERCEPTION 4D

Search 5D, sneak 6D+2

STRENGTH 3D+1

Brawling: *teräs käsi* martial arts 8D, climbing/jumping 5D+2, stamina 5D

TECHNICAL 2D

Special Abilities:

Brawling: teräs käsi martial arts: A character making a *teräs käsi* attack may not make any other actions in the round, including *dodges* or *parries*. The character splits the die code into “attack dice” and “damage dice,” rolling the attack dice *only* to hit, but adding the “damage dice” to the character’s *Strength* when causing damage.

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 2

Character Points: 8

Move: 10

Equipment: Palawa tunic, satchel with personal mementos

■ Zu Pike

Type: Martial Arts Assassin

DEXTERITY 4D+2

Brawling parry 5D, dodge 5D, running 5D

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Cultures 5D, intimidation 5D, languages 4D, planetary systems 4D+2, streetwise 5D, survival 4D+2, willpower 4D

MECHANICAL 2D

PERCEPTION 4D

Search 5D+2, sneak 7D

STRENGTH 3D+1

Brawling: *teräs käsi* martial arts 7D+2, climbing/jumping 5D, stamina 5D

TECHNICAL 2D

Special Abilities:

Brawling: teräs käsi martial arts: A character making a *teräs käsi* attack may not make any other actions in the round, including *dodges* or *parries*. The character splits the die code into “attack dice” and “damage dice,” rolling the attack dice *only* to hit, but adding the “damage dice” to the character’s *Strength* when causing damage.

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 2

Character Points: 10

Move: 10

Equipment: Datapad with poetry, Palawa tunic, satchel with personal mementos

Chapter Four

The Fringe

The fringe, like Black Sun, is everywhere. It lurks in the dingy alleys of starports, cowers in the smoky corners of seedy bars, and conducts its business in back streets across the galaxy. The fringe is not an organization, but a strata of society. Outcasts, mercenaries, criminals, smugglers — all with allegiances to little but themselves. Their talents and skills can be hired for the right amount, or lost through competitive bidding. Some sell out to the Empire, some serve Black Sun, and a few aid the Rebellion. That's the risk with the fringe — one never knows whose side they're on, other than their own.

Dash Rendar

If ever the term “hot-shot freighter jock” applied to anybody, it fits Dash Rendar. With his souped-up freighter, the *Outrider*, and his trusty co-pilot droid Leebo, he blasts across the galaxy, dabbling in all sorts of activity, from smuggling to bodyguard work, and working for whoever pays the most credits. Dash frequently boasts that he can fly anything well and that he's just as good a shot with a blaster — and he's willing to try any crazy stunt to back up those boasts.

Some believe he tries to buck the odds to see just how good he is — and with such dangerous activities, when he discovers his limits, he'll go out in a ball of fire and a mass of crumpled wreckage. Others think his bravado and laughing in the face of danger is simply a way to impress others. However, this is only partially true ... Rendar really is as good as he says he is.

Rendar plays the role of streetwise smuggler well. Tall and lean, with red hair and green eyes, he certainly looks the part. His typical outfit includes a blue and brown freighter captain's quilted jumpsuit, a flexmetal blast vest with padded pauldrons (for those all-too-common firefights), and a heavy blaster pistol slung low

on his hip. Dash wears brown flight gloves and, on his left wrist, a visual wrist comm with a long-range shielded single-channel link to his co-pilot, Leebo. Dash sometimes carries a small comlink box on his belt for emergency back-up. He may carry additional gear and weapons as needed, but he generally prefers to travel light. Dash looks as if he's in his late twenties, and has the lazy, insolent attitude common among smugglers, especially those prone to boasting about their exploits.

Dash doesn't squander his talents on causes and freedom-fighting. He's a mercenary, “trustworthy and loyal” just as long as his employer's credits hold out. He doesn't believe in favors to be paid off later, nor in working for anyone on good faith. He doesn't want anybody owing him and he makes sure no one can call him in on a debt, financial or otherwise. Dash's terms are simple: half up front and half when the job is finished. Unlike his smuggling contemporaries Han Solo and Lando Calrissian, Dash has never joined the Rebel Alliance ... and never intends to. To Dash, the Rebels could hardly pay for his services. He's accepted a few cargo runs to Alliance bases — for which the Rebels paid handsomely — but doesn't believe in putting his life on the line for any cause except money.

Dash initially met Lando Calrissian several



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years ago over a sabacc table on Kaal, and the two joined forces for several smuggling runs and con games. Later, Dash ran into Han Solo on Port Haven, a secret smugglers-only hideaway on an uncharted backwater world. Rendar, Solo and Calrissian — all hiding out from Imperial Customs ships — spent many hours trying to impress each other with stories of fancy flying and daring smuggling runs ... and many credits passed across the table in friendly sabacc games. Ultimately, the other two smugglers fell into other, more noble activities — Calrissian (rather inadvertently) defeating the Norulac Pirates at Taanab and later becoming baron-administrator of Cloud City, and Solo stumbling into the Rebel Alliance. Dash, on the other hand, stayed true to his two favorite causes: acquiring credits and polishing his reputation.

Dash hadn't seen his old smuggling friends for several years. Then, he ran into Solo when he brought supplies in to the Rebel base on Hoth. Of course, Dash's timing couldn't have been worse ... he was stuck at Echo Base when the Imperial Fleet blockaded the system. The Alliance was paying him good money, so he joined the battle, flying a snowspeeder to help stave off the Imperial walker assault force. It gave Dash a chance to show off his flight skills in something other than the *Outrider*, and he even took out an AT-AT walker. Getting out was a little touchy, even for a pilot of his high caliber. After a run-in with bounty hunters on Ord Mantell, he managed to track down the whereabouts of his now-frozen friend Solo.

Dash has heard that Lando is going through a tough time. First, Calrissian lost control of Cloud City. Now, word has it that he's fallen in with the Rebellion, and he's working with a snooty Rebel princess willing to pay top credits for help in locating the bounty hunter Boba Fett. All Dash has to do is verify that Fett has Solo with him on the Imperial enclave on Gall and then he can claim some easy credits.

Of course, there's more to Dash than he lets on. Beneath all Dash's carefree bravado and exceptional talent lurks a festering anger, the cynicism for which most mercenaries are noted. Dash has a personal grudge against the Empire.

That grudge goes back many years, to a time when Dash was a student at the Imperial Academy at Carida, racking up flight time in different starships and making a good impression with his peers and instructors. He had a promising career ahead of him with the Imperial Navy, or, more likely, his family's shipping corporation. RenTrans was a growing competitor in the lucrative Core Worlds shipping industry, and the Rendar family was becoming wealthy and promi-

nent within Core society. Tragically, Dash's bright future was blackened by an accident and a vengeful Emperor.

Dash's older brother Stanton was another ambitious freighter pilot working his way through the family shipping company. Rather than inherit some cushy administrative position, Stanton chose to work up the ranks just like the regular pilots, proving his abilities to himself and his peers, and doing what he enjoyed best: flying starships. Everything changed when, during one takeoff from a starport on Coruscant, a control system on Stanton's bulk freighter blew out. The freighter careened into Emperor Palpatine's private museum. When the power generator exploded, it took out most of the museum in a cascading fireball that sent shock waves through even the lower levels of the city. Dash's brother was killed.

The Emperor, enraged by the destruction of his museum, wanted vengeance. Apparently his collection included a large number of Jedi artifacts, as well as ancient treasures from the Sith Lords and other infamous agents of the dark side; obviously, these priceless relics could not be replaced. Palpatine ordered the Rendar family's property and wealth seized, banished them from Coruscant and the Core Worlds, and awarded RenTrans' business holdings to one of its competitors, Xizor Transport Systems. Dash was summarily evicted from the Academy on Carida, despite his promising flight performance, and was banished from the Core Worlds as well.

Since then, Dash has forged his place in the fringe community, distinguishing himself with his daring flying, and risky smuggling scams. Like so many members of the Alliance — and many more disaffected members of the fringe and the galaxy — Dash is just one more casualty of the Emperor's power.

■ Dash Rendar

Type: Brash Pilot

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 7D, blaster: heavy blaster pistol 8D+2, brawling parry 5D, dodge 7D+2, grenade 4D+2, melee combat 6D, melee parry 6D, pick pocket 5D, running 4D, vehicle blasters 3D+2

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Alien species 5D, bureaucracy 4D, business 3D+2, business: smugglers 5D, intimidation 5D+2, languages 4D, law enforcement 5D, planetary systems 6D+2, streetwise 7D+1, survival 5D, value 5D, willpower 4D

MECHANICAL 4D

Astrogation 7D+2, capital ship piloting 5D, repulsorlift operation 8D, space transports 9D, starfighter piloting 8D, starship gunnery 8D, starship shields 7D+1, swoop operation 7D+2

PERCEPTION 3D

Bargain 7D+2, command 5D, con 6D+2, forgery 6D, gambling 6D+1, hide 5D, persuasion 5D+2, search 5D, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 3D



The Business Merger

Howzmin let Sprax into Xizor's office as soon as the Vigo arrived. The summons from the Underlord of Black Sun had been sudden, but the Nalroni knew better than to delay his departure, even if it meant curtailing his own endeavors for a time. Xizor did not tolerate delays.

Sprax went down on one knee before Xizor, who was sitting on his throne with his eyes closed, meditating.

The Falleen's eyes opened slowly and he looked at the kneeling figure. "Rise, Vigo Sprax," he said in his clear and beautiful voice. The Nalroni rose. "A matter has emerged which requires resources which I know are at your disposal."

Sprax's brow kneeled inquisitively. "Of course, my Prince. My place is not to question, but to obey," he replied. "What are your wishes, master?"

"As your own intelligence has reported, RenTrans, a shipping company with growing concerns here within the Core Worlds, has come to my attention," Xizor began. "I have already approached the owners, the Rendar family, about joining forces and becoming a subsidiary of my own Xizor Transport Systems. However, they have been somewhat ... unwilling, shall we say ... to consider the benefits of a merger. That must change. So I'd like you to help make up their minds, one way or another."

"Ask, and it shall be done," Vigo Sprax said.

"You have access to several operatives," Xizor continued. "Experts in the field of starship repair and modification, as well as security systems. See to it that these experts arrive here on Coruscant immediately, in the usual discreet fashion, with no traceable connections to business affairs of your syndicate or mine."

"Your intentions are not always clear, Prince Xizor, but I shall obey."

"I shall entertain your curious nature, Vigo Sprax, because you are, in many respects, worthy of a certain degree of my trust," Xizor said. "In one week, the RenTrans bulk freighter *Doriella's Mystress* will lift off from docking pad RT209, at the starport facilities right here on Coruscant, near the Imperial Complex. Your operatives will see to it that its control and drive systems are tampered with, in a manner that will make the ensuing crash seem like an accident. Have the unfortunate freighter plow into some building complex nearby. Some extra detonite charges to encourage the ship's main power core to blow upon impact would be most convincing.

"And if this little display doesn't convince RenTrans to merge with XTS, I'm sure the irate Imperial administration, or perhaps even the Emperor himself, can do my work for me. What a pity it would be if the Rendar family were disgraced and its business assets seized and awarded to its chief competitor ..."

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

TECHNICAL 3D

Blaster repair 4D, computer programming/repair 6D, demolition 4D, droid programming 6D+2, droid repair 6D, repulsorlift repair 4D+2, security 5D+2, space transports repair 8D, starship weapon repair 7D

Force Points: 4

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 7

Move: 10

Equipment: Blast vest (+1D physical, +1 energy, torso only), heavy blaster pistol (5D), visual wrist comm, back-up comlink

Leebo (LE-BO2D9)

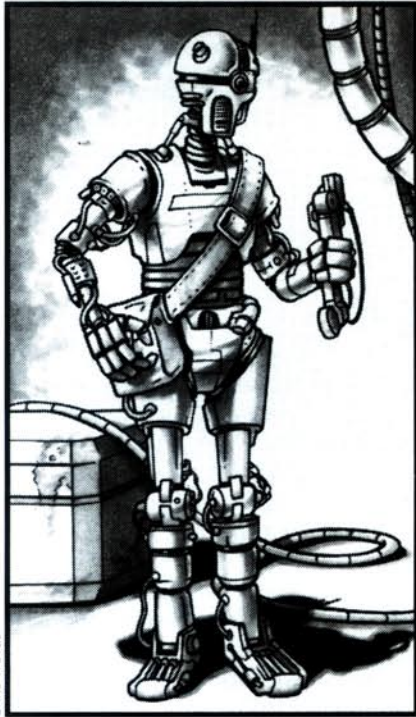
Dash Rendar's trusty companion is the feisty droid LE-BO2D9. Leebo fulfills his master's need for a companion, both in terms of company on long hyperspace jumps and as back-up when Dash inevitably gets himself into a tight situation. Dash knows that LE-BO2D9 is completely trustworthy, and that's a valuable commodity to a free-wheeling smuggler.

Leebo is an early model Cybot Galactica LE-series repair droid, programmed for repairs and interaction with sentient beings, such as star-

ship captains and customs personnel. Leebo's first owner was the portmaster at Esseles starport, who used him to ensure freighters were meeting starship safety regulations. However, during one inspection, a freighter captain blasted off with the droid aboard!

Leebo soon found himself repairing the very starship systems he was originally inspecting. He was passed between smuggler captains, sometimes as a payoff, sometimes as part of sabacc winnings. Along the way, his masters programmed to fulfill a variety of functions; now Leebo is just as comfortable translating alien languages as he is tearing apart a hyperdrive. Leebo's droid housing has been stripped of cosmetic skin plating to add new onboard gear, while armor plating and reinforced components protect critical systems.

Before Dash Rendar acquired Leebo, the droid was serving as manager for a comedian traveling through the Outer Rim Territories. Although Leebo arranged for transportation, lodging and performances, he was also used in his master's comedy routine. The comedian programmed



Chris Trevas

Leebo with what can be best described as a “quirky” sense of humor — fine during comic performances but downright annoying when the two inevitably became involved in dangerous situations (such as escaping from angry crowds that didn’t care for the comedian’s “alien” jokes).

Leebo’s comic master traded the droid to Dash Rendar for quick and quiet passage off Rodia, where he had offended the local audience with jibes at their warrior-leader, Navik the Red. After delivering the comedian to Byblos, Rendar put Leebo to work repairing his freighter, the *Outrider*.

Like many of Leebo’s previous masters, Dash has since made a few modifications to the droid — he added a broad-band antenna integrated with a long-range, shielded single-channel comlink, and upgraded Leebo’s programming to enable the droid to fly the *Outrider* as well as any good smuggler worth his spice.

Leebo has remained faithful to Dash throughout the smuggler’s many misadventures and the pair make a great team. The droid often does the work Dash is too impatient to take on: setting up meetings with contacts, scoping out new smuggling markets, repairing the *Outrider*, and often flying backup for Rendar when he gets himself in a tight spot. Leebo normally carries only a simple tool bag, which is typically slung over one shoulder and contains his starship repair kit.

■ Leebo

Type: Modified Cybot Galactica LE-Series Repair Droid
DEXTERITY 1D

Dodge 3D

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Bureaucracy: starport customs 4D, languages 5D, law enforcement: Imperial Customs 4D, planetary systems 5D, streetwise 4D+2

MECHANICAL 2D

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

PERCEPTION 1D

Bargain 3D, investigation 2D, search 3D

STRENGTH 3D

TECHNICAL 3D

Capital starship repair 4D, computer programming/repair 5D, security 3D+2, space transports repair 5D

Equipped With:

- Stripped-down skeletal body (two arms, two legs, torso, head)
- Visual sensors — human range
- Audio sensors — human range
- Holographic projector/recorder
- Vocabulator speech/sound system
- Broad-band antenna receiver/transmitter
- Long-range, shielded single-channel comlink to Dash Rendar’s unit

Move: 7

Size: 1.7 meters tall

Cost: Not available for sale

Equipment: Satchel with starship repair tools

Jabba the Hutt

Jabba the Hutt, often called the “Bloated One” (though never to his face) and known to his Hutt peers by his full name, Jabba Desilijic Tiure, is one of the most powerful crime lords in the Outer Rim Territories. He has achieved a level of infamy reserved for only a few criminals and is known to have his chubby fingers in every illegal gambit, from smuggling to racketeering, spicing to slavery.

Jabba has earned his notoriety as a gangster. He built his sizable criminal empire through business acumen, ambition and his forceful personality. Of course, Jabba’s efforts brought him into conflict with the interests of other Hutt criminal organizations. The Hutts were infamous for their inter-clan rivalries, which often erupted into starport skirmishes and brush-fire wars among their various servitor species (such as the Nikto, Klatooins and Vodrans). And as Jabba’s power grew, he had to fend off his peers.

He devised a brilliant plan to unite his species in their criminal endeavors. Calling together the Hutt clan leaders, he convinced them of the need to expand their influence rather than continuing to bicker among themselves. In a demonstration of superior oratory bravado, he proposed uniting the many Hutt clans to exploit the rest of the galaxy instead of each other. Rather than continuing business through inter-clan rivalries, Jabba wanted the Hutts to focus their efforts as one entity against the other exploitable species.

Jabba’s plan worked to perfection. Those who opposed him were carefully removed, one by one, and Jabba eventually elevated himself to the very visible position of chief of the Hutt crime syndicate. Unlike his subordinate clan leaders and many other crime lords, Jabba believes his ostentatious displays of wealth and power helps keep others in line. He knows the value of appearances, and goes to great lengths to ensure others perceive the great Jabba as a mighty crime lord with no scruples about crushing those who cross him.

Jabba is a keen observer of his own enter-



BY WILLIAMSON

lem giving Xizor the appearance that he is a distant vassal for Black Sun. Of course, things can change — and the ambitious Jabba is willing to bide his time and seize whatever opportunities the future may bring.

Jabba the Hutt

Type: Hutt
DEXTERITY 2D
KNOWLEDGE 3D
 Alien species 5D, bureaucracy 7D, bureaucracy: Tatooine government 9D+1, business 6D+1, cultures 4D+2, intimidation 7D, languages 4D, law enforcement 4D+1, law enforcement: Tatooine 9D, streetwise 9D, streetwise: Jabba's organization 11D
MECHANICAL 3D
PERCEPTION 3D
 Bargain 8D, command 8D, con 7D+1, gambling 7D+2, persuasion 7D+2
STRENGTH 4D
 Brawling 6D, lifting 6D, stamina 7D
TECHNICAL 3D
Special Abilities:
Force Resistant: Hutts have an innate defense against Force-based mind manipulation techniques; they roll double their *Perception* dice to resist such attacks. It is believed that Hutts cannot learn Force skills.
Force Points: 5
Dark Side Points: 6
Character Points: 26
Move: 2

prises and of other galactic developments. He keeps a wary eye on his peers, subordinates and competitors. Although he is a powerful being, Jabba knows his enemies, and knows how far-reaching their authority is. He has used a strategy similar to the one he used to rally the Hutt clans: rather than oppose many of his non-Hutt criminal peers, Jabba has agreed to armistices with them, pledging not to interfere in their business as long as they don't do so with his.

Perhaps Jabba's most respected criminal peer is Black Sun's Prince Xizor. The Falleen crime lord is not as visible as Jabba — in fact, Xizor likes hiding behind elaborate shadows to mask his true involvement in Black Sun. Jabba knows the Hutt crime syndicates are powerful, but they could easily be crippled in an open confrontation with the vast forces available to Black Sun. Jabba owes Xizor respect for allowing the Hutts to run their operations free from competition of Black Sun, and so he pays the Falleen Prince homage from time to time, doing favors in exchange for his autonomy.

To Jabba, peaceful coexistence with one's powerful competitors is far better than costly confrontation — the Hutt inter-clan conflicts taught him that. As long as Black Sun allows his own enterprises to expand, Jabba has no prob-

Jabba's Swoop Gang

In addition to his menagerie of mercenaries, servants, bounty hunters, dancing girls and spies, Jabba the Hutt also employs a particularly barbaric swoop gang which runs errands throughout nearby regions of Tatooine. The swoopers are a rag-tag bunch of ruffians culled from the worst elements that Mos Eisley has to offer: thieves, murderers, and bullies.

Jabba's swoop troops haunt the dunes between Wayfar and Mos Eisley, running the Hutt's protection racket among the moisture farmers and generally causing havoc in the settlements. Pay the swoopers enough credits and they'll go away; try to fight back and they'll never leave you alone. Their days are spent racing over the sand dunes between settlements, while nights are spent drinking and carousing at bars and cantinas. The swoopers are always in a foul temper, and enjoy preying on the weak.

Of course, the swoop gang is still subject to Jabba's whims, and they regularly report to his palace across the Western Dune Sea. While Jabba's entourage finds their ruffian antics amusing, most of the palace's servant staff does not, as they are typically the focus of the swoopers' abusive assaults. Occasionally their rowdy and

disrespectful behavior offends even Jabba, eliciting warnings and threats ... and occasionally, a rancor feeding for the amusement of Jabba and his entourage.

Jabba frequently uses the swoop gang for a variety of activities. The swoopers keep tabs on activities in Mos Eisley, as well as collecting “protection” money from cowed shopkeepers and escorting Jabba or his lesser officials when they travel between the palace and his Mos Eisley townhouse.

Membership in the swoop gang is constantly changing. While “leadership” (if such a term can be applied) remains relatively stable, the underlings come and go, as swoop troopers are killed in firefights and chases or simply move on to other work for Jabba. Big Gizz, the current leader, has been around for some time, and is constantly on the lookout for unsavory characters to recruit. The promise of powerful swoops, plentiful weapons and easy access to any number of vices is enough to lure a constant stream of new members.

Big Gizz

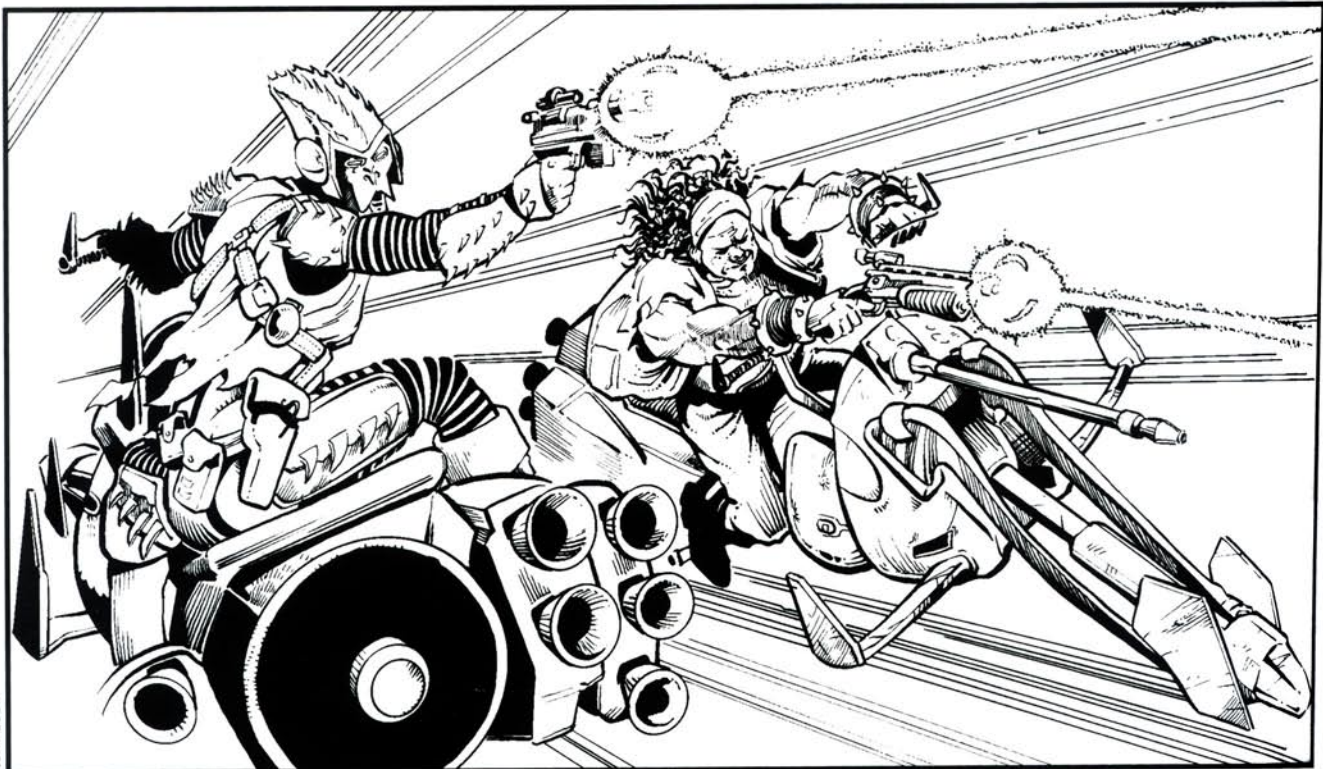
The leader of Jabba’s swoop troops is a wild-haired and truly repulsive bully named Big Gizz. He’s an imposing monster, with his long hair tied back with a bandanna and a mouthful of crooked teeth that forms a fierce smile. His nose’s snout-like nostrils are pierced by a single gold ring and his clothing is reminiscent of

vagabond raider gear — tattered and adorned with personal mementos.

Gizz’s law is crude and he behaves like a barbarian prince reigning over a cruel horde. Gizz is quick to incite his gang to violence, slow to rein them in, and sometimes ambivalent toward his master’s less vicious orders. To him, the swoop gang is his personal party. Those courting his favor laugh at his jokes, harass those Gizz dislikes and generally let him ride at the head of the pack ... and anyone who tries to upstage him usually ends up at the wrong end of his blaster.

Unfortunately, Gizz is so busy having fun with his swoop gang he doesn’t always remember that he’s subordinate to Jabba. He often displays disrespect toward his master, most often by leading his swoopers through Jabba’s palace, where they harass Jabba’s servants, and use their swoops to run over pedestrians and scrape up the walls in tight-corridor turns. Gizz’s foolhardy arrogance often tempts Jabba’s wrath, since the Hutt’s appearance of supreme authority means everything. Now and then Jabba puts Gizz back in his place, sometimes giving him a verbal slap on the wrist in front of his gang, and other times reminding him how tenuous his position of command is by making a morsel out of one of his lesser swoop troopers.

While Gizz may be cowed within the palace, his fear of Jabba dissipates as soon as he is back to racing over the desert dunes. He’s more



interested in having fun wreaking havoc on moisture farmers, terrorizing wayward Jawas and racing down Mos Eisley's streets. To worry about tomorrow would be to dilute the wonderful taste of violence and terror that can be savored today.

■ **Big Gizz**

Type: Swoop Gang Leader
DEXTERITY 3D
 Blaster 6D+2, brawling parry 4D, dodge 3D, melee combat 5D, melee parry 5D
KNOWLEDGE 2D
 Intimidation 5D+2, streetwise 5D, survival: desert 4D
MECHANICAL 4D
 Repulsorlift operation 5D, swoop operation 6D+2
PERCEPTION 3D+2
 Command 5D, con 4D+2, gambling 6D
STRENGTH 3D
 Brawling 5D
TECHNICAL 2D+1
 Repulsorlift repair 4D
Force Points: 1
Dark Side Points: 5
Character Points: 3
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster carbine (5D), boot knife (STR+1D), gear bag (with 100 credits, rations and snuff of ryll), heavy blaster pistol (5D), swoop.

Spiker

Gizz's lieutenant is a swoop rider named "Spiker" for the spiked armor and helmet he wears. He follows Gizz around, laughing at his bad puns, doing his bidding and, for the most part, agreeing with his leader's every suggestion. He has a maniacal high-pitched laugh that suggests to most that he's a bit insane. Spiker often engages in risky ventures — red-lining his swoop in hair-raising maneuvers, picking fights with those larger or more well-armed than he is, and occasionally skidding his swoop into walls — which seem to satisfy his need for death-defying feats of bravery (or stupidity, as some might see it). Some are beginning to believe Spiker has whacked one wall too many.

Actually, Spiker's insanity is all part of an act. Although Big Gizz is the intimidating and ferocious leader of the gang, it's Spiker who has the true talent for strategy and tactics. Gizz is all mouth and no action, in Spiker's eyes, nothing more than a blustery windbag without his swoop.

Jabba believes Gizz's terrifying leadership style and repulsive features help to instill dread in those he deals with, but it would be all too easy for Gizz to forget who is running the show. Spiker was placed

in the ranks to act as a spy for the Hutt crime lord. He makes a point of reporting back to Jabba on all of the swoop gang's activities, most especially those from which the Hutt does not receive his proper cut of the profits.

The rumor that Spiker's unique armor was given to him by Jabba is true. The Hutt wants to make sure his informant is well-protected, both from the dangers that are part of the gang's operations and from possible assassination attempts if Gizz ever wises up.

■ **Spiker**

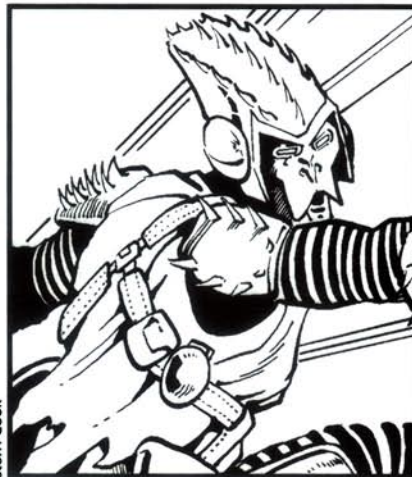
Type: Swoop Gang Lieutenant
DEXTERITY 3D
 Blaster 7D+2, brawling parry 5D, dodge 6D, melee combat 5D, melee parry 5D
KNOWLEDGE 2D
 Intimidation 5D, streetwise 5D+2, survival: desert 5D, willpower 4D
MECHANICAL 4D
 Repulsorlift operation 6D, swoop operation 7D+2
PERCEPTION 4D
 Command 5D, con 6D, gambling 5D, search 6D, sneak 5D+2
STRENGTH 3D
 Brawling 6D, climbing/jumping 5D+1, stamina 4D
TECHNICAL 2D
 First aid 4D, security 4D+2
Force Points: 1
Dark Side Points: 3
Character Points: 6
Move: 10
Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (5D), hold-out blaster (3D), 2 knives (STR+1D), spiked armor (+2D physical, +1D energy, -1D Dexterity and related skills, spikes cause STR+1D damage when *brawling*), swoop

Big Gizz's Swoop Troopers

The swoopers accompanying Big Gizz are a varied lot. Some were recruited for their talents with a swoop and a blaster, while others joined because they had nothing better to do. At least a few are burned-out swoopers from the racing circuit, and some are just outlaws who found themselves dumped on the remote world of Tatooine.

Most of the swoopers are easily cowed by Gizz's overbearing and ferocious personality, and the constant presence of Spiker keeps them in line as well. They are typical ruffians — bold and raucous when in a large group, but quick to flee when confronted by a superior force. They are easily influenced by peer pressure and the whims of their leaders.

Gizz's gang numbers about a dozen members. Most wear protective goggles and high



Storm Cook



Just Another Day's Work

The swoop troopers roared down a Mos Eisley sidestreet, Big Gizz and his armored lieutenant, Spiker, leading the way. The other gang members followed, their modified swoop engines ripping through the air and kicking up the midday dust like a stampeding herd of rabid banthas.

They found Whizzer in a small courtyard where several alleys met. The old Twi'lek was laboriously pushing along a repulsorcart with a medium-sized metal crate on it. Before the oldster could throw up his hands in surprise, the swoopers surrounded him, revving their angry engines and shouting insults at the Twi'lek. Big Gizz raised a hand and the swoopers fell silent.

Gizz's bike roared as it jumped out of the encircled swoop troopers and brought him alongside Whizzer's crate. Gizz stared long and hard into the Twi'lek's quavering eyes, his wild hair rustling in the hot, dusty breeze. "Ey, Whizzah," he shouted into the oldster's face. The Twi'lek seemed to wrinkle under the caustic fumes of Gizz's rancid breath. "We've been lookin' for yah. Jabba tells us you owe him some stuff. He wants dah money ... and he wants his spice."

At this the other swoopers erupted into raucous calls of "Give him the spice, head-tail man," and "Yeah, credits, baby, fork over the credits!"

When they settled down, Gizz moved even closer to Whizzer's face. "What's in dah crate, Whizzah?" The swoop gang's leader leered with pleasure at the

Twi'lek's obvious discomfort. "Yah gonna show me, or does Big Gizz have to get one of his swoopahs to break one of those fancy head-tails?"

Whizzer stumbled back, sputtering out excuses. "I was just going to sell this crate off to a smuggler, one shipping out to the Core Worlds ... she could pay me the credits I owe Jabba." Beads of sweat bloomed on his forehead. "Just give me a few days, and I'll have Jabba's money and another load of ryll, and he'll have everything he wants, I swear to you. Just leave me to my business and I'll fix everything."

Gizz snarled, sending another noxious breath into Whizzer's face. His hand shot out, caught the Twi'lek by his vest collar, and drew him close. "Jabba don't take excuses," he growled. "The Bloated One just wants what you owe him." Gizz pushed Whizzer back, and the old Twi'lek almost stumbled over his crate.

Gizz snapped his fingers. "Spiker! Get over here," he barked.

The imposing trooper in the jagged armor swung a leg over his swoop and swaggered over to Gizz's side. Every surface was covered in armor, every piece bristling with metal spikes.

"Rip his head off, Spiker."

Spiker stepped closer to Whizzer and raised a forearm to strike. One swipe and the Twi'lek's face would be torn from his skull. Spiker swung — and

shock helmets, giving them the nickname of "conedomes" among the settlers brave enough to deride the swoopers under their breath. Each swoop trooper customizes his outfit, wearing everything from blue neocelks and orange and tan flight suits to coveralls with green puff sleeves and bantha-hide tunic dyed red. Many just wear the gray work suits of freight handlers. They all have the same insignia stitched somewhere on their costumes: a pronged symbol denoting their allegiance to Jabba the Hutt — many also proudly carry this same symbol as a tattoo.

As a rule, the swoopers all carry blasters. Most also carry some melee weapon as well, whether a knife concealed in a boot sheath or metal prybars and pipes to pummel others into submission. One particularly intimidating swooper, Axeman, is named for the large vibro-ax he uses. It's also indicative of what many swoopers believe happened to Axeman's skull at some point — he isn't terribly bright, and has a bloodlust that manifests itself in his constant and often verbalized need to "Do good death!"

Typical Swoop Trooper. All stats are 2D except: *blaster 4D+2, dodge 3D, melee combat 4D, intimidation 3D, streetwise 2D+2, swoop operation 5D, brawling 4D+2*. Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), various melee weapons (STR+2 to STR+3D), swoop.

Jix

The newest member of Gizz's gang is a vagrant the swoopers picked up while terrorizing the streets of Mos Eisley. Jix claimed to be a starship tech who had been kicked off the bulk freighter he was serving on for insubordination ... if one could call laying the captain out on the deck "insubordination" and not outright assault.

He showed he was good with a blaster, agile on a swoop, and reliable in a fight by facing off against Spiker. Big Gizz liked Jix's brash style so much he inducted him into the gang on the spot.

Jix isn't like most of the swoopers. He's big and silent, but when he acts, it's with lightning speed. Sometimes his actions with the swoopers seem premature, as if he's jumping the gun to try and prove himself to his new peers. Jix

abruptly halted his strike, the jagged spikes only a centimeter from the Whizzer's cringing face. "Just kidding, oldster," Spiker whispered, then broke out in one of those insane, high-pitched giggles. "The ryll, it's in that crate you got there?" he asked, nodding his spiked helmet at the metal crate on the repulsorcart.

Whizzer nodded gingerly.

"Hey, Gizz," Spiker called, turning to his leader. "Whizzer's got the spice right here. Let's not gut his business ... maybe if he gave you a sample, you might give him a few more days on his debt. It gives you two more days to plan every exact and gruesome detail of how you're going to dispose of this Twi'lek trash if he doesn't pay up." The threat was followed by more maniacal laughter.

Big Gizz smiled a crooked-fanged smile. "Yeah, give Big Gizz a sniff and we won't tell Jabba we ran into yah."

Whizzer seemed to agree, although he didn't say anything. He undid the latches on the crate and lifted the lid. The box was filled to the rim with a bluish powder. Big Gizz reached over, thrust his gloved hand into the powder, and stuffed a handful of ryll into his demonic face. He snuffed and licked the blue powder from his hand, spilling much of it on his vest and swoop. When he was done, Big Gizz leaned back in his swoop seat with a contented look on his face.

"Looks like we're done with you, Whizzer," Spiker said, giggling. "Just be sure you have everything you owe Jabba next week, or Gizz here's going to do something to you even I can't imagine." Spiker's thorny head threw back as he let loose another cackle. He hopped on his swoop and followed Gizz out of the alley. The other swoopers zoomed around Whizzer for a moment, shouting "Yeah, next week!" and "Gizz'll get yah!" Once the gang had roared off into the dusty Mos Eisley alleys, Whizzer wiped the sweat from his brow and promptly fainted.



Storn Cook

believes that if he's going to survive — and prosper — he needs to stand out among Gizz's rowdy gang.

Jix's appearance is unremarkable; he wears tech's pants with plenty of pockets, fingerless gloves, a vest, and a pair of goggles. Jix keeps his long black hair tied in a tail to keep it out of his face. He is often heavily armed, favoring a blaster pistol strapped to each hip — he sometimes carries a blaster rifle in a shoulder-back holster as well. As an added precaution, Jix keeps a throwing knife concealed in his glove, though those who learn of the weapon's existence tend to fall prey to Jix's deadly aim.

Jix isn't all that he seems — he's actually a deep-cover Imperial spy sent personally by Lord Vader to monitor Jabba the Hutt's activities and to make certain that Luke Skywalker isn't killed. Vader has kept his eye on several criminal organizations, including Black Sun and the Hutt crime clans. The sooner agents like Jix can infiltrate these syndicates, the sooner Vader will be alerted to any shady dealings that might affect the Empire, or his place at the Emperor's side.

Jix has access to Imperial Intelligence support personnel covertly placed in Mos Eisley and in Arkanis sector. He also has access to priority communications networks should he discover information that must be reported directly to Lord Vader.

Jix knows he's in a dangerous position. It's bad enough he's supposed to keep an eye on Jabba's activities, but it's worse having to do so from within the Hutt's violent swoop gang.

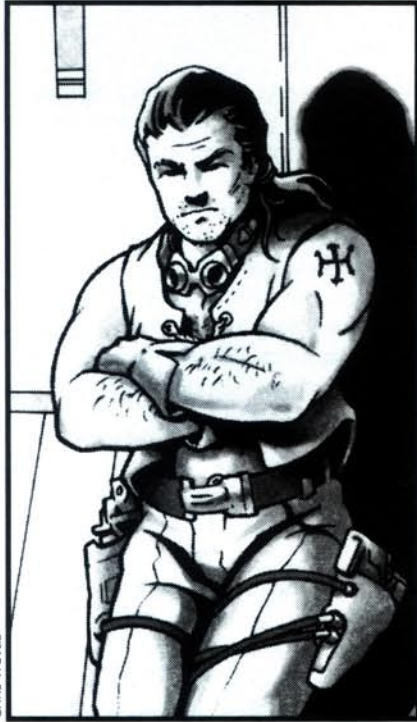
■ **Jix**

Type: Imperial Spy

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 7D+2, brawling parry 5D, dodge 6D+1, melee combat 5D, melee parry 5D, pick pockets 5D+2, running 4D, thrown weapons 5D+2

KNOWLEDGE 2D+2



Chris Trevas

Intimidation 3D, streetwise 5D
MECHANICAL 3D+1
 Communications 5D,
 repulsorlift operation 4D+2,
 swoop operation 6D+2
PERCEPTION 3D+2
 Con 7D, forgery 6D, hide 5D,
 investigation 6D+2, persuasion
 6D, search 6D, sneak 6D+2
STRENGTH 2D+2
 Brawling 6D, stamina 4D
TECHNICAL 2D+2
 Computer programming/re-
 pair 4D, security 5D, space
 transports repair 4D+2
Force Points: 3
Character Points: 11
Move: 10
Equipment: 2 blaster pistols
 (4D), blaster rifle (5D), con-
 cealed throwing knife
 (STR+1D), goggles, hydro-
 spanner

Bounty Hunters

“Bounty hunter.” Few terms evoke such a strong reaction as this one. Famous and infamous, feared and respected, the most successful bounty hunters are known across the galaxy. Yet those who aren’t so successful often fade from memory as quickly as they were vaporized by their quarry or competitors.

Although Black Sun has its own legion of hired bounty hunters, there are others work exclusively for themselves, choosing their

quarry. Some inadvertently and unknowingly aid Black Sun, while others interfere with Prince Xizor’s ambitions, yet all of them factor into the conflicts between Black Sun, the Empire and the Rebel Alliance.

Skahtul’s Coalition

Many bounty hunters were attracted by the pay when the call to capture Luke Skywalker went out. Carried by mysterious messengers, the offer promised an exorbitant number of credits for the young Jedi’s death. The message reached a crafty Barabel hunter named Skahtul, leader of a small band of relatively competent but otherwise obscure bounty hunters. Skahtul had also heard Imperial agents were offering a sum for Skywalker’s capture — good only if returned alive. Known for hedging her bets, Skahtul decided she would pursue Skywalker and, after capturing him, would deal with both parties to drive the bounty reward even higher.

First, Skahtul knew that she and her associates were somewhat limited in their capabilities. The group had little chance against a powerful Jedi. Skahtul thought long and hard, then decided to contact some of her competitors. If the hunters couldn’t capture Skywalker with superior combat skills, they might be able to overwhelm him with greater numbers.

So Skahtul joined forces with the Nikto Calliose, drew a few more lone hunters into the group, and hired a few mercenaries for extra firepower — promising each of them a cut of the final reward. The main group of 15 hunters trained together for several days while the more

The Backup Plan

Jix left Lord Vader’s training chambers, heading out to the transport which would ferry him out to his next assignment on Tatooine. The Dark Lord of the Sith had noticed Jix’s obvious discomfort in his presence: no doubt the watchers in the shadows helped unnerve the agent, along with Vader’s own intimidating presence. The Dark Lord ignited his lightsaber and engaged the next combat training droid for a few seconds before nonchalantly carving it to pieces. Too easy.

Xizor had shown his sabacc hand — or rather, Vader had peered over his shoulder at it. Black Sun’s prince had betrayed himself by bringing Jabba to Coruscant for one of his personal meetings. Of course, few knew the Hutt crime lord had even entered the Core Worlds, but Vader was one of them. He had eyes everywhere. Eyes that could discover underhanded intrigue, and eyes that would ensure his operative Jix would succeed. Vader had learned not to depend on the actions of any one man — the

failures and inadequacies of numerous Imperial Navy officers had taught him that. No, this time there would be a backup plan.

Vader knew of the Jawas of Tatooine. They were as numerous as plague flies on a rotting carcass. So numerous that several errant ones would not be greatly missed. And several additional ones would not be noticed.

“Kohvrekhar,” the Dark Lord called.

One of the shadows in the training chamber answered back. “Yes, Lord Vader.”

“Prepare your team to travel to Tatooine. You know what to do in the event Jix fails.”

“Yes, Lord Vader,” the shadow replied. “Protect the one named Skywalker, even if it requires us to dispatch several of Jabba’s followers. Or Jix.”

“Correct. You are dismissed,” Vader said, turning away from the speaking shadows. “On your way out, summon your clan-brother — I have other contingencies to plan with him.”

experienced hunters pursued leads and hunted down their quarry's location. When they learned that Skywalker was headed for Kothlis, they knew it was time to make their move.

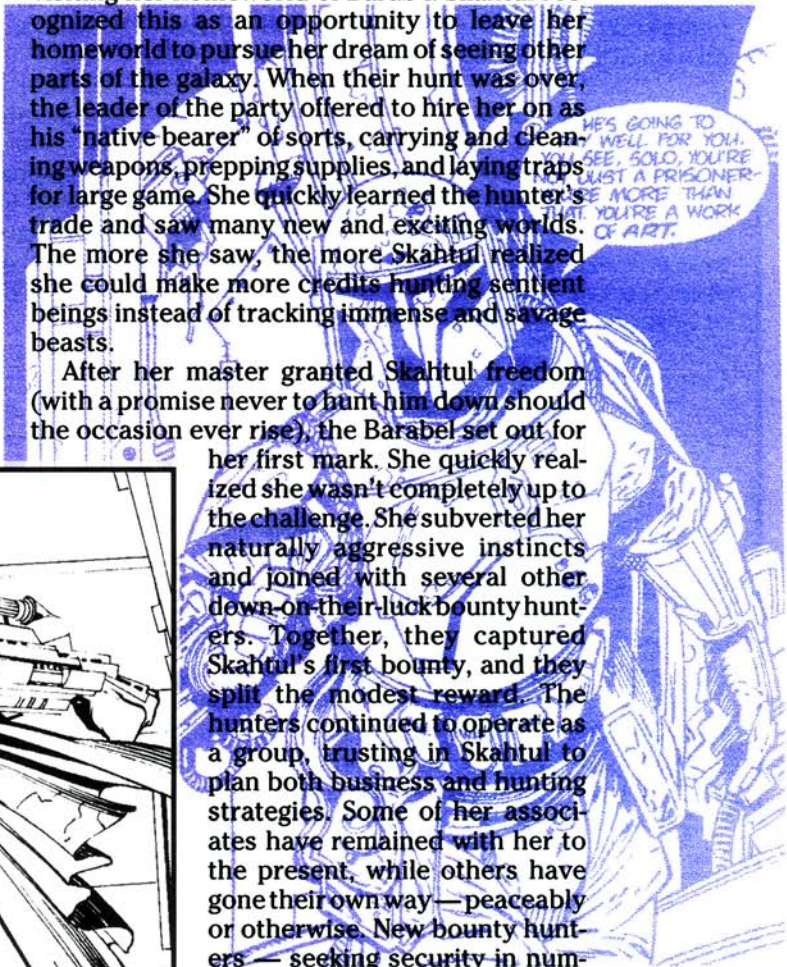
Skahtul

Skahtul is a moderately successful bounty hunter, but an exceptional Barabel. She has managed to overcome her species' hatred for others in order to accomplish a greater goal — in her case, joining other hunters for mutual profit and protection. Skahtul is an imposing sight, dressed in black hunter's fatigues to which she clips and hangs a bristling array of weapons. She treats the hunters in her group as she would Barabel peers, with respect, tempering her natural instincts to oppose anyone not of her species.

Skahtul began her training as a youth, when she was hired as a local guide by safari hunters visiting her homeworld of Barab I. Skahtul recognized this as an opportunity to leave her homeworld to pursue her dream of seeing other parts of the galaxy. When their hunt was over, the leader of the party offered to hire her on as his "native bearer" of sorts, carrying and cleaning weapons, prepping supplies, and laying traps for large game. She quickly learned the hunter's trade and saw many new and exciting worlds. The more she saw, the more Skahtul realized she could make more credits hunting sentient beings instead of tracking immense and savage beasts.

After her master granted Skahtul freedom (with a promise never to hunt him down should the occasion ever rise), the Barabel set out for her first mark. She quickly realized she wasn't completely up to the challenge. She subverted her naturally aggressive instincts and joined with several other down-on-their-luck bounty hunters. Together, they captured Skahtul's first bounty, and they split the modest reward. The hunters continued to operate as a group, trusting in Skahtul to plan both business and hunting strategies. Some of her associates have remained with her to the present, while others have gone their own way — peaceably or otherwise. New bounty hunters — seeking security in numbers — joined her band. Skahtul prefers to instill loyalty in her comrades through deeds, not threats, and has proven her faithfulness by saving her companions' lives on several occasions. Her associates often jokingly refer to her as their "mother," a term Skahtul discourages with a toothy and decidedly un-matronly snarl.

Skahtul knows her latest business venture — capturing the Jedi Skywalker — is beyond the means of her small band. As a Barabel, she has a great respect for Jedi, but she does not allow that to discourage her pursuit of an extremely lucrative bounty. She has translated her respect for the Jedi into an admiration of their superior combat abilities.



Illustrations by Dark Horse Comics

■ For the Rebels to rescue Han Solo, they must outsmart Boba Fett, the galaxy's most notorious hunter.

Her plan to unite several other bounty hunter groups just might work. What they lack in experience they could make up for in numbers. And if Skahtul succeeds in raising the reward by playing the bidding parties off each other, the divided sum would still be well worth the trouble.

■ Skahtul

Type: Barabel Bounty Hunter Leader

DEXTERITY 4D

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

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Intimidation 3D+2, planetary systems 3D, streetwise 4D

MECHANICAL 2D

Beast riding 3D+2, repulsorlift operation 4D

PERCEPTION 3D+1

Command 5D, investigation 4D, search 4D+2, sneak 4D

STRENGTH 4D+2

Brawling 6D, climbing/jumping 5D

TECHNICAL 2D

Blaster repair 4D, first aid 3D+1

Special Abilities:

Natural Body Armor: Barabels' black scales provide a bonus of +2D against physical attacks and +1D against energy attacks.

Radiation Resistance: Barabel receive a +2D bonus when defending against the effects of radiation.

Vision: Barabels can see infrared radiation, giving them the ability to see in complete darkness provided there are heat differentials in the environment.

Force Points: 3

Character Points: 11

Move: 11

Equipment: Ammo bandolier, blaster pistol (4D), blaster rifle (5D), hold-out blaster (3D), 2 knives (STR+1D), restraining bands, 2 stun grenades (5D stun damage)

Calliose

Skahtul's principle partner in the hunt for Skywalker is a Kajain'sa'Nikto (or "red Nikto") named Calliose, who commands another small troupe of low-level bounty hunters. While his hunters could be more accurately labeled ruffians, Calliose keeps them in line with barked threats and an occasional slap upside the head. The Nikto has reason to be gruff. He began his career not as a bounty hunter, but as a bodyguard for a Klatooinan Trade Guild boss named Qoronal. Although he learned his trade quickly, he was not swift enough to prevent agents of a rival crime syndicate from assassinating his master. When others in the trade guild hierarchy discovered Calliose's mistakes helped the assassins succeed, they put a bounty out on him.

Calliose fled the sectors where the Klatooinan Trade Guild exercised its power, then began his own bounty hunter career. He figured it would bring him some much-needed credits, and give him a good excuse to vaporize any other hunt-

ers coming after him — for many in this field, eliminating the competition is as much a part of the job as capturing the mark (despite all the talk of the "bounty hunters' creed" and "honor among hunters").

Along the way, Calliose picked up several other refugees from the Klatooinan Trade Guild: mercenaries who ran out on their guild contracts, guards who had itchy trigger fingers, and security experts who, well, weren't the best in their field. Although these associates have histories similar to Calliose, the Nikto never stops looking over his shoulder and questioning his followers' loyalty. His gruff nature reminds others that he won't hesitate to blast them should he ever uncover treachery.

When Calliose heard the offers for Skywalker's capture, he initially wanted to go after the prize himself. Instead, he chose to team up with Skahtul's group. Calliose could provide the illusion of adding some firepower and specialists to the team, but the plan was to sit back and let Skahtul's cronies do most of the work. It would also give the Nikto a chance to keep an eye on one bounty hunter who might have heard of the price on his head: Calliose knows Skahtul keeps abreast of most bounties coming out of Hutt Space and he knows he's a tempting target — especially if he drops his guard at the wrong time.

■ Calliose

Type: Kajain'sa'Nikto Bounty Hunter

DEXTERITY 4D+1

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

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Bureaucracy: Klatooinan Trade Guild 4D, intimidation 4D+2, streetwise 5D, survival: desert 3D

MECHANICAL 2D

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

PERCEPTION 3D+2

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

STRENGTH 4D

Brawling 4D+2, climbing/jumping 4D+1

TECHNICAL 2D

First aid 4D, security 3D+1

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 under water.

Kajain'sa'Nikto Stamina: These Nikto have great stamina in desert environments. They receive a +1D bonus to both *survival: desert* and *stamina* rolls.

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 2

Character Points: 4

Move: 10

Equipment: Blast vest (+1D physical, +1 energy, torso only), 3 grenades (5D), heavy blaster pistol (5D), knife (STR+1D), macrobinoculars, medpac

Partners No More

Skahtul found Calliose hobbling down an alley several blocks from their now gutted hideout on Kothlis.

Only minutes before, she had barely escaped the reinforced building where they were holding Skywalker. A strong cell and card-reader security lock apparently couldn't keep the Jedi imprisoned for long — his friends who helped blast him out and the stormtroopers that followed were more than enough to convince the Barabel that this job was more trouble than it was worth. And this job had taken up most of her investment capital.

That wasn't as bad as watching her bounty hunter associates cut down by blaster fire, a swinging lightsaber, and a deadly crossfire from Calliose's thugs. She was going to make sure Calliose regretted being found.

"Where do you think you're going?" Skahtul growled, knocking the blaster from the hunter's hand and pinning his neck against the alley wall. "You've got some nerve limping away from a fight like that ... leaving me and my hunters in the rubble to fight off that squad of stormtroopers. Who knows what they're doing to the poor idiots they captured? Torturing them to death, maybe? That makes me angry!"

Calliose gasped for breath as Skahtul's arm pushed his upper torso into the wall. "It's ... not ... my ... fault ..." he whispered.

Skahtul let him drop into the alley's filth and kicked him in the gut. "And whose guard was watching Skywalker's cell when he busted out?" she snarled, picking him up by his blast vest and slamming him

into the wall again. "I just loved how your thugs loused up that firefight. That crossfire you caught us in back there wouldn't have anything to do with secret orders, would it?"

"W-what secret orders?" Calliose gasped. "We were working together on this one, Skahtul ..."

"I know you," she sneered. "You like to eliminate other bounty hunters who might be on your trail. I'd be a fool not to keep tabs on your past. I think you panicked. You're not stupid, Calliose. You gave your hunters orders. If it looked like our little alliance was falling apart, they were supposed to take me out."

"We didn't mean to shoot at your hunters," Calliose said. "They were in the way —"

"How convenient," Skahtul snarled. "I don't take too kindly to seeing my associates blasted away by an unruly group of trigger-happy idiots who don't know where they're aiming. Being left behind for the stormtroopers was a nice touch."

"I didn't know the stormtroopers were going to blast in next —"

"Shut up!" the Barabel growled. "I should gut you right here, you sniveling excuse for a hunter. But I've got other plans for you." With her free hand — the one that wasn't crushing the Nikto's windpipe — she removed the restraining bands from her belt and clamped them around Calliose's wrists. "I've heard some friends in the Klatooinan Trade Guild have been looking for you. Let's go."

Maybe Skahtul would get a reward out of this job after all ...



Stern Cook

Boushh

The Ubese bounty hunter Boushh is a rather formidable sight. Despite the slender build characteristic of his species, Boushh manages to look intimidating thanks to several layers of rough survival clothing, spiked knuckle guards, shoulder and neck armor, and several belts and bandoliers bristling with odd devices and explosives. His helmet contains visual enhancement sensors, a voice modulator, and a breathing apparatus to allow him to breathe Type I atmospheres.

Like many of his wayward Ubese brothers, Boushh is prominent in the bounty hunting trade. Unwilling to form permanent alliances with any one particular criminal organization, the hunter roams the Outer Rim Territories, picking up jobs here and there, and rarely working more than several months for any employer. More recently he has been accepting contract work from agents he believes represent the immense Black Sun organization. These days, half his time is invested in pursuing his prey, and the other half is spent gathering information about his employers, whom he always considers untrustworthy.

Boushh is shifty and clever. He expects his prey to try every trick to escape, and he often spends hours doing little else than anticipating every move his quarry might make, and every counter-move he'll make to lure the prey to capture. The bounty hunter treats his employ-

ers the same way. He expects to be cheated, lied to and otherwise taken advantage of and he prepares for those situations. He prefers to know as much as he can about prospective clients and their bounties — the dirtier the data, the better, for such information is useful in blackmailing those who try to cheat him of his bounties.

Boushh shares his species' interest in technology of all sorts. In the bounty hunter's case, he prefers small gadgets easily concealed within his costume, or in his utility belt or bandolier. His favorite gadgets are the exploding kind — flash and smoke gre-

nades, computer surge exploder plugs, intricate detonation timers, plasma-burn tape, and thermal detonators. For a while he had been working with a human bounty hunter named Beylyssa, and it seemed the two shared their interest in all things explosive, but the partnership ended quickly and violently, although neither hunter was seriously injured.

Besides trusting few other beings, Boushh is also very greedy. His excuse — often voiced when he demands more payment than was contracted on a job — is that the technology he uses to subdue or kill his prey does not come cheap. That explanation is partly true. Explosives and sensitive detonation timers are difficult to obtain even on the black market, and handfuls of credits are often needed to purchase quality goods in secret. However, Boushh seems to demand more credits than he needs for his equipment. Some in the bounty hunting field surmise the Ubese hunter is sending a cut of his pay to other struggling Ubese bounty hunters and mercenaries — rumors have even been heard of some kind of elite Ubese mercenary unit forming that could be prone to using illegal technologies and outlawed weapons.

■ Boushh

Type: Ubese Bounty Hunter

DEXTERITY 4D+2

Archaic guns 6D, blaster 7D+2, brawling parry 5D, dodge 6D, grenade 8D, melee combat 7D+1, melee parry 7D

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Alien species 4D, business 5D, cultures 3D, intimidation 6D, languages 4D, law enforcement 5D, planetary systems 4D, streetwise 5D+2, survival 4D, value 3D+2

MECHANICAL 2D

Astrogation 3D+2, repulsorlift operation 4D, space transports 4D, starship gunnery 4D, starship shields 3D+1

PERCEPTION 4D+1

Bargain 5D, investigation 7D, persuasion 5D, search 6D, sneak 6D+2

STRENGTH 2D+1

Brawling 5D, climbing/jumping 3D+2

TECHNICAL 2D+2

Armor repair 4D+2, blaster repair 4D, computer programming/repair 3D+2, demolition 7D, droid programming 3D+2, first aid 4D, security 5D+1

Special Abilities:

Survival: "True Ubese" get a +2D bonus to their *survival* skill due to the harsh conditions they are forced to endure on their homeworld.

Type II Atmosphere Breathing: "True Ubese" require adjusted breath masks to filter and breathe Type I atmospheres. Without the masks, Ubese suffer a -1D penalty to all skills and attributes.

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 4

Character Points: 4

Move: 10

Equipment: Bounty hunter armor (see below), energy pike (STR+2D+2), flash canister (4D stun damage), 2 grenades (5D), heavy blaster pistol (5D), timer detonator with 1 block detonite.



Chris Trevat

■ Boushh's Armor

Model: Modified Ubese Raider Armor

Type: Modified battle armor

Cost: Not for sale

Availability: Unique

Game Effect:

Basic Suit: Provides +2D to *Strength* for physical attacks, +1D for energy attacks. Covers torso and head only. No *Dexterity* penalties.

Sealed Enviro Filter: Filter system maintains Type II atmosphere within helmet, and filters out harmful molecules and odors.

Flash Guard Visor: Nullifies all stun damage from visual sources (for instance, flash canisters or grenades).

Infrared Sensors: Adds +1D to *Perception* in darkness.

Macrobinooculars: Add +3D to *Perception* or *search* for objects 100-500 meters away.

Sound Sensors: Adds +1D to *Perception* or *search* in quiet situations only.

Spiked Knuckle Guards: STR+1 damage when brawling.



Bounty's Due

Guri left the *Stinger* on docking pad 28, sitting on piles above the marsh. She pulled the green cloak around her, grasped the metal case filled with credits, and sauntered down the docking pad ramp and into the muddy Gelgelar streets.

The haughty Boushh had crossed his last contact with Black Sun. He had captured his last bounty alive, just as Xizor wanted, but the Ubese hunter claimed it had taken more of his resources this time, and demanded 50 percent more than the contract had specified. Xizor surprisingly agreed and ordered Guri to meet Boushh here at Gelgelar and give the bounty hunter his due.

So far Boushh had always dealt with messengers from Green, the Black Sun Vigo who controlled various criminal interests in this region. Chorh-dha or Vimriss or some other toady usually fronted for Green. Black Sun didn't like revealing what it was and what operations it was sponsoring. It was a nice, anonymous arrangement. Boushh couldn't leave well enough alone. The shifty Ubese had already sent out feelers, poking around to see who the messengers reported to, which starships they traveled on, and what other contacts they made. And that wasn't good for Black Sun's business.

Guri picked her way between several ramshackle hovels built of old cargo containers and rusting hull plates. She found the hatch smeared with blue ultrapaint, then let herself inside. Boushh was there, standing beneath a dim luma hung from the ceiling. An old plastic cargo crate served as a makeshift table in front of him. Guri glanced around quickly, finding only a shackled Nimbanese cringing in the shadows nearby — the bounty mark.

"Yo tzak sze Chorh-dha?" the Ubese asked

through his mechanical voice modulator.

"Chorh-dha thought it would be better to send me," Guri replied. "Someone you might trust more."

Boushh coughed out a short laugh. "Yo czhal."

Guri obliged, setting her metal case on the plastic cargo crate, raising her hands and turning around. She felt one of Boushh's hands pat her down, seeking weapons or other devices. No doubt his other hand was on his blaster. When Boushh found no threats on her person, he spoke again, ordering her to put her hands down and open up the case.

Of course, she had expected this. Boushh was too suspicious to open the credit case himself. She still needed a distraction. Stun gas wouldn't work — though she was immune to the anesthetic's effects, it also wouldn't get through the bounty hunter's helmet. Same problem with a flash grenade, since his visor was sure to protect him. Still, she had prepared well ...

She opened the case and turned it toward Boushh, showing him the piles of credit chips clanking within. He approached, one free hand reaching for them. Guri watched, impassively. Boushh ran his hand through the credit chips and then cried out in pain. His blaster hit the floor as he clutched his hand, into which a small creature had sunk its fangs. Just the distraction Guri needed.

Guri's high kick landed on Boushh's head with a very satisfying snap. His body fell to the floor, the helmet now resting on his shoulders at an awkward angle.

She wrenched the dinko from Boushh's lifeless hand and squeezed the life out of it with her fingers. Then Guri closed the case of credits and motioned to the cowering Nimbanese. "Let's go," she said. "Try to escape and you'll end up just like him." Guri tossed Boushh's body over her shoulder with her free hand and headed back to the *Stinger*.

Xizor had always wanted to see what the Ubese looked like beneath their helmets ...

Snoova

Of the few known Wookiee bounty hunters, Snoova is regarded as perhaps the most vicious. In addition to employing the conventional methods of his contemporaries, Snoova also uses his natural weapons — his climbing claws — in his work. While Wookiee society finds the use of these claws in combat dishonorable, Snoova has found them rather useful in shredding his enemies.

Snoova avoids other Wookiees, as they are well aware of his practices and are charged by



Tim Bobko

tradition with killing those of their species who dishonor them so. Rumors abound that the bounty hunter fled his homeworld after a disagreement with a family member over the affections of a female. Some say Snoova struck at his rival with his climbing claws, forever maiming him, but giving Snoova a death-mark among his own people. He somehow fled Kashyyyk and indentured himself as a mercenary to Asteria, a

minor crime lord. When his services as a bounty hunter finally paid off his debt, Snoova was set free.

These days, Snoova generally works within Imperial space, far from his homeworld; he often takes on Imperial contracts. Although Wookiees are considered a slave species, Snoova enjoys a certain amount of autonomy within the Empire, as he is often recruited to do its dirty work. While he isn't really a free Wookiee, his identification datawork lists him as his own master.

Snoova prefers to work alone — he's never sure when a partner might sell him out to vengeful members of his species. Indeed, few hunters want to risk the possibility of the Wookiee turning on them in a bloodthirsty rage. On occasion, when it suits his needs he has formed tenuous partnerships with others, including the Ubese bounty hunter Boushh.

The Wookiee bounty hunter keeps his head fur cut in a short spacer's flat-top, with the longer sidehairs pulled back in a ponytail. His coat is brown and mottled with large patches of black — one facial patch seems like a mask of black fur encircling his eyes. Some of his more daring peers mockingly call him the "furry bandit," but never in his presence. Snoova sometimes uses a removable rig with a monocle ocular enhancer to give him better vision in darkness.

Snoova's attitude is generally angry, and he has no qualms about being rude in public, shoving folks around and using his imposing stature to get his way. Every inconvenience is a reason to growl, and Snoova often lets his short temper get the better of him. Still, he takes care not to offend his clients too much — any displeasure they cause him the Wookiee transfers to his quarry.

■ Snoova

Type: Dishonored Wookiee Bounty Hunter

DEXTERITY 3D+1

Blaster 5D+1, blaster: repeating blaster 6D, bowcaster 4D, brawling parry 6D+2, dodge 5D, grenade 4D+2, melee combat 5D, running 4D+1

KNOWLEDGE 2D+1

Intimidation 5D, law enforcement 3D+1, planetary systems 4D, streetwise 5D+1, survival 3D+2

MECHANICAL 2D+1

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

PERCEPTION 2D+1

Search 5D, sneak 4D+1

STRENGTH 5D

Brawling 7D+2, climbing/jumping 6D

TECHNICAL 2D+2

Blaster repair 3D+2, demolition 4D, first aid 3D+2, security 3D+1

Special Abilities:

Berserker Rage: Snoova gains +2D to *Strength* when brawling in *berserker rage*. See page 84 of *Star Wars Sourcebook, Second Edition*.

Climbing Claws: Wookiees' climbing claws add +2D to their *climbing* skill. Since Snoova is a dishonored Wookiee with a death-mark on his head, he may also use his claws when *brawling* to inflict STR+1D damage.

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 7

Character Points: 6

Move: 11

Equipment: Ammo bandolier, grenade (5D), heavy blaster pistol (5D), light repeating blaster (6D), medpac, satchel, monocle ocular enhancer (+2D to *search* in darkness), vibro-ax (STR+2D)

Denizens of Coruscant's Shadows

Elements of the fringe can be found virtually everywhere, from the edges of the Unknown Regions to the heart of the Core Worlds. The fringe is not a caste limited by social status, economic means or geographic location — it is omnipresent. It is only fitting that Coruscant, center of the Empire, possesses its fair share of these elements. To some extent, the presence of illegal trade is tolerated; accomplished smugglers cater to the desires of the extremely wealthy, all with a veneer of civility and class. In fact, members of Coruscant's nobility often consider the possession of certain prohibited items — slaves, banned artwork and the like — as signs of their status. Certainly the Emperor knows of the flourishing illegal trade in Imperial Center, but allows it to continue; not only does it keep the lesser nobles busy with their own minor intrigues, but Palpatine can also use this information to blackmail various nobles to do his bidding.

Coruscant is not all glitter and shine, however. In the lower levels of the planet's vast citysprawls, numerous "marginal operators" buy and sell illegal cargoes and undertake a variety of petty schemes to eke out a modest living.

Out of the Picture

Snoova's head reeled again. His memory vaguely drifted back into his aching skull. He had just completed a meeting with Asteria, something about a routine bounty job. It was just outside her fortified townhouse that they jumped him — six goons with stun pikes and shock batons. He remembered slashing one up good. There must have been more in the shadows down the alley, because he felt the stings of tranq slugs. Then the street turned upside-down and he passed out.

The Wookiee shook his head more vigorously this time and looked around his cell. It wasn't too large — in fact, when he finally regained his balance, Snoova was certain he couldn't even stand up in it. As it was, his legs didn't even stretch across the floor. The reinforced door near his feet had a small transparisteel view-hole near the top, where he occasionally caught a glimpse of a blurry face looking in. He tried to get up, but found it was slightly difficult without his arms ...

It took Snoova a while to realize his arms were hanging above him, his wrists manacled in something metal which was bolted to the wall with a heavy durasteel link. Thick metal mitts clamped his hands into fists so he couldn't extend his claws. To ensure he didn't use the mitts as weapons, they had been chained together and bolted to the metal cell wall. He tried yanking the chains apart with his arms, then tried pulling out the bolted wall link with a few tugs, to no avail. The clearer Snoova's head became, the less he liked his situation.

The cell door finally whooshed aside after several locking mechanisms had clicked or whirred open. Nobody entered — there was hardly room — but Snoova did make out one figure standing in the

doorway, an aging and rather placid looking Twi'lek dressed in gaudy robes and jewelry. Behind this Twi'lek were several other alien guards, all brandishing humming stun pikes. The guards seemed eager to zap him.

The Twi'lek cleared his throat and spoke. "Please accept my humblest apologies for your treatment, my friend."

Snoova roared back something disparaging about the Twi'lek's parentage, then growled more while yanking on his chained mitts. If his captor had hair, it would have blown with the gust. As it was, the Twi'lek's jewelry jangled in the fetid breeze of Snoova's breath.

"I have been called far worse, hunter," the Twi'lek calmly replied. "And yes, your mitts are meant to keep you from inflicting unnecessary damage upon my staff and facility."

Snoova let loose another barrage of howling and roaring.

"Whether or not you remember my face for the rest of time does not concern me. For now suffice it to say that our purposes require you to be previously disposed, or 'out of the picture,' as you bounty hunters are so fond of saying. In another reality, let us say that your twin is paying a visit to Coruscant. For now, please, enjoy what hospitality we are capable of offering an enraged Wookiee. You shall be fed and cared for, and eventually, when our purposes allow, you shall be released. Do not fear — you shall be handsomely compensated for your inconvenience ... once you have been transported far from this slave camp."



Certain areas in Imperial Center's foundations — such as Coruscant's Southern Underground — attract more “undesirables” than others. Whether they live in the light or the shadows, these fringe elements seem to thrive wherever they ply their trade.

Wendell Wright-Sims

Coruscant's most prominent spice dealer is a well-to-do socialite named Wendell Wright-Sims. One might think that in the Imperial capital such a questionable commodity would be highly regulated — if not completely outlawed — but Wright-Sims carries out his spice-dealing enterprises with the express permission of the Emperor himself. It seems Palpatine wants only the choicest spice delivered to the august citizens of his capital, and Wright-Sims has impeccable taste in quality spice and the smugglers who bring it into Imperial Center. Besides, Wright-Sims figures the Emperor's subjects have a right to enjoy themselves — if it also serves Palpatine's need to keep those same subjects addicted and docile, then so be it.



Tim Bobko

Wright-Sims ensures the spice flowing into Coruscant is the most refined of its kind in the galaxy. No lesser substance could be allowed to taint those who could be considered the richest and certainly most fortunate members of galactic society. To make sure he is fulfilling his market's needs, Wright-Sims is constantly flitting off to social engagements with his clients, chatting at a costume ball here, having lunch at the Manarai there, mingling

with those who haunt the Imperial Palace's public corridors, and in general hobnobbing with all whose needs he serves.

As a Coruscant socialite, Wright-Sims is careful to always dress in the latest fashions. His whitened hair is always pomaded with fine fragrances, and he keeps his physique in the fashionable trim of the day. He watches the newsnets daily for hints of the next “hot trend,” and peppers his speech with the most popular catchphrases. Wright-Sims can discuss the latest political developments with aplomb, speak of high society ideals with the Human High Culture theorists, and speculate on galactic developments with a practiced ease. He is a student of

the superficial and an avid practitioner of complimentary banter.

Of course, Wright-Sims knows his place, and he often humbles himself among his more auspicious Coruscant society peers. He is particularly mindful of the Emperor's good graces in allowing him to pursue his import trade, and is always willing to assist the emissaries of the Empire. Wright-Sims also acknowledges the role Black Sun plays in his business success — or rather, the role Black Sun's *absence* plays. As a professional courtesy, Prince Xizor has kept his own spice dealers from interfering with Wright-Sims' affairs. In return, the socialite often visits Xizor to present him with several kilos of the choicest spice. While the Underlord of Black Sun does not indulge in such base pleasures, he does seem to appreciate the gesture. He knows Wright-Sims is only doing his job — maintaining his favor among clients and competitors.

Like Xizor, Imperial Center's premier spice merchant does not himself indulge in his own merchandise. Instead, he finds pleasure in the ever-extravagant lifestyle of Coruscant society.

■ Wendell Wright-Sims

Type: Spice Importer

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 3D+2

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Bureaucracy: Imperial 6D, business 6D, business: spice 10D+2, cultures: Coruscant 5D+2, languages 4D+2, streetwise: Coruscant 6D, value: spice 9D+1

MECHANICAL 2D

Beast riding 4D, repulsorlift operation 3D+1

PERCEPTION 4D

Bargain 8D, command 5D+1, con 4D+2, forgery 6D, investigation 5D, persuasion 7D

STRENGTH 3D

TECHNICAL 2D

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 12

Move: 10

Equipment: Datapad link to newsnets, fashionable clothes, hold-out blaster (3D)



An Old Flame in Need ...

Wendell Wright-Sims read over the invitation printed on the plastic slip as he approached the entrance to the reception hall.

His Eminence, Kren Blista-Vanee, Imperial Advisor To Our Most August Emperor, Hereby Requests Your Auspicious Presence At A Gala Commemorating The Season's Opening-Night Performance Of The Kallea Cycle.

He handed the wordy invitation to the honor guard, who slotted it through a datareader, then waved him on through.

The reception hall beyond was packed with Coruscant's elite society. If they weren't gossip-

ing in little clutches of people, they were floating around the lavish hall, admiring the Imperial Advisor's collection of art, marveling at the exquisite food, or gazing out the 30-meter-tall transparisteel windows which served as walls and offered an amazing view of the glowing Coruscant skyline.

Still, even with having to sit through the Kallea Cycle's first marathon portion, Wendell was determined to be his usual charming self. That was a part of his job, even if it meant sitting through a tediously droll Brentaal opera.

He made sure his white hair was still in place and straightened this week's designer evening coattails before gliding into the throng. Wendell drifted into one conversation, through a debate and finally out of another discussion, all the while smiling, nodding, shaking hands and basically reinforcing his devotion to those addicted to the choicest spice he so deftly brought to their doorsteps.

"Yes, it's amazing how those performers can sing for five hours straight. They must train their voices for years before they can carry out such a feat of musical daring.

"Lady Comark, what a lovely gown you're wearing this evening. Yes, I'll be sure to stop by and visit soon. Of course, what guest wouldn't bring his gracious host a proper gift?

"How abominable! One would think those Rebels might think innocent lives had some value, but it seems they shall never stop until they're sitting right back here in the old Senate chambers again.

"Certainly you must be joking, Grand Admiral Takel. A scandal years ago involving the late Grand Moff Tarkin and a female aide? I'm sure today's Imperial administration is quite above such improprieties. Oh, and yes, I'll have a package for you next week."

It was the kind of superficial banter Wendell excelled at. As long as he stroked them properly, he would sell enough spice to live extremely comfortably.

Then he saw her, an exquisite vision of beauty. At least that's what he'd tell her. It had been at least two years since they had casually courted. Wendell remembered it as a pleasant time, although he couldn't quite recall why they'd drifted apart. Perhaps it would be worth surviving the five-hour performance of the opera's first portion after all ...

"Why, Mayli Weng," Wendell exclaimed, approaching the woman with the ornate gown and artistically-styled hair. "I haven't seen you since —"

"Since we stopped seeing each other," she casually cut in, disengaging herself from the conversation she was having with several important-looking gentlemen.

Wendell took her hand and gently pressed his lips against it. "A minor technicality," he said smoothly. Mayli didn't realize it — or maybe she just wasn't saying anything — but while they were exchanging small talk, Wendell was slowly easing her out of the main arena of chatting guests toward the more serene sidelines. Mayli silently followed and flashed a polite smile at



Tim Bobko

several acquaintances as they passed. She had dropped her courteous manner by the time Wendell steered her near one of the immense windows overlooking Coruscant.

"Wendell, I don't have time for your romantic advances," she said. "Both you and I have business to attend to at this reception. Our livelihoods depend on affairs such as this. We're accomplishing nothing by opening up old emotional wounds ..."

"I can afford to share some of my time with a friend in need," Wendell coolly said. "You certainly seem upset about something. Upset enough that it might interfere with your intended negotiations tonight anyway."

"My 'intended negotiations' are none of your business," Mayli began. "It's not my fault half my entertainers on Ralltiir are being rounded up as Rebel sympathizers, Governor Snopps on Corulag won't tell those Academy cadets to stop abusing my pleasure hall girls, and the Esselian government wants to cut out the union and regulate the industry there in its own tyrannical fashion."

"Seems like you have a lot on your mind," Wendell said, putting an arm around her shoulder. "Perhaps I can offer a diversion ..."

"I don't want any of your merchandise, if that's all you're offering," Mayli interrupted, making a move to back away. "You know I haven't touched that stuff since I hauled myself off the dance floors."

"As I was saying, perhaps I could offer a diversion by catching up on old times — you know, some fancy culinary tidbits borrowed from a servant's tray, a flask of some Cedrellian aged wine, and thou, so to speak. Non-committal, of course."

"Wendell, at times you can be annoyingly vapid."

"And yet, you must admit, from time to time charm can often be a fulfilling substitute." He began leading her by the hand toward the terrace arches. "Come, walk with me through the balcony garden, and I shall take your mind off your worries with my sonorous renditions of the great Korfani poet, Adranax: 'Why mourn for tomorrow in tears today/When current fleeting hours not long shall stay?/Come stroll with me, we shall find your lost peace/In an old friend's arms and a gentle kiss.'"

Mayli Weng

Entertaining the high-society multitudes on Coruscant is no easy endeavor, but the Exotic Entertainers' Union does its part. The organiza-

tion licenses its personnel and protects the industry from unjust Imperial regulation or interference from various criminal syndicates.

Mayli Weng is one of several representatives of the union, speaking for its 20,000 workers in the Core Worlds. While most of her constituents work in high-class entertainment establishments on Coruscant, the rest travel to casinos, restaurants, clubs and pleasure halls scattered throughout the Core Worlds. A former exotic entertainer herself, Mayli has been elevated to Coruscant society's elite by her prominent administration position in the union. Along with her official duties, her job consists of lobbying business leaders, conferring with others in the entertainment industry, and currying favor with powerful individuals in the Imperial Court.

Mayli also frequently reports to the Underlord of Black Sun, who has considerable influence both with entertainers and club and casino owners. Many of her constituents work for Black Sun front enterprises, and she keeps Xizor apprised of any developments in her industry which might expose Vigo operations. As in all her dealings, Mayli is extremely polite with Xizor: she never demands, but asks with the graciousness for which she is renowned. She seems to please Xizor, for he has used his influence more than once to press the Entertainment Owners' League into making concessions to her union.

Despite Mayli's charms, the Underlord of Black Sun has not yet tried to seduce her. He has made it clear that he does not allow pleasure to interfere with business.

Her exceptional figure, pleasant demeanor and melodic voice make dealing with her a joy. She has a wardrobe that rivals any in elite society, and often chooses evening dresses which accentuate her charms. Some say she has five assistants who do nothing but style her luxuriously long, brown hair before public engagements, but this might simply be a rumor spread by justifiably jealous socialites.

Still, Mayli does not rely on her appearance alone. She is a competent business-woman, capable of bargaining her way out of a corner and convincing the other party that they got the better end of the arrangement.

Although bright and charming in public, in private she is prone to depression. Away from the glitter of high society and the responsibilities of her job, she finds her life frighteningly empty.

■ Mayli Weng

Type: Entertainment Union Representative

DEXTERITY 3D

Pick pocket 5D

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Bureaucracy: Exotic Entertainers' Union 7D, business:

entertainment 6D, cultures: 6D+2, streetwise 5D, value 5D+2, willpower 5D+1

MECHANICAL 2D

PERCEPTION 4D

Bargain 9D, con 4D+2, hide 5D, investigation 5D+2, persuasion 6D, persuasion: seduction 8D+2, sneak 6D

STRENGTH 3D

TECHNICAL 2D

Force Points: 1

Character Points: 17

Move: 10

Equipment: Business datapad, exotic dress

Benedict Vidkun

Benedict Vidkun is a denizen of Coruscant's lower levels. As an engineer charged with maintaining the complex sewage system serving the Imperial Complex above, he works nights, sleeps days, and rarely sees the light. The radiance of Coruscant's sun might just blind Vidkun, so well has he adapted to life in the dank, fetid depths. He is short and thin, ideal for scampering through the kilometers of tunnels which siphon off the waste from above. Vidkun's skin is paler than most cave fish, and his brown eyes bulge, as if seeking whatever light they can. His sharpened yellow teeth might seem more befitting a predator of the depths he haunts, but they reinforce the unsettling illusion that he belongs down there. A wispy beard and mustache must filter the disgusting sewer smells from his seemingly oversized nose, for Vidkun rarely complains of the stench. Maybe he's been down in the sludge tunnels so long he doesn't notice anymore.

In his earlier days, when his appearance must have been more acceptable to other humans, he married a woman significantly younger than he. Perhaps she thought there was some prestige in marrying a civil engineer who kept the Imperial capital in working order. Or maybe she saw the potential for wealth in Vidkun's ambitious eyes. Whatever the case might have been, she has expensive tastes, and Vidkun pays dearly to satisfy his spouse's avarice.

While Vidkun's regular duty of controlling the sewage flow pays relatively well, his wife's ability to spend credits siphons off most of his salary. On occasion, he has sold detailed information on Coruscant's lowest levels, but only for a hefty price. He knows that few people would have access to this data — and still fewer would want to pay for it — so his involvement in supplying maps could easily be traced.

Vidkun's data is very accurate — he's familiar with every spillway, dump chute and sludgeway running beneath the Imperial Complex, including those beneath the Emperor's Palace, Darth Vader's castle, the old Senate Hall, the offices of several prominent ministries and administrative departments, and even Prince Xizor's pal-

ace. Vidkun's brother-in-law Daiv works for the construction firm which built several complexes, including Prince Xizor's palace, and can provide Vidkun with detailed plans of sewer levels — for a cut of the credits, of course. Another brother-in-law, Lair, handled security when the waste disposal levels were last renovated, so he has codes to override the many security systems meant to keep people out of the pipes.

Vidkun is a shrewd bargainer. Of course, those venturing into the labyrinth beneath the Empire's dark heart are at his mercy. Should they decide his services aren't worth the previously agreed-upon price, or if Vidkun decides to drive his price up further, they might find themselves lost forever in the stinking wastes, or, worse yet, led into some gruesome trap or sewage processor. And if the sludgeways fail to dispose of annoying patrons, Vidkun can always use the hold-out blaster he keeps concealed in his work coveralls ...

■ **Benedict Vidkun**

Type: Civil Waste Disposal Engineer

DEXTERITY 2D

Blaster 4D

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Streetwise 5D, survival: waste disposal levels 6D

MECHANICAL 2D

Machinery operation 5D, repulsorlift operation 3D+1

PERCEPTION 2D

Bargain 5D, con 5D+2, search 4D+1

STRENGTH 2D

Brawling 4D+2, climbing/jumping 5D

TECHNICAL 2D

Machinery repair 6D, security 5D+1

Character Points: 2

Move: 10

Equipment: Helmet with luma mount, hold-out blaster (3D), maintenance toolkit, water-proof boots, work coveralls



Chris Trevas

Spero

In a plaza deep in Coruscant's Southern Underground, one can find a small plant shop. It seems somewhat out of place among the seedy bars, junk shops and flop hotels, but it is an important locale for those who scratch out a tenuous existence in Imperial Center's lowest levels. It is here that the proprietor, a Ho'Din master gardener named Spero, grows and sells many plants and fungi, including a specially-engineered yellow fungus that replenishes the Underground's fetid air. For a few credits, bums,

vagabonds, sludgeway denizens and business proprietors can buy a clump of fungus to help freshen the air in their hovels, pipe shelters and bars.

Spero himself is a sight — although the three-meter-tall Ho'Din is beginning to droop in his old age, his red snake-like head tendrils still come dangerously close to brushing the ceiling of his store. He shuffles around his planting troughs and hanging pots, cultivating his gray stikmoss, stretchy vines, and flowering tendroots. Inhabitants of the Southern Underground often come to him with their ailments, for Spero is known for his expertise in Ho'Din herbal medicines, and he cultivates many plants with healing properties.

On rare occasions, an old friend or associate drops by, often in a hurry, seeking information about others on Coruscant, contacts in the Southern Underground, or the best places to hide. Spero obliges them all — he is a kindly being who has always depended on the goodness of others to survive and the humble plant master is a well-known and mostly trustworthy infor-

mation broker. Spero has numerous contacts in the lower levels, including Imperial soldiers, Rebel operatives and those who earn their pay by doing the bidding of the galaxy's criminal leaders.

In his younger days, Spero was an adventurous Ho'Din who left his homeworld in search of exotic plant life. Eventually, he settled down to experiment with his own breeds of flora from the samples he had collected during his travels. Through tedious study and experimentation, he developed a yellow fungus which grew in great, billowy sheets. While the fungus proved to be a pleasing sight as a decorative feature, it also served the practical purpose of converting noxious gases and other unhealthy fumes into oxygen without the need for sunlight. His new fungus was incorporated into architectural designs for palaces, villas, public areas, and other structures which didn't always have the proper ventilation needed for comfortable habitation. Though Spero could have become rich with this discovery, he saw it as his personal contribution to bringing organic elements back into the

Spero's Flight

Leia's office door chimed. She didn't look up from the stacks of datapads on her consulate office desk — the week's edicts were being forced through the Imperial Senate chamber for votes before the new year's fete week. If she didn't finish reviewing them, who knew what new and tyrannical policies the New Order factions would pass. She'd have to leave for Ralltiir soon, and she couldn't afford to fall behind on her Senate datawork. The door chimed again. "I told you, I'm not to be disturbed," she called.

The door slid aside anyway. One of the consulate's lesser aide's poked her head in. "My apologies for disturbing you, Princess," she said, bowing her head in shame. "Master Gardener Spero insists he must see you. It seems rather urgent."

"Show him in, Maglenna," Leia said, her brow furrowed with concern.

Spero shuffled in, kneading his hands anxiously, his red head tendrils shaking with fright. "Princess, something terrible has happened," he stammered. "I was working in the consular gardens and I found a datacard hidden in the main planter. Well, I knew it shouldn't be there, and I tried to return it to the chief of the household staff. As I was doing so, a strange man approached me, said he was with Imperial Intelligence, and told me I was under arrest."

"How did you get here?" Leia asked.

Spero blushed. "The man was standing next to the bed of Ancathian funge-flowers," he explained. "Fearing that I might be in danger, I whistled the proper

frequency, and the flowers spewed their pollen into a thick cloud around the man. Humans are particularly susceptible to the funge-flower's pollen, and he was momentarily stunned. I slipped out the back garden gate and carefully made my way here. Please, Princess, you must help me."

Leia knew she shouldn't have allowed the Rebel operatives to use the Alderaan consular gardens as a meeting place, and she certainly didn't approve of them using the main planter as a drop point for datacards. Still, the damage was done and Spero was one of the casualties.

"Maglenna?" Leia called. The young aide appeared once again in the office doorway. "Take Spero to the consulate turbolift — the private one adjacent to the conference room. Take him down to sub-level 27 and hand him off to Hindred. He'll know what to do."

"Where am I going?" Spero asked.

"Somewhere safe," Leia assured him, rising from her seat and taking his shaking hand in hers. "Hindred knows a dozen bolt holes, both in system and out. In the meantime, I'll get our operatives fabricating some rumors to throw off Imperial Intelligence. Don't worry, you'll be safe, friend."

Spero bowed low as Maglenna tugged on his cloak. "You shall have my eternal gratitude, Princess," he said. "Should our paths ever cross again, I shall be most indebted to you." The aide urged him out of the office and toward the private conference room turbolift.

galaxy's architecture.

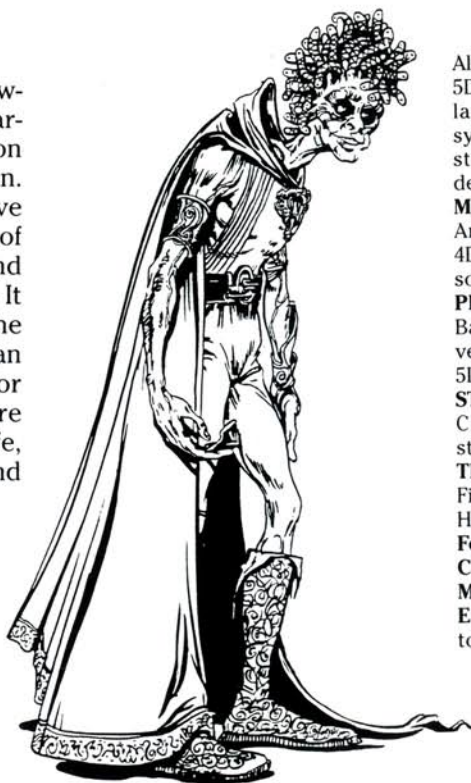
His achievements did not go unnoticed, however. He was awarded the title of "Master Gardener" by his peers, and was offered a position as chief gardener to the Royal House of Alderaan. He was responsible for crafting the extensive gardens on the Organa estate, and took care of their gardening needs in their consulates and other holdings throughout the Core Worlds. It was while serving Princess Leia Organa at the Alderaan consulate on Coruscant that Spero ran afoul of the Empire. Princess Leia arranged for his safe "disappearance" to prevent his capture by Imperial agents. Spero now enjoys a new life, aiding the denizens of the Southern Underground and tending to his beloved plants.

■ **Spero**

Type: Ho'Din Master Gardener

DEXTERITY 3D

KNOWLEDGE 4D



Alien species 6D+2, cultures 5D+2, ecology: Moltok 6D, languages 5D, planetary systems 6D, streetwise 7D, streetwise: Southern Underground 9D

MECHANICAL 2D

Archaic starship piloting 4D, astrogation 3D+2, sensors 4D

PERCEPTION 4D

Bargain 5D, con 4D+2, investigation 5D, persuasion 5D+2

STRENGTH 2D

Climbing/jumping 3D+2, stamina 4D

TECHNICAL 3D

First aid 5D+2, (A) first aid: Ho'Din herbal medicines 4D

Force Points: 1

Character Points: 9

Move: 10

Equipment: Gardening tools, pinch of snuff-fungus

Chapter Five

Planets

The civilization of the Galactic Empire spans billions of stars, from Coruscant — the heart of the Empire — to remote Outer Rim worlds like Tatooine and Gall. Prince Xizor's plot unfolds on only a handful of worlds, but should his plan succeed, the implications will reach across the galaxy.

Bothawui

The homeworld of the Bothans is a burgeoning economic hub dominated by high-technology industry. Bothawui is also home to the ruling Bothan Council (composed of several clan leaders) and the various ministries which regulate commerce and government in the colonies. Although Bothawui is officially part of the Empire, the Bothans are essentially left alone to pursue their economic affairs.

Many corporations have factories and trade houses on Bothawui, and a minimal Imperial presence helps preserve the stable Bothan government; the planet has almost no outward signs of Rebel affiliation and thus there is no need for a prominent military force. The Imperial government maintains a consulate run by a less-than-efficient consul-general, and the compound is operated with a minimal staff; a token force of stormtroopers provides a proper military display whenever the consul-general needs to go anywhere. Occasionally, vessels from the Imperial sector fleet make a patrol sweep through the system, but these ships rarely involve themselves in Bothan matters.

The Empire has other reasons to avoid interfering with the status quo on Bothawui. The numerous Bothan clans are fiercely competitive, and centuries of political infighting has fostered the belief that spying is merely a logical extension of good government. As a result, they tend to tolerate a large degree of what others call "espionage." Over the centuries, the planet

has gained a reputation as "neutral ground," not only for trade arrangements and diplomatic negotiations, but also for information gathering operations.

Agents representing virtually every political and criminal faction in the galaxy hide behind false identities and front companies, gathering and exchanging information on their competitors and enemies, routing supplies and illegal goods through the bustling starport, and occasionally making their rivals "disappear" when necessary.

Spies can often find convenient "cover stories" in Bothawui's society. Because of the preponderance of manufacturing companies, commodities exchanges, trade unions, shipping companies, and support service organizations, there are nearly-infinite opportunities to set up convincing false identities.

Often, spies sent to the Bothan homeworld know that they are in little danger should their cover become compromised. Certain intrigues are tolerated: the Imperials ferret out and tail Rebel agents, Alliance operatives track Imperial Intelligence operatives and the Bothans watch *everybody*, selling information to the highest bidder.

The Empire allows this espionage activity because it is both a participant in and benefits from the situation. Imperial Intelligence can keep track of the Rebellion, the Bothans and various criminal organizations, monitoring these various groups and their activities. Although the Bothan spynet sometimes supplies the Rebel Alliance with information, it also furnishes intelligence for the Empire.

This web of intrigue is well-hidden by Bothawui's brisk shipping, communication and transportation industries. Blaster fights, daring commando missions and sabotage are discouraged since open conflict would be more detrimental than beneficial to all factions.

Bothawui itself is an eminently pleasant world. The main starport is located away from the capital city, with pubtrans flitters zipping like busy insects between the port and the downtown area. The capital city's wide, clean boulevards afford a good view of Bothawui's towering buildings, all constructed from a glittering natural stone. Many corporations maintain satellite offices here, and the commercial districts house immense pedestrian malls filled with stores offering an infinity of merchandise. Species from all over the galaxy freely mingle here and the city seems so representative of the Empire in population, corporations and merchandise that an inexperienced traveler might easily mistake Bothawui for one of the more-prominent Core worlds.

Surrounding the main portion of the city are commercial districts with light industrial complexes hidden away in the rocky foothills; the foothills are lightly populated and offer a degree of freedom not afforded in the city. Outside of the bustle of the city, the Rebels maintain a well-armed safehouse, the Empire monitors a state-of-the-art communications and sensors station, and the Bothans have a small starfighter base which boasts a dozen Y-wings and their support crews. Here on Bothawui as long as everybody's discreet, the intelligence game will remain a proper and courteous pursuit.

■ Bothawui

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Temperate
Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
Hydrosphere: Moderate
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Plains, mountains, oceans, forests, urban
Length of Day: 27 standard hours
Length of Year: 351 local days
Sapient Species: Bothans (N), humans, various aliens
Starport: Standard class
Population: 2.5 billion
Planet Function: Homeworld, espionage, trade
Government: Imperial consul-general with Bothan Council
Tech Level: Space
Major Exports: Mid technology, high technology, information
Major Imports: Mid technology, high technology, information

The Weekly Luncheon

Garin made certain he arrived at the Cedrian Terrace on time — no use arousing suspicion by being late. The others in his lunch party had also just arrived, and they met in the restaurant's foyer with hugs and handshakes as if they were old friends from the Academy. There was Sharalon, looking sharp in her uniform and giv-

ing him that alluring smile — he gave her a peck on her cheek. He turned to slap Drixar on the back. The Wroonian starport security officer shook Garin's hand vigorously before the group turned to the serving droid, who waited near the reservation podium.

"The usual table, friends?" the droid chirped.

"Yes, Beevee," Sharalon said. "The one by the window."

"Of course. Follow me, please." BV-1210 led the group through the maze of tables and diners to a booth with a good view of the bustling Bothawui street below. They all began perusing the menu and chatting about their luncheon choices.

Their weekly lunch meeting here at the Cedrian Terrace had become a ritual. They'd all engage in superficial conversation over lunch — but their real purpose was to observe each other, poke and prod here and there during the discussion, and occasionally let slip some seemingly valuable bit of misinformation. It was little more than a polite formality among the spies who called Bothawui home.

Beevee took everyone's order, beginning with Sharalon, then Drixar and finally Garin. Sharalon's lovely appearance and pleasant demeanor was deceiving — she was really an Imperial Intelligence agent, and had been responsible for the deaths of several Rebel operatives Garin had known. From her position as the main desk manager at the Regal Bothan Hotel, she could monitor the comings and goings of other rival operatives, and arrange safe meeting areas, drop points and lodging for her own agents. It was a far cry from her work rooting out and eliminating Rebel spies in the Core Worlds — Garin surmised Sharalon had gone overboard on the Kuat incident and had been reassigned to Bothawui to "cool off."

Beevee returned with their drink orders. Drixar had already launched into one of the boastful tales Wroonians are so infamous for telling. He was a security officer out at the spaceport, the perfect cover from which a crime syndicate's informant could monitor activity and assist smuggling efforts. Neither Sharalon nor Garin knew for whom he worked (they had conferred on that point only last week during an unscheduled evening meeting after the Bothan Trade Mission's reception). However, both agents strongly suspected he worked for the Hutts — if not Jabba, then someone pulling some very influential underworld strings within Hutt Space.

Of course, there was a fourth member of their little luncheon gang, and he represented the Bothans. Beevee might not always be at hand,



Storm Cook

but all three operatives believed he had augmented audio and video sensors, as well as a direct comlink to a listening device planted within their table's centerpiece. They didn't bother to remove it. Here on Bothawui, everybody spied on everyone else. Their lunch here had become habit — to break that habit would be to send a clear message to other parties that something was up.

"I hear you hired a few more staffers over at the hotel," Garin said, a seemingly innocuous comment to Sharalon. "You'll have to introduce me sometime." She gave him a coy smile, but Garin detected a slight expression of disgust. His subordinates were getting good at spotting new Imperial Intelligence operatives as soon as they set foot in the starport.

Drixar gabbed on about some shipment of interesting sensor and computer equipment headed for Kothlis. Sharalon raised an eyebrow but said nothing — still, the slight expression of surprise tipped Garin off that the Empire didn't know about the shipment. Neither did Garin, but at least he didn't show it.

"Now that you mention computers, I hear your office is upgrading its computers, Garin." Sharalon smiled over her glass of fizzling chooss.

"With our new accounts in the Corporate Sector, we have to expand our data processing capabilities," he replied. "It's amazing what computers can do these days."

While Beevee was serving their lunch, Garin glanced around the restaurant and out the window. In the street below, he tagged two Imperial watchers trying to look inconspicuous while viewing the local newsnets on a public display. He wasn't sure who Drixar had following them, but it was most likely the Rodian sitting at the restaurant juice counter.

The meal ended with the usual jokes and laughter. Beevee stopped by with the check — "I hope your dining experience has been pleasant, friends," he chirped. Sharalon picked up the tab this time, giving Garin a sly wink when Drixar wasn't looking.

That night Garin scanned the various reports logged in that afternoon. While he was having lunch with his rivals, his slicers had managed to copy Sharalon's personal datafiles, making off with some interesting tidbits about a Grand Moff traveling incognito through Bothawui starport next week, what she knew of Rebel capital ship movements within the sector, and some rather embarrassing details about her personal life. At the same time, somebody working for Drixar had, no doubt, caused the new comm surveillance system in the hidden Rebel front-house to crash; so much for the "hidden" part. And Sharalon had been busy after lunch — the sensor and computer equipment headed for Kothlis had been "misrouted" to an Imperial garrison deep within the Core Worlds. No doubt the Bothans weren't happy about that ...

Coruscant

Coruscant has always seemed to be the center of the known galaxy. Once the seat of government for the Galactic Republic, it is now the throne-world of Emperor Palpatine. Coruscant's name is derived from the sparkling lights that illuminate the planet — even at night — making it seem like an immense, glittering Corusca gem when viewed from space. Although the planet has been called Coruscant for the 25 or so millennium since the founding of the Old Republic, today it is referred to as “Imperial Center” among those loyal to the Emperor’s New Order.

Space travelers are often amazed at the variety of orbital facilities floating above the planet. Climate-control mirror stations, habitation spheres, power sats and skyhooks, fill the sky while a never-ending river of private, commercial and military starship traffic runs to and from the surface. The system is also home to the Coruscant Sector Fleet (Imperial Center is considered a sector unto itself for deployment purposes), as well as any number of Imperial Navy task forces mustering here before heading to other priority assignments.

The stream of starship traffic — coupled with the seemingly-infinite lights from Coruscant's buildings — gives the planet a “cityglow,” turning night to day in the upper areas of the planet's urban strata. Most of Imperial Center's surface is covered with buildings spanning hundreds of stories and thousands of kilometers — an architectural behemoth. Only the uppermost build-

ings actually receive light from Coruscant's sun, and most buildings actually possess their own ecosystem.

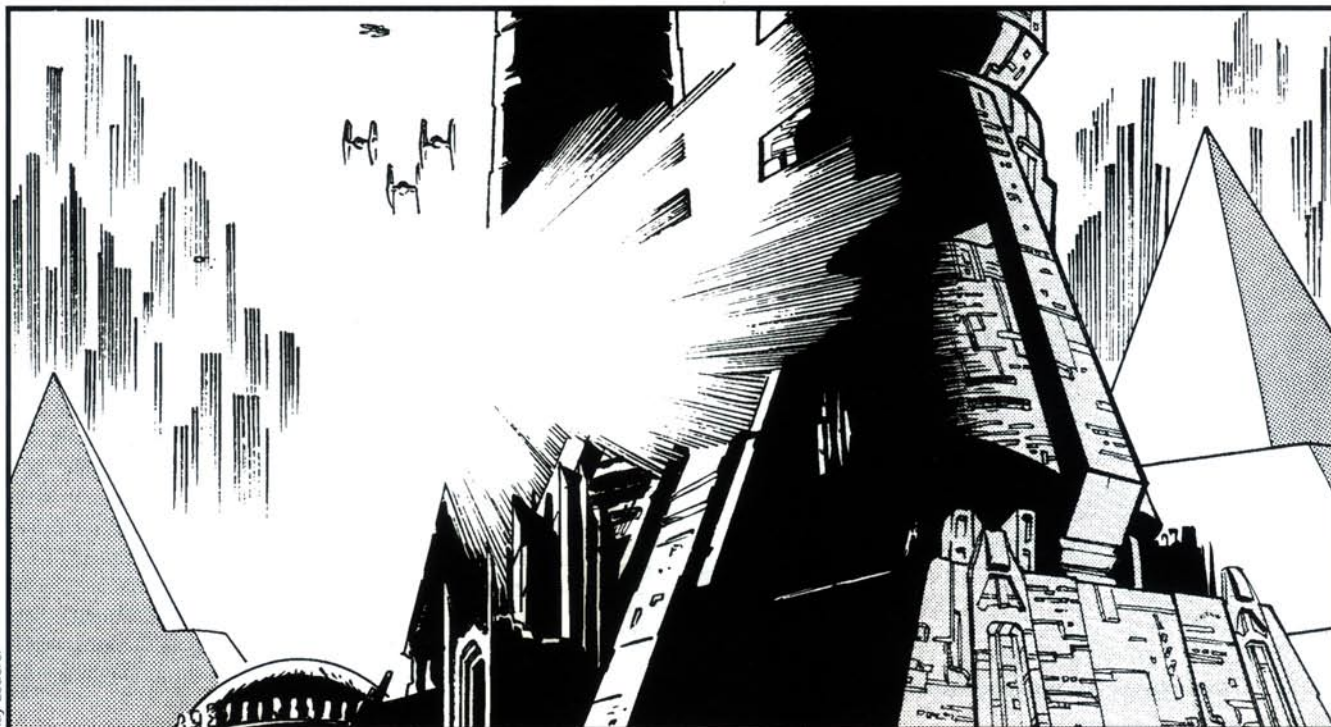
Some skyscrapers are little more than honeycombed apartments, while others sport enclosed roof-top gardens, starship landing bays, or public areas. Power plants and maintenance bays in each building's deep sub-basement help maintain acceptable atmospheric conditions, pump in water and siphon off waste materials. Vents from skyscrapers' heating and cooling systems cause “microweather cells” in Coruscant's atmosphere, creating air currents, low-hanging clouds, and even small rain storms.

City blocks are connected by bridgeways and public squares, sometimes spanning several levels. Some buildings merge into each other, creating self-contained neighborhoods serving the residential, commercial, public and starport needs of its citizens.

The upper tiers of Coruscant's skyscrapers house the more affluent and prestigious citizens. The deeper one goes — into the caverns and labyrinthine maintenance ducts — the lower one descends into a realm where everything seems to skulk in the shadows.

■ Coruscant

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Temperate
Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
Hydrosphere: Moderate
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Urban
Length of Day: 24 standard hours



Ray Leederer

Length of Year: 368 local days
Sapient Species: Humans (N), various aliens
Starport: Imperial class
Population: 650 billion
Planet Function: Government, administrative
Government: Imperial bureaucracy
Tech Level: Space
Major Exports: None
Major Imports: Foodstuffs, medicinal goods

The Imperial Palace

The highest point on Coruscant is Imperial Palace, home of Emperor Palpatine and much of the immense bureaucracy which helps run his Empire. The ornate structure dominates the skyline, and towers over the Old Republic Senate Hall located nearby. This ornate building runs completely and contiguously from Coruscant's bedrock. Palpatine's immense throne room is an auditorium sunken into the stone, where honored citizens and bureaucrats are summoned to listen to the Emperor's decrees. Palpatine maintains various other private audience chambers throughout the palace for less public meetings.

The Palace constantly bustles with harried bureaucrats, pensive administrators, low-level data-crunchers, droids, visiting dignitaries, and military personnel. Standing in the Grand Corridor, one has a perfect opportunity to view them all, scurrying about to do their business on behalf of the Empire. Imperial stormtroopers and Coruscant guards can be found virtually everywhere, patrolling public areas, escorting dignitaries, and — along with the red-robed Imperial Royal Guard — protecting the Emperor's privacy and his person.

In addition to the vast number of public levels of the Palace, there are a seemingly-infinite number of private areas used by Coruscant's powerful elite. The Emperor has several audience chambers, each designed to serve a particular need. His favorite has a circular-webbed window overlooking his capital — elite stormtroopers keep watch in raised duty stations, while several Imperial Royal Guards stand ready at all times. Several more Royal Guard members lurk behind secret panels, waiting to intervene in the unlikely event of an emergency. It is in audience chambers such as these that the Emperor spins his elaborate schemes and confers with his Imperial Advisors and other servants.

Few are allowed into these secure areas — one must have an extremely important position in the Imperial hierarchy to gain access, or in many cases, to even know of their existence. Even more secure levels are guarded by Royal Guards, as well as Imperial Sovereign Protectors and Imperial Sentinels. Private areas of the

Imperial Palace include landing pads for special visitors, the Emperor's private studies, and museum vaults containing the most cherished and powerful Sith and Jedi artifacts from Palpatine's personal collection. Several well-guarded tunnels lead to nearby areas of importance, including the Emperor's personal museum and Lord Vader's castle.

Lord Vader's Castle

The Emperor rewards his most prized servants well, and Lord Darth Vader is no exception. Upon completion of the expansion of the Imperial Palace, Palpatine ordered that a smaller residence for Lord Vader be constructed nearby. Although Vader has a fortress retreat elsewhere on the planet (as well as several similar retreats on other worlds), this castle is his main residence. It is near enough to the Palace that Vader can swiftly respond to his master's summons, and allows Palpatine to keep a close eye on his servant.

Although it is not as tall or impressive as the Imperial Palace, Vader's castle is an imposing edifice nonetheless. Broad, dark towers with narrow-slit windows join jagged vertical walls. Both outwardly and inwardly it displays few signs of Vader's immense wealth. Within the enclosure, there are structures that look like they were built by a brooding architect preparing for a mighty war — a style that suits Vader's personality well.

Lord Vader's personal sanctuary is located deep within the castle, behind armored walls and blast doors. There he maintains his private quarters. Close at hand is a small command center where he may keep in touch with outside events, a practice arena where he hones his lightsaber skills against combat droids (which rarely provide an adequate challenge), and a landing bay containing his armored shuttle.

Vader's castle has sophisticated security stations, guest quarters for visiting military personnel, barracks for guards, and several meeting rooms and holograph pads. Vader knows that even his "sanctuary" is not truly secure — the Emperor and others keep track of his activities by linking into his own security net, by placing spies within his castle staff, and by setting up their own surveillance devices.

However, few suspect Vader's well-hidden secret. He keeps a contingent of Noghri commandos on hand for missions of the utmost secrecy and importance. The Noghri move about through a series of secret corridors built after the Emperor's construction droids completed the castle. The elusive aliens excel at keeping

out of sight. Vader keeps the Noghri around as bodyguards, and occasionally sends them to do his reconnaissance work — or to eliminate his enemies.

Xizor's Palace

Prince Xizor's permanent residence on Coruscant is an immense dwelling only a few minutes' walk from the Imperial Palace. Built to his exacting specifications, Xizor's palace is designed to satisfy his whims and allow him to oversee the immense criminal bureaucracy of Black Sun (as well as the more legitimate concerns of Xizor Transport Systems). It rises above the Coruscant skyline as a visible representation of Xizor's seclusion, with two exotic and ornate towers flanking the immense central structure. It is within this central fortress that Xizor plots his schemes and commands the various minions of Black Sun.

The palace has 102 levels above ground, with at least 20 sub-levels. Turbolifts and access stairways run through all levels, from the deepest sub-basement (which holds recycling and waste disposal machinery), to the top floors, where Xizor and his esteemed guests enjoy a magnificent view of Coruscant through incredibly thick transparisteel viewports. The main levels contain large ballroom chambers, wide corridors, courtyards with false skylights, landing pads, small gardens and receiving areas. Above these are several levels where Xizor and his guests reside, as well as Xizor's meeting rooms, communications and security center, and audience chamber.

The entire palace seems to be a maze of corridors, and obvious security measures abound — keypad code locks, handprint ID scanners, cardreader locks, vault-like blast doors, and Xizor's personal guards. Other surveillance precautions are not so apparent: nearly every corridor and room is monitored by comnet receivers and holocams, linked in a complex net-web. This allows Xizor to monitor security from any room within the palace. He maintains dedicated surveillance computers in his security center, with additional monitoring units in his training rooms, office, audience hall, and personal chambers. By accessing his security net with a secret ID code, Prince Xizor can review records from any holocam or comnet receiver within the palace at any time.

A computer interface office accesses his massive information base — which includes records on blackmail files, personal projects,

and many core secrets of Black Sun and Xizor Transport Systems. These files are all irreplaceable since no duplicates exist anywhere else, making it virtually impossible for a spy to discover Xizor's secrets. The interface consists of several computers in Xizor's office, audience hall and personal chambers: each requires a complex code to access, a code that is often changed. These computers are connected by



one main trunk line and several emergency redundant lines to Xizor's main computer core — an immense mainframe and storage system sealed in the palace's lower depths within a seven-meter-thick duracrete vault. Most of the access cables are shielded against electromagnetic interference and other tampering. Xizor's secrets are much too valuable to lose, and he goes to great lengths to protect them.

There are many other aspects of Xizor's palace which remain as hidden and mysterious as the Falleen Prince himself. His personal quarters and offices are carefully guarded, and among the only areas that are not monitored. The palace also contains several chambers designed for Xizor's personal use, including combat and exercise training rooms, a firing range, a secure comm station, and vaults containing many of his prized possessions.

The Manarai

Coruscant's most exclusive restaurant, the Manarai is *the* gathering place for Imperial Center's elite. Sitting high atop a spire along Monument Park, the Manarai's transparisteel walls offer a breath-taking view of the highest peak in the Manarai Mountains — the only place where open ground can be seen in all of Imperial City.

Eating at the Manarai is no trivial matter. If prospective patrons can afford the astronomical prices, *and* if they are "approved" by the restaurant's management, one still must book reservations months in advance. Of course, it is worth the wait — dinner at the Manarai is truly an exquisite experience. The ambiance is high culture at its finest, with a conservative decor well-suited to maintaining privacy between tables. The restaurant levels are tiered, so all diners have unobstructed views out the transparisteel walls to gaze upon Monument Park and the sparkling Coruscant skyline.

The restaurant staff is as cultured and groomed as its clientele. The chefs are the best in the galaxy, recruited by scouts whose sole job is to locate new and tantalizing cuisine. Even the serving staff is carefully screened by a security consultant, and trained by Imperial Center's most affluent protocol experts. The Manarai maintains a meticulous security staff to ensure the patrons' outside lives — vengeful enemies, scandalous intrigues and personal vendettas — do not follow them in for dinner. The atmosphere is always calm and formal, as those who have made "inappropriate" displays in the restaurant are seldom allowed to dine there again.

Besides hiring the best staff, the Manarai's management caters to the most discriminating

culinary desires. The restaurant's tower has several docking platforms to accept freighters' importing cooking ingredients from across the Empire and beyond. The Manarai employs harvester groups to bring in fresh produce from distant locales, and hires big game hunters and trappers to acquire the more tenacious creatures to be served up for restaurant patrons. Famous delicacies such as fleek-eel, stuffed yam and plicto steak, giant lthorian snail in flounut butter, and Kashyyyk land shrimp are offered nightly. No dish is too elaborate or esoteric for the Manarai's cooking staff to create. If given sufficient notice, the chefs can create any culinary dish to suit a diner's tastes.

Few know who the Manarai's true owners are — the management runs a tight operation, and ensures by reputation and fine service that the restaurant (and not its owners) are the focal point of any accolades or publicity. However, several influential beings are rumored to have a stake in the Manarai, including an Imperial Advisor, an unnamed Hutt clan lord, a coalition of Core World Moffs, and even Prince Xizor of Xizor Transport Systems.

Still, few who dine at the Manarai care who actually owns it. The restaurant's clientele is more interested in a fine view, carefully cultivated ambiance, and exotic dining.

The Southern Underground

Deep beneath Imperial Center's towering spires and elegant skyscrapers lurks a darker world. At the bottom of the crevasses between skyscrapers, beneath even the lowest maintenance sub-levels, hides a sinister domain never touched by the sun's rays, where society's undesirables and refugees huddle in dank tunnels, prey on each other and eke out a tenuous existence. This is Coruscant's underground, a facet of the Imperial capital censored from glossy promotional holovids and omitted from polite conversation. It is the kingdom of thieves, outlaws, and the scum of Imperial society.

One of these infamous subterranean wastelands is the Southern Underground, located beneath Coruscant's southern sectors. This haven of the fringe is a maze of underground tunnels, chambers and plazas, all remnants of ancient city-levels forgotten when the construction droids were rebuilding sectors of Imperial Center. Here the Empire's undesirables cower, combing for food in trash heaps, sleeping in old vent-ways, and exploiting one another just to survive.

The Southern Underground is an immense complex of tunnels and artificial caverns, kilometers deep beneath Coruscant's skyline, and

A Very Special Meal

Master Chef Tavvar Va'ran was nervous. It was a busy night at the Manarai, and he had many orders to fill. He was the second-best Kubaz chef in the Empire — of course, few knew that the best Kubaz chef was on the Emperor's personal staff. Most of the time, Master Chef Va'ran was only responsible for the fine culinary delights which graced the Manarai's tables. Tonight he would be responsible for murder.

Tavvar stood quietly, kneading his hands in a spare wipe-cloth, listening to the human female standing across the prep table from him. By human standards she was gorgeous, but the Kubaz chef found her unappealing for he knew the black heart that lurked beneath the beautiful features. Still, she was part-owner of the Manarai and his master ... in fact, she had personally hired him. It was a debt she never let him forget.

Tavvar knew if he were not cooperative, Guri would have no qualms about eliminating him and encouraging the Manarai's management to elevate the third best Kubaz chef in the galaxy to his position. He listened attentively.

"You are preparing a course for Fendrilon Koozar, yes?" she asked coolly.

"Yes," Tavvar replied. He had heard of Koozar, one of the Emperor's Advisors who had an alarming habit of poking his nose where it wasn't welcome. "He has ordered an appetizer of raw Wroonian flycatcher filet, followed by a bowl of sufur greens topped with mecolar briddlings and drezze sauce, then a main dish of fleek-eel broiled in zaffa oil. He has not yet placed his order for dessert."

Guri gave him a disparaging look. He knew she was well-trained in proper etiquette and culture, but it seemed she had a distaste for the high tastes Koozar often treated himself to. "You will ensure he

is given the 'house special,'" she said.

Tavvar's snout wrinkled in an odd grimace. The term was a code. It was a combination of ingredients, some natural food seasonings, others nearly untraceable chemicals. They would be added to a victim's dishes throughout the meal. These components were designed to work in conjunction with natural oils and spices found within the meal, as well as with the victim's own digestive system, to cause certain unpleasant effects several hours after consuming the meal — often resulting in the victim's rather painful death.

"Do you have any particular preparation instructions you would like me to follow?" Tavvar asked.

"I am looking for something discreet, as always," Guri said. "Perhaps a recipe to induce hallucinatory effects later on — something that might prompt him to open his speeder door and leap out, or jump from his tower balcony."

Tavvar mentally ran through chemical combinations, spices, elements in Koozar's food, and his knowledge of human physiology. A dose of tasteless thetametabuterin in the flycatcher filet, a hybrid mold on the greens briddlings, and some collafa spice in the zaffa oil should do the trick, he thought.

"It will be done according to your orders," Tavvar said. It didn't make much difference. Guri still stood there — she would keep her watch until the entire meal had been prepared and served. So Tavvar began his culinary work.

The next evening Tavvar saw on the newsnets that Fendrilon Koozar, while in his luxury airspeeder, had thrown an uncontrollable fit at his droid pilot, wrested the controls from the automaton, and slammed his craft into the Ministry of Land Management, perishing in a fiery explosion.

in some places so abysmal as to tunnel into the planet's very bedrock. It is a realm eternally lit by a smoldering twilight of firepits, glow-fungus, and sputtering maintenance lights. Where blue-gray mold or oxygen-producing yellow fungus doesn't grow, the walls are covered with graffiti scrawled in grease and blood. The signs are smeared on by crazed prophets of doom, beggars with nothing better to do, and gangs of thugs marking their territory. Most of it is blurred by liquid seeping from the walls and ceilings — either leaking from maintenance systems, or condensation forming from occasional thermals from above blowing into the deeper, cooler canyons. Streams of sludge trickle down corridors and pool in open spaces. The air is dank and fetid, and reeks of old machinery, rotting

biological material, and other, more offensive things.

The underground has become home to many communities of outcasts. One can find entire colonies of beggars living in ramshackle hive shelters carved from vent-ways, twisted debris, rotting maintenance pipes, and junked machinery. Bandits strike at weaker groups and then scurry back to booby-trapped warrens and armored strongholds. Refugees fleeing Imperial authority also make their way down into the underground's subterranean depths. The more unsavory characters join the gangs of thieves terrorizing other denizens, or sell their services for food, equipment and shelter. Others hiding from the Empire bring their lives with them, carrying on business down here much as they did on the surface.

These refugee entrepreneurs have carved out an entire economic niche in the Southern Underground, offering goods or services often in return for valuables instead of currency. These merchants barter for whatever their clients have to offer — information about dealings in the underground or above, their own services or skills, or commodities such as clean water, food, or uncorroded equipment.

Businesses crop up wherever open areas can be found in the subterranean labyrinth. One such area — the main plaza for the Southern Underground — is a hemispherical cavern as large as a city square. The shops clinging to the perimeter of this chamber are grungy establishments catering to the survival and less savory needs of the denizens. Among the businesses here are a bakery, weapons outfitter, clothing kiosk, shoe store, electronics market, a restaurant and cantina, and a plant store. The entrepreneurs accept whatever they can get as payment. All are operated by “undesirables” who fled here to live unimpeded by the edicts and treachery of the Empire.

The goods offered in these establishments are often either scrounged from the underground or stolen and smuggled in from the upper levels. The nearby Hasamadhi warehouse district — a shipping area near South Pole and several levels above the Southern Underground — provides a steady stream of stolen goods. As long as thieves don't take too much, they draw little attention to themselves. They help support the underground businesses, which, in turn, attract more customers from Coruscant's fringe population — even ones from the glittering surface who have credits and a need to conduct their business in the shadows.

Kothlis

One of the main Bothan colonies, Kothlis is an industrial center which supports the brisk technology trade on Bothawui, only a few light years away. While Bothan interests own a good portion of the industries here, other galactic corporations have plants on Kothlis, producing everything from droid components to datapads. Unlike the Bothan homeworld, Kothlis is not “nice and tidy,” although the planet's non-industrial areas are kept relatively clean. It is evident that the Bothans on Kothlis are more interested in business and industry rather than making a good impression.

Kothlis' main starport and city are surrounded by low mountains on one side and vast forests on the other. Rather than using leaves to collect nutrients, the forest trees have broad fungus fronds which grow in the reddish light of Kothlis'

sun and maintain the Type I atmosphere through a crude form of photosynthesis. This process gives the air an odd fragrance, something like warm and moldy cheese.

Most of the light industry is concentrated around the planet's main starport. Microelectronics factories and nav computer assembly lines are interspersed with warehouses and docking bays. A formal passenger starport is located west of the main city, and a large residential area of aesthetically pleasing apartment complexes rises in the east. Heavier industrial facilities have been built far from Kothlis' main city throughout the main continent. These self-contained mini-cities are comprised of manufacturing areas, living quarters, support and maintenance bays, commercial and service malls, and small transportation stations.

As with any highly industrialized planet, Kothlis has its risky neighborhoods. While the residential and commercial areas are kept clean and well-patrolled, some of the warehouse, docking bay and factory districts are not so safe. An occasional business failure keeps the light industry sectors dotted with abandoned facilities, which inevitably attract beggars, swoop gangs and smugglers. As long as these groups don't cause too much trouble for big business, the local government looks the other way.

These abandoned areas are also home to several Bothan spynet facilities. Although espionage isn't tolerated as much as it is on Bothawui, Kothlis is still a relatively secure location for some spynet operations. The most important of these small facilities is a strongly-defended safehouse hidden behind an industrial park with dilapidated offices and a row of storage units. Here, the Bothan spynet's decryption experts process data from many sources, breaking codes, slicing into the datanet at the Imperial consulate, and managing and disseminating the spynet's immense flood of information. For obvious reasons, the safehouse's location is a closely-guarded secret.

Like Bothawui, Kothlis is officially part of the Empire, but it's governed by a Bothan colonial board. The Empire maintains a token consulate with a handful of stormtroopers. Contingents of the local Imperial Navy sector fleet occasionally make sweeps through the system, but major shows of force are rare — on occasion the fleet is called in to deal with pirate and smuggler activity that is impeding shipping, but on the whole the Empire keeps its fingers out of the lucrative enterprises on Kothlis.

Kothlis is the fourth of seven planets in its system — most of its neighbors are gas giants or

metal-cored spheres which the Bothans had mined to their limit in antiquity. The system's dim red sun doesn't provide much warmth for the outer planets, but tends to bake the innermost planets, which have irregular orbits. Kothlis itself has three small moons and an odd asteroid trail — perhaps the remains of a fourth moon. The asteroids are a bit of an astrographical hazard, but are easy to pick up on scanners by locating a large chunk of rock which seems to lead the swarm in a shaky parabolic orbit around Kothlis.

■ Kothlis

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Cool
Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
Hydrosphere: Moist
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Plains, mountains, forests, urban
Length of Day: 22 standard hours
Length of Year: 408 local days
Sapient Species: Bothans, humans, various aliens
Starport: Standard class
Population: 807 million
Planet Function: Colony, manufacturing
Government: Imperial consul-general with Bothan colonial board
Tech Level: Space
Major Exports: Mid technology, high technology
Major Imports: Raw materials

Kothlis Shadowport

The odd asteroid trail and three moons orbiting Kothlis make good hiding places for smugglers and other outlaws. The system's astrographical features are conducive to smuggling activities, and a number of fringe elements ferry corporate industrial secrets, high technology prototypes, and restricted cargoes off the planet. In fact, the smuggling runs out of Kothlis have been lucrative enough that a shadowport has been established on one of the moons.

Kothlis' second moon was formerly a training ground and ordnance testing zone for the Bothan Militia years before the Empire's rise to power. Its scrub land and rocky canyons were used to train troops in ground combat maneuvers and to test starfighter and capital ship air-to-ground strikes. Some areas of this moon are pock-marked with craters from turbolaser blasts and proton torpedoes. Such features — and the moon's general state of abandonment — presented an opportune environment for quiet smuggling ventures.

The Kothlis shadowport provides limited services to smuggler and pirate ships which roam the sector. Its docking bays are situated in proton torpedo blast craters left over from the moon's military days. Each "crater" has been excavated and reinforced and is large enough to

hold a light freighter or a starfighter. Electromagnetic countermeasure camo-netting can quickly be dragged over a bay from concealed storage bunkers along the crater rim. Bulk freighters or larger pirate corvettes often land in nearby clearings, although they don't enjoy the security benefits of the camo netting.

The crater bays are connected by a series of tunnels linking surface entrances and underground chambers. The port administrator, an old pirate named Rithgar, charges no port fees in credits, but expects visitors to leave behind an adequate share of supplies and spare freighter parts. Rithgar's storage bays contain heaps of old starship components, most from scrapped vessels or from discarded systems. Spacers can purchase salvage rights to these junk heaps if they need parts, but must provide their own technical repair services. Several caves have been excavated and furnished with old cots, rickety chairs and uneven tables — crude living conditions, but Rithgar provides them to smugglers free of charge. One cavern is filled with plunder from Rithgar's old pirating days, and serves as his quarters — a few well-stocked crates form an impromptu bar, where the old pirate often entertains his numerous guests.

A small command area contains controls for the base reactor and a rudimentary sensors and communication system. Although the components haven't been upgraded in years, Rithgar uses them to monitor the status of customs ships and any other space traffic in the system. The base has relatively few defenses — a few sensor pods around a perimeter — but Rithgar keeps a blaster carbine handy at all times, and he has an old Z-95 Headhunter ready in case he needs to make a quick escape.

Kothlis shadowport attracts an odd assortment of visitors. Many small-time smugglers use it as a stopover and refueling point where they can rest from their latest cargo runs. It's a safe haven where they can also trade news about lucrative markets and dangerous regions of space, and where they can boast of their latest adventures. The port also has its share of Rebels passing through. Their starfighters and operations teams use the repair and refueling facilities, and glean whatever intelligence they can from others using the port.

Of course, the Bothan spynet has long been aware of the Kothlis shadowport. The Bothans allow the port to operate, since its effect on local shipping is negligible and it is the perfect site for spynet agents to keep tabs on the smuggler community. On rare occasions, the spynet uses the shadowport for their own operations. Few

Hasty Exit

To'iiir and his smuggler apprentice, Liadden, sat on one of the fancy divans in Rithgar's quarters. The master of the Kothlis shadowport had invited them into his ostentatiously decorated chamber for a drink and the latest news from their smuggler peers.

To'iiir, his Twi'lek head-tails draped casually over his shoulder, sipped hot caff. Liadden, much bolder than her elderly mentor, had their host mix up a flameout. Rithgar served it up in some crystal goblet worthy of a queen, on a silver tray carved in ancient runes. The entire cave chamber was piled high with loot — including an old Alderaanian tapestry, a few plush Wroonian carpets, carved *greel* wood end tables, and even an exquisite oil-burning chandelier from Xaza IV. It was hard to believe this was a smuggler shadowport. The open blast door to Rithgar's command area showed computer screens and sensor scanners monitoring activity within the system. The old pirate liked his luxurious plunder, but also knew how to run his shadowport.

Liadden fidgeted impatiently. They had already refueled their freighter, the *Seventy-Seven Stars*, and picked up a few spare parts in return for some of their ship's stores. Yet her elderly mentor had insisted on socializing with their host, who leaned up against the crates filled with his private stock of drink, picking at his scruffy beard and breaking out now and then in piratical laughter. "I hear that Imperial Moff is still after you for that little stunt you pulled," Rithgar said. "That's what you get for picking up young ones to help you fly that rusty clunker you call a star freighter."

"She fast," To'iiir said. "Never better."

"Who d'ya mean?" Rithgar laughed, "The ship or the girl? Haw, haw!"

The other visitor to Rithgar's homey quarters was a younger Twi'lek relaxing in the self-conforming chair across from To'iiir and Liadden. He had introduced himself as Tru'eb. So far he had said nothing, sitting quietly and occasionally chuckling to himself, no doubt at the conversation going on around him. Perhaps he had something to do with To'iiir's insistence that they stay and mingle.

"And you, my quiet friend," Rithgar chortled, nodding to Tru'eb. "How are things with your lady friend?"

"Do you mean my ship or my old partner?" he

coolly asked, sipping some sort of blue frothy concoction.

Rithgar only laughed heartily.

"The *Luudrian Star* is fine," the other Twi'lek said. "Platt is also well. She's running ryll from Ryloth into the Corporate Sector."

"Is Sector cleared, or do difficulties exist?" To'iiir calmly asked.

"Platt can handle it," Tru'eb responded. Liadden noticed his head-tails move, probably an elaboration on the comment meant only for To'iiir. She noticed her mentor's head-tails gesture as well, a motion she had come to learn as a comment of acknowledgment.

"Hear other interesting news?" To'iiir asked.

"Bettle and Jaxa are still bickering," Tru'eb said. "Nothing serious, I am certain. Nada Synnt is capitalizing on the rawmat shortage. Roarke is still getting into trouble." With each comment, Liadden noticed the Twi'lek's head-tails move — and To'iiir's moved in response. There was much more to this conversation than what was being said audibly.

Then Liadden understood. This wasn't just some refueling stop for To'iiir — this was an intelligence-gathering visit. Tru'eb here was another smuggler, and they were trading notes. Some were meant to be heard by other people, and other comments were meant only for To'iiir. Liadden had heard rumors that the Bothans had some stake in this shadowport, and wondered if the Twi'leks' secret conversation was a precaution.

Rithgar turned to the command center door in response to an oscillating beep coming from the sensors computer. "By the Fire Rings of Fornax!" he cursed. To'iiir and Liadden rose simultaneously while Tru'eb slowly placed his drink on the end table. "The sensors are picking up something big — an Imperial ship ... a *Super-class Star Destroyer* and support vessels!"

When Liadden turned back to her mentor, he was already gathering his things. Tru'eb paused momentarily in his hurried way out the door, no doubt to his ship. "*Ma-allesh*, friend," he said. To'iiir nodded back, then Tru'eb disappeared into the stone corridors linking the shadowport's docking bays.

"Come, young one," To'iiir said, dragging her by the hand. "Hasty exit. Imperial problems not good ... not now."

pirate groups use the port's facilities, since it's more useful for light freighters and fighters than pirate corvettes. However, an occasional starfighter fleet attached to a pirate group sometimes drops in for quick refueling and repairs before heading out for another sortie against nearby shipping lanes.

Rodia

The homeworld of the Rodians is a planet in the Tyrius star system surrounded by several small moons. Rodia is a tropical planet whose land masses are covered in dense jungles and forests teeming with a wide assortment of life.



Storn Cook

Hunting Holiday

Boddu Bocck crouched low in the jungle underbrush. He checked the bolts in his powered crossbow, then stroked his reddish beard, contemplating the tropical terrain around him. Bocck was only a few kilometers from the edge of Equator City, but it would be a savage fight all the way. There were provincial jungle Rodians out here, Rodians who didn't take too kindly to meddlesome trespassers. It was all part of the challenge.

The bounty hunter took stock of his surroundings. He was crouched within the roots of a large jungle tree covered with fuzzy moss. To the north — where he was headed — was a canal of sorts, one of those long pools of stagnant water which collects between the land which clutches to the trees. He could probably jump it if he had a running start, but Bocck didn't want to leave his cover just now. He couldn't see through the murky liquid. The local Rodians probably put a trap in there, either some kind of contact poison chemical, long spikes, or a creature of some sort. At least that's what Bocck would have done if he were a Rodian protecting his territory. The ones in these parts were paranoid of other warring clans and ruffians sent by Navik the Red. And after his past visits, Bocck was certain they were wary of him.

To the south stood a few vine-covered boulders, then more jungle trees. Plenty of cover for a Rodian hunting party out for blood. Some might think shooting a few Rodians in their home territory was foolish, but Bocck knew it was an effective way to get them out of their enclave for the hunt. And what better way for a bounty hunter to hone his skills than play prey for a while against the most notorious hunter species in the galaxy?

Bocck had shot many jungle province Rodians on previous trips. They didn't look much different than

the city Rodians — their clothes were a bit more ragged, but they were still extremely intelligent on a hunt, and still used blasters. They weren't barbarians — they were simply exiled clans, groups which had been persecuted in the cities, and purists who believed in the old, violent ways rather than the new industrialized ones. All had good reason to protect their turf.

He had been watching one rock for almost 10 minutes when one of the vines rustled. There was a Rodian hiding behind that rock, Bocck thought, with a few of his pals nearby. This wasn't going to be easy. He scanned the ground between his jungle tree root hiding place: a few twigs, moist humus, and two fist-sized stones. Bocck gathered the rocks in one hand, then peered over the root at the stagnant pool. If he was right that the water was somehow booby-trapped, this ploy would work ...

With a flick of his hand, the two stones soared through the air, then splashed one after the other into the water. Cupping his free hand near his mouth, Bocck cried out in surprise toward the pool.

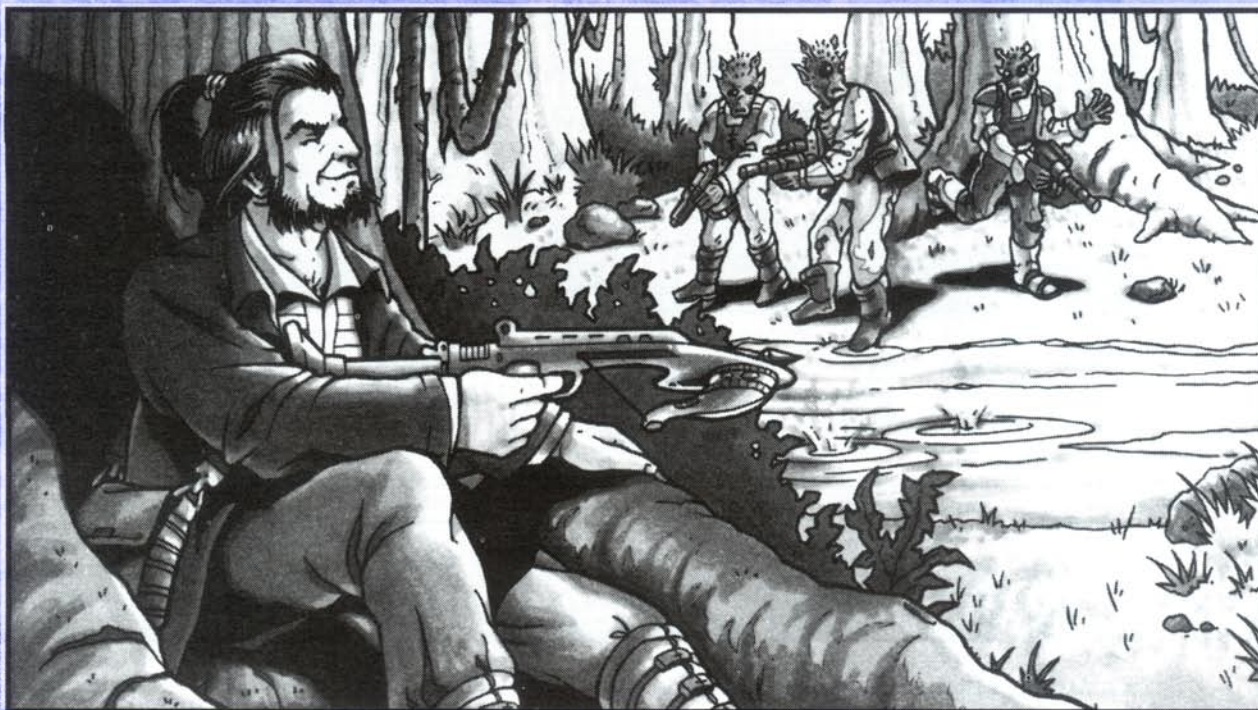
When he spun around toward the vine-covered rocks, Bocck knew his hunters had taken the bait. Assuming their quarry had stumbled into the pool trap, three Rodians with blaster rifles jumped out from their hiding places and rushed toward the water. Bocck fired off three crossbow bolts, each one finding its mark in an unfortunate Rodian. Now that the initial charge was over, he could make his run to jump the pool.

Even as he leaped over the water, Bocck still couldn't see anything beneath its murky surface, but he soon realized he should have been watching the other shore. A lone Rodian had managed to sneak around to this side while Bocck was watching the rocks. The Rodian popped out from behind a

The coastlines are humid, fed by jungle swamps and frequent rainfall from stormy purple and gray clouds. Most Rodians live in the bustling cities, the business and residential areas surrounded by the sprawling industrial complexes which fuel the planet's weapons technology enterprises. Unlike Rodians of the past, the urban inhabitants today have forgotten how to cull their food from the remaining jungles. Instead, they concentrate on manufacturing weapons in their immense industrial centers and much of the planet's food is imported. Not only do these industrial sectors insulate the cities from the jungle, but they are rapidly consuming the tropical forests in their infectious growth.

Some areas of Rodia are still wild. Many pro-

vincial Rodians still live in heavily fortified clan enclaves deep in the jungles. Most are hesitant to join the cosmopolitan life for personal differences or clan conflicts. This arrangement has been encouraged by the ruthless Rodian leader, Navik the Red. Navik rose to power by warring with clans opposed to his rule, cementing the dominance of his own clan, the Chattzas. He eliminated his enemies in a series of fierce and bloody campaigns which spanned several star systems. By the end, Navik named himself Grand Protector of the Rodians. He quickly moved to "transfer" those Rodians within the government who showed even the slightest bit of hesitation about supporting his edicts, exiling them to jungle province posts.



Chris Trevas

tree and belted Bocck in the gut with some kind of staff made from strong jungle wood. He fell back on the soft humus near the pool, then rolled in time to avoid the Rodian's downward thrust with the staff. Bocck grabbed the staff's end and yanked on it to draw his opponent closer. Using the Rodian's momentum, Bocck released the staff, grabbed his attacker's belt, and swung him into the pool.

Bocck had been right about the seemingly innocuous water — rather than floating on the top, the Rodian seemed to stick there, unmoving and lifeless, impaled on the sharpened spikes lurking just below the surface ...

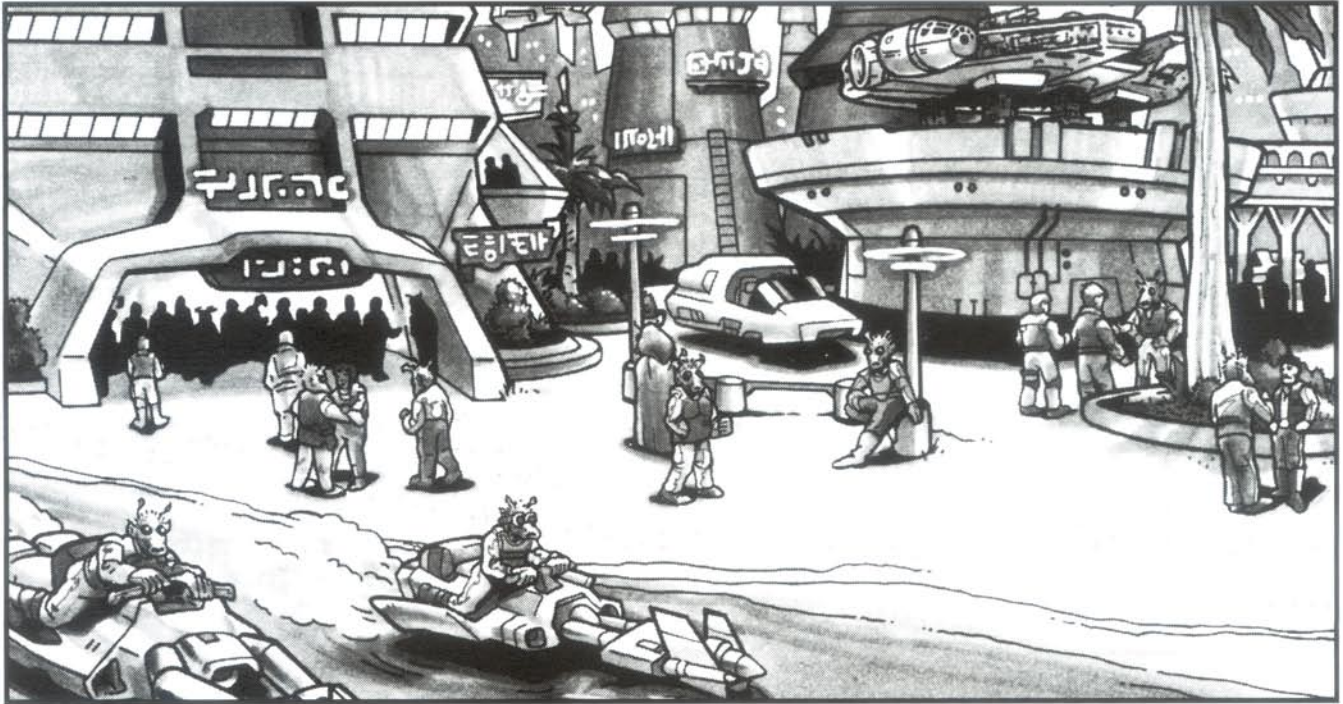
A blast splintered part of a nearby tree. Bocck rose and turned to shoot the Rodian dodging for cover behind one of the boulders — he squealed as the powered crossbow bolt imbedded itself in his chest. Then Bocck was off, scampering through the thick Rodian jungle as if he had been born and raised there.

A few more kilometers and Bocck would reach the outskirts of Equator City. There he could hitch a ride to his hotel, just in time for a relaxing bath, an exquisite dinner, and a late-night hand of sabacc. It was a perfect day in his annual training vacation on Rodia.

Visitors to Rodia are discouraged from venturing deep into the tropical jungles. There is little threat from the immense predators which used to roam these forests — the Rodians have long since hunted most of them to extinction. However, wayward travelers are easy prey for Rodian provincial clans, which view trespassers as fair hunting game. Although the urban areas are much more civilized in this aspect, visitors are cautioned to make sure other aliens are always in sight. Travel in groups is advised, and certain all-Rodian neighborhoods can be as deadly as the jungle.

Equator City

The most notable metropolis for visitors is Equator City, the primary starport and largest urban area on the planet. The city is a tourist's paradise. Situated along a coastline which runs east-west along the equator, this urban sprawl offers tropical beaches, clear waters and cosmopolitan amenities. Visitors and natives alike come here to bask on the pristine beaches, swim in the shallow bays, or go motosurfing through the lightly pounding waves. Such attractions are only brief respites from the hot and sticky climate here, which is fed by moisture from the sea to the north and the jungle swamps to the south. The dense city itself also



Chris Trecois

contributes to the sometimes oppressive heat.

Of course, the main attraction is the city. Entertainment industries hug the shore like so many parasitic morrts clinging to a fat Gamorrean. Restaurants, pleasure halls, casinos, amphitheatres, and hotels of every class gratify any desire for the appropriate price. These businesses are cradled in an entirely fabricated atmosphere of bio-engineered lawns, trees and bushes, signs glowing with electro-reactive gases, and pleasant music piped in through concealed speakers. It's all meant to put visitors at ease so they will dump thousands of credits into Equator City's entertainment industry. The largest complexes are often run by entertainment corporations, but some are actually front companies for criminal organizations or political groups. Of course, most visitors hope to win big at the gambling machines and sabacc tables, but Equator City can be a harsh place for those without the self-discipline to quit before they've lost all their money ... or the common sense to realize that not all tables and machines are as "honest" as management claims.

■ Rodia

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Hot
Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
Hydrosphere: Moist
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Jungle, ocean, urban
Length of Day: 29 standard hours

Length of Year: 305 local days

Sapient Species: Rodians (N), humans, various aliens

Starports: 4 Stellar class

Population: 1.3 billion Rodians, 100,000 humans and aliens

Planet Function: Homeworld

Government: Rodian Grand Protector

Tech Level: Space (in cities), industrial (in jungle provinces)

Major Exports: Weapons technology

Major Imports: Foodstuffs, luxury goods

The Flip of the Credit Casino

The Flip of the Credit is a typical casino in Equator City. Built many years ago in a rather opulent architectural style, the casino's worn appearance complements the other buildings in its entertainment complex: the Sovar Imperial Hotel, Calliandro's (a restaurant with excellent Kubaz cuisine), and Stufar's Grand Dancitorium. Like many casinos in the city, it is packed with sabacc tables, electronic gambling devices, card games, credit disc machines, randomizer wheels, and Trin stick tables. Visitors are often required to purchase 100 credits worth of cred chits for the games — "just to get them started," the management claims — but many machines and dealers take regular credits (and other valuables) as the evening's gambling spree wears on into the early morning hours.

The mobs of players, dealers and bodyguards are as much a part of the atmosphere as the smoke and dank odor of spice which permeates the establishment. The Flip of the Credit at-

tracts a varied crowd: gamblers tired of a complacent life in the Core Worlds, down-on-their-luck smugglers trying to recoup losses from busted cargo runs, and underworld thugs investing their earnings or receiving covert “payments” through rigged games all populate the tables and lounges.

Although the “no blasters” policy is clearly posted near the entrances, patrons and employees alike all seem to be carrying weapons around the Flip of the Credit. Part of this comes from a code of behavior: anybody can carry a blaster, but knowing when it is prudent to draw it and when it’s best to leave it in the holster is what separates the living from the dead. Anyone mindless enough to incite or participate in hostile activities will soon learn that management is swift to “prosecute” those violating the “no blasters” rule. The casino security force is not terribly subtle about being seen: large armed guards of every species haunt the corridors and casino floors, scanning for anybody who may cause trouble and need to be blasted.

The casino’s operator, a Rodian named Avaro Sookcool, seems to be an intense data-cruncher. He occasionally passes through the casino floor, disdainfully looking over the games and the innumerable patrons. Avaro has a passing interest in the business, as he represents certain concerns in the criminal underworld. He often has more important matters to attend to, and leaves security and surveillance up to a hand-picked team of Rodians who wander around in expensively tailored suits, no doubt designed to conceal the body armor beneath the fine fabric.

Vergesso Asteroid Field

The Lybeya system, an insignificant area of Bajic sector in the Outer Rim Territories, has no planets orbiting its sun — not even a gas giant. Rather, several vast asteroid fields slowly orbit a single, lonely star. The system is far enough from major trade routes as to be impractical for mining ventures. Even the largest asteroids are composed of worthless slag metals and are too much trouble to be worth excavating and processing.

Still, the Lybeya system is a valuable asset for Ororo Transportation, a front company for the criminal Tenloss Syndicate. Ororo has legitimate shipping interests, and it also distributes illegal merchandise garnered from other Tenloss operations in the Outer Rim Territories. Hidden within the asteroid field’s largest rock — a planetoid the size of a large moon — is Vergesso Base, Ororo’s main distribution, storage and repair facility for its illicit operations.

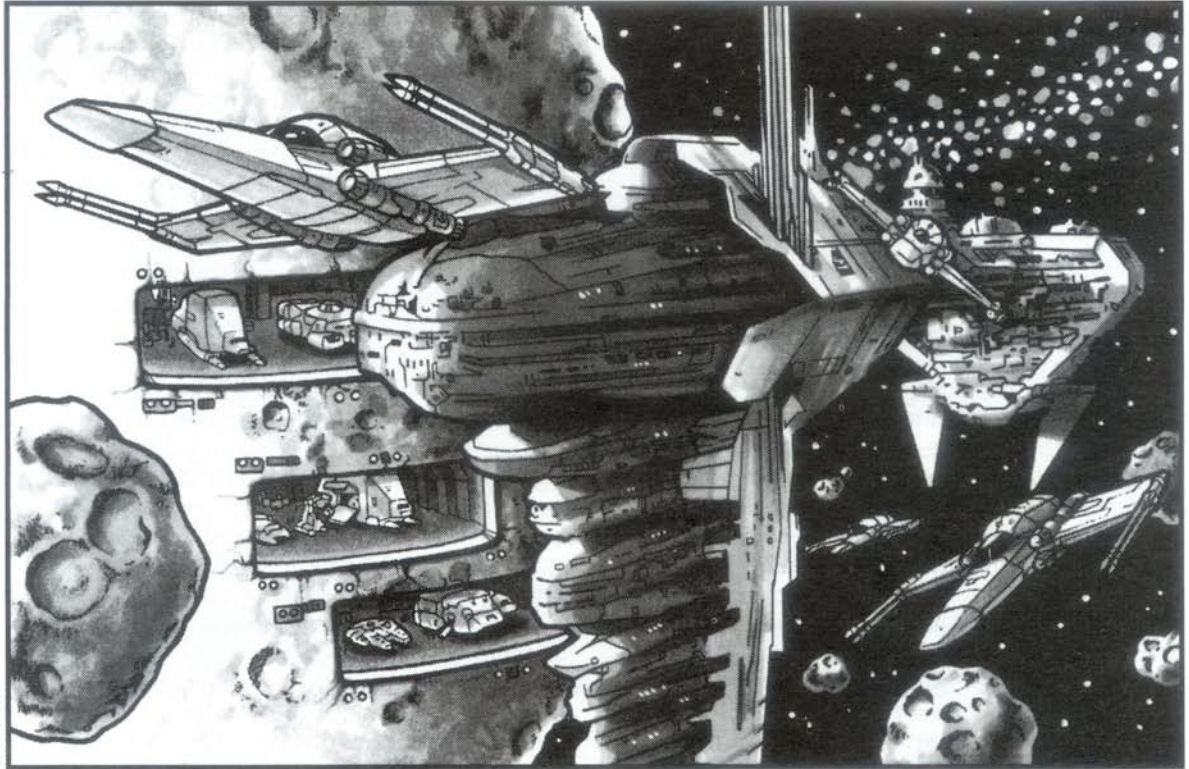
The facility is carved directly into one face of

the giant asteroid. From the outside, it seems as if one side is completely covered by docking bays. The hangars vary in size, with some large enough to accommodate up to two Corellian Corvettes or several bulk freighters. Each is rimmed with the white light of magnetic field projectors keeping the atmosphere from leaking out into space. Some surface defenses dot the perimeter, including a few turbolaser emplacements and large anti-starfighter quad laser cannons. Several tractor beam mounts monitor nearby asteroid activity, grabbing and maneuvering any stray rocks away from Vergesso Base. These tractor beams also keep other large asteroids in a shaky orbit around the facility, making sure the side riddled with docking bays is concealed from most angles. Although the base’s operations center is buried deep within the asteroid’s interior, several sensor pods relay information to coordinate and monitor system traffic and communications.

The asteroid is filled with large, plasma-carved passageways leading to storage caverns, repair bays, personnel quarters, repulsorlift garages, and cargo processing areas. Skiffs skim through the large corridors, transferring crates from warehouse bays to docking hangars. Tech crews scurry over ships, repairing them before their next shipping runs. Credit-counters with datapads inventory cargo bays and electronically tag large plastic and metal crates for transfer. Mercenaries from the Tenloss Syndicate’s Natori Association pass through the base, outfitting their ships with new weapons and consumables, and stocking up on ordnance. Vergesso Base is a busy hub for Ororo’s activities.

The facility is also the center of the Tenloss Syndicate’s lucrative spice trade. Independent spacers who manage to smuggle spice from Sevarcos, Kessel and Ryloth sell it here to Ororo, where it is refined, stored and shipped off to various markets. Ororo also has its own spice smugglers who manage to slip large amounts of contraband out of other locations. The organization’s spicing activities have grown so rapidly in recent years that it has come to the attention of other competitors, most notably the shadowy underworld organization known as Black Sun.

To protect the Vergesso Base and its lucrative trade in spice and other illegal or stolen merchandise, several capital ships patrol the system. Two Nebulon-B frigates make regular rounds, from the Lybeya system’s outermost fringes through the asteroid fields and toward its sun. If the need for subtlety arises, the warships pull into close orbit to one of the large



asteroids near Vergesso Base, then shut down their non-essential systems. These floating hulks are often mistaken for asteroids or space debris on scanners, if they are noticed at all. However, this surprise tactic does have its risks — it takes several minutes to bring the capital ships' engines, shields and weapons back on line. These vessels' captains often wait until an enemy has passed them by and then slip back behind asteroid cover before powering up. This defense force is supplemented by any corvettes docked at the Vergesso Base and a flock of starfighters, which includes snubships like the Z-95 Headhunters or stolen Corporate Sector Authority IRDs, as well as Y-wings and X-wings flown by visiting Rebel pilots escorting cargoes bound for Alliance bases.

One would think such a large operation in an out-of-the-way system like Lybeya would attract attention. Indeed, Imperial sector authorities are well aware of Ororo's secret base. The local Imperial sovereign, Grand Moff Kintaro, has not classified the operation as a threat to sector security, and thus has not brought it to the attention of Imperial military forces. Kintaro's actions might seem lax, but he is well paid for his inaction. Ororo delivers a hefty monthly tribute to Kintaro's capital on Talofan, and the Grand Moff is content to look the other way — sometimes even actively concealing Ororo's activities from his own staff and officers.

What Grand Moff Kintaro doesn't know is that a good portion of the stolen goods and equipment processed through Ororo's Vergesso Asteroid base ends up in the hands of the Rebel Alliance. In the past, Ororo has helped provide basic supplies and construction materials for Rebellion bases and outposts. Most of this materiel was mis-routed from corporate warehouses to smugglers' cargo bays by faulty transfer orders planted in computers by Ororo's slicers. A good portion is also siphoned off from the Tenloss Syndicate's Galindas Exports division, which runs an immense fencing operation in nearby Skine sector. Some shipments are delivered covertly to hot areas where the Rebel activity is intense — for instance, Ororo's smuggler agents are the principle gun-runners and suppliers of Alliance resistance groups on the oppressed planet of Ralltiir. However, Ororo sometimes makes more open deliveries to large Rebel installations and fleets. Its bulk freighters are well-protected by Corellian Corvettes, and additional starfighter forces provided by the Rebel Alliance ensure the cargo arrives safely.

Unlike some other criminal organizations, Ororo Transportation and the Tenloss Syndicate favor the Rebel Alliance and work to undermine the Empire. Ororo sells goods to the Rebellion at extremely low prices, and Vergesso Base is a known safe port for Alliance vessels. Rebel ships operating in Bajic sector and nearby lo-

cales often drop in for repairs and resupply, and the base's docking areas are sometimes filled with as many Alliance officers and crew as there are Ororo employees.

The crime syndicate's sympathies toward the Rebellion stem from several recent encounters with the Imperial Navy. At times Imperial forces have been overzealous in their campaign against certain underworld entities, and the Tenloss Syndicate has all too often felt the brunt of Imperial might. Tenloss' leaders feel the galaxy would be a much more lucrative place for criminal operations if the Empire were replaced with a much more idealistic — yet ineffectual — fledgling government. Of course, the Tenloss Syndicate doesn't make this belief widely known.

Zahr

The Zahr system lies near the astrographical center of the Outer Rim Territory's Cadavine sector. When the system was formed billions of years ago, the spinning gases from the system's sun coalesced into a single orbiting planet, an immense gas giant named Zahr. The heavier elements from this oversized gas sphere spun off to form over a dozen satellite moons, which totter around Zahr in somewhat shaky orbits.

With few natural resources, the system would have remained obscure and undeveloped if the local sector capital recently established on Dorvalla had not been located only 30 minutes away by hyperspace route. The Empire is attempting to reclaim this area from fringe groups and colonists who took over when the Old Republic administration running the sector collapsed years ago. While the Imperial sector administration tries to bring bureaucratic order to the sector on Dorvalla, the area's real power, the Imperial Navy's Cadavine Sector Fleet, operates from the Imperial enclave in Zahr system in the effort to rein the sector back into the Emperor's fold.

The Imperial Enclave on Gall

Gall, Zahr's largest and most stable moon, is home to the Cadavine Sector Fleet Imperial Enclave, a sprawling planetside facility which supports the Empire's naval activities throughout the sector.

The Imperial enclave is on the planet's northern continent. The southern continent is constantly plagued by turbulent cyclonic storms and other severe atmospheric conditions which occasionally spill over to affect weather in the north. The enclave is situated on a plateau which borders a badlands region known as the Grand Trench canyons. These narrow gorges were carved by millennia of water rushing down

from cyclonic storms to the south, leaving chasms filled with jagged outcroppings of red rock.

The enclave's facilities begin at the edge of the Grand Trench canyons. A long-range Imperial sensor post monitors starship traffic and communications for the starport nearby. Spaceport docking bays, landing pads, repair hangars and support services extend around the sensor post and along the gorge rim.

Industrial and residential areas swarm around the starport. This industrial area caters to the sector fleet's needs. Corporations which supply Imperial Navy vessels have plants there which manufacture starship parts, process and package food, assemble capital ship electronics systems, and mass-produce Imperial-issue goods like uniforms, datapads and comlinks.

The Imperial enclave at Zahr is not a training ground for Imperial personnel, as some might initially believe. It is a formation and deployment center for components of the Imperial Navy sector fleet on operations throughout the Cadavine sector. The planetside base itself is immense. In addition to the barracks for Imperial Army forces and quarters for the innumerable Imperial Navy officials and administrators, this military personnel transfer post contains housing for thousands of crewmen passing through Zahr on their way to and from posts on other Imperial-held Cadavine sector worlds and Imperial Navy vessels throughout the area.

Two Imperial garrisons — built in the typical, imposing architectural style — protect the ground base, one at each end, with the long-range sensor station to the south forming the third point of a defensive triangle. The garrisons provide TIE fighter protection for the moon, while two Imperial Star Destroyers and their own TIE fighter wings maintain security high above Gall's surface. Since there often seems little need for the garrisons' walker and scout units, elements of these groups are often transferred to other vessels on specific Cadavine sector missions. The base's troops protect and patrol the main base, and also serve as security for the starport, in conjunction with a small contingent of Imperial Customs officers.

The Imperial-class starport caters to military, corporate and civilian needs. Entire sections of docking bays are frequently cordoned off for use by Imperial forces. Transports ferry capital ship crews to other posts on their way to new assignments aboard starships participating in Cadavine sector military operations. Supply ships bring in much-needed consumables, especially commodities which the local industrial plants cannot manufacture. Corporate

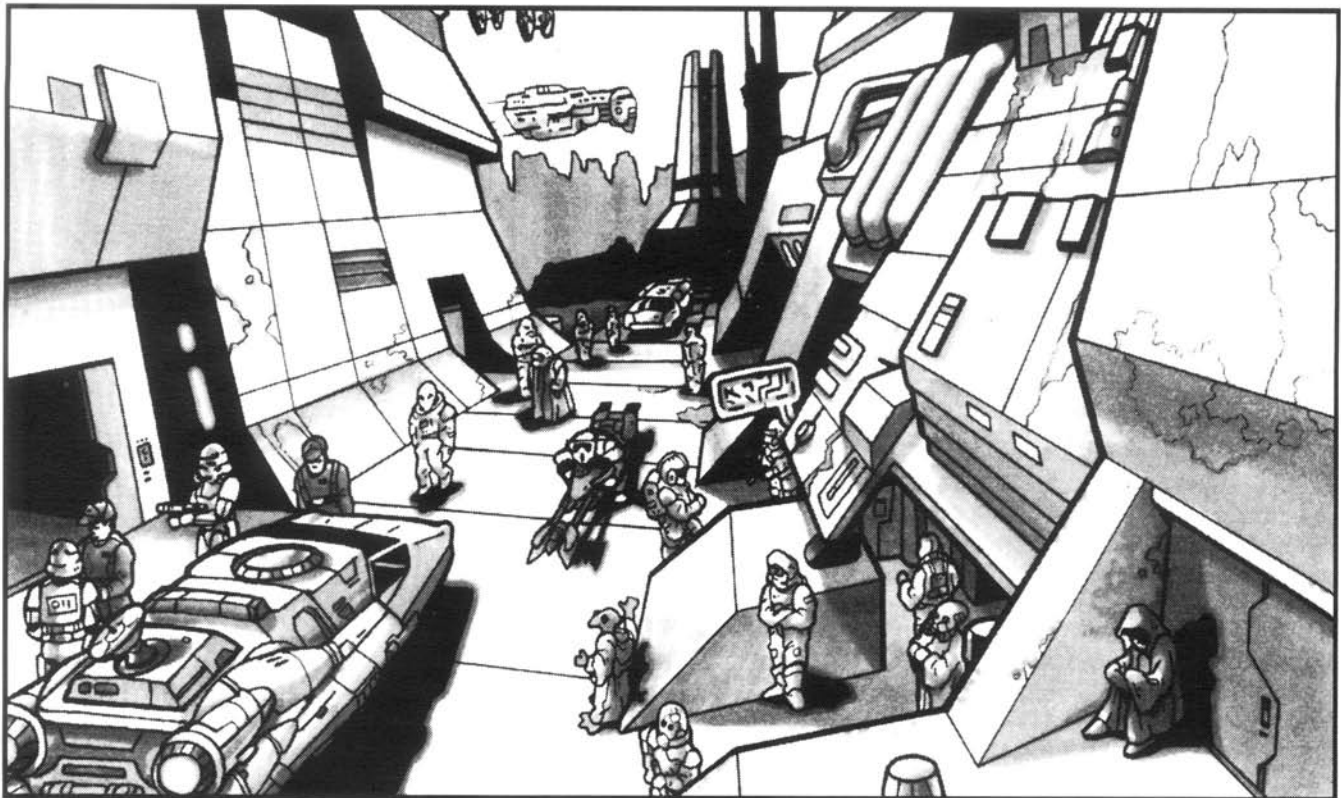
freighters haul in raw materials and components for their factories, and free-traders bring in luxury goods and other, illicit cargoes to fulfill the needs of base personnel.

Many starport facilities — other than docking bays, repair hangars and warehouses — cater to military personnel stationed on Gall. Restaurants, casinos, bars and other entertainment establishments cater to the desires of visitors and soldier alike. The proprietors of these businesses are more than happy to accept an Imperial officer's idle-time credits alongside the credits of some tramp-freighter captain. The spaceport maintains an almost carnival-like atmosphere, especially at night when starport streets are crowded with pleasure-seekers, their faces aglow with light from illuminated signs advertising entertainment houses. Parties (and sometimes brawls) from restaurants, hotels and bars often spill out into the street — although the local Imperial authorities maintain a firm sense of order.

The presence of various alien species also contributes to this mood. Although the Empire often persecutes non-humans, aliens are allowed in the starport quarter. However, they are unwelcome beyond the borders of this area. Wayward aliens are swiftly removed from checkpoints leading to industrial areas, the Imperial base, or blocks of docking bays used for naval transports — any alien caught within these

restricted zones is severely punished, even possibly summarily executed if the being is suspected of espionage. The Empire realizes that alien traders are an important part of the Outer Rim economy, and often takes steps to ensure non-humans are welcome in certain secure starport and commercial sections of Gall. Unfortunately, the Empire also sees aliens as a possible threat and makes sure they do not stray into restricted areas.

Since the starport is the most visible area to visitors, and since it's frequented by spacers and military personnel alike, it's substantially more impressive than the other factories, residential quarters, and base buildings. Tall buildings slant upward, piling businesses high, but still allowing for a good view of the sky from both street and window. The streets are broad enough to allow a steady flow of pedestrian traffic, while repulsorlift vehicles travel in the wider lanes above the crowds. Shops at the street level keep their doors open during the day, and many entertainment establishment doors stay open at night, too. The upper levels of these buildings often house offices or apartments, and some have landing pads for repulsorlift vehicles dropping passengers off. The starport quarter seems very much like any other modern city — who would notice the presence of a vast Imperial military base only a few kilometers away?



CHRIS TREVIS

Glory Support

Chief was up late again, squatting in the warehouse hangar's corner, trying to get the heater unit's reactor going. The other technicians were asleep in the junky cargo containers which served as barracks. At least they were slightly warmer than the hangar. The expansive warehouse area wasn't as cold as Hoth, but at least on that snowy planet they had cold weather gear to keep them warm in the ice-cut service bays.

Chief wrenched the torque-spanner again, but it flew off the power fixture, clattering to the hardened stone floor. She sat down on the cold rock and shook her head. This was too much. After a bumpy deployment onto Kile, Chief and the other techs in Rogue Squadron's support crew had marched through unstable badlands, braved a flash flood, and found the cargo container with their prefab base in the rocky foothills. Then they dragged all the cast-plast pieces out and assembled them, all under the direction of a few Rebel engineers who each believed *they* were the base commander.

In a day or so the Rogues would sneak into the

system, stay for a few days, complete their mission and jump out, taking all the glory with them. The tech crew does all the work, and the hot-shot rocket jocks take all the credit. If it weren't for their technical support, the Rogues wouldn't be flying those banged-up starfighters, and they wouldn't be landing them at the support base on Kile. Chief was weary of sweating away her life so some starfighter pilot could have it easy.

That was it. Chief had already decided she wanted out of this unit. The arrangements had been made. If she came through, she'd be done with the Rebellion and heading out of sight with enough credits to be happy the rest of her life.

She whipped off her service cap, tied up her hair and tucked it back out of her way, all while staring at the busted heating unit. With a few more hours of work, Chief might be able to eke a little bit of warm air out of it — certainly not enough to heat any part of the makeshift starfighter base comfortably. It would have to do for now ... until better things came along. And Chief knew that soon they would ...

Gall

Type: Terrestrial moon

Temperature: Cool

Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)

Hydrosphere: Moderate

Gravity: Standard

Terrain: Plateau, canyon, forest

Length of Day: 29 standard hours

Length of Year: 369 local days

Sapient Species: Humans, some aliens

Starport: Imperial class

Population: 57 million

Planet Function: Imperial Enclave

Government: Imperial Navy Admiral

Tech Level: Space

Major Exports: Starship parts and systems

Major Imports: Raw materials, foodstuffs

Kile

Kile is one of two moons which pass extremely close to Zahr in their orbits. It is rather nondescript as moons go — marginally habitable by humans and covered with mountain ranges, eroded badlands and rolling scrub-plains. Little rain falls on the prairies — most moisture falls in the highlands as snow, then melts, carves its way through the badlands, and evaporates just as it sinks into the plains. Kile's atmosphere barely registers as Type I, and those staying there for extended times often complain of a shortness of breath when exerting themselves.

Despite its proximity to the Imperial Enclave on Gall, Kile was selected for a temporary and

hastily erected Rebel starfighter base. The Rebellion had long thought of establishing a small surveillance post on Kile to monitor starship traffic and communications at the Imperial Enclave, but Kile was thought to be too close to Zahr. The immense gas giant's magnetic field and Kile's own mineral composition near the surface would have interfered with surveillance electronics. However, this phenomenon also fouls sensor readings from passing vessels, effectively masking most activities on the surface from all sensors except visual detection. While the small base on Kile is isolated, it seems an ideal hiding place from which a short-lived campaign of brief starfighter operations can be carried out.

The base itself is little more than a prefabricated warehouse serving as a hangar. The cast-plast prefab pieces were loaded into a driver barge's detachable cargo container, transported to the Zahr system, and dropped rather unceremoniously as the freighter passed Kile on its way to Gall. Although the cargo container had been heat shielded and reinforced against impact, the cast-plast building components didn't fare too well. An expeditionary crew was carefully smuggled onto the moon to assemble the base before the starfighters and pilots from Rogue Squadron showed up for a quick mission against the Imperial Enclave on Gall.

The set-up crew consisted of a few Rebel

engineers and Rogue Squadron's technical crew. One smuggling run supplied additional consumables — food, water, power cells, weapons and medical supplies — and another brought in the crew's technical support machinery and spare parts. In order to evade Imperial detection, these freighters arranged their arrival or departure from Gall to coincide with Kile's orbit passing the far side of Zahr — their flight plans and hyperspace jump vectors were planned to bring them relatively close to Kile, long enough for them to dip into low orbit and jettison their heat and impact-shielded cargo undetected.

The Rebel engineers used plasma-grids to form a smooth construction surface in the rock of the mountainous foothills. Rogue Squadron's technical crew helped assemble the plastic beam framework and the sheet metal sidings and roof, living out of the smaller consumables cargo modules, which were crudely furnished with whatever personal gear the crew had brought. The whole base still smells of burned rock from the plasma-grids and it's just about as cold inside the hangar as it is outside, since the heating unit's reactor busted when it was dropped with the initial prefab parts. Rogue Squadron's technical crew hasn't been too en-

thused with this assignment, but they know it's only temporary. On the whole, the base isn't very comfortable — but that's not its purpose. The Kile facility is little more than a service hangar for X-wings on standby for a quick mission against the Imperial Enclave.

No doubt there are other interesting areas on Kile — the highlands' cascading falls, the vast caverns carved out deep beneath the badlands, and the pristine shores where the plains meet the moon's single small sea, for example, but few have explored the moon, and the local Imperial forces actively discourage stray travelers from exploring Kile or any of Zahr's other moons.

■ Kile

Type: Terrestrial moon

Temperature: Cool

Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)

Hydrosphere: Dry

Gravity: Standard

Terrain: Barren, mountain, plain

Length of Day: 20 standard hours

Length of Year: 535 local days

Sapient Species: Humans, aliens

Starport: Landing field

Population: 50

Planet Function: Hidden, temporary Rebel base

Tech Level: Space (near base)

Chapter Six

Aliens

Countless alien species populate the world of the Empire, contributing much to galactic culture and playing an important role in the struggle between the Rebel Alliance, the Empire and Black Sun.

Falleen

The Falleen are a reptilian species from the system of the same name. They are widely regarded as one of the more aesthetically-pleasing species of the galaxy, with an exotic appearance and powerful pheromone-creation and color-changing abilities. Falleen have scaled hides, with a pronounced spiny ridge running down their backs. The ridge is slightly raised and sharp, a vestigial feature inherited from their evolutionary predecessors. While their hides are often a deep or graying green, the color may fluctuate towards red and orange when they release pheromones to attract suitable mates. These pheromones also have a pronounced effect on many other human-stock species: Falleen have often been described as “virtually irresistible.”

Falleen females are visually almost identical to males, with the most notable exception being that their spinal ridge tends to be somewhat smaller, although it is also a brighter green in color. Females also tend to exhibit less ability to change their skin color as their moods change, although their pheromones seem to be equally effective on males of many species.

Despite their reptilian origins, Falleen grow hair on their heads (although not on their faces). Females tend to style their long, straight hair in elaborate coiffures, replete with exquisite combs, colorful beads, and other adornments. Male Falleen wear their hair in neatly tied tails, single braids and topknots. Falleen physiques are contoured and elegant, although some nobles increase their musculature through rigorous

training. Falleen are long-lived, with an average life span nearing 250 Standard years; some exceptional Falleen are known to have lived as long as 400 years.

Falleen generally do not show emotion, particularly in public. Their culture and physiology helps them develop great control over the outward signs of passion and anger; while the Falleen still experience very strong emotions, they simply do not display them. The Falleen consider species that indulge in emotionalism — in particular, humans — to be inferior. They prefer to be calculating and cautious since they consider it safer to allow intelligence and clear thought to dictate their actions, rather than being enslaved by their feelings.

Their self-control extends to their skin color and pheromones. While their skin is generally gray-green in color, the Falleen can change their skin color to warm hues (often in order to gain the confidence of others). In addition, they can generate powerful pheromones that render many humanoid species susceptible to suggestion. While the Falleen usually keep their pheromones “in check,” they can often use this ability to achieve a number of results. For instance, if a Falleen were bargaining over the price on a work of art, she might lighten her skin tones and exude a small dosage of pheromones, setting the art dealer at ease and making him more amenable to her wishes. If a male Falleen were trying to seduce a female Imperial operative to help his personal cause, he might change his green skin to a more arousing shade of red or orange, and send a greater amount of pheromones into the air.

Many Falleen have some basic control over these powers, although it takes training and meditation to be able to use them to their utmost efficiency. These pheromones are important communication tools in Falleen culture, but most Falleen individuals also have the disci-

pline to resist the suggestions of others — Falleen may choose to allow themselves to be influenced if it is in their best interests.

Although their technology level is considered equal to most spacefaring civilizations, Falleen society is relatively feudal, with noble houses ruling over lower classes of artisans, technicians, general workers and slaves. Their homeworld consists of several kingdoms ruled by monarchs, most of whom care more for political intrigue and displays of influence and wealth than settling differences through such primitive methods as war. The kingdoms carry out commerce and industry, bicker over boundaries, and further their own agendas to increase prosperity among their general populations, but Falleen civilization is generally peaceful.

Rather than concentrating on space travel and conquests, Falleen society instead chose to develop what they considered to be their already superior culture to greater heights of refinement. Their world is self-sufficient, and there is a somewhat arrogant belief among the Falleen that they can exist in the galaxy without the help of other “lesser” species. Although a small stellar-class starport supports modest trade, the Falleen are generally content to conduct their business on their homeworld; the average Falleen never leaves the planet.

There are exceptions, however. Young nobles from all the kingdoms spend part of their adolescent years on what is known as “pilgrimage” — a great trip out into the galaxy to see its many wonders. Some remain away from home, giving up their royal claims to their siblings. Two notable Falleen nobles who left their homeworld to make their mark on the galaxy include Xizor, Underlord of Black Sun, and Xzupal, a scout working near the Unknown Regions. Most, however, return to Falleen and use what they have learned to more prudently govern their realms. For a species that considers itself the most advanced in the galaxy, Falleen find little need to indulge in what the galaxy has to offer; they’d much rather bask in their own sense of glory at home.

The Falleen have made little impact on the galaxy. They are content to manage their own affairs on their homeworld rather than attempt to control the “unwashed hordes of countless run-down worlds.” Before the Falleen disaster 10 years ago, free-traders and a few small shipping concerns made regular runs to Falleen, bringing unique artwork, customized weapons, and a few exotic fruits and plants. Some Falleen nobles were so pleased with the wonders traders could bring — especially items for which they acquired a taste during their “pilgrimages”

— that they traded Falleen slaves for these wares. Certainly females from what was considered one of the most beautiful species in the galaxy would be highly prized as slave girls and dancers. Although few Falleen slave females were traded, those indentured to powerful masters have used their unique charms to their benefit. Mistress Miaxi, a former slave — and now consort to the Imperial governor on Speco — is said to run the system by working her Falleen charms on the enthralled governor.

Of course, the disaster of a decade ago convinced the Falleen to further remove themselves from the events of the galaxy. The Empire’s orbital turbolaser strike laid waste to a small city and the surrounding countryside, and travel to and from the system was restricted by decree of the Imperial Navy. The incident greatly angered the Falleen and wounded their pride; they chose to withdraw from the rest of the Empire. Recently, as the Imperial blockade was loosened, a few Falleen nobles have resumed their “pilgrimage” tradition, but most of the Falleen would just as soon ignore the rest of the galaxy.

■ Falleen

Attribute Dice: 13D

DEXTERITY 2D/4D

KNOWLEDGE 2D/4D+2

MECHANICAL 2D/4D

PERCEPTION 2D+1/4D+2

STRENGTH 2D+1/4D+2

TECHNICAL 2D/4D

Special Abilities:

Attraction Pheromones: Exuding special pheromones and changing skin color to affect others gives Falleen a +1D bonus to their *persuasion* skill, with an additional +1D for each hour of continuous preparation and meditation to enhance the effects — the bonus may total no more than +3D for any one skill attempt and the attempt must be made within one hour of completing meditation.

Amphibious: Falleen can “breathe” water for up to 12 hours. They receive +1D to any *swimming* skill rolls.

Story Factors:

Rare: Falleen are rarely seen throughout the galaxy since the Imperial blockade in their system severely limited travel to and from their homeworld.

Move: 9/12

Size: 1.7-2.4 meters tall



The King’s Requiem

King Haxim sat on a stone bench, quietly contemplating his surroundings. The royal gardens stretched as far as he could see — not even a hint of a palace wall or tower appeared on the horizon. A nearby fountain gurgled a pleasant and random tune, while insects buzzed in the flowering trees nearby. Haxim breathed in the air — cool water, fragrant pollen, the scent of his finely scaled skin. He opened his eyes and drank in the verdant splendor all around him, repre-

sentative of all the most beautiful natural features of his homeland.

King Haxim was waiting to die.

His heralds had told him of the disaster at the nearby Imperial research facility. They themselves had seen the results of the spreading bacterium, as they encountered the rotting corpses of lab technicians, lying in the doors of the bunker they had yearned to escape. The servants had told of riots in the cities as the king's subjects succumbed to the necrotizing plague. Haxim had already seen several of his palace staff infected, and the heralds had since perished of the disease unleashed by the Empire.

Unlike his subjects, King Haxim would not try to flee death — he knew all too well it would claim him soon. If the bacterium did not consume his flesh, he was certain the Imperial warships hovering high above would rain death upon them in a crude yet effective attempt to eliminate their scientific abomination. He did not want to live, for in his eyes there would be little left. Even if only his kingdom were ravaged, the land would forever be a blemish on the planet and the Falleen people.

His only hope for revenge was his son, Prince Xizor, who had left the planet years ago on his "pilgrimage" and never returned. The lure of the greater galaxy had ensnared him, consumed him with its luxuries and powers. Perhaps Xizor would use what he had gained there to avenge his beautiful homeworld's disgrace. A fitting purpose for one who so eagerly fled Falleen in search of greater glory, Haxim thought.

The king looked up past the budding trees and lazily curling clouds. There he saw the white slivers of Imperial ships. And from their bellies were blooming bright, green turbolaser flowers.

Human: Etti

The Etti are a race which concerns itself only with outward appearance and the acquisition of greater luxury. Etti, while genetically human, tend to have lighter, less muscular physiques than the human norm, possibly as a result of generations of pampered living. Their flesh is relatively soft and pale, and their hair is among the most finely textured in their region. Etti often have aquiline features, giving them a haughty look of superiority.

The Etti have long had an isolationist culture. Over 20,000 years ago, the ancestors of the modern Etti united in their opposition to the political and military policies of the Galactic Republic. This group of dissidents pooled their

resources and purchased several colony ships. Declaring the Republic to be "tyrannical and too oppressive," they left the Core Worlds and followed several scouts to a new world far-removed from the reach of Coruscant.

This new world, Etti, was mild and comfortable. Advanced terraforming and bio-engineering technologies (stolen or purchased from the Republic) allowed them to develop a civilization based on aesthetic pleasures and high culture. The Etti shunned contact with the outside galaxy and their culture stagnated and became decadent.

Eventually, the rest of the galaxy "caught up" with the isolationist people; the then newly-founded Corporate Sector Authority offered the Etti control of an entire system if they would only develop and maintain it on behalf of the CSA (and, of course, share the profits). The Authority asked the Etti to terraform portions of one of the planets in this system to serve as lush estates for the Authority's ruling executives and to develop elaborate entertainment complexes to cater to the needs of wealthy visitors. The Etti leaders, sensing the opportunity for great profit, accepted the offer and relocated, bringing most of the Etti population with them.

The Etti were given relatively free reign to govern the planet (within Corporate Sector directives). They terraformed the land, making virtually every hectare burst with rich foliage. Entertainment complexes and starports were constructed to cater to offworld traffic. The starports were turned over to the Corporate Sector (since they tended to attract an unsavory element), but the rest of the planet remained in the hands of the Etti and the Authority executives and socialites who purchased or rented estates for their personal recreation.

As the Corporate Sector developed and grew, Etti IV's importance increased; each year, more traffic came through its starports and more wealthy citizens were attracted by the planet's beauty. The Etti have made a profitable business of parceling off and selling plots of prime property on their new planet, many as fine estates for CSA officials, replete with villas, gardens and lakes. They are careful not to overdevelop the planet, and they pride themselves on their land and resource management abilities.

The Etti also run several pleasure complexes for the CSA as they believe they — more than anyone — can best cater to the wealthy. Their entertainment complexes are works of art in themselves — architectural enclaves shielded from the harsh reality of the Corporate Sector worlds. These complexes include hotels, casinos, pleasure halls, music auditoriums, holo-

centers, and fine restaurants, all connected by gardens, seemingly natural waterways, and grand tubeway bridges with greenery hanging from planters everywhere. The entertainment complex at Etti IV's main starport, called the Dream Emporium, is their most luxurious and lucrative establishment, drawing on the wealth of the innumerable CSA officials living on the planet and traders travelling through the region.

■ Human: Etti

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

Special Abilities:

Affinity for Business: At the time of character creation only, Etti characters receive 2D for every 1D of skill dice they allocate to *bureaucracy*, *business*, *bargaining* or *value*.

Move: 8/10

Size: 1.7-2.2 meters tall

Near-Human: Epicanthix

The Epicanthix are a near-human people encountered relatively recently and known for their combination of warlike attitudes and high regard for art and culture. Physically, they are quite close to genetic “baseline” humans, suggesting that they evolved from a “forgotten” colonization effort many millennia ago. They have lithe builds with powerful musculature. Through training, the Epicanthix prepare their bodies for war, yet tone them for beauty. They are generally human in appearance, although they tend to be willowy and graceful. Their faces are somewhat longer than usual, with narrow eyes. Their long black hair is often tied in ceremonial styles which are not only attractive but practical.

The Epicanthix have always been warlike. From their civilization's earliest days, great armies of Epicanthix warriors have marched from their mountain clan-fortresses to battle other clans for control of territory — fertile mountain pastures, high-altitude lakes, caves rich with nutritious fungus — and in quest of slaves, plunder and glory. They settled much of their large planet, and carved new kingdoms with blades and blood. During their dark ages, a warrior-chief named Canthar united many Epicanthix clans, subdued the others, and declared a world-wide peace. Although border disputes erupted from time to time, the cessation of hostilities was generally maintained. Peace brought a new age to Epicanthix civilization, spurring on greater developments in har-

vesting, architecture, commerce and culture. While warriors continued to train and a high value was still placed on an individual's combat-readiness, new emphasis was placed on art, scholarship, literature and music. Idle minds must find something else to occupy them, and the Epicanthix further developed their culture.

Over time, cultural advancement heralded technological advancement, and the Epicanthix swiftly rose from an industrial society to an information and then space technology level. All this time, they maintained the importance of martial training and artistic development. When they finally developed working hyperdrive starships, the Epicanthix set out to conquer their neighbors in the Pacanth Reach, their local star cluster. These first vessels were beautiful yet deadly ships of war — those civilizations which did not fall prostrate at the arrival of Epicanthix landing parties were blasted into submission. The Epicanthix quickly conquered or annexed Bunduki, Ravaath, Fornow and Sorimow, dominating all the major systems and their colonies in the Pacanth Reach. In addition to swallowing up the wealth of these conquered worlds, the Epicanthix also absorbed their cultures, immersing themselves in the art, literature and music of their subject peoples.

Imperial scouts reached Epicanthix — on the edge of the Unknown Regions — shortly after Palpatine came to power and declared his New Order. The Epicanthix were quick to size up their opponents and — realizing that battling Palpatine's forces was a losing proposition — quickly submitted to Imperial rule. An Imperial governor was installed to administer the Pacanth Reach, and worked with the Epicanthix to export valuable commodities (mostly minerals) and import items useful to the inhabitants. The Epicanthix still retain a certain degree of autonomy, reigning in conjunction with the Imperial governor and a handful of Imperial Army troops.

Quite a few Epicanthix left their homeworld after first contact with the Empire, although many returned after being overwhelmed by the vast diversity and unfathomable sights of the Empire's millions of worlds. Some Epicanthix still venture out into the greater galaxy today, but most eventually return home after making their fortune. The Epicanthix are mostly content to control their holdings in the Pacanth Reach, working with the Empire to increase their wealth, furthering their exploration of cultures, and warring with unruly conquered peoples when problems arise.

■ Near-Human: Epicanthix

Attribute Dice: 12D

DEXTERITY 2D/4D+2
KNOWLEDGE 2D/4D
MECHANICAL 2D/4D
PERCEPTION 2D/4D+2
STRENGTH 2D/4D
TECHNICAL 2D/3D+2

Special Abilities:

Cultural Learning: At the time of character creation only, Epicanthix characters receive 2D for every 1D of skill dice they allocate to *cultures*, *languages* or *value*.

Story Factors:

Galactic Naiveté: Since the Epicanthix homeworld is in the isolated Pacanth Reach section, they are not too familiar with many galactic institutions outside of their sphere of influence. They sometimes become overwhelmed with unfamiliar and fantastic surroundings of other worlds far from their own.

Move: 10/13

Size: 1.8-2.5 meters tall

Ubese

Millennia ago, the Ubese were a relatively isolated species. The inhabitants of the Uba system had led a peaceful existence, cultivating their lush planet and creating a complex and highly-sophisticated culture. When off-world traders discovered Uba and brought new technology to the planet, they awakened an interest within the Ubese that was soon to grow into an obsession. The Ubese hoarded whatever technology they could get their hands on — from repulsorlift vehicles and droids to blasters and starships. They traded away whatever they could to acquire more technology. Initially, Ubese society benefited from new technology. Productivity rose in all aspects of business. Health conditions improved so much that a population boom forced the colonization of several other worlds in their system.

Ubese society soon began to pay the price for such rapid technological improvements: their culture began to collapse. Technology broke clan boundaries, bringing everyone closer, disseminating information more quickly and accurately, and allowing certain ambitious individuals to influence public and political opinion on entire continents with ease.

Within a few decades, the influx of new technology had sparked the Ubese's interest in creating technology of their own. The Ubese leaders looked out at the other systems nearby and where once they might have seen exciting new cultures and opportunities for trade and cultural exchange, they now saw civilizations waiting to be conquered. Acquiring more technology would let the Ubese to spread their power and influence.

When the local sector observers discovered the Ubese were manufacturing weapons which had been banned since the formation of the Old Republic, they realized they had to stop the

Making War Is Love

A poem by the great Epicanthix Warrior-Chief Canthar

My bow is curved like your slender form,
 Bending your bow alongside mine in battle,
 Facing our foes to save our love and clan.
 If we do not fight we lose our selves;
 Enemies burn our deeds and love from this world,
 And we die in anonymity.

Ubese from becoming a major threat. After a debate driven by fear and misinformation, the sector council decided a preemptive strike would sufficiently punish the Ubese and reduce their influence in the region.

Unfortunately, the orbital strike against the Ubese planets set off many of the species' large-scale tactical weapons. Uba I, II and V were completely ravaged by radioactive firestorms. The planets' atmospheres were consumed in the conflagrations. When Uba III's weapons stockpile detonated, the resulting explosion shattered the planet's crust — orbital forces later tore the world apart and scattered the remains into what is now Uba's asteroid belt. Only on Uba IV, the Ubese homeworld, were survivors reported — pathetic, ravaged wretches who sucked in the oxygen-poor air in raspy breaths. Sector authorities were so ashamed of their actions that they refused to offer aid — and wiped all references to the Uba system from official star charts. The system was placed under quarantine, preventing traffic through the region. The incident was so well hidden that word of the devastation never reached Coruscant.

The survivors on Uba scratched out a tenuous existence from the scorched ruins, poisoned soil and parched ocean beds. Billions had died in the initial orbital strikes, but



We Are Made of Suffering

The following statement was discovered in data-files retrieved from wreckage near Ubertica:

History may question my motives, but their accusations do not concern me. Our people, the True Ubese, have lived in exile long enough, while the *yarak pootzck* have followed the easy life and usurped our rightful place in the galaxy. It is for honor and justice that we fight.

They say we are of the same blood, but we are not. We have endured millennia of suffering while they lived in pampered luxury. We True Ubese have scraped and bludgeoned a harsh existence from the wastelands of our world, battling hostile clans, poisoned earth and savage predators. The pretenders, the *yarak pootzck*, have basked in their fair living, enjoying the verdant fields and hills of Ubertica, and basking in the political stability inflicted upon them by their Republic and Imperial masters. Our people

are considered outcasts, while theirs are accepted as a welcomed race among the galaxy.

So I, Savax Clan-Vorsazg, War-Master of the Southern Wastes, have mustered my clan-brothers to erase the mistake with which history has cursed us. The *yarak pootzck* must be destroyed if we are to relinquish this curse and emerge into the growing galaxy. We have acquired five warships which shall rain destruction on Ubertica — then we will personally land and finish off the survivors one by one to forever erase their memory from this universe. Such is the will of Savax and the destiny of the Ubese people.

Upon hearing of Savax's strike against Ubertica, an Imperial sector fleet was dispatched. Although the fleet destroyed Savax's ships and troops, it was too late to stop the attack, which destroyed many of Ubertica's cities.

over the next millennia, millions more would suffer and perish. The Ubese slowly evolved into survivors — savage nomads. They excelled at scavenging what they could from the wreckage. The Ubese wandered their planet in small clans, hunting and raiding for life's necessities.

Some Ubese survivors were relocated to a nearby system, Ubertica. Several concerned activist groups within the sector organized the feeble rescue attempt, which managed to relocate only a few dozen families from a handful of clans; the quarantine on the system was brutally effective and the relief efforts — masterminded by underfunded but well-meaning activist groups — were pathetically ineffective. The survivors on Uba — known today as the “True Ubese” — soon came to call the rescued Ubese *yarak pootzck*, a phrase which implies impure parentage and cowardly ways. While the true Ubese struggled for survival on their homeworld, the *yarak pootzck* Ubese on Ubertica slowly propagated and found their way into the galaxy.

Millennia later, the true Ubese found a way off Uba IV by capitalizing on their natural talents — they became mercenaries, bounty hunters, slave drivers, and bodyguards. Some returned to their homeworld after making their fortune elsewhere, erecting fortresses and gathering forces with which to control surrounding clans, or trading in technology with the more barbaric Ubese tribes. While they might seem cold, the Ubese have a deadly precision about them. Particularly vengeful Ubese sometimes hunt down the *yarak pootzck* as part of the millennia-old bloodfeud. Recently a true Ubese warlord, Savax,

rallied several clans, acquired five capital ships (rumored to have been supplied by the Hutts) and bombarded the *yarak pootzck* settlements on Ubertica. Fortunately for the rest of the sector, Imperial forces stepped in and vaporized Savax and his ships — but not before much of Ubertica's urban areas had been laid waste.

Few free-traders ever visit Uba IV — those who do have a tendency to disappear suddenly, their ships and gear torn apart for scrap and useful machinery by Ubese raiders.

Nobody really remembers what the Ubese originally looked like, and few have ever seen a true Ubese outside of the protective gear they must wear to live on Uba IV. They tend to be slight of build, and still carry their species' obsession with technology. The Ubese rely on a variety of machines to keep them alive. They require specially tuned breath masks or filters to process Type I atmospheres. Most use voice modulators to clarify and amplify their natural speech, which is believed to be little more than a raspy whisper. Often, Ubese wrap themselves from head to toe in combat armor, flowing robes and rugged survival clothing.

Little is known about Ubese culture. They seem to be loyal to one another, despite nurturing an understandable dislike toward most other members of the galactic community. Away from their homeworld, wayward Ubese seem to care little for other societies' laws, customs and mores. They are mysterious wanderers, nomadic warriors who hide their inner secrets and agendas just as they hide their faces behind helmets and breath masks.

■ “True” Ubese

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

Special Abilities:

Survival: “True Ubese” get a +2D bonus to their *survival* skill due to the harsh conditions they are forced to endure on their homeworld.

Technical Aptitude: At the time of character creation only, “true Ubese” characters receive 2D for every 1D they place in *Technical* skills.

Type II Atmosphere Breathing: “True Ubese” require adjusted breath masks to filter and breathe Type I atmospheres. Without the masks, Ubese suffer a -1D penalty to all skills and attributes.

Move: 8/11

Size: 1.75-2.25 meters tall

■ Yrak Pootzck Ubese

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

Increased Stamina: Due to the relatively low oxygen content of the atmosphere of their homeworld, “*yrak pootzck* Ubese” add +1D to their *stamina* when on worlds with Type I (breathable) atmospheres.

Move: 8/12

Size: 1.75-2.25 meters tall

Chapter Seven

Droids

There are countless makes and models of droids, capable of performing a wide variety of tasks. From everyday labor units (like the many Industrial Automaton Asp units) to highly-specialized units (such as the Arakyd Seeker AS-M12 message droid), these technological marvels have become an indispensable part of galactic life.

Asp Droid

Asp droids are extremely common, found on any number of worlds. These automatons are roughly humanoid in form, with a practical and sturdy framework, and simple joints powered by hydraulic pistons and servomotors. Most asp units have a single ocular receptor (with vision in the normal human range) and a set of audio receivers for hearing and interpreting basic verbal commands.

There are several different “basic” asp models — varying in height and capabilities — and each individual unit is customized with additional equipment and peripherals to suit the specific needs of the buyer. These add-ons may include improved ocular or audial sensors, enhanced and strengthened limbs (for greater lifting capacity), or advanced programming for performing a wide range of tasks.

Industrial Automaton’s ASP-7 model is a typical light-duty asp. These fifth-degree droids amble about many businesses and households, carrying out menial tasks. Most asps can be purchased with rudimentary programming to make them practical servants in the home or laborers on the factory floor. Many companies use them for routine work, such as transporting business records between locations, operating factory assembly line machinery, and assisting in simple repairs. Asps are also practical in homes, as they take care of mundane cleaning work and simple maintenance duties. However,

these very basic units tend not to react well to unexpected circumstances, and have a tendency to report back to their masters for further instructions at these times.

The basic ASP-7 model has very simple programming. They are somewhat limited in the social interaction department, and their tinny voxbox’s vocabulary is restricted to “affirmative” and “negative.” While not much for small-talk, they are always polite, and are inhibited from inflicting harm upon any being by their life preservation programming circuits. The basic-level programming makes the units seem like droid simpletons at times, but they are dutiful household or business servants and rarely break down.

■ Asp

Type: Industrial Automaton ASP-7 Droid

DEXTERITY 1D

KNOWLEDGE 1D

MECHANICAL 1D

PERCEPTION 1D

Search 2D

STRENGTH 1D

Lifting 2D

TECHNICAL 1D

Equipped With:

- Humanoid body (two arms, two legs, head, torso)
- One visual ocular
- Two audial receivers

Story Factors:

Basic Programming: Basic ASP-7 droids are programmed only for the most menial of tasks. They are often out of place in other settings where more specialized droids would be used, such as starship engineering bays, medical suites and battlefields. They can be upgraded with improved programming and more attachments at an additional cost.

Restricted Vocabulary: The basic ASP-7 unit can only reply with the words “affirmative” or “negative,” despite any question asked or situation encountered.

Move: 6

Size: 1.6 meters tall

Cost: 1,000 credits



Better Than Nothing

Platt was worried. She'd had to ditch the *Last Chance* in the Dorajan jungle for repairs. The Imperial picket in orbit wasn't too happy about her leaving without permission — especially with that cargo hold filled with Imperial-issue heavy blasters — and their TIE fighters had done a number on her ion drives' power couplings. And if she didn't get it all fixed soon, that Star Destroyer up there would pinpoint her position and send a heavily-armed someone to collect her.

"SeeVee," Platt called, her voice echoing through the maintenance crawlway beneath the main crew compartment. She poked her head out of the hole in the starship floor where she had removed the deck plate. "SeeVee! Get over here and bring me the toolbox!"

Somewhere in the bowels of the ship an asp droid's voxbox crackled a tinny, "Affirmative." Platt leaned on the deck plates, tapping her fingers. SeeVee slowly walked through the ship, his leg servomotors making a "whrrr-clunk" sound with each step. The smuggler would be the first to admit SeeVee was slow, both in locomotion and processing speed. He was also cheap, and Platt often needed help around the ship, no matter how seemingly simple-minded that help happened to be.

SeeVee "whrrr-clunked" up to the hole created by the missing deck plate and dropped the toolbox to the floor. "Affirmative."

"Thanks," Platt muttered as she began sifting through the toolbox. After finding the power prybar, she withdrew into the access hole, wedging herself into the tight crawl space to rip out a pipe which had impacted the power couplings. When that was out, she began fitting the new coupling into place. "Hey, SeeVee!" she called. "Find me the hydrospanner."

Platt didn't hear the usual "affirmative." But SeeVee clunked around the deckplates enough. When he hadn't produced the hydrospanner — which was sitting right there in the toolbox — Platt started to wonder. She wriggled back out the access conduit and poked her head out through the deckplate hatch. SeeVee was wandering down the corridor to the cockpit.

"SeeVee!" she called. "Come here." The droid obediently turned around and clunked his way back to the access hatch. "I asked you for the hydrospanner," she scolded, tossing tools out of the box. "Why were you heading for the cockpit?"

"Negative," SeeVee replied.

Platt found the spanner at the bottom of the

toolbox. "It's right here," Platt said, holding the hydrospanner for SeeVee to examine. "Don't you know a hydrospanner from the cockpit?"

"Negative."

"What twisted logic programming infests that metal head of yours?" she ranted. "How are you able to identify the toolbox to fetch, but you can't find me the hydrospanner?"

"Negative. Negative."

"Don't you 'negative' me, you rusty old pile of junk." Platt sighed and shook her head. No sense wasting time arguing with the droid. Things would be so much simpler with an astromech droid, even if they *did* tend to get pesky with time.

Platt took the hydrospanner and crouched into the maintenance hole to attach the new power coupling. "You know, SeeVee, you're not



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an asp,” Platt called. “You’re a frippin’ pain!”

“Affirmative.”

“Why don’t you just go find some cozy corner and switch off?”

“Affirmative.”

Stupid droid.

Asp Lightsaber Training Droids

Deep within his fortified castle in Imperial Center, Darth Vader maintains a small corps of modified asp droids for his personal combat training. Dubbed “killer droids” by Vader’s somber household staff, these automatons were built according to the Dark Lord’s exacting specifications.

These training droids look very much like the typical asp droids found in menial servant jobs throughout the galaxy. Vader adopted the ASP-19 frame design because it was sturdy and relatively easy to repair if not too seriously damaged. However, the basic frame was all Darth Vader used when designing his training droids. He had most of the main body components manufactured from reinforced alloys so the droids would hold up better under combat stresses and lightsaber hits. The asp’s single visual ocular was replaced by a compact high-speed visual sensor, with special interface couplings to allow for faster transmission of optical data and quicker responses through advanced servomotors.

Vader ordered the droids to be outfitted with advanced AA-1 Verbo-brains — the same processors used in Cybot Galactica’s popular 3PO-series human-cyborg relations droid. But where the protocol droids’ processor units can store millions of languages, these Verbo-brains are packed full with combat techniques. It is even rumored that part of the droids’ battle programming comes from a Jedi holocron with the personal lightsaber training techniques of Master Vo’ren Faalo.

The units are programmed at Vader’s castle. The castle’s computer draws all the techniques from a secured file and imprints this information on the droids’ processors. This information is regularly updated, allowing the droids to be improved over time and allowing the experiences of earlier droids to be directly programmed into any new asp training droids.

A special circuit imbedded within the Verbo-brain counters any life preservation programming left in the imprinted processor: each training droid is specifically programmed only to attack other beings armed with lightsabers, and to ignore all others. Still, the droids are considered so dangerous that they are never let out of



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the training area. While Vader has tired of these units because their combat abilities barely manage to challenge his own, the units are considered unbeatable and deadly by everyone else on Vader’s staff.

Droids in Darth Vader’s training area are often required to handle a lightsaber. Rather than labor over a new built into each droids, Vader has constructed a single spare lightsaber that is passed among his various training units. This means he can only battle one droid at a time, which is hardly a challenge for the Dark Lord of the Sith.

■ Modified Asp Lightsaber Training Droid

Type: Modified Industrial Automaton ASP-19, Lightsaber Training Configuration, Mark IX

DEXTERITY 3D

Lightsaber 8D+2

KNOWLEDGE 1D

MECHANICAL 1D

PERCEPTION 3D

STRENGTH 4D

Brawling 5D

TECHNICAL 1D

Equipped With:

- Reinforced alloy humanoid body (two arms, two legs, head, torso)
- One high-speed visual sensor
- Two audial receivers
- AA-1 Verbo-brain
- Armor plating and reinforced alloys. +2D to *Strength* against physical and energy damage.

Story Factors:

Attack Restrictions: The training droid's programming restricts its attacks to those against opponents wielding lightsabers. All others are ignored.

Move: 12

Size: 2.2 meters tall

Cost: Not available for sale

Equipment: Lightsaber (5D)

Information Droid

Although Veril Line Systems is perhaps more notable for its series of industrial-purpose droids, it has occasionally ventured into the very competitive service droid market. One of its more successful endeavors in this field is the IN-series information droid.

Constructed in the same general shape as Veril Line Systems' EG-series power droids, the IN-series information droids are taller and sleeker than their "clunkier" predecessors, with treads instead of legs. These droids are often assigned to public places in order to dispense directions and general data to travelers and visitors. If properly linked into local comm networks, these droids can also provide data on local weather conditions, repulsorlift traffic status, and news items downloaded from newsnets. Some less-expensive hotels use these droids to assist guests, recommending local restaurants and attractions and helping them arrange transportation. Starports station information droids throughout their corridors to direct travelers to gates and to provide lift-off and ticket information.

Information droids have a sizable memory cache, capable of storing a large amount of data. Basic protocol routines ensure the droids are courteous and helpful, but not overly so (as some protocol droids sometimes become). IN-units are also programmed with modest language skills — sometimes as many as two dozen languages — to better assist others. Buyers obtaining their droids directly from Veril Line Systems can customize their droid's communication programming to suit individual needs. A vocabulator speech/sound system allows information droids to understand verbal questions

and respond.

If more specific information is required beyond what is stored in its memory banks, information droids can use their extendible I/O jack to interface with other computers. Their access is usually restricted to the lowest data levels to keep them from tampering with protected information. This data-retrieval restriction is actually hardwired into the droids' circuits — even if a computer expert tried slicing into a datanet through an information droid's I/O computer jack, access to more information would be denied because of the circuit's design limitations.

Enterprising members of the Rebel Alliance have found additional uses for these practical droids. By adding extra c-boards to implement a voice and visual ID recognition protocol, Rebel operatives have modified information droids to serve as convenient and inconspicuous drop points for messages and information. When a particular programmed passcode is given, the droid verifies the code against voice recognition and visual data on the operative authorized to use that code. If the operative's identity is accepted, the droid will follow basic information storage and retrieval instructions: "Do you have any messages for me?", "Tell agent Vewin that his friend Do'naal is an Imperial spy," "The information in the file I'm giving you is to be uploaded by Rixen." A datacard slot concealed behind an easily opened service panel allows spies to store information on datacards.

Although information droids are most often located in public areas, Rebel operatives using these modified droids as blind drops are simply assumed to be using them for their original purpose. The scene looks very much like any other — a baffled visitor using an information droid to get directions.

In response to this trend of illegally modified Rebel information droids, Imperial agencies have encouraged droid owners to give their automata regular mechanical and programming inspections. Imperial agencies and criminal organizations have also taken to modifying these information droids for their own purposes.

■ Information Droid

Type: Veril Line Systems IN-4 Information Droid

DEXTERITY 1D

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Languages 5D

MECHANICAL 1D

PERCEPTION 1D

STRENGTH 1D

TECHNICAL 1D

Computer programming/repair 4D

Equipped With:

- Box frame body
- Treadwell locomotion unit
- Video sensor

Dead End Drop

Rixen jostled her way through the central plaza of Kuat Passenger Port with millions of other travelers. She adjusted her gear bag as she peered around at all the bulkheads where there might be a computer port — with a particular information droid plugged into it.

She found L1V-IN plugged in near a travel convenience shop. The information droid was giving two lost tourists from Gruvia directions to the nearest CoreStar Liners ticket office. Rixen backed up against the wall, waiting for her turn to speak with the droid. It also gave her a chance to peer around the pulsing crowds to make sure there were no Imperials around — or that double-agent Do'naal who had been trailing her ever since Byblos. Nope. Nobody but the usually bustling crowds, a few free-trader types gathered around a nearby snack kiosk, and a maintenance tech trying to fix a broken cleaning droid.

The Gruvian tourists shambled on their way, and Rixen approached L1V-IN. "How may I assist you?" the droid asked.

"Sixty-seven starport sirens sounded simultaneously," she said, using one of the code phrases. It was an innocuous tongue twister, but it was something few people would say to an information droid in a busy starport. "Rixen. Identify."

L1V-IN's video sensor swiveled around in its socket, examining her from head to toe. Its internal speech analysis programs were humming away, scrutinizing her voice patterns. "Confirmed," the droid chirped. "How may I assist you, Rixen?"

"Messages," she said curtly. Rixen peered over her shoulder to make sure nobody was paying close attention to her conversation with L1V-IN.

"Three messages," the droid said. "Message one: Stabris reports Vewin has been captured by Imperial operatives on Kelada. He was interrogated thoroughly and is now considered a security risk."

Vewin had been an outstanding operative. The Rebel Alliance would miss him, but couldn't offer him any assistance. Who knew how much he had told the Imperials about their operations in adjoining sectors?

Rixen froze as some Imperial Customs officers strode nearby, apparently in a hurry. She thought it best to change the conversation for the moment: "And after I take a left at Gate 96B, I'll find the boarding desk for the *Starlite Cloud*?"

L1V-IN's programming picked up the cue and went along with her. "Yes," he chimed, "but be sure you have all your documentation ready for the boarding clerk."

When the officers had passed from sight, Rixen ordered L1V-IN to continue.

"Message two: Stabris has continued on to the Outer Rim Territories, as Imperial counter-intelligence operations in the Core Worlds and Colonies have increased. She will stand by on Bimmisaari and await contact with you."

It looked like Rixen's travel plans were going to change. Still, perhaps it was best she got as far out of the Core Worlds as possible for now. Imperial Intelligence was catching on to their operations here, and was becoming more and more ruthless in ferreting out their agents.

"Message three: From agent Do'naal."

Agent Do'naal? Rixen wondered how the supposed Imperial spy had accessed one of the Rebellion's modified information droids. Something wasn't right ...

L1V-IN continued relating the message. "You are surrounded. Place your hands on your head. Do not make any sudden moves."

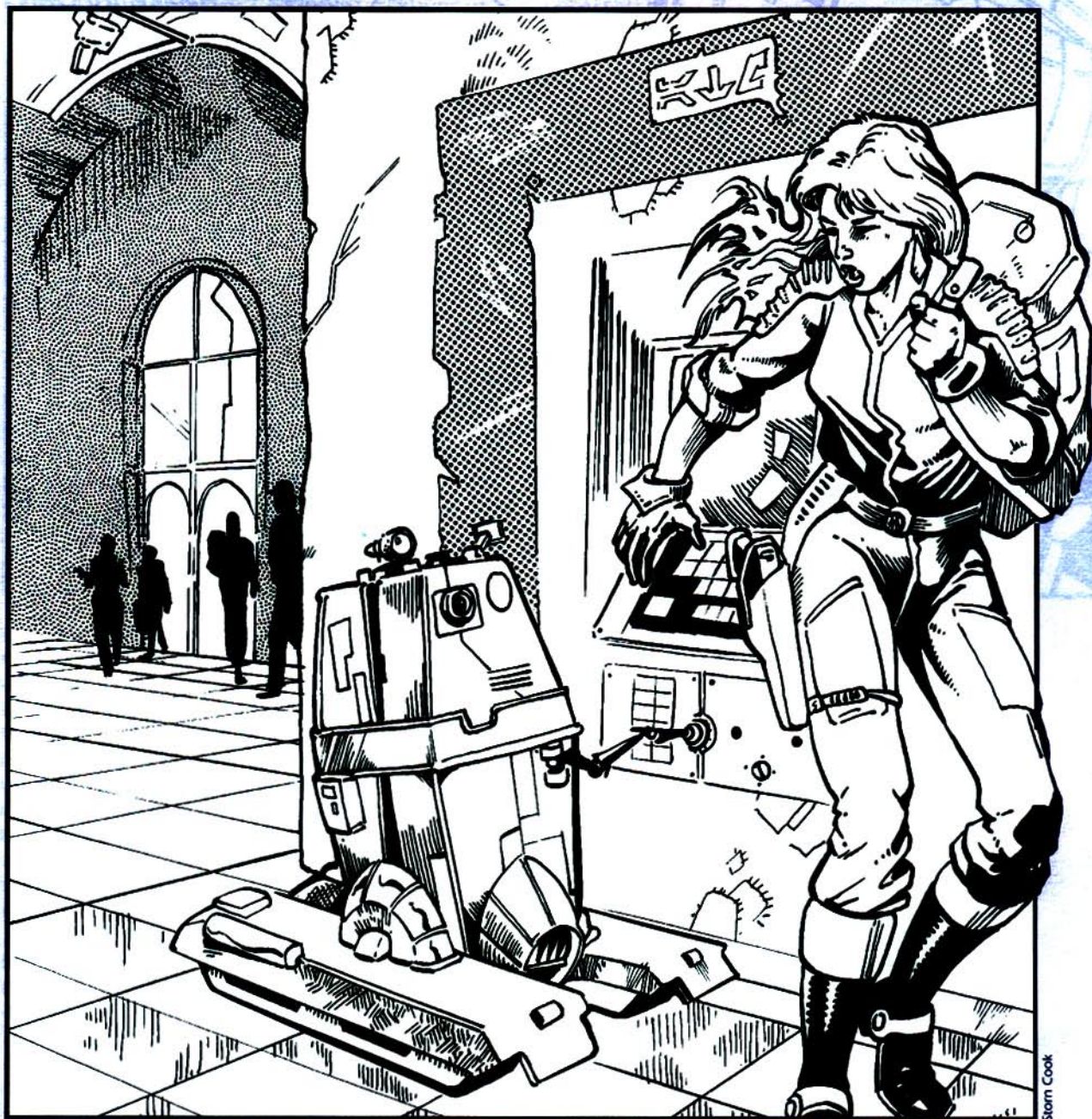
"What?" Rixen cried out. Before she could turn from the droid, she was surrounded by several undercover Imperial agents, all pointing blasters at her. They had been everywhere, just waiting for her — the free-traders enjoying caffa at the snack kiosk, the clerk in the travel convenience shop, the tech repairing the cleaning droid, even the two "lost" Gruvian travelers.

Rixen's hand darted into her gear bag's outer pouch. If she could press the deadman control box, she'd set off a charge of detonite concealed in L1V-IN that would take out her and all the agents.

Before she could dig out the remote detonator box, an iron grip clamped around her wrist and whipped her hand out of the bag. In her panic, Rixen had failed to notice someone sneaking up behind her ... Do'naal. He wrenched her arm behind her back, pulled the hold-out blaster from her jacket's inner holster, and dropped the weapon to the floor.

"We've been waiting for you, Rixen, my dear," he snarled into her ear. "We couldn't let you leave the Core Worlds without a final little chat with your old friends from Imperial Intelligence, could we now?"

"How did you find me?" Rixen stammered, her nerves beginning to give out. She knew she wasn't going to make any rendezvous with Stabris in the Outer Rim. "There are nearly a half million of these little information droids lingering around Kuat Passenger Port. How did you discover this one was our blind drop?"



“Your friend Vewin was very cooperative, given the proper incentive,” Do’naal sneered. “Luckily we were able to reprogram your little droid friend here before you arrived at Kuat. What a pity.”

Several stormtroopers had arrived on the scene. Do’naal shoved Rixen into their midst, and they

took away her gear bag and snapped her wrists behind her in restraining bands.

Do’naal just flashed an evil grin and stroked his beard. “I shall take particular pleasure in interrogating you myself.” Then the stormtroopers led Rixen off to the Imperial detention lock-up.



DARK HORSE COMICS

- Vocabulator speech/sound system
 - Extendible I/O computer jack
- Move:** 3
Size: 1.3 meters tall
Cost: 2,500 credits

Message Droid

Sending messages throughout the galaxy can often be a difficult, time-consuming and expensive affair. Since the Emperor disbanded most of the HoloNet and restricted what was left to military and large corporate concerns, communications are much more restricted than in the days of the Old Republic — and no one knows when Imperial agents are monitoring transmissions. Many sectors and systems have maintained electronic message systems and news contact through subspace sector comm relays. News agencies have developed the extensive newsnet dissemination grid consisting of subspace relays and courier droid pods, which make their rounds through certain systems in a sector, transmitting news and mail to uplink stations on planets for delivery or broadcast. Those wishing delivery of downloaded mail sometimes use courier services, which deliver mail datacards across the galaxy in fast, lightly-armed transports.

When senders need to transmit high-priority or security messages, they can turn to one of the most reliable — but expensive — communica-

tions systems around: a messenger droid. The designers of the Arakyd Viper probe droid have used that technology to develop a civilian message droid system. The owner gives the droid a message, recorded either on audio sensors or on a holographic projector. The droid receives the message's recipient, identification data, passcode, and destination. The droid is then loaded into its transport pod (a civilian version of the probot's hyperspace pod), and sent on its way. Although the pod can only be used for one hyperspace jump, both droid and pod can be retrieved and used again after modest refitting.

The seeker messenger droid — about half the size of an astromech droid — is little more than a compact globe hovering on a repulsorlift generator. The unit sports a host of access panels, speaker grilles and visual and audial sensors. Its holographic projector/recorder is hidden behind one of these panels for protection.

A significant portion of the droid's programming is devoted to finding the message's intended recipient. As soon as the droid's pod enters a system, it begins searching for a pre-programmed landing point or uses its sensors to determine the best place to land. Upon landing, the message droid emerges from the pod and begins its search. It uses its audio and video sensors to seek out the recipient, moving around on its repulsorlift generator and using a fine

manipulator arm to activate door control panels and other access devices. The droid sometimes uses its vocabulator to seek directions or information regarding the intended recipient (the unit is normally only programmed for Basic, although additional languages can be added to the unit by the owner). In certain environments, the droid can use its extendible computer I/O jack to interface with local networks to gather information.

After finding the message's recipient (or authorized representative), the droid engages its identification and passcode security routine. In addition to providing the droid with search parameters, its master gives it a password, usually one previously agreed on by sender and recipient. The droid will not reveal its message until the proper passcode is given. Circumventing these precautions is extremely difficult, and sometimes results in erasure of the message. If the correct password is given, the droid delivers the message using its onboard holographic projector. As an additional caution, the holographic databanks are deleted seconds after the message is delivered. The droid retains information on its owner, and often returns to the transport pod to await retrieval once its mission is completed. AS-M12 units are quite expensive, and their use is normally limited to situations when speed and security are of the utmost concern. Consequently, droid owners usually make a point of recovering these units after a message is delivered (though some crimelords and intelligence organizations modify seeker droids to self-destruct after completing a mission as an added security precaution).

■ Message Droid

Type: Arakyd Seeker AS-M12 Message Droid

DEXTERITY 1D

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Planetary systems 3D

MECHANICAL 1D

Sensors 3D

PERCEPTION 2D

Search 4D

STRENGTH 2D

TECHNICAL 1D

Computer programming/repair 3D

Equipped With:

- Repulsorlift generator
- Visual and auidial sensors
- Vocabulator speech/sound system
- Retractable fine work grasper arm
- Holographic projector/recorder
- Computer I/O jack

Special Abilities:

Message Security: A message droid will not convey its information unless a proper passcode is given. Circumventing this passcode to get at a message without a passcode requires a Heroic *droid programming* roll.

Move: 10

Size: 0.5 meters tall

Cost: 4,000 credits

■ Message Droid Hyperspace Pod

Craft: Arakyd Seeker Transport

Type: Message droid hyperspace pod.

Scale: Starfighter

Length: 2 meters

Crew: None (fully automated droid brain with *astrogation* 4D, *space transports* 4D)

Passengers: 1 message droid

Consumables: 1 month

Cost: 20,000 credits

Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1

Nav Computer: Limited to 1 jump

Space: 6

Atmosphere: 330; 950 kmh

Hull: 1D+2

Sensors:

Passive: 20/1D

Scan: 40/2D

Search: 60/3D

Focus: 3/4D

Chapter Eight

Equipment

The citizens of the galaxy rely on a number of technological items, often of staggering complexity and ingenuity. From advanced medical devices to deadly weapons of war, the variety and sophistication of machinery, tools and equipment that can be found is truly staggering. These items — from everyday labor-saving devices to gear that can save lives in a crisis — are, in many ways, the lifeblood of the galaxy.

Bioscan

Developed by research technicians from the prestigious Rhinnal State Medical Academy, the bioscan scanner and diagnostics package can identify and analyze the biological composition and status of a living being. The system consists of two major components: a dedicated sensor array and a highly-sophisticated computer analysis program.

The sensors are arranged in a framework which can easily be lowered over a patient (although the various sensors may be dismantled and rearranged for other applications). The sensors *must* be firmly mounted to a stationary frame for accurate readings. The elongated sensor packages include full-range scanner, medtox detector, vapro-sampler, and doppraymagno scanner, all fine-tuned to provide accurate readings.

The sensor array must be connected to an analysis computer, which sorts and displays information in either a holographic or flatscreen format. The bioscan has several practical medical applications and is capable of providing data on a subject's species, sex, heartbeat, respiration, muscle tone index, height, weight, temperature, approximate skin age, biological anomalies or variations, and the presence of diseases or viruses. The bioscan is also adept at identifying various alien species, and has more than 1,000 templates for normal specimens of common aliens.

Though rarely found outside the medical community, bioscans have other applications useful to those in the intelligence community. If well-hidden, the unit can covertly gather information on passersby. It can detect and analyze power sources, comm transmissions, hidden weapons and explosives, and other electronic devices concealed on or implanted within a subject. While obviously useful to espionage and security agents, the bioscan is not ideally suited to non-medical tasks especially due to the sensors' short range. Those bioscans used for intelligence purposes are very expensive and must be handled carefully: any irregularities in scanner placement can easily result in faulty or inaccurate bioscan readings.

■ Bioscan

Model: Athakam/RSMA Bioscan Unit

Type: Bioscan sensor array and analysis unit

Scale: Character

Skill: Computer programming/repair (set up); first aid or medicine to use

Cost: 13,000 credits

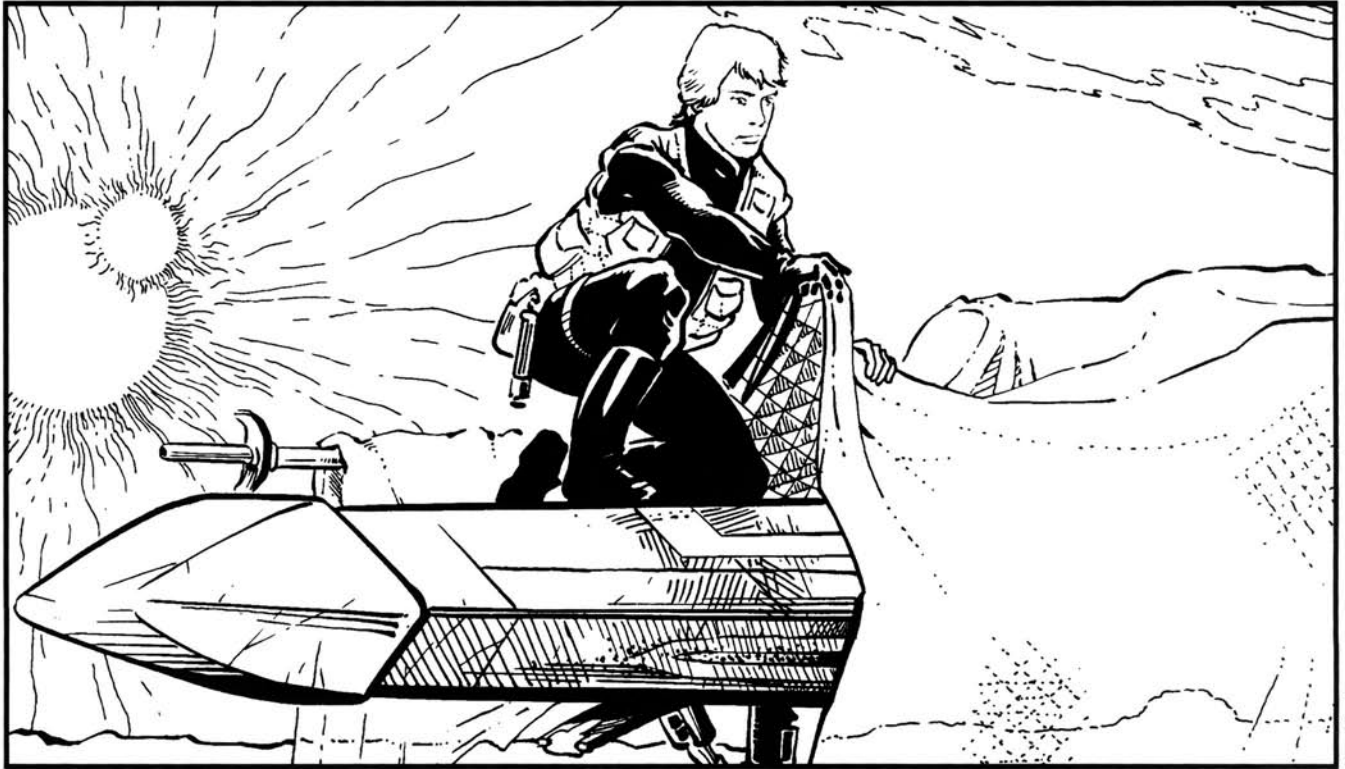
Availability: 3, F

Game Notes: Requires an Easy to Difficult *computer programming/repair* roll to set up (depending upon situation). If properly set up, adds +2D to *first aid*, *medicine* or *Technical*. Maximum range of three meters.

Scanner provides detailed information on the subject's species, sex, heartbeat, respiration, muscle tone index, height, weight, temperature, approximate skin age, biological anomalies or variations, and the presence of diseases or viruses. The bioscan can detect and analyze power sources, comm transmissions, hidden weapons, and other electronic devices concealed on or implanted within a subject.

Camo-Netting

In warfare and covert operations, it often becomes necessary to conceal strategic targets such as grounded starfighters, command bunkers, trenches, and blaster artillery emplacements. While conventional camouflage techniques are generally effective against visual searches, they often fail when sensors are em-



Storn Cook

ployed against them. To this end, Fabritech designed CN-15 camouflage netting, a powered unit with the ability to conceal areas from sensor scans by giving the camouflaged area the same sensor profile as the surrounding terrain.

This camo-netting consists of a 15-meter-square metal mesh, with a small power unit connected to one corner. This netting is relatively light, and can be handled by two people with ease (although one person could deploy it with some difficulty). The net is covered by flexible plastic scales coated in a sensor-reflective material. This coating acts as a mirror, reflecting the sensor pattern of nearby terrain back at a scanner sweep. If a pilot were covering up a starfighter on an open plain, the camo-netting would reflect the sensor aspects of the rolling hills and grass back to any recon craft searching for the downed vessel. The individual reflector chips' and power unit's sensor signatures are small enough to avoid detection by cursory scans for metal objects and energy sources. This form of camo-netting eliminates the need for different non-electronic camo-netting for each terrain type. Since this form of camo-netting relies on reflection rather than projection, it can be used in any environment.

The camo-netting's reflective powers also extend past the range of electronic sensors and continue into the visual spectrum as well. Visual scans at long range simply pick up the reflected

terrain, although closer inspection may reveal anomalies. This camo-netting is also relatively effective at masking items from ground detection up to 250 meters away. Once surface observers enter that range, however, the camo-netting's presence becomes relatively easy to detect visually.

The CN-15 unit is large enough to cover an item 225 square meters (or 15 meters on a side). This enables it to conceal items of relatively small size, from an X-wing starfighter or command bunker to a few landspeeders or even a blaster artillery emplacement. The camo-netting is less effective if three or more nets are strung close together, because the nets' energy signatures begin to interfere with each other. Rather than reflecting the nearby terrain, several camo-nets used in tandem begin reflecting each other, giving away their position by emitting occasional bursts of static and registering as metal objects on sensors.

Fabritech has halted design and production of larger versions of this camo-netting at the request of the Imperial military, who feel these items may aid the Rebellion. Because of its obvious applications, camo-netting is restricted by Imperial law to those holding an Imperial license to use or transport this gear. Such a license often includes a detailed background check. Individuals and groups which often use camo-netting in their operations include Imper-

ally-sanctioned bounty hunters, mercenary groups, and Imperial operatives. The Empire is worried that camo-netting could be used to conceal Rebel installations, so it has recently increased its scrutiny of those wishing to purchase or transport these items.

■ Camo-Netting

Model: Fabritech CN-15 Camouflage Netting

Type: Camo-netting

Skill: Hide

Cost: 3,500 credits

Availability: 2, R

Game Notes: Camo-netting adds +2D to the difficulty to detect the camouflaged object with sensor-scanning equipment at ranges greater than 250 meters. Camo-netting offers no bonus at a range of less than 250 meters. If more than three camo-nets are used in tandem, the sensor-scanning equipment gains a bonus of +1D to detect the nets because of the interference the nets cause.

Hyperbaric Medical Chamber

Industrial accidents, military incidents and natural disasters may leave victims saddled with painful and lingering injuries that cannot be easily remedied with cybernetic replacement limbs. Forced to live in expensive and intrusive cybernetic life-support systems, these beings often breathe only with the assistance of a respirator unit.

Hyperbaric medical chambers allow these people to spend time outside their survival suits, relaxing unburdened by life-support machinery. While prohibitively expensive for average citizens, these chambers can be found in most major medical facilities.

The chamber is a large, pressurized living quarters which can simulate nearly any atmospheric condition; it can also be used for aliens visiting worlds with incompatible atmospheres. Atmospheric pressure can be altered to allow those with respiratory difficulties to breathe on their own, while medicated and oxygenated fields assist healing and lessen the pain from burn injuries. Repulsor-fields can vary the gravity inside, allowing those who might not be able to move on their own in regular gravity a degree of locomotive freedom.

Hyperbaric medical chambers are not suggested for extended use. Most patients use them for only a few hours, enjoying a little freedom before returning to their survival suits. Extended use of the chambers is possible, but many patients living in hyperbaric medical chambers have discovered that the units are sometimes more of a prison than encumbering survival suits.

■ Hyperbaric Medical Chamber

Model: Athakam/RSMA atmosphere replicator

Type: Hyperbaric medical chamber

Scale: Character

Cost: 50,000 credits

Availability: 3, F

Game Notes: The chamber's atmosphere can be adjusted to allow comfortable habitation for any species or medical condition a patient might have. This negates any penalties and the need for life-support apparatus while in the chamber.

Myostim Unit

The myostim unit was originally developed to combat muscle atrophy on low-gee worlds where gravity control was not available. Employing a sensor field coupled to an adjustable, computerized electromyoclonic broadcaster, the myostim unit massages muscles, causing them to expand and relax in sequence. A myostim unit helps keep low-grav world residents in shape by exercising muscles to a degree that the planet's gravity cannot. Users can stay in shape simply by sitting in the contour chair myostim array, while remaining free to perform other more sedentary activities.

Myostim units soon found use among body-builders and other athletes, who began using them to keep in shape without any undue effort. They could use the units for a few hours each day to maintain and increase their strength, while attending to other matters (such as political and product endorsements, personal trade ventures, lucrative holo-ad engagements, and even side betting on their own events). Myostim units are much easier to transport than more-traditional exercise equipment and do not require the user to waste time in "tedious" training routines. It is also rumored that bounty hunters, mercenaries, and other such individuals sometimes use these units to increase their strength — when they can afford the myostim's high cost, at least.

Recent medical research has indicated that extended use of myostim units might have certain detrimental effects on the subject's health. Those who have maintained their physical condition with myostims and then suddenly stopped training have experienced extreme muscle atrophy. Even with regular exercise, these individuals lost their strength over time. Scientists also suspect that extensive exposure to a myostim's sensor fields and electromyoclonic broadcaster affects the subject's electro-neural system, a symptom which might vary in intensity from species to species. This interference can cause problems with coordination and judgment, especially in times of extreme physical exertion or stress.

While medical examiners have not yet proven these theories, many believe that prolonged use of a myostim unit is dangerous, and often cite the case of famed shockball athlete Gordus Grime. Gordus, a shockball star, purportedly depended on a myostim unit to maintain his

physique while pursuing his other business affairs. After a shockball exhibition game on Kaal, he went berserk, murdering seven socialites at a reception in his honor and mangling 17 more people before authorities put him down.

Myostim Unit

Model: Traxes BioElectronics Myostim Couch
Type: Myostim unit
Scale: Character
Cost: 30,000 credits
Availability: 3
Game Notes: For every 12 hours spent on a myostim unit, the subject's *Strength* is increased by +1 (maximum bonus of +1D). The bonus lasts for one week. Extended use of myostim units might have psychologically damaging results in tense situations requiring sudden bursts of activity. After more than six months of use, characters in an extremely stressful situation may suffer a -2 penalty to *Dexterity*, *Knowledge*, *Perception*, and all related skills; with a *mishap*, the character becomes enraged and uncontrollable.

Coruscant Guard Armor

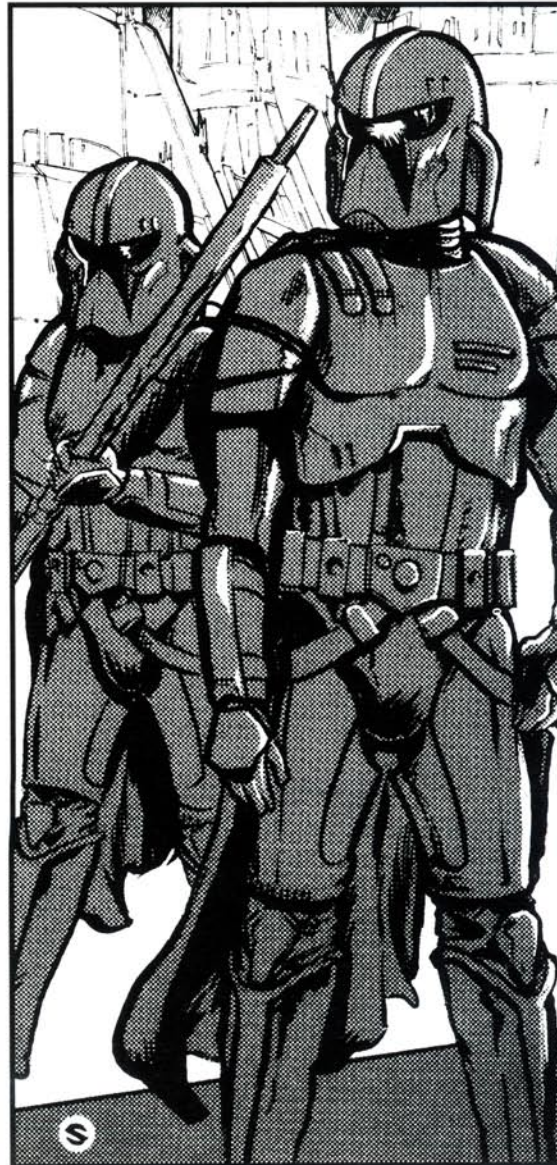
The distinctive crimson and black armor of the Coruscant Guards is a relatively straightforward modern set of armor: light and heavily-padded, it is comfortable (if awkward) to wear, and it provides excellent protection, particularly against non-energy attacks, such as fists, projectile slugs and vibroweapons. What makes this armor notable is the sophisticated battle helmet's sensors, comlinks (with scramblers), and filters, which allows a Coruscant Guard to operate at full capacity, even in complete darkness, at long range, or in the midst of stun gas and other crowd control gases.

Coruscant Guard Armor

Model: Standard Coruscant Guard Armor
Type: Personal battle armor
Scale: Character
Cost: Not available for sale
Availability: X
Game Notes:
Basic Suit: Provides +2D physical, +1D energy, -1D to *Dexterity* and related skills.
Optic Sensors: Allows user to operate in complete darkness with no penalty.
Filter: Self-sealing filter system screens out all dangerous particulates. Unlike stormtrooper armor, this armor lacks an oxygen supply; there must be a potentially breathable (but polluted) atmosphere to filter or the user will suffocate.
Comlink Scrambler: Comlink is linked to other Coruscant Guard units and Coruscant Guard command, allowing units to disperse yet still be in full communication. Optional tracking beacon software adds a tracking beacon so that unit commander knows positions of other troops at all times; unit commander's helmet has verbally activated internal "heads-up display" to show trooper positions.
Climate Control Body Glove. Allows user to operate comfortably in exceptionally hot or cold climates for periods of up to several hours.

Taser Staff

Model: Merr-Sonn Taser Staff



Type: Taser staff
Scale: Character
Skill: Melee combat: taser staff
Ammo: 50 (charges)
Cost: 500 (power packs: 40)
Availability: 2, R
Body: 2D
Difficulty: Moderate
Damage: 5D or 5D stun (uncharged attack causes STR+1D damage)

Capsule: The standard melee weapon of Coruscant Guards, the taser staff is a potent weapon for crowd control and riot suppression. Able to deliver a lethal or a stunning charge, the weapon literally crackles with energy when it strikes a target. The weapon is balanced and each end is weighted, making the weapon quite effective even after the power pack has been fully drained. It's quite light at only 10 kilograms and it can be separated into three pieces to be carried in a backpack.

Chapter Nine

Vehicles

Airspeeders and landspeeders are among the most common vehicles in the galaxy, but they are by no means the only modes of transportation. Paragliders and highly-modified swoops are just a few of the unusual vehicles used throughout the Empire. While most are used merely for transportation, pirates, criminals, Rebels and Imperials all use specialized or modified vehicles to suit their various needs.

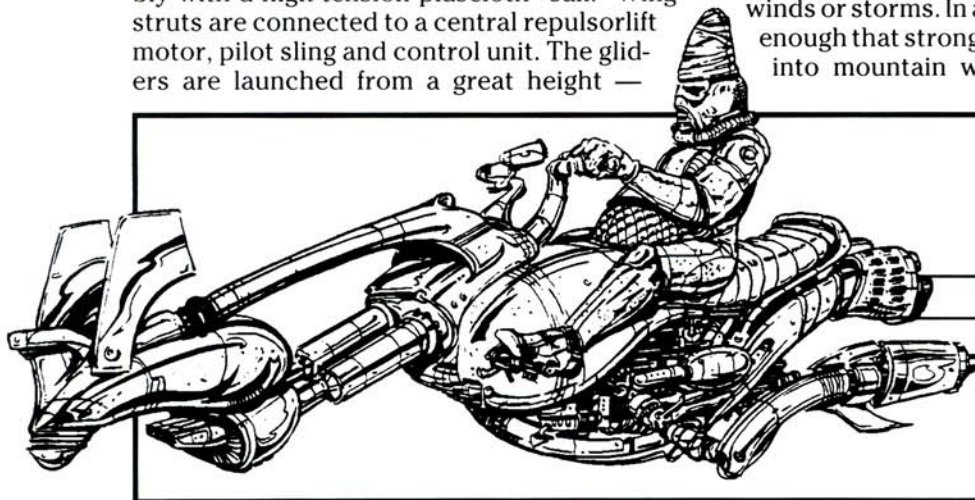
Paragliders

Flight has intrigued members of countless species for centuries. While some individuals pursue careers flying among the stars, the less ambitious are content to fly merely for sport. The Nen-Carvon R-23 recreational paraglider is a commercial variant of the Imperial sky swooper and para-wing glider designs of Cloud City and Aris. The wing-frame assembly and small repulsorlift motor combine to make an affordable craft, allowing the pilot to fly to great heights without the noise (or expense) of a regular airspeeder.

Paragliders consist of a folding wing assembly with a high-tension plascloth "sail." Wing struts are connected to a central repulsorlift motor, pilot sling and control unit. The gliders are launched from a great height —

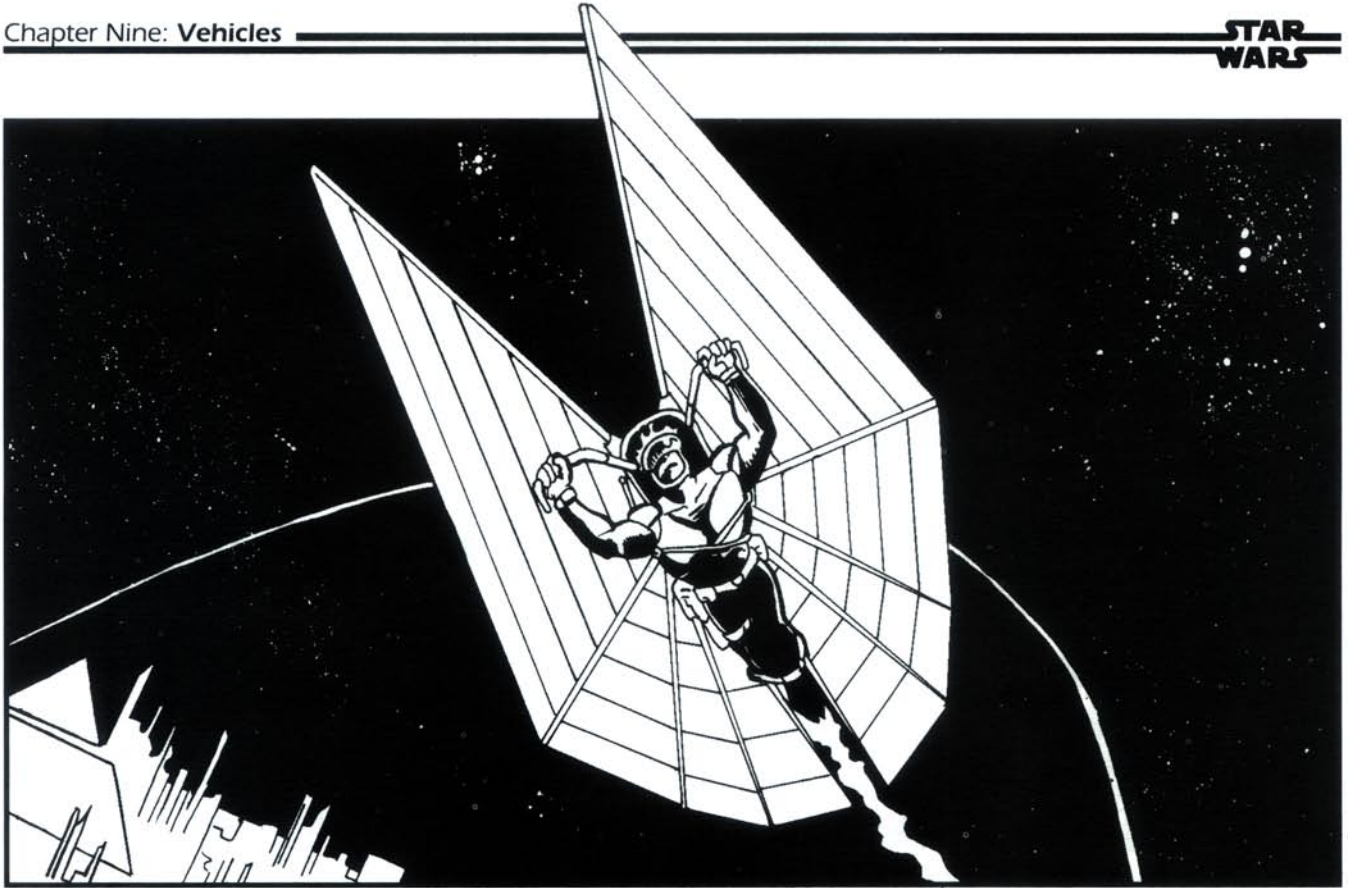
either towed by airspeeder or lofted off a tall building, mountain peak or canyon edge. Pilots simply strap themselves into the safety harness, grip the controls, and gracefully fall off into open air. While the para-wing is capable of gliding downward or riding rising air currents to remain airborne, a repulsorlift motor augments altitude, allowing for extended flights (up to several hours long). The motor also prevents the paraglider from being forced to land in dangerous, remote or inappropriate environments during an emergency. Pilots steer by using both hand controls and shifting balance with their legs in the safety harness, though the repulsorlift motor can augment the craft's maneuverability.

The wing assembly and light-weight frame fold down to fit in an elongated bag when not in use. Light and portable, the bag allows the pilot to carry the glider unit like a backpack and hike to a launch point if necessary. While paraglider sailing is a popular sport on many worlds, it is also quite dangerous. Pilots must be careful not to fly in adverse weather conditions, since the wing assembly frame may collapse in severe winds or storms. In addition, the vehicle is light enough that strong gusts can smash the glider into mountain walls and other obstacles.





Dark Horse Comics



Despite the vehicle's limitations, pilots often describe paragliding as a thrilling experience.

■ Paraglider

Craft: Nen-Carvon R-23 Recreational Paraglider
Type: Recreational paraglider
Scale: Speeder
Length: 4 meters
Skill: Repulsorlift operation
Crew: 1
Altitude Range: Ground level–2,000 meters
Cost: 300 credits
Availability: 2, F
Maneuverability: 3D
Move: 80; 230 kmh
Body Strength: 1D

Pubtrans Flitter

While public transportation networks may be well-developed in many industrial centers, there are still those who desire a private means of travel while visiting new planets. Pubtrans flitters fit the bill, providing fast and convenient transportation.

These small airspeeders can often only accommodate two or three passengers (in addition to the pilot). They typically cost more than other methods of mass transport, but flitter drivers can take their passengers to any location and by any route requested, in contrast to public transportation vehicles (which have preset schedules and a limited number of stoppoints). Pubtrans flitters often cruise public plazas and starports, looking for prospective

passengers — especially those who are lost or have no patience for the often complex mass transport services. Pubtrans flitters can zip above crowds and are compact enough to land close to a building's entrance or on docking pads used by private airspeeders.

Most cities have several transport companies covering flitter routes. Fares typically range from five to 25 credits, depending on the travel distance. Pubtrans flitters can be piloted by individuals or by droids, and both can be interesting sources of information ... if they're in the mood and properly tipped.

■ Pubtrans Flitter

Craft: Incom PT-97 Pubtrans Flitter
Type: Public transportation airspeeder
Scale: Speeder
Length: 7.5 meters
Skill: Repulsorlift operation: airspeeder
Crew: 1
Crew Skill: Typically repulsorlift operation 4D+2
Passengers: 2
Cover: Full
Altitude Range: Ground level–1,000 meters
Cost: 25,000 credits (new), 12,500 credits (used)
Maneuverability: 3D+1
Move: 160; 460 kmh
Body Strength: 3D

Swoops

While commercial speeder bikes are built for safety and control, swoops are built purely for speed. These repulsorlift craft are little more

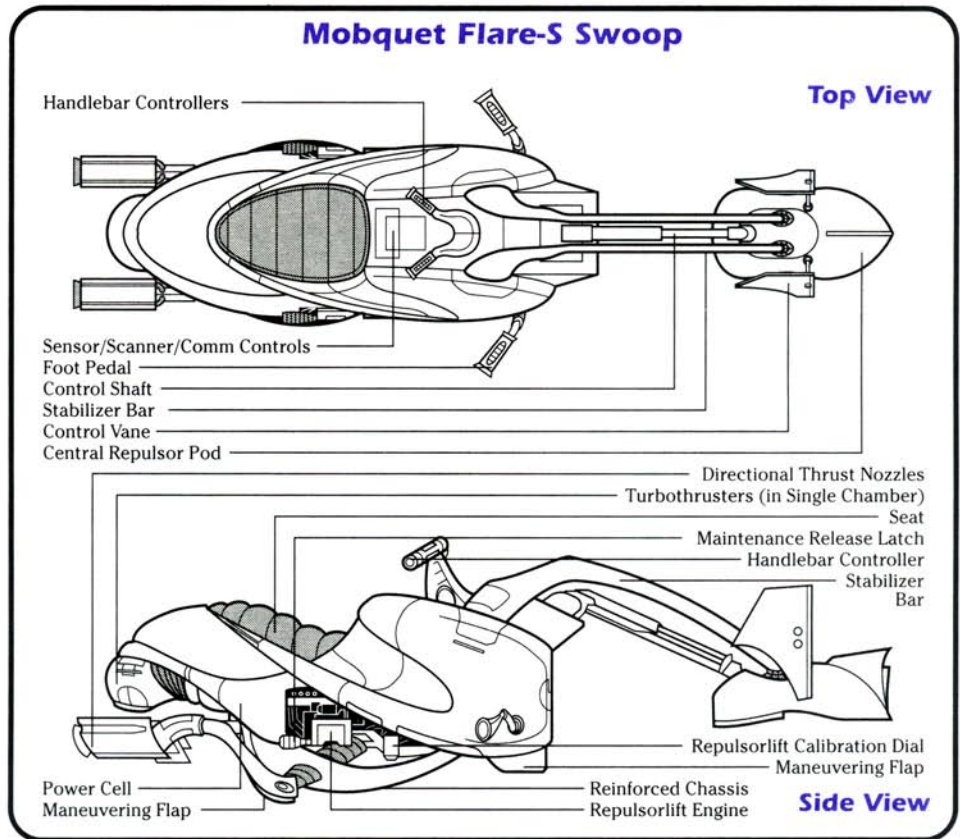
than powerful engine pods with seats. These vehicles are the focus of a swoop racing industry, with major competition circuits in most regions of the galaxy. Swoops are fast, unpredictable, and difficult to control. As such, they are also the favored transportation of unscrupulous gangs throughout the Empire (particularly in the Outer Rim Territories). These swoop gangs are usually vicious and amoral, carving out their territory through threats, extortion and violence.

The Mobquet Flare-S is typical of the many swoop models available; many members of Big Gizz's gang use this type of swoop. The engine components are housed in a reinforced chassis, with a seat over the entire assembly. Repulsorlift and turbothrust engines propel the swoop to speeds exceeding 600 kilometers per hour. Engine vents ensure the thrusters and repulsorlift motors all roar in a cacophony of power.

All controls are centered in the handlebars and foot pedals. Maneuverability is provided by steering vanes, balance modules in the repulsorlift units (including the forward repulsorlift pod), angling turbothruster nacelles, adjusting altitude, and the pilot shifting weight around.

Swoop gangs typically customize their swoops. The safety harnesses, commonly known as "sissy straps," are usually cut off, and the seat is sometimes extended for an additional rider. A deadman's switch is often installed in the control bars — should the pilot release the handlebar grips while the thrusters are engaged, the swoop slows to a stop in case the rider is knocked or shot off his bike.

Professional swoop racers wear fully sealed flight suits with independent oxygen supplies



for high-g maneuvers and high-altitude flight, while elaborate safety harnesses keep them in the saddle. However, most swoop gangs laugh at these precautions, ignoring the "splat-suits" and "sissy straps" — even eschewing *helmets* — to pursue a dangerous, high-speed life on the edge.

Swoop

- Craft:** Mobquet Flare-S Swoop
- Type:** Swoop
- Scale:** Speeder
- Length:** 2.5 meters
- Skill:** Swoop operation
- Crew:** 1
- Cover:** 1/4
- Altitude Range:** Ground level–350 meters
- Cost:** 6,500 credits (new), 2,000 credits (used)
- Maneuverability:** 4D+2
- Move:** 225; 650 kmh
- Body Strength:** 1D+1

Chapter Ten

Starships

The starships of the galaxy are more than just a means to get from one world to another. Each ship is designed for a specific purpose, modified in turn by each owner ... and many are used in ways that would make the original engineers cringe. While older freighters like Han Solo's *Millennium Falcon* seem to require constant maintenance and improvement, newer ships like Dash Rendar's *Outrider* and Prince Xizor's *Virago* are at the cutting edge of technology — for now.

Millennium Falcon

Famous smugglers come with their own famous starships. Platt Okeefe has her *Last Chance*, Bettle and Jaxa have the *Mallixer*, Tru'eb Cholakk has the *Ludrian Star*, and Han Solo has the *Millennium Falcon*; although the notorious Corellian smuggler is currently encased in a block of frozen carbonite, his modified Corellian YT-1300 light freighter still flies on.

These days the *Falcon* is in the service of the Rebel Alliance, under the expert piloting of Han's old friend (and the *Falcon's* former owner), Lando Calrissian. While Lando enjoys being back in the cockpit, there are still a few things about "his baby" he's itching to tinker with. From his point of view, who knows when Solo's going to escape the clutches of Jabba the Hutt? Lando figures he can customize the smuggling ship to suit his current needs and if Solo doesn't like the alterations, he can change them back when — and if — he returns.

Perhaps the most drastic modification Lando has made was adjusting the *Falcon's* docking claw and attaching several ventral "hull clips" to hold an X-wing close to the hull. The entire rig's a bit shaky, but it works. Lando cobbled together the entire set-up at Leia's suggestion, so Luke could accompany them on missions but still bring his X-wing starfighter if needed. Lando

had to modify several other systems aboard the *Millennium Falcon* to make this unusual arrangement work: the hyperdrive profile for the freighter had to be adjusted, and the ventral quad laser cannon's firing templates had to be reprogrammed (so a gunner couldn't accidentally blow the X-wing away). Still, while the entire rig seems stable in space, it gives the *Falcon* some serious maneuvering problems in an atmosphere.

Lando has added a small tractor beam beneath the *Falcon's* cockpit. That's not too sturdily rigged up, either, but the tractor beam projector is helpful in several respects. It can be used to manipulate crates for loading or unloading from the *Falcon's* cargo bay and can also be used to maneuver other craft in space — specifically, bringing Luke's X-wing safely toward the *Falcon* and guiding it into the hull clips. However, the tractor beam projector is too weak to be useful in combat.

Lando has also done some minor tinkering with other onboard systems. He's adjusted the life-support to suit his preferred climate, and has tried to clean up the interior. His busy schedule hasn't allowed him much time to streak the grease off everything and give the bulkhead panels a thorough scrubbing, but he can live with a little grime here and there.

Lando's most disturbing adjustment has been with the autogalley, where he's added more appliances for manual food preparation. Although the different components were rather haphazardly wired together, Lando is still anxious to try out the entirely upgraded galley with his somewhat limited culinary expertise — a prize-winning chef he is not.

■ Millennium Falcon

Craft: Modified Corellian YT-1300 Transport

Type: Modified light freighter

Scale: Starfighter

Length: 26.7 meters

Skill: Space transports: YT-1300 transports
Crew: 2, gunners: 2, skeleton: 1/+15
Crew Skill: See Lando Calrissian and Chewbacca
Passengers: 6
Cargo Capacity: 100 metric tons
Consumables: 2 months
Cost: Not available for sale
Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1/2
Hyperdrive Backup: x10
Nav Computer: Yes
Maneuverability: 2D (1D in an atmosphere with X-wing attached)
Space: 8
Atmosphere: 365; 1,050 kmh
Hull: 6D
Shields: 3D
Sensors:

Passive: 30/1D
Scan: 60/2D
Search: 75/3D
Focus: 4/4D

Weapons:

2 Quad Laser Cannons

Fire Arc: Turret

Crew: 1

Skill: Starship gunnery

Fire Control: 3D

Space Range: 1-3/12/25

Atmosphere Range: 100-

300/1.2/2.5 km

Damage: 6D

2 Concussion Missile Tubes

(fire-linked)

Fire Arc: Front

Skill: Missile weapons: concussion missiles

Fire Control: 3D

Space Range: 1/3/7

Atmosphere Range: 50-100/300/700

Damage: 9D

Blaster Cannon (retractable)

Fire Arc: Turret

Scale: Speeder

Skill: Vehicle blasters

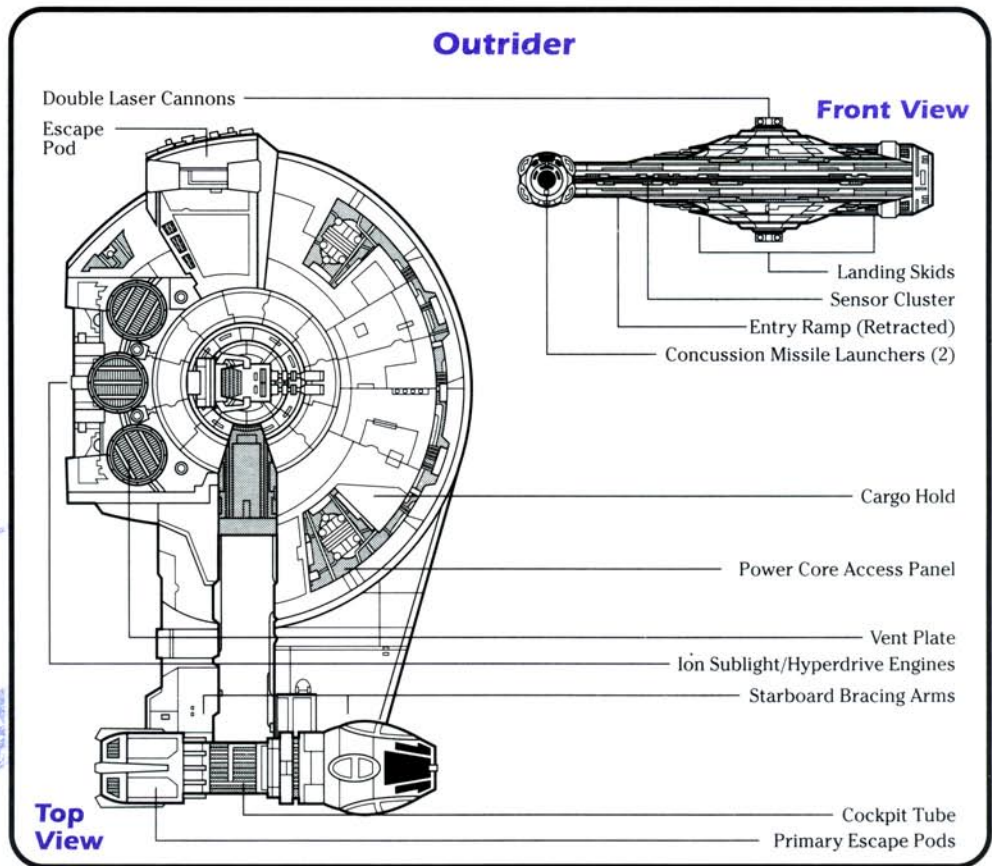
Fire Control: 4D (fired from cockpit)

Atmosphere Range: 1-50/100/250

Damage: 3D+2

Outrider

The *Outrider* is a heavily modified Corellian YT-2400 freighter flown by smuggler Dash Rendar. Much newer and sleek-looking than the older YT-1300 models, the *Outrider* is a ship designed to suit Dash's exciting and dangerous lifestyle. The YT-2400 model sports the trademark saucer-shaped hull of most YT-series light freighters, and, like its predecessors, is fast, sturdy, and infinitely variable. The basic hull saucer has two starboard bracing arms connecting the cockpit module, a cylindrical affair running parallel to the hull. At the forward end of the module sits the cockpit, with an access tube running aft to an escape pod built for six.



The saucer hull also has an escape pod, as well as two gun mounts, dorsal and ventral. The cargo compartments and crew quarters aren't as spacious as other YT models, because much more room has been given over for modification.

The Corellian Engineering Corporation designed this ship as a "stock cargo hauler," intended for use in the more competitive and hazardous regions of the Outer Rim Territories. Its bulkhead frames have been reinforced, and the exterior hull plating is double-armored. The YT-2400's power core has nearly twice the output of other YT models, allowing for oversized engines and extra modifications to utilize the extra energy.

Dash Rendar has, of course, modified the *Outrider* to suit his needs. The stock engines were torn out, and three new military grade KonGar KGDefender ion engines were installed in their place. The vessel's hyperdrive rating was boosted near the levels of the infamous *Millennium Falcon* with a heavily-modified SoroSuub Griffyn/Y2TG hyperdrive unit. The shield generators were boosted using power loop capacitors running off the freighter's mighty power core, and the weapons systems were upgraded and linked through a combat com-

Troy Vigil

All the Extras

Dash Rendar strode down the *Outrider's* entry ramp and into the immense repair bay deep beneath Byblos Starport Tower 214. Spare starship parts were heaped along the bay walls, and mechanics of all species and descriptions scurried around, sorting equipment or repairing the bulk freighter in the adjacent tech hangar.

A diminutive Sullustan approached, protective goggles perched on her forehead and tools bristling from every pocket on her worksuit. "Rendar," she called in a squeaky voice. "I've been expecting you."

"Yeah, Bolabo, I just got my hands on this new starship, and I was wondering if you could refit her," Rendar said.

"She's a beauty," Bolabo said, strolling around the *Outrider* with the keen eye of a professional technician. "One of those new Corellian YT-2400 jobs, right? I'd heard of them, but never seen one in person. You must have paid a pretty hefty sum for this one. Mint condition, too."

"Let's just say I have an old and generous Twi'lek uncle who appreciates my transport services," Rendar said. "I hope you have some hot systems to load on her."

"Sure, Rendar, I've been saving up for you," Bolabo said. "We've been keeping track of you. I knew you'd be coming back this way as soon as I heard you had your hands on this YT-2400. So I've got some appropriately 'hot' components we can load up. First we'll strip down the shield generators, install some power loop capacitors and reconstruct the entire array system. Then we'll drag out whatever cheapo hyperdrive the Corellians threw in there and fix you up with some new hyperdrive motivators my friends back on Sullust managed to smuggle out. Of course, we'll rip out those wimpy blaster cannons and put something with a bit more punch in the turrets, sling a concussion missile system beneath the cockpit, then rig it all together with one of these sleek new combat computers we lifted out of the Sienar

Fleet Systems research tower right here on Byblos. You wouldn't believe how lax their security is. Then we coat the entire hull with this black-chrome sensor-deflector spray somebody found in a highly classified Imperial warehouse. Seems to work well on light freighters, although I don't have a lot left. And finally, we'll gut the ion drives and refit the bracings with these three military grade KonGar KGDefender ion engines. My, uh, 'purchasing agents' brought them out of the advanced engineering department of the Corulag Academy. Very fast. Very illegal. With all that junk in there you'll be making the Kessel Run in record time."

"Sounds great," Rendar said, a wary look in his eye. "What'll it cost me?"

"You're not going cheap on me, Dash, are you?" Bolabo chided. "Like I said, we keep track of a hotshot rocket jock like you. Heard you broke the record doing the Seviri Sidestep. Got out with a cargo hold full of carsunum spice. They pay prime credits for that stuff in the right markets."

"And I know the right markets," Dash bragged.

"That's the point: you got the best for your cargo, I'm sure." Bolabo removed a worn datapad from her jumpsuit pocket and began punching in numbers. "Let's say I give you the whole upgrade for ... this much." She handed the datapad to Rendar, and he gasped.

"You're outta your little Sullustan mind!"

"Sure, okay," Bolabo said, recomputing the numbers on the datapad. "I can always find another customer for those illegal KGDefender ion drives. Stealing those isn't like picking berries, now is it? Don't fret. I hear old Tru'eb's looking to replace the *Luudrian Star's* failing excuse for a drive system ..."

"Okay, okay," Rendar conceded. "I'll pay." Bolabo was asking for practically all the credits he made off the carsunum spice. It was worth it. The *Outrider* would be so packed with extras that it would make even Han Solo jealous. "Where do I sign?"

puter in the cockpit. Although they can be fired manually from the turrets, Dash often doesn't have a gunnery crew and the heavy Dymek double laser cannons can be targeted and fired from the cockpit, but with reduced efficiency. An advanced (and contraband) sensor system was also installed. Finally, the entire hull was coated with an illegal sensor stealth coating. The black-chrome coating absorbs or deflects most weaker sensor systems at range.

Few know where Dash found the credits, time, expertise or equipment to modify the *Outrider* properly, and nobody bothers to ask. The

Outrider is like a charlatan's illusion — only the charlatan knows how it all works, and everything else is just a trade secret.

■ Outrider

Craft: Modified Corellian YT-2400 Transport

Type: Modified light freighter

Scale: Starfighter

Length: 21 meters

Skill: Space transports: YT-2400 transports

Crew: 2, gunners: 2, skeleton: 1/+10

Crew Skill: See Dash Rendar and Leebo

Passengers: 4

Cargo Capacity: 75 metric tons

Consumables: 2 months

Cost: Not available for sale

Hyperdrive Multiplier: x3/4
Hyperdrive Backup: x10
Nav Computer: Yes
Maneuverability: 2D
Space: 8
Atmosphere: 365; 1,050 kmh
Hull: 5D
Shields: 3D+2
Sensors:
Passive: 30/1D
Scan: 60/2D
Search: 75/3D
Focus: 4/4D
Sensor Stealth System: +1D+2 to avoid detection by sensors at ranges of more than 50 units.
Weapons:
2 Heavy Double Laser Cannons
Fire Arc: Turret
Crew: 1
Skill: Starship gunnery
Fire Control: 2D (0D if fired from cockpit)
Space Range: 1-10/20/30
Atmosphere Range: 100-1/2/3 km
Damage: 6D
2 Concussion Missile Tubes (3 missiles each)
Fire Arc: Front
Skill: Starship gunnery
Fire Control: 3D
Space Range: 1/3/7
Atmosphere Range: 50-100/300/700
Damage: 9D

Stinger

Guri, first lieutenant to Black Sun's chief, Xizor, makes her rounds in a sleek and heavily modified Surronian assault ship called the *Stinger*. It is as beautiful and deadly as its mistress.

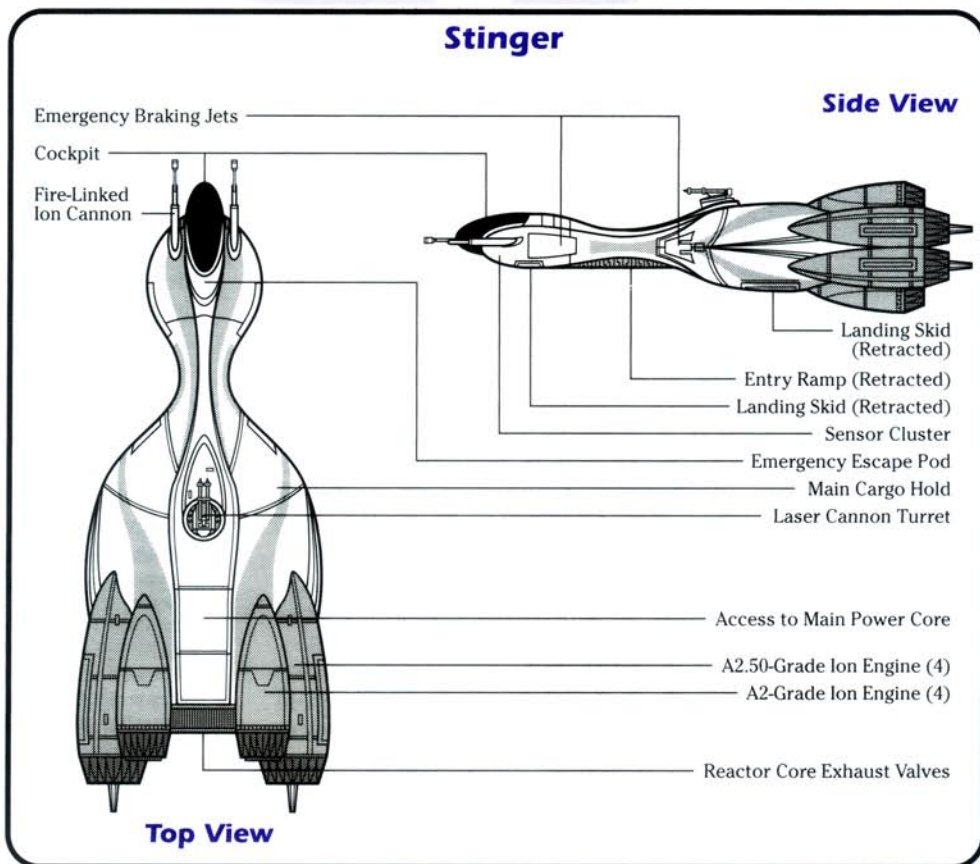
The *Stinger's* soft curves seem to have been artistically crafted by her designers. The cluster of eight ion drives fitted aft provide fast propulsion as well as smooth maneuverability. Coupled with forward braking jets and a complex control computer, the engines make the *Stinger* as agile as an angry insect. Guri also uses the forward braking thrusters in ruthless combat maneuvers, most often decelerating so fast that a pursuing enemy flies right by her and into the *Stinger's* gun sights.

The *Stinger's* weapons complement is also impressive. Forward-firing ion cannons are useful in disabling targets to be captured or subdued, and a double la-

ser cannon turret mounted dorsally provides adequate fire support when lethal force is required. Although the lasers can be targeted from the turret, a redundant fire-control link to the cockpit allows the pilot to operate them at a slightly reduced accuracy.

The state-of-the-art equipment outfitting the *Stinger* does not leave much room for amenities, but the craft's pilot requires few comforts. The cockpit has room for two passengers, and a survival pod directly aft provides escape should the *Stinger* be destroyed. The main cargo hold is small by light freighter standards, and much of it is filled with systems overflowing from the aft engineering crawl space — shield generator capacitors, power core control systems and reserve drive modules. No crew quarters exist. Portions of the cargo hold can be modified to accommodate passengers, but a small fresher and a package of old foodstuffs provide the only comforts.

Guri has modified the *Stinger* with several systems to assist her in duties for Black Sun. The vessel's communications package has been upgraded to better monitor comm channels in-system for hints of the activities of enemies, allies and others she might encounter. The sensors system has also been modified for greater



efficiency. Guri has also installed several security precautions as well, including an auto-destruct mechanism linking the cockpit to the power core. Those attempting to steal the *Stinger* would soon find themselves at the center of a small sun.

Xizor has had the *Stinger* in his hangars for several years — a unique gift from an unknown Surrionian hive craftguild for some unspecified favor performed by the Falleen Dark Prince. Xizor granted it as Guri's personal transport when she first came to serve him. Guri uses it when ever she is sent off Coruscant to carry out her master's bidding. It has served her well as a basic transport, mobile base of operations, and smuggling ship. Unlike most captains, however, Guri has no sentimental attachment to her ship, and sees it only as a tool to be effectively used to further Black Sun's ambitions. The *Stinger's* profile is as notorious as its captain. Wherever the *Stinger* goes, people know Guri is on the prowl.

■ Stinger

Craft: Modified Surrionian Conqueror Assault Ship

Type: Modified assault ship

Scale: Starfighter

Length: 28 meters

Skill: Space transports: Surrionian assault ship

Crew: 1

Crew Skill: See Guri

Passengers: 2

Cargo Capacity: 25 metric tons

Consumables: 1 month

Cost: Not available for sale

Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1

Hyperdrive Backup: x10

Nav Computer: Yes

Maneuverability: 3D

Space: 9

Atmosphere: 400; 1,150 kmh

Hull: 4D

Shields: 2D

Sensors:

Passive: 40/1D

Scan: 80/2D

Search: 100/3D

Focus: 5/4D

Weapons:

2 Ion Cannons (fire-linked)

Fire Arc: Front

Skill: Starship gunnery

Fire Control: 3D

Space Range: 1-3/7/36

Atmosphere Range: 100-300/700/3.6 km

Damage: 4D

Double Laser Cannon

Fire Arc: Turret

Crew: 1

Skill: Starship gunnery

Fire Control: 2D (0D if fired from cockpit)

Space Range: 1-3/12/25

Atmosphere Range: 100-300/1.2/2.5 km

Damage: 5D

Suprosa

Xizor Transport Systems uses a variety of freighters in its shipping fleets, from immense container ships and bulk freighters to small light freighters. Most of these ships are used for commercial shipping. Some, like the *Suprosa*, are secretly used to carry out Black Sun's criminal agenda. While it might look like an ordinary cargo freighter, the *Suprosa* is specially outfitted to haul extremely valuable cargoes for Black Sun.

The CE-2 series was an experiment on Corellian Engineering's part to create a freighter using a detachable cargo pod as a hold, much like their popular barge drivers. The ship features a standard forward-mounted cockpit, while the aft end contains the ion engines and hyperdrive motivators. Drive mechanisms and the power core take up much of the vessel's interior. Ventral cargo clamps secure the hold container, which is accessed from the outside by large cargo doors and from inside the freighter by a ventral hatch. If viewed from the side, the ship's profile seems like a stylized graphic of a blaster.

Captain Sivar, the current owner of the *Suprosa*, has modified the Corellian CE-2 freighter for covert operations. On the outside, it appears to be a relatively normal freighter, but several valuable extras are cleverly concealed. Black Sun entrusts him with running valuable cargoes, including copies of syndicate datafiles, stolen prototypes for industrial inventions, important Black Sun personnel or prisoners, and special computer components.

In addition to reinforced hull plating and upgraded shields, the *Suprosa* is equipped with several retractable, concealed weapons systems. Fore and aft double laser cannon turrets provide all-around fire support, and concussion missile turrets pop out of their dorsal and ventral cowlings to create a serious menace to attacking starships. However, the ventral missile turret cannot be deployed unless the detachable cargo container is released — a small price to pay should the *Suprosa* need to put up a fight for survival.

■ Suprosa

Craft: Modified Corellian CE-2 Transport

Type: Modified light freighter

Scale: Starfighter

Length: 100 meters

Skill: Space transports: CE-2 transport

Crew: 2, gunners: 2

Crew Skill: Astrogation 5D, space transports 5D+2, starship gunnery 6D+2, starship shields 4D

Passengers: 2

Cargo Capacity: 50,000 metric tons

Consumables: 2 months
Cost: Not available for sale
Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1
Hyperdrive Backup: x12
Nav Computer: Yes
Maneuverability: 1D+2
Space: 4
Atmosphere: 280; 800 kmh
Hull: 5D
Shields: 2D
Sensors:

Passive: 10/0D
Scan: 25/1D
Search: 40/2D
Focus: 2/3D

Weapons:

2 Double Laser Cannons

Fire Arc: Turret
Crew: 1
Skill: Starship gunnery
Fire Control: 3D
Space Range: 1-3/12/25
Atmosphere Range: 100-300/
 1.2/2.5 km

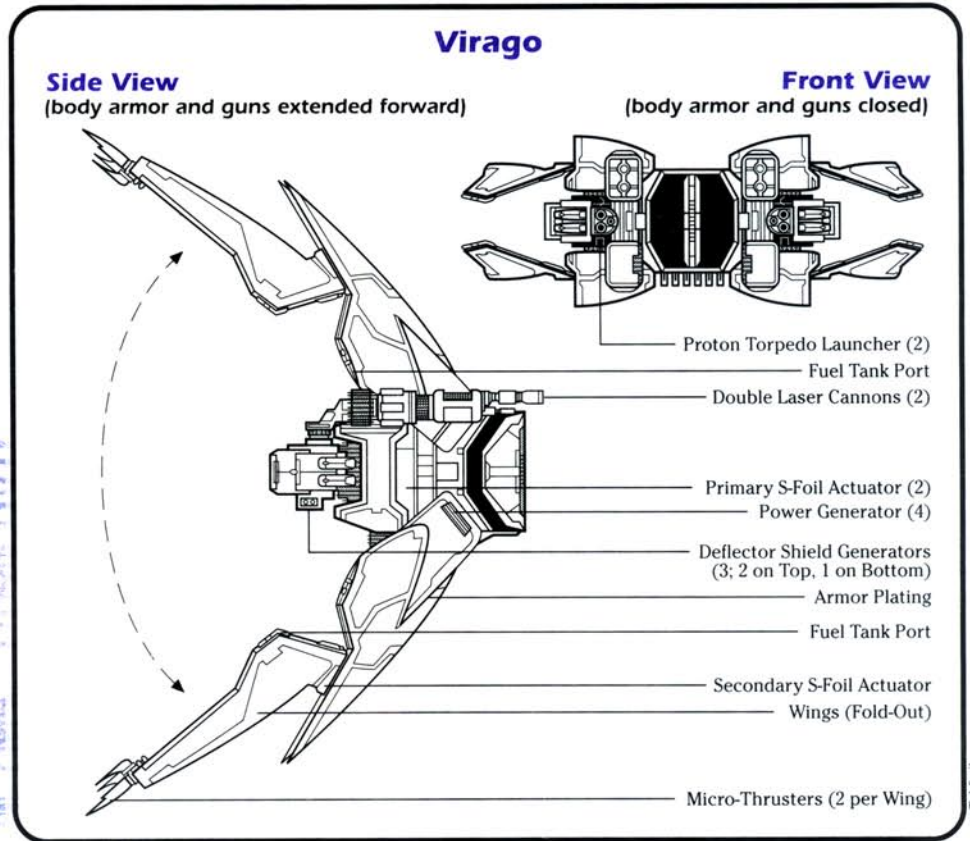
2 Concussion Missile Launchers (may be fire-linked)

Fire Arc: Turret
Crew: 1 (co-pilot)
Skill: Starship gunnery
Fire Control: 2D
Space Range: 1/3/7
Atmosphere Range: 50-100/
 300/700
Damage: 8D (9D if fire-linked)

Virago

The Underlord of Black Sun rarely ventures far from his fortified palace on Coruscant. He has little reason to leave the system, for his minions attend to his innumerable business concerns throughout the galaxy. However, Xizor is not one to fully trust others. To that end he commissioned MandalMotors shipyards to design a new starship—swift, practical and deadly—for those rare occasions when Black Sun affairs require his personal attention elsewhere. The MandalMotors design engineers created the *Virago*—first in the *StarViper*-class of assault fighters—exclusively for Xizor’s private use. It satisfies the Underlord’s basic needs: superior speed and maneuverability, with a fair amount of protection and armament.

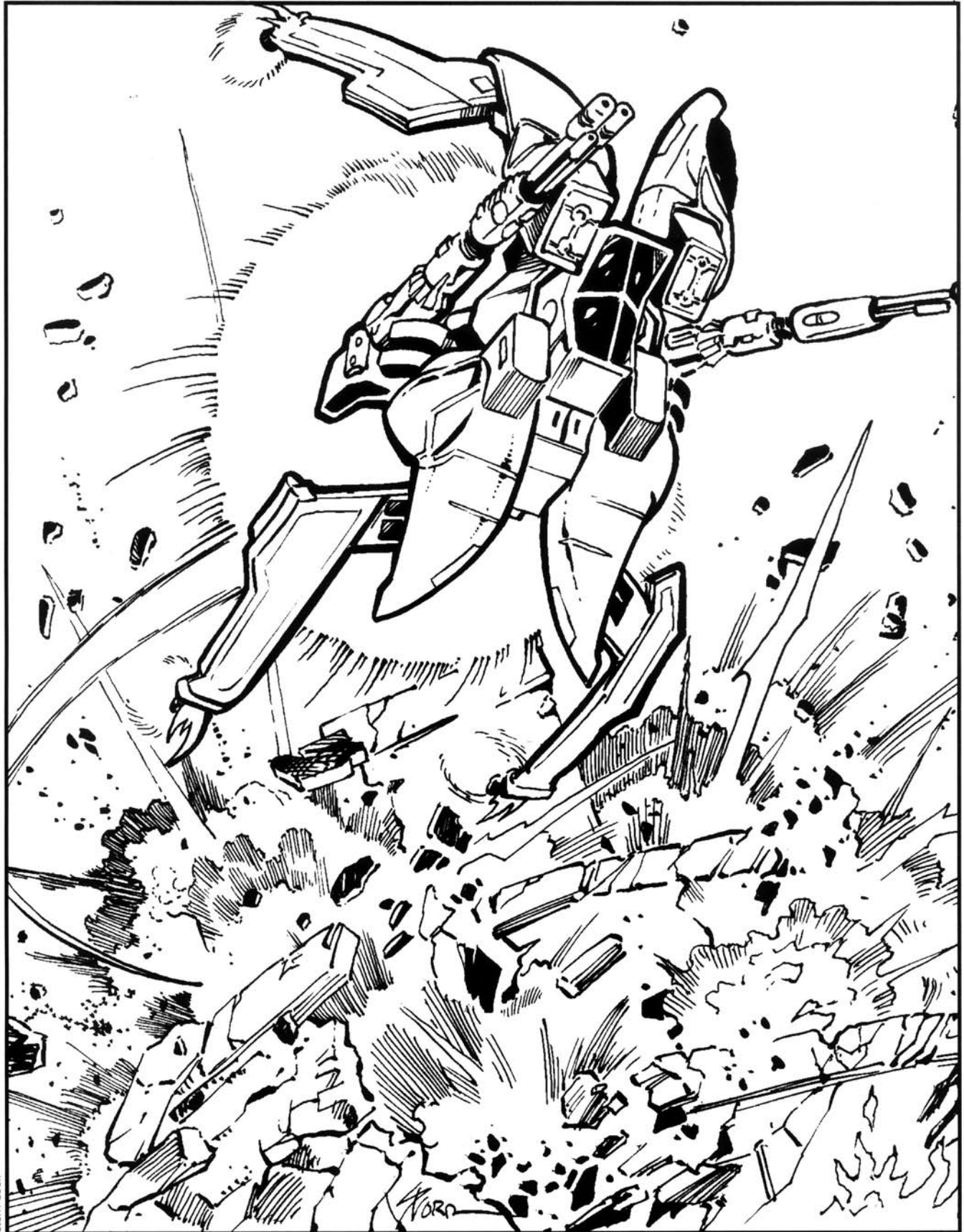
The *Virago*’s unique design employs four adjustable wing panels with two micro-thrusters each to maintain optimum maneuverability. Each wing operates on its own s-foil mechanism independent of the others, constantly changing position in flight as maneuvers require. The entire arrangement makes the *Virago* seem to be a graceful avian fluttering its wings irregularly. Everything is coordinated through a state-of-the-art computer control system integrating flight commands with the wing micro-thrusters



and adjustable thrust nacelles on the main engines, a pair of Quadrex IGt ion drives. However, while this wing arrangement provides maximum maneuverability in space, the *Virago*’s wings are a hindrance during atmospheric flight and are normally retracted unless the vessel is in combat.

In addition to its speed and maneuverability, the *Virago* is well armed and armored. A pair of Taim & Bak Ht-12 double heavy laser cannons are mounted on either side of the cockpit, with extending arms to provide a wide field of fire during combat operations (the cannons remain locked in the forward position when the wings are retracted). Two proton torpedo launchers also cover the forward firing arc. The forward faces of the wing panels are heavily armored, while augmented shield generators protect the rear portions of the ship, which tend to not have as much armor plating.

All the systems aboard the *Virago* require an enormous amount of energy to operate at maximum efficiency. To that end the designers integrated four separate power generators, one in each wing spar, as well as a reserve fuel cell rack within each wing.



Storn Cook

Virago

Craft: Modified MandalMotors StarViper assault fighter

Type: Modified assault fighter

Scale: Starfighter

Length: 21 meters

Skill: Starfighter piloting: StarViper

Crew: 1

Crew Skill: See Xizor

Cargo Capacity: 1 metric ton

Consumables: 2 months

Cost: Not available for sale

Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1

Hyperdrive Backup: x10

Nav Computer: Yes

Maneuverability: 3D+2 (3D+2 in atmosphere with wings retracted; 1D in atmosphere with wings extended)

Space: 11

Atmosphere: 435; 1,200 kmh (with wings retracted); 210; 600 kmh (with wings extended)

Hull: 6D (front), 3D (back)

Shields: 1D (front), 4D (back)

Sensors:

Passive: 25/1D

Scan: 40/2D

Search: 60/3D

Focus: 4/4D

Weapons:

2 Double Heavy Laser Cannons (may be fire-linked, but when linked can only fire to front or back facings)

Fire Arc: Front (wings retracted); with wings extended: 1 front/left/back, 1 front/right/back. Each cannon may only turn one fire arc per turn.

Skill: Starship gunnery

Fire Control: 2D

Space Range: 1-3/12/25

Atmosphere Range: 100-300/1.2/2.5 km

Damage: 5D (6D if fire-linked)

2 Proton Torpedo Launchers (3 torpedoes each)

Fire Arc: Front

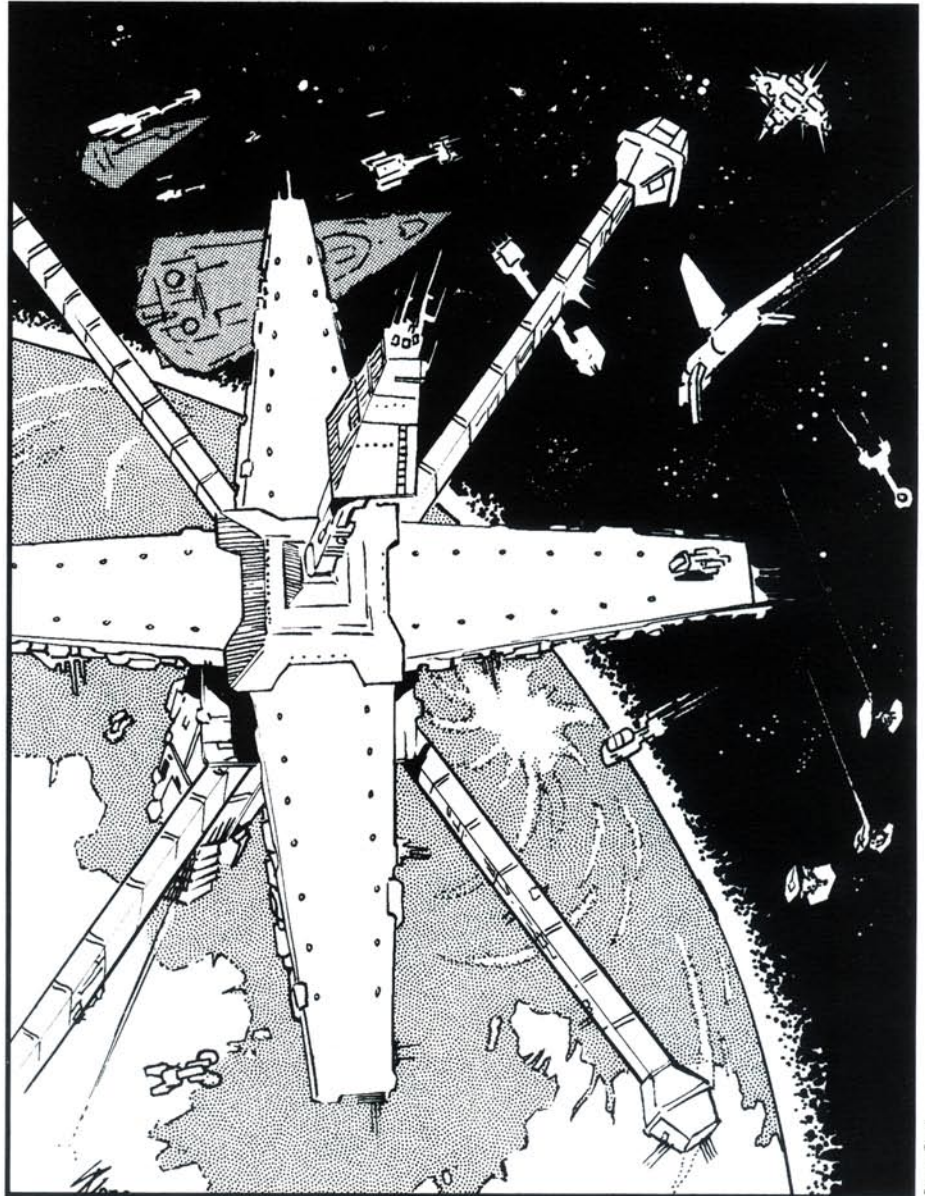
Skill: Starship gunnery

Fire Control: 1D

Space Range: 1/3/7

Atmosphere Range: 50-100/300/700

Damage: 9D



Storn Cook

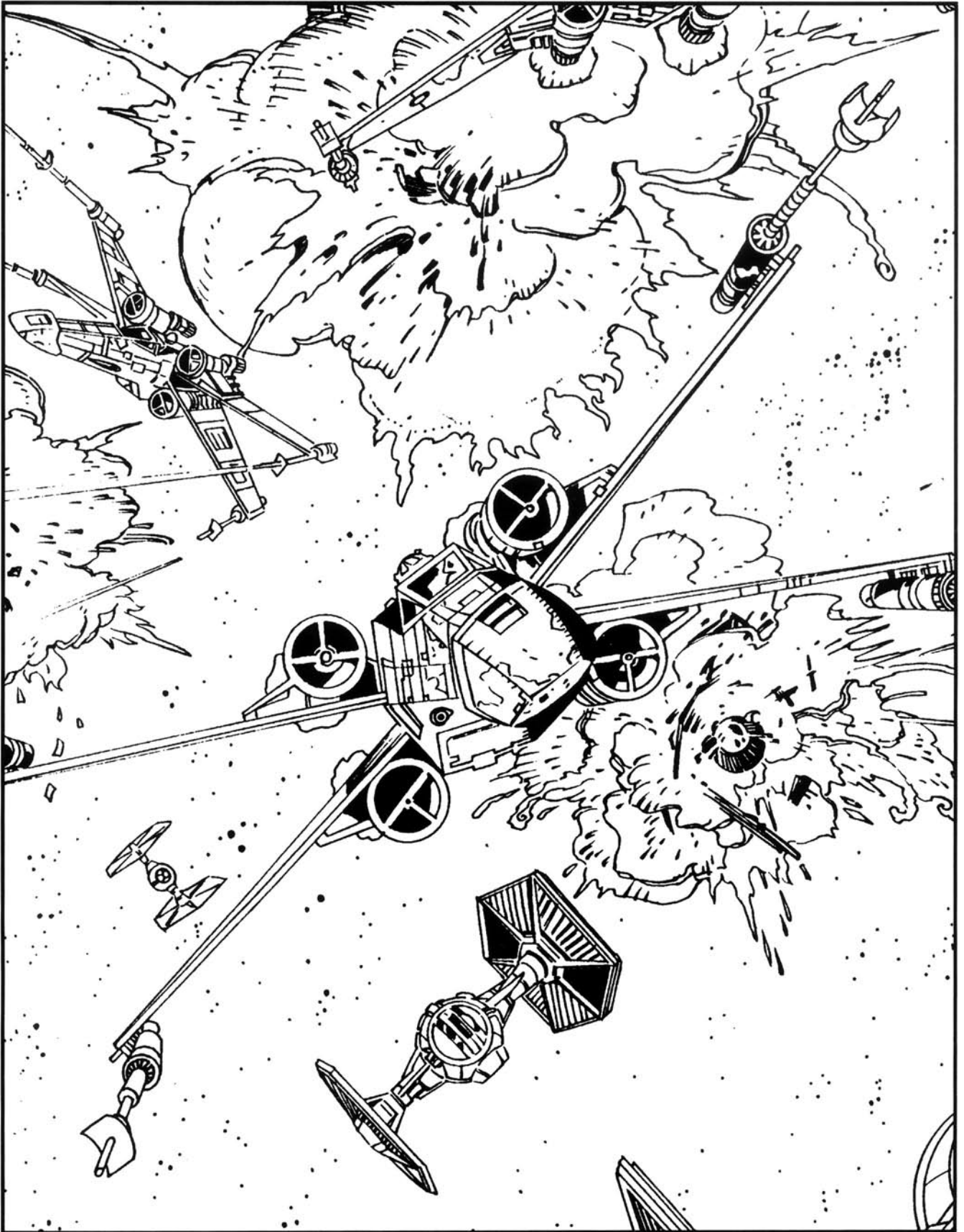
Skyhooks

Although not technically considered a starship, skyhooks fall into the category of orbital installations and often serve the spacer community. There is no greater concentration of these immense, floating satellites than above the glimmering surface of Coruscant, the Empire's heart.

These giant installations hover in low orbit around Coruscant, each tethered to the planet below by a long and tenuous umbilical providing turbolift access. Skyhooks vary in design, size and purpose, but most contain docking bays to accommodate starship traffic, habita-

tion areas for residents and workers, and immense engineering bays for the equipment required to maintain the skyhook and its tether. At times, the skies over Imperial Center seem to blossom with skyhooks of every sort. Some function as smaller and more exclusive residences, upscale counterparts to the monstrous habitation spheres which hang precariously in higher orbit. Others function as intermediate passenger or cargo stations, supplementing the planetside starport facilities. Some skyhooks are packed with communications and surveillance systems, while others monitor and coordinate the complex starship traffic corridors of the Empire's capital.

A few skyhooks are the exclusive domains of



Dark Horse Comics

some of the most prominent citizens of the Core Worlds. These orbital platforms contain all the luxuries of home, as well as special facilities like private landing and repair bays, residential complexes, art galleries, and vast habitat gardens filling entire decks. These skyhooks act as the “country estates” of Coruscant’s elite, who can’t always take the time to travel to their villas on more bucolic worlds far from the political scene. The Emperor himself has his own carefully protected skyhook, and it is rumored that Xizor, head of the power corporation Xizor Transport Systems, has a palatial skyhook named *Falleen’s Fist*.

To some, the skyhooks floating above Coruscant seems rather fragile, like fantastic glass sculptures. However, the skyhooks’ designers have taken many precautions to ensure the skyhooks are safe and dependable. The skyhook is placed in geosynchronous orbit above the planet right from its initial construction phases. Powerful repulsorlift generators and maneuverability jets maintain a stable orbit and keep it from plunging into the atmosphere, dragged down by gravity and the weight of the tether. Individual tube links — each part of the turbolift system — interconnect to form the flexible umbilical. Each link has its own control and maneuvering repulsors to maintain its position despite the presence of hostile weather conditions. Shield generators protect the tethers from damage, while static antennae collect and disperse static electricity from atmospheric friction. The snapping strobes from these antennae also act as warning lights for flying craft.

Despite all these precautions, some skyhooks must be removed for safety reasons. In these rare cases, damaged skyhooks are either towed out of orbit or destroyed by patrol ship blaster fire so that they burn up upon entering the atmosphere. Tethers present other problems

for disabled skyhooks — they are often detached at the base and allowed to be towed off with a skyhook, or are locked into position with a series of emergency stabilizer rods in each tether link until the entire assembly can be torn down.

Passengers and cargo often reach skyhooks through turbolifts running the length of the umbilicals. A particular skyhook’s function often determines the intensity of passenger or cargo traffic — a platform serving as an intermediate starship docking area would have many people and freight passing along its umbilical, while a private skyhook serving as a wealthy estate would have few supplies and personnel transferred up the tether. For higher traffic skyhooks, the large turbolift cabs are often linked together in “trains.” Despite the use of acceleration and deceleration compensators in these large turbolifts, the journey from the surface to a skyhook can take upwards of two hours. Nearly all skyhooks maintain docking facilities for small craft in case of emergencies or for arrivals from off-planet. All skyhooks are required by Imperial spacefaring agencies to carry a compliment of escape and rescue pods to accommodate all inhabitants, although wealthy owners often forgo this precaution because they feel it detracts from the ambiance of their personal space habitats.

■ Skyhook

Craft: Core Worlds Engineering Skyhook Platform

Type: Skyhook

Scale: Capital

Length: 1,200 meters

Passengers: 1,000

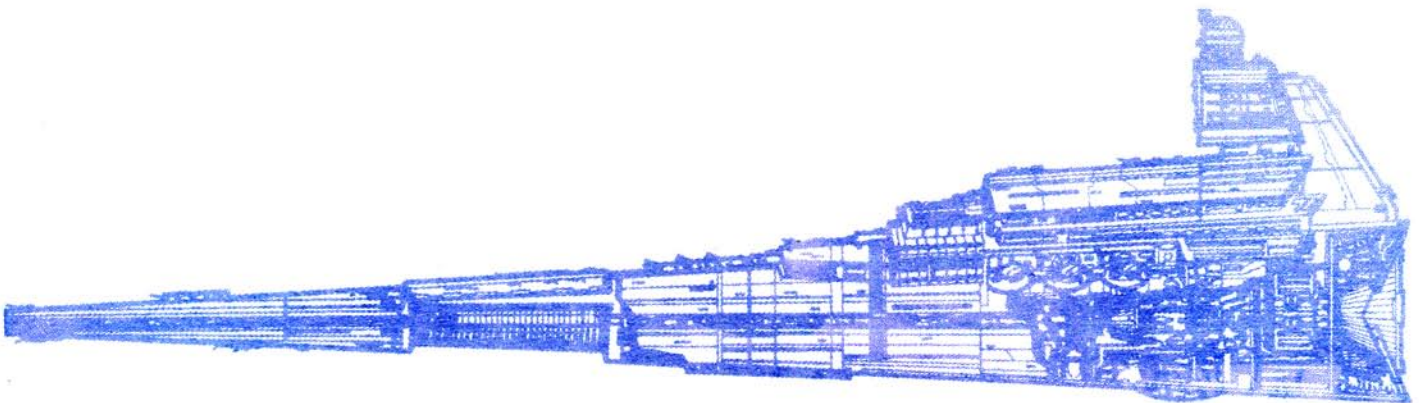
Cargo Capacity: 50,000 metric tons

Consumables: 6 months

Cost: 25 million credits

Hull: 1D

Game Note: Stats for specific skyhooks may vary based on their primary function.



STAR WARS

SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE

S O U R C E B O O K

by Peter Schweighofer

The Official Companion to the Novel *Shadows of the Empire*

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