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New Horizons

Bantam Musters New Rebellion, Bounty Hunters and Tyrants Test

Bantam Spectra publishing continues its successful line of Star Wars novels with a new hardcover novel, another short story anthology, and the final installment of the Black Fleet Crisis.

This month Kristine Kathryn Rusch's The New Rebellion arrives at bookstores across the nation. It continues the epic Star Wars saga of Luke Skywalker, Leia Organa-Solo, Han Solo, and Chewbacca. Somewhere in the galaxy, millions suddenly perish in a blinding instant of pain, anguish and despair—a disruption of the Force so shocking it is felt by Luke at his Jedi academy on Yavin 4 and by Leia at home on Coruscant. It is a deed that rivalts the terrifying power of the Death Star, the long-destroyed weapon of the defeated Empire. But where did it happen? And how? And why?

Then death comes to Coruscant itself. As Leia, head of the New Republic, prepares to address the Senate, a massive explosion rocks the meeting hall, decimating the Senate’s ranks. Leia survives and recovers, only to be faced with calls to resign from office. Even worse, some of the Senators lay the blame for the attack on Han Solo.

As Leia works desperately to clear Han’s name, Han and Chewbacca journey to the lawless asteroids of Smuggler’s Run to track down rumors of a secret plot against the New Republic. And Luke goes in search of Brakiss, a former Jedi student who has turned his considerable talents to the dark side of the Force and might well have been involved in the unexplained deaths of millions that so disturbed Luke and Leia. But Brakiss is only a small part of the carnage taking place on Coruscant and elsewhere. Luke is being stalked by a master of the dark side who is determined to rule as the next emperor. Luke, Leia, and Leia’s Jedi children are targeted to die. Then billions will follow in a holocaust unequalled in galactic history.

Kristine Kathryn Rusch is an award-winning fiction writer and editor. Her novels include Facade, Heart Readers, Traitors, Sins of the Blood, The White Mask of Power, The Devil’s Charm, The Fey: The Sacrifice, and The Fey: The Changeling. She is also the co-author of Memoirs, with Kevin J. Anderson, and The Escape and The Long Night, with Dean Wesley Smith. In 1991 she won the John W. Campbell Award for her fiction. She is also the Hugo-winning editor of The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction and the founder, with her husband, Dean Wesley Smith, of Pulparchive Publishing.

The New Rebellion hardcover novel is $22.95 and reaches bookstore shelves this month.

Bantam Spectra will also be releasing the third short story anthology edited by Kevin J. Anderson, Star Wars: Tales of the Bounty Hunters. In a wild and battle-scarred galaxy, assassins, pirates, smugglers, and cutthroats of every description roam at will, fearing only the professional bounty hunters—amoral adventurers who track down the scum of the universe... for a fee.

When Darth Vader seeks to strike at the heart of the Rebellion by targeting Han Solo and the Millennium Falcon, he calls upon six of the most successful—and feared—hunters, including the merciless Boba Fett. They all have two things in common: lust for profit and contempt for life...
Shayne Bell, Daniel Keys Moran, Kathy Tyers and Dave Wolverton. In *Tyrant’s Test*, Michael P. Kube-McDowell’s final novel in the *Black Fleet Crisis* saga, the New Republic battles a deadly enemy with a new weapon: the illusion of defeat. In the wake of a shattered alliance, the New Republic fights a relentless new enemy.

Faced with an alarming image of Han as a battered hostage of the Yevetha, Chewbacca takes on an urgent mission. Meanwhile, Leia calls upon the Senate to take a stand and eliminate the Yevethan threat — even at the cost of Han’s life. As a former Imperial governor takes his battle to the runaway Quella spaceship, Luke’s continuing search for his mother brings him dangerously close to Nol Spaar’s deadly forces. And as the Yevetha close in on the forces of the New Republic, Luke takes a desperate gamble with an invisible weapon.

*Tyrant’s Test* retails for $5.99 and goes on sale this December.

**West End Tells Tales of the Jedi**

This month West End Games publishes its long-awaited *Tales of the Jedi Companion*, the definitive *Star Wars* roleplaying game guide to the hit comic book series from Dark Horse Comics.

Four thousand years before the events of the *Star Wars* movie, Ullic Qel-Droma, Nomi Sunrider, Tott Doneeta and hosts of Jedi Knights faced the dark side of the Force in all its shadowy guises. Join these intrepid warriors as they face the Beast Wars of Onderon and the Freedom Nadd Uprising!

This 176-page sourcebook (including 16 pages of full color) features detailed game statistics and histories on the people, places, ships, and droids that made Dark Horse Comics' *Tales of the Jedi* series so exciting. In addition, the *Tales of the Jedi Companion* features a comprehensive listing of all Force powers ever featured in *Star Wars* roleplaying game products. Also included are several character templates, equipment types and a campaign guide to help gamemasters run adventures set in the *Tales of the Jedi* era! A 32-page tutorial adventure tempts fans to enter the roleplaying game universe with an expedition into the shadowy ruins of Kabus-Falek. The epic struggle against the dark side of the Force is only beginning...

*The Tales of the Jedi Companion* is available at bookstores, hobby shops and game stores across the country. The $25.00 hardcover sourcebook is an essential guide for any fan of Jedi.
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FEATURED ARTIST

Kathy Burdette

The Official Star Wars Adventure Journal receives artwork in all formats. Most artists work in a medium they’re most comfortable with—pen and ink, markers or paint. Much of the work is black-and-white. Only 16 of the Journal’s 288 pages are full-color. So when artists submit color work, it’s reproduced in black-and-white.

Our “Featured Artist” section gives readers a chance to enjoy some of the artwork from earlier Journals in its original full color, complete with information about the artist and the articles the pieces illustrated.

Kathy Burdette has illustrated many features in the Journal, including “Wanted By Cracken,” “Cracken’s Rebel Operatives” and “Smuggler’s Log.” She’s also contributed character portraits to “Swoop Gangs” in Journal #6, which was based on a game campaign by two of her roleplaying colleagues, authors John Beyer and Wayne Humfleet.

Kathy works part-time for the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, and freelance short stories and game source material in addition to her artwork.

Borun Cull is a Quarian slaver who aided the enslavement of the Talon Alcove III and captured two Wookiee delegates to the New Republic. His chief warrant was issued in Journal #10’s “Wanted By Cracken.”

Kea Ra-Lan is a Graal thief currently wanted for stealing ancient Wookiee texts from the sacred vaults of Neocomora. What she intends to do with the texts is unknown, although many Wookiees believe she’s working for the rival Thandoshans.

The infamous Nakoni smuggler Drokken Antig is notorious for betraying those with whom he works. On one planet, more recent missions, he spaced his rides to increase after stealing several Starfighter gunship prototypes.
Dutra Zeneta is the Jin leader of the Shroud Team, an intelligence group which helps return "orphaned" (displaced) Rebel agents to the Alliance. One of the few survivors of the massacred Scandium Team, Zeneta is physically and psychologically scarred from the tragedy.

Dheendo is Zeneta's chief aide, an ex-bounty hunter with close ties to Corin City's Lowtown social scene — the perfect environment for "orphaned" Rebel agents to contact him. Dheendo and his commander originally appeared in Journal #10 of Cacken's Rebel Operatives.
They had left the Core Worlds a dozen jumps ago, setting off across the Outer Rim Territories with its barbarians and non-human monsters and thinly-veiled contempt for the glory and benevolence that was the Empire. Four jumps ago they had left behind even that pale caricature of civilization to enter the sparsely charted region called Wild Space. Now, with this final jump, the Imperial Star Destroyer *Admonitor* had left even that behind.

Ahead of them lay the Unknown Regions. Behind them lay the Empire.

And, for all practical purposes, the ruins of their careers.

"Forward sensors reporting, Captain," an officer called from the starboard crew pit. "No signs of spacecraft."

"Acknowledged," Captain Dagon Niriz said, glowering out the bridge viewport at the dull red sun glowing in the near distance. The dying embers of a once glorious star. How very symbolic. "Launch TIE fighter squadron," he ordered. "As per the admiral’s orders."

"Yes, sir."

There was a footstep beside him. "Well, there it is," General Larr Havereel commented. "Our new tour of duty. Looks so very inviting, doesn’t it."

November, 1996

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“Looks so very like slow death,” Niriz said bluntly.
“Yes,” Haverel murmured. “I suppose slow death is just what happens when you come down on the wrong side of Imperial Palace politics.”

Niriz nodded sourly. He’d seen it happen himself, time and time again: intrigues and squabblings among the aides and advisors and sycophants of the Imperial court as they forever jockeyed for the Emperor’s ear and favor. The tension between two sides could sometimes build for years, then suddenly come to a head and be over in a matter of days or even hours, with the loser and his allies either executed or — if the winners were feeling particularly lenient that day — sent packing off to effective exile on some mudwater world like Abregado or Tatooine.

And the admiral had been right in the middle of the game, so the gossip said, playing it with zest and a certain degree of finesse. To have pulled this exploration/mapping assignment in the Unknown Regions, he must have lost big.

But that was no reason why Niriz and Haverel and the rest of the Admonitor’s crew had to lose with him. No reason at all.

Out of the corner of his eye, Niriz saw the officers in the starboard crew pit stiffen, their attention shifting a bit. Niriz stayed where he was, watching the dark shapes of the TIE fighters as they realigned into search formation, until he heard the soft footstep on the command walkway behind him. “Admiral,” he said, only then turning around.

It was indeed, as he’d surmised, Admiral Thrawn. “Captain,” the admiral said in that carefully cultured voice of his. “Report.”

“We’ve arrived, sir,” Niriz said shortly, eyeing him with the mixture of fascination and distaste that had followed Thrawn ever since Captain Voss Parck had found him on some mudwater planet out here in the Unknown Regions and brought him back to the Imperial Court. Basically man-shaped, Thrawn’s blue skin and glowing red eyes nevertheless marked him emphatically as an alien. And the Emperor did not like aliens.

Parck should have been disciplined or executed on the spot for that kind of arrogance. The only reason he hadn’t been was that Thrawn had apparently turned out to be quite a competent tactician and strategist. He’d been given private Academy training, risen with dramatic speed through the ranks, and ultimately been made a command officer.

The Emperor had tolerated his presence. Why, Niriz would never know. Others in the court — a great many others — had not.

“Yes, I see that,” Thrawn said dryly, those glittering eyes shifting momentarily over Niriz’s shoulder. “But those fighters should be further out by now. How soon after our arrival did you order them launched?”

“Immediately, sir,” Niriz said, striving to keep his voice civil. Whether he liked this assignment or not, he was still an Imperial officer, and he obeyed orders. “There might have been some trouble with the pre-launch check list — the crews aren’t used to dealing with the hyperdrives on these new TIE scouts.”

“You’re thinking of a deficiency they need to correct,” Thrawn said. “Launch practice, Captain, beginning now. Please see to it personally.”

Niriz ground his teeth. “Yes, sir,” he managed, catching the eye of the comm officer. “Call Commander Parck to the bridge.”

“Yes, sir.”

Niriz looked back at Thrawn, a small touch of spiteful satisfaction flickering through him. Parck might not have been disciplined at the time, but Thrawn’s enemies hadn’t forgotten him. Once the captain of his own Victory-class Star Destroyer, he’d been summarily stripped of that command, demoted to commander, and put aboard the Admonitor as Niriz’s first officer. Servant him right.

The admiral was watching him, an unreadable expression on his alien face. “I gather, Captain, that you don’t consider this mission worthwhile.”

“No, sir, I don’t,” Niriz said, lowering his voice out of habit to keep his words from the ears of those in the crew pits. Differences between senior officers were none of the lower ranks’ business. “If I may speak freely, I think it’s a complete waste of the Empire’s time and energy and resources. With reports of unrest cropping up all across the Empire, sending a fully equipped Star Destroyer out here on mapping duty is just plain stupid.”

“Perhaps,” Thrawn said. If he was offended by Niriz’s boldness, his expression didn’t show it. “On the other hand, the Empire is a living entity. All living entities must grow if they’re to survive.”

“There’s plenty of room for growth within our own borders,” Niriz countered. “There must be hundreds of worlds back there we’ve hardly even glanced at.”

“The Exploration Corps can deal with those,” Thrawn said with a hint of disdain. “The Unknown Regions are the future of the Empire, Captain. It’s only fitting that the Imperial Fleet lead the way.”

Niriz bit down on his tongue. Thrawn was putting a good front on it, he had to give him that. Perhaps he’d even convinced himself that
he hadn’t in fact lost that last political fight. “Of course,” he said aloud. “Sir.”

A movement at the archway leading to the aft bridge caught his eye: Commander Parck had arrived. “With your permission, Admiral, I’ll start the hangar bay crews on their practice.”

“Very good, Captain,” Thrawn said, his eyes again on the starscape outside. “Have them concentrate on pre-launch drills for the moment. I don’t think we’ll be spending more than an hour or two in this system, and I don’t want the TIEs caught outside when we’re ready to jump.”

“Yes, sir,” Niriz said. Stepping past the blue-skinned alien, he stalked back down the command walkway, seething quietly to himself. To send the ship’s captain to deal personally with TIE fighter crews was almost as demeaning as a public slap in the face. No wonder Thrawn had gotten himself exiled out here. The only mystery was what had taken the Imperial Courtiers so long to do it.

They were on their fifteenth system when they found their first sign of intelligent life. Or rather, when it found them.

“There are three of them, Captain,” the sensor officer reported. “About twenty-five meters long — roughly the size of an Oracilian customs frigate. Unfamiliar configuration; unknown weaponry.”

“Acknowledged,” Niriz said, standing on the command walkway with Thrawn and Parck and gazing out at the approaching spacecraft. An alien design, but with the compact and nimble-looking shape of fighters. One squadron of TIE fighters was already on their way out of the hangar bay, with a second standing by. “TIE control: order advance squadron to warn them back.”

“Countermand that,” Thrawn said before the officer could acknowledge. “Advance squadron is to take up open escort formation ahead of the Admonitor. Comm officer, key external signal to my comlink.”

He pulled his comlink cylinder from one of his tunic chest pockets. “I trust you realize those ships out there are probably armed,” Niriz warned him.

“Oh, I’m sure they are,” Thrawn agreed.

“Then shouldn’t we do something about that?” Niriz asked, striving for patience.

“We’re at full battle alert,” Thrawn reminded him. “For now, that should be sufficient.” He lifted his comlink and thumbed it on. “Unidentified spacecraft, this is the Alderaanian Colonies Starcruiser Admonitor. If you understand, please respond.”

He switched off the comlink. “Colony Ship?” Niriz repeated with a frown.

“We’re a rather imposing sight,” Thrawn pointed out. “I don’t want our size to frighten them away.”

Niriz looked back at the approaching fighters. Not only did the admiral not want to fight, he didn’t even want to worry them. Maybe he’d change his mind when they blew off the command superstructure. “And you’re expecting them to understand Basic?”

“They’re close enough to Wild Space to have run into traders or smugglers from the Empire,” Thrawn said. “If they haven’t. I know a couple other languages we can try.”

Abruptly, the bridge was filled with noisy static. “Hello, Colony Ship,” a wheezing voice said. “I am Creysis, ruler of this system and lord of all I survey. How dare you invade my realm without my permission?”

“More ships,” the sensor officer called. “Incoming from around that small moon to portside. Twenty... thirty... thirty-eight of them total. One larger ship, bulk freighter size, falling in behind them.”

“Launch second TIE squadron,” Niriz ordered. “And have two more squadrons prepared immediately.”

“Countermand that,” Thrawn said again. “Have advance squadron pull back to tight escort formation.”

“Sir, I strongly suggest you reconsider,” Niriz said, one hand clenching into a frustrated fist. Did this blue-skinned alien understand nothing about standard tactics? “The whole purpose of a fighter screen is to engage the enemy at a safe distance and force him to disclose his weaponry.”

“I’m aware of that, thank you,” Thrawn said, his attention clearly on the approaching fleet. “Don’t worry, they’re not going to attack. Not until they have a better idea of our capabilities.”

He switched on his comlink again. “Our apologies, Creysis,” he said. “We didn’t realize we were intruding. We’ll leave at once, of course, as soon as our exploration ships are back aboard.”

The static returned. “I accept your apologies, Creysis wheezed. “What exactly is it you seek?”

“A new home for our colonists,” Thrawn said. “One which would not intrude on you or anyone else, of course. Would you happen to know of any such worlds?”
"I might," Creysis said. "Perhaps we should meet personally for a discussion."

"That would be most generous of you," Thrawn said. "May I offer the hospitality of the Admonitor for a meeting?"

"As a token of my trust, I will come," the wheezing voice said. "I will have my transport prepared at once."

"I'll look forward to meeting you," Thrawn said. "Farewell."

He switched off the comlink and returned it to his chest pocket. "Order two TIEs to remain outside to escort our visitor into the hangar bay," he instructed the fighter control officer. "The rest will return to the hangar bay but remain on alert. All stations will continue at battle readiness."

"Yes, sir."

"Commander Parck, you'll stay here," Thrawn continued. "Captain Niriz, come with me. We have preparations to make before our guests arrive."

Niriz hadn't expected Creysis to be naive enough to board an unknown ship alone, and he was right. When the piercing squeal of the alien gas-drive landing jets finally faded away there were five alien ships resting on the Number 3 hangar bay deck: four of the fighters they'd first encountered forming a square around a smaller one-man craft.

Or rather, a one-alien craft.

The being that emerged was large, ungraceful, and — in Niriz's opinion — fairly revolting. His misshapen head was hairless and noseless, with oval eyes that seemed to be set too far apart across its face and a puckering mouth ringed with undulating, worm-like tentacles. From a distance his skin appeared pinkish; close up, Niriz could see that it was in fact a creamy white background covered with a crisscrossing pattern of delicate red lines. He was dressed in a long vest of dark-furred animal skins sewn together in an apparently haphazard pattern. Hanging around his neck on a cord was a bent, teardrop pendant of gold scattered with colored gems; strapped conspicuously at his side was a large hand weapon. "I am Creysis," he wheezed as he lumbered across the deck toward the Imperials waiting for him. "Which one commands?"

"I do," Thrawn said, taking half a step forward. "I am called Thrawn. This is Captain Niriz, in command of the Admonitor itself."

"Ah," Creysis said, coming to a stop two meters away. For a moment the mouth worms wiggled a little more vigorously, perhaps sampling odors or sounds. "How many colonists have you?"

"Forty thousand," Thrawn said. "Plus seven thousand crewmen who run the ship. Do you know of any planets nearby we might be able to colonize?"

"Not so quickly, red-eyes," Creysis said, his eyes narrowing to slits. "Before talk do you not honor me with a gift?"

"Of course," Thrawn said, signaling to one of the troopers hanging a few meters back. The other stepped forward and handed the admiral a small box. "I see from your pendant that you appreciate beautiful things," Thrawn said, opening the box and lifting out a delicately carved golden sculpture. "Please accept this as a token of our honor toward you."

"It is indeed beautiful," Creysis said, not making a move to take it. "But my wish was for a different gift."

"My apologies," Thrawn said. "Have you any suggestions?"

"One of those," Creysis lifted his right arm, bent tightly, and pointed the elbow toward one of the TIE fighters standing ready. Thrawn shook his head. "I'm sorry, but I can't give you one of
those," he said. "We have a limited number of exploration ships, and the path we will have to take before we reach our final destination is still very uncertain. If it would soothe your feelings, though, I could offer you a second or even a third sculpture. We have many such items aboard for use as trade goods."

"That will not be necessary," Creysis said. Again the mouth worms wiggled; then, with an elaborate shrug that seemed to start at his hips and run all the way to the top of his shoulders, he stepped forward and plucked the sculpture from Thrawn's hands. "Perhaps when you have settled to your new world you will have an exploration ship to spare me."

"Perhaps," Thrawn said. "Though that would of course depend on how quickly we find such a world."

"Of course," Creysis agreed. "Have you a list of parameters for the world you seek?"

"I shall convene the Council of Colonists immediately," Thrawn said. "I'm sure they'll be able to come up with a proper list."

"Prepare it at your leisure," Creysis said, taking a step back toward his transport. "Make sure it is exactly what you want. When it is ready, you may bring it to me at my command ship."

The worms wiggled. "When you come, be certain you are also prepared to strike a bargain."

"What do you mean, a bargain?" Niriz asked.

Creysis eyed him. "Do you expect a world for free, white-head?"

he sniffed, the wheezing taking on an edge of contempt. "If you wish your journey shortened by me, you must pay for the information."

"I understand," Thrawn assured him. "The Council of Colonists will arrive fully prepared to deal with you."

The mouth worms stiffened one last time, then Creysis turned and stalked into his ship. Thrawn motioned the Imperials back and with another gale blast of gas-drive landing jets, the five alien ships lifted from the deck and made their way out the hangar entry port.

"Evaluation, Captain?" Thrawn asked.

"They're obviously primitives," Niriz sniffed, strongly tempted to quote for him the old Imperial dictum that all non-humans were primitives. "Animal-skin clothing, and rather haphazardly put together."

"Yet the seam lines were straight and used a slender thread," Thrawn said. "I'd say the unevenness in the pattern was likely part of the style. Anything else?"

"They don't seem to have repulsorlifts," Niriz said. "But they make up for it in weaponry. I counted at least ten laser barrels on each of those fighters."

"Ten barrels, yes," Thrawn said. "But I suspect no more than two of them were actually lasers. The tips on the other eight looked more suited to projectile weapons or even focused sensors. What about our visitor himself?"

Niriz looked out at the departing alien ships, wanting very much to tell Thrawn that none of this was really very important. But something in the admiral's tone or manner demanded a thoughtful answer. "Very confident," he said. "Arrogant, even. Typical of a barbarian leader, whether he's got anything to back up the bluster or not. You're not seriously going to send a delegation into his ship, are you?"

"He was willing to come here," Thrawn pointed out. "Refusing to reciprocate might be taken as an insult."

Niriz snorted. "I imagine you can guess how much I care about that."

"More to the point, we're here to explore," Thrawn said. "This is our chance to learn more about these people, and perhaps learn something about the immediate area."

Niriz grinned; but Thrawn was right. "May I recommend, sir, that we at least try to find out what we're up against. We have three sensor-stealthed assault shuttles aboard - let me send one of them around the back of that moon and see how many ships Creysis has."

"If that was actually their main base, that might tell us something," Thrawn agreed. "But it isn't. Tell me, Captain, you've been dealing closely with the Admonitor's TIE pilots for the past few days. Is there anyone in particular you'd consider especially good under fire?"

Niriz frowned, the sudden change in subject throwing him momentarily off track. "Lieutenant Klar's very good," he said. "Excellent pilot, very cool."

"Have him and two other TIE pilots report to my command room in an hour," Thrawn said. "And have General Haverel detail six of his troopers to meet with me at that same time. Same criteria."

Six men especially good under fire. Thrawn's mythical Council of Colonists, undoubtedly. "Yes, sir," Niriz said stiffly. "May I again suggest, Admiral, that this might instead be the time for a show of strength. An assault shuttle with a squad or two of stormtroopers aboard, perhaps, plus a full wing of TIEs to escort them."

"Recommendation noted, Captain," Thrawn nodded. "Carry out your orders."

Niriz clenched his teeth briefly. "Yes, sir."
the archway leading from the hangar bay proper to the cavernous service and maintenance area behind it. The bustling activity seemed to part before him, service techs and engineers stepping respectfully out of his way and, more often than not, staring furtively after him as he passed.

Muttering a curse under his breath, Niriz turned and stalked toward the turbolifts. He didn’t like any of this, but service in the Imperial Fleet wasn’t something you did if you happened to be in the mood that day. He and the Admonitor had been given an assignment; and if it meant putting up with a capricious alien commander, then they’d just have to put up with him.

At least, for now.

“Three of the alien fighters have appeared from the far side of the moon,” the sensor officer called. “Swinging around the shuttle and TIE fighter escort and dropping into an outer escort formation.”

“Acknowledged,” Thrawn said. “Watch for more of them.”

“If they haven’t all fallen asleep from boredom,” Niriz muttered to General Haverel standing beside him. He and Haverel had supplied the personnel Thrawn had requested well within the admiral’s specified one-hour time limit. But then, for some unexplained reason, Thrawn had taken another three hours to get this whole charade moving and out into space.

But now they were finally off. And with the alien fighters forming escort around them, the gamble had begun. With six troopers, a Zeta-class long-range shuttle, and three irreplaceable TIE fighters set out on the betting line.

And along with them, Commander Parck.

Niriz gazed out at the distant drive trails of the Imperial ships and the fainter drives of the alien fighters flying beside them. Still not believing Thrawn had given such a risky assignment to a man who was supposed to be his friend or at least his ally. But then, perhaps Thrawn didn’t see it that way. Alien minds — who really knew how they worked?

“Creyisia’s command ship has made its appearance,” the officer continued. “Also coming from behind the moon. Looks like a hangar bay’s opened just behind and beneath the nose.”

Pressed tightly against the side of his leg, Niriz’s fingertips rubbed restlessly back and forth across the material as he watched Parck’s shuttle maneuver into the dark opening. In the past three hours, the Admonitor’s drift had taken it a considerable distance from Creysia’s headquarters moon. If the alien was planning treachery, it would be precious minutes before either the Star Destroyer or its TIE fighters could get there to help.

He’d pointed that out to Thrawn an hour ago, suggesting they at least partially close the gap. The admiral had responded with some nonsense about not spooking them, and had ignored the recommendation.

Just as he’d ignored every other suggestion Niriz had made about this whole operation. Could he really be so reckless or incompetent? Or could it be that he had some private agenda?

The glow of the Zeta shuttle’s drive vanished into the alien hangar bay. “Recall the escort,” Thrawn ordered. The officer acknowledged, and a moment later the three TIEs began curving away from the command ship —

And in that moment, the alien fighters abruptly struck. Abandoning their outer escort formation, they dropped in behind and around the three TIEs, lasers spitting brilliant bolts of red fire.


“Countermand that,” Thrawn said. His voice was still calm, but it had taken on a cryogenic-whip edge. “All ahead point one.”

“Point one?” Niriz echoed, spinning to glare at the other. “Admiral —”

“We’re supposed to be a colony ship, Captain,” Thrawn said. “Colonel ships are not designed for rapid acceleration.”

“To blazes with that!” Niriz snarled, twisting back to look at the beleaguered TIEs. Two of them were ahead of their pursuers, slowly but steadily outdistancing them. But the third had been slower on the uptake and was lagging dangerously behind. “Look behind you,” Niriz muttered under his breath toward the other TIE pilots. Surely the other two pilots realized their comrade was in trouble. “Why don’t they fire back?”

“Because I gave them orders not to,” Thrawn told him coolly. “Helm, all ahead point two.”

“You what? Admiral —”

“Hey, it’s hit!” the sensor officer shouted.

Niriz spun back to the viewport. The lagging TIE’s starboard solar panel had disintegrated in a ball of savage fire, the fighter twisting madly as its pilot fought to bring it under control. He succeeded, but the effort cost him too much speed, and the rest of his inadequate
lead. Even as Niriz watched helplessly, three of the pursuing fighters swarmed around him like a flight of quamila swooping onto a crippled Redjik. There was a multiple flicker of grappling lines, and then the whole group swung around in unison into a tight curve back toward Creysis's command ship.

Niriz swore under his breath, measuring the distance with his eyes. Now that they had their prize, the rest of the alien fighters had broken off their pursuit of the other two TIEs and were also heading back home. The command ship was also turning to flee; but if Thrawn threw full power to the *Admonitor*'s drive right now, they might still be able to catch the fighters and the crippled TIE before they made it inside...

"Helm, all ahead point two five," Thrawn ordered.

Niriz turned back to face the admiral, raw fury at Thrawn's indifferent bungling battling against the military etiquette instilled in him by four generations of family service to the Fleet. The etiquette won, but just barely. "Admiral Thrawn," he said, his voice almost steady, "I understand your reluctance to reveal our true nature to these aliens. But enough is enough."

Thrawn's glowing eyes might have sparked a little brighter at the word *aliens*. But when he spoke, his voice was as calm as ever. "Actually, Captain, I don't think you do understand," he said, "The other two TIEs will be returning shortly; please go to the aft bridge comm station and check on their status."

"Admiral, the command ship is moving away," the sensor officer reported. "Thirty-eight fighters have joined it, all of the ships we saw earlier. They're forming into a screened-flight configuration around the command ship."

"What's their speed?"

"One-six-five."

"Helm, bring our speed to one-six-three," Thrawn instructed.

Niriz took a step closer to Thrawn. "What if they jump to lightspeed?" he growled.

"We're watching them," Thrawn assured him. "If they jump, we'll have their vector. But I don't think they will." He raised a blue-black eyebrow, "I believe you were to check on the TIE fighters."

In other words, he was dismissed. "Acknowledged, Admiral," he bit out.

Turning, he stalked down the command walkway and through the archway into the aft bridge. He turned toward the comm station — "A word with you, Captain?"

Niriz turned. General Haverel was standing on the other side of the aft bridge, between the turbolift and the hologram pod. His face was tense with smoldering anger. "What is it, General?" Niriz asked, stepping over to him.

"I think you know as well as I do, sir," Haverel said, nodding his head sharply toward the main bridge. "I've got six troopers aboard that shuttle. Six good troopers. Did you know Thrawn insisted that they go there unarmed? No hold-out blasters; not even any knives."

"I didn't know that," Niriz said heavily. "But I can't say I'm surprised. He's trying to maintain the illusion that we're a harmless colony ship."

"Is he?" Haverel demanded. "Or this all something else entirely?"

"Such as?"

"Such as maybe he's made a private deal with this Creysis pirate," Haverel said bluntly.

Niriz felt his eyes narrow. "You must be joking."
“Am I?” Haverel countered. “Look at the facts. Thrawn agrees to send a contingent to talk to Creysis; but instead of sending it right away, he holds off for three hours. Meanwhile, he has the Zeta shuttle and one of the TIE fighters locked away in the Number Six maintenance area with about fifty techs swarming all over them.”

Niriz eyed him, a cold feeling settling into his stomach. He hadn’t heard anything about any work being done on the shuttle. “Which TIE was it?”

“Do you have to ask?” Haverel said darkly. “The one the aliens grabbed.”

Niriz looked forward, at the admiral standing alone on the command walkway with his back to them. The man who had indeed personally arranged all this.

And who was now deliberately allowing the enemy ships to pull ahead of them. “I don’t believe he’d betray us,” he said, looking back at Haverel. But even to himself the words sounded hollow.

As they obviously did to Haverel, too. “What other option is there?” the general demanded scornfully. “He’s given them a Zeta shuttle, a TIE fighter — both of them probably loaded to the gills with extra technology — and is now letting them get away. And with eight of our men as prisoners, just as an extra bonus.”

Niriz stared at Thrawn’s back, the weight of four generations of service denying that such blatant treason was possible from a senior flag officer. But against that was the weight of the actual evidence. “Why would he do it?”

“Who knows?” Haverel rumbled, waving a hand in curt dismissal. “He’s an alien. Worse, he’s an alien from right here in the Unknown Regions. Maybe he’s known this Creysis for years — could be he even set this charade up in advance. That doesn’t matter. What matters is what we’re going to do about it.”

The cold feeling in Niriz’s stomach turned to sharp-edged ice. “What do you mean?” he asked cautiously.

“You know what I mean, Captain,” Haverel said. “I’m saying that the only chance those men out there have is for us to relieve Thrawn of command.”

“Or in other words,” Niriz said quietly, “you’re suggesting mutiny.”

A muscle in Haverel’s cheek twitched. “I’m suggesting that the Empire and our oaths have been betrayed,” he said. “And I’m suggesting that it’s our duty to set things right.”

“By sedition?”

“The crime has already been committed,” Haverel insisted. “And not by us. All we’ll be doing is taking the Admonitor back for the Empire.”

Niriz looked back at Thrawn again. The weight of four generations of service ... “Let’s give him a little more time,” he said at last. “Maybe he’ll — I don’t know. Come to his senses.”

“It’s almost too late for that,” Haverel said bitterly. “It’s certainly too late for the good men he sent out there to die.”

Niriz took a deep breath. “We’re warriors of the Imperial Fleet,” he reminded Haverel. And reminded himself. “It’s our duty to die when the situation requires it.”

For a moment the two men gazed at each other. “All right, Captain,” Haverel said at last. “You do what you have to. So will I.”

Turning, he stalked into the turbolift. He turned around as the door closed, giving Niriz a glimpse of his implacable expression, and then he was gone.

With a tired sigh, Niriz crossed to the comm station. The two TIEs had made it back safely, hangar bay control informed him, and the pilots would be available to talk to him in a few minutes. He waited until they had extricated themselves from their fighters, confirmed that neither was hurt and that neither fighter was damaged, and ordered them to report to debriefing.

He signed off, and for a few minutes more he stood where he was, thinking about what Haverel had said and fighting a silent battle within himself. But there was really only one decision possible. Turning to the main bridge, he headed back down the command walkway.

It seemed a longer walk than usual before he reached Thrawn’s side. “Captain,” the admiral said, his voice its usual smoothness.

“Report.”

“Both TIEs have returned safely,” Niriz said, gazing out at the fleeing alien ships. Even in the short time he’d been gone, they’d moved noticeably farther away. “What’s the status on Creysis?”

“Unchanged,” Thrawn said. “The aliens have increased their speed to one-seven-two. We’re maintaining pursuit at one-six-three.”

Less than a quarter of what the Admonitor could actually do. “Creysis is probably taking both the shuttle and the TIE fighter apart right now,” he said. “I presume you know that.”

“Yes.”

“Possibly taking Commander Park and his delegation apart, too.”

Thrawn shook his head, an almost imperceptible movement of his head. “No, he won’t have harmed them yet. Simple caution
dictates that. He won’t have taken them far from the shuttle, either.”

Niriz frowned. He’d have thought, an immediate trip to Creysis’s detention center would be in order. “Why do you say that?”

“Because one or more of them could be carrying transmission cameras,” Thrawn said. “Until he has a better idea of our technology level, he won’t risk letting them see more of his command ship than necessary.”

“Perhaps,” Niriz said. “On the other hand, between the shuttle and TIE fighter, he can presumably learn all he needs to about us and our technology.”

Thrawn nodded. “Presumably.”

Niriz stared at that alien face, frustration simmering within him. Here he was, trying desperately to give the admiral every last benefit of the doubt. And yet here was the admiral, admitting with unabashed candor how badly he’d handled this whole operation. Did he want to be relieved of command?

“What it ultimately comes down to is a simple matter of trust,” Thrawn said quietly. “Whether you trust me personally; whether you trust the officers who approved my promotion to the rank of admiral; whether you trust the Emperor and his decision to place me in command here.”

Niriz grimaced. “It would have been easier if you hadn’t mentioned that last one.”

Thrawn turned to face him; and to Niriz’s surprise the admiral smiled. A faint, enigmatic smile, but a smile nonetheless. “Never assume things are necessarily the way they seem, Captain,” he said. “Particularly when dealing with the Emperor.” The glowing eyes glittered. “Or with me.”

Niriz dropped his eyes from that unblinking gaze. Haverel’s doubts about Thrawn’s loyalty flashed through his mind, along with his own questions about a private agenda. Or perhaps the problem was something more innocent but no less dangerous: that Thrawn had managed to convince himself that the Admonitor’s mission was more than just an elaborate and wasteful form of exile.

Or perhaps the Emperor and all those approving officers really had known what they were doing.

But it almost didn’t matter. With those four generations of service behind him, there still was only one decision possible.

He looked up again into Thrawn’s face. “Admiral, I recommend you call a stormtrooper squad to the bridge,” he said. “There could be trouble.”

“Add to that,” Haverel said. “There’s more than one way to skin a cat.”

Niriz turned. General Haverel had returned and was marching stolidly toward them, a formation of six black-clad troopers following in his wake.

Halfway down the command walkway the general waved the troopers to a halt and continued on to them alone. “Admiral,” Thrawn,” he said without preamble. “In the name of the Empire, I ask you to relinquish command of the Admonitor to Captain Niriz, and that you allow these troopers to escort you to your quarters.”

Niriz looked over Haverel’s shoulder at the troopers. Their faces were set in the expressions of men who’d been given orders they agreed with but at the same time found highly unpleasant. Behind them, the officers and crewers in the crew pits were going about their duties, apparently oblivious to what was happening here.

“I see,” Thrawn said calmly. “I trust, General, that you’ve thought this through.”

“There are men out there,” Haverel said harshly. “My men. I’m not just going to abandon them.”

“Your loyalty is admirable,” Thrawn said. “How would you propose we rescue them?”

“Perhaps we should try attacking,” Haverel said. “I believe our discussion with the admiral was more than just an elaborate and wasteful form of exile.

Niriz braced himself. “Yes, Admiral,” he said. “I don’t believe my
officers will go along with mutiny." He forced himself to look at Haverel. "Nor will I."

For a long moment no one spoke. "I’m sorry," Haverel said at last. "This is something I have to do." He started to raise his hand — "Admiral!" the sensor officer called from the crew pit. "Eight of the fighters have broken out of formation, heading off on different vectors."

Niriz turned to look out the viewport. He got just a glimpse of the drive trails heading out from Creysis’s fleet before the eight fighters jumped to lightspeed. "Do we have jump vectors for all of them?" Thrawn asked.

"Yes, sir," the officer replied. "Specter Two signals primary target has gone on vector seventy-one mark five."

Niriz blinked. He hadn’t been aware that Thrawn had launched any of their sensor-stealthed assault shuttles. "What are the Specters doing out there?" he asked.

"Watching for precisely this moment," Thrawn said, and there was no mistaking the grim satisfaction in his voice. "Comm officer, signal on frequency forty-six. Message: now."

Niriz looked at Haverel, who was looking as confused as he himself felt. "Admiral, if this is some belated attempt to show a little resolve —"

"It’s not belated at all, general," Thrawn cut him off. "It’s exactly the proper time. I want three platoons of your troopers in the hangar bay in ten minutes. There are two squads of stormtroopers already there — they’ll get them into proper position."

Haverel’s cheeck twitched. "Yes, sir." Turning, waving his troopers on ahead of him, he headed for the aft bridge.

"Your turn, Captain," Thrawn continued. "Order the helm to full power and stand by battle stations."

His eyes glittered. "The charade is over. It’s time to show them just who and what we really are."

Reflectively, Niriz came to full parade attention. "Acknowledged, Admiral."

He raised his voice. "Helm: all ahead full. Sound battle alert."

They’d been sitting on the hangar bay deck for nearly twenty minutes now, ever since the outer hatchway doors had slammed shut behind the shuttle and the aliens had unceremoniously herded them out here, and Parck’s legs were starting to feel the strain. Slowly, carefully, he eased them into a different position — the barrel of a heavy handgun slapped warningly against the side of his head. "You not move," the alien wheezed.

One of the troopers sitting across from Parck stirred, his face darkening as he looked up at the guard. "Patience," Parck murmured, just in case the other was thinking of trying something foolish or desperate. The time for action, Thrawn had told him, would come only after Creysis’s people had had time to examine the shuttle and the damaged TIE fighter they’d brought aboard.

From the look of things, that time must be getting close. The shuttle itself had been only cursorily looked at, but the TIE had been practically disassembled. The pilot, Lieutenant Klar, had been over there with the aliens most of the time; a pair of weapons jammed into his ribs as they kept up their running interrogation. From where he sat, Parck couldn’t hear either the questions or Klar’s answers; he could only hope Thrawn had coached the pilot on what he was or was not to tell them.

Across the way, a door irised open and Creysis stepped into the hangar bay. Parck eyed him as he lumbered toward the group of prisoners, but the alien expression was impossible to read.

The effort turned out to be unnecessary. "Parck," he wheezed, those repulsive mouth tentacles wiggling more than usual. "So you were telling truth. Foolish for you."

"What do you mean?" Parck asked.

"Your spacecraft is indeed a podon, ripe for harvest," Creysis said, pointing with his elbow in the direction of the outer hatchway. "Slow and leeeble and full of good things. Soon it will be in the grip of the Ebruchi."

"Ah," Parck nodded. "So that’s what you call yourselves, is it? The Ebruchi? We’d wondered about that.

The mouth tentacles momentarily stopped their movement. "Do you not hear me, Parck?" he demanded. "I say we will take your spacecraft and all you possess."

"With what?" Parck snorted. "The ships you have here? Don’t be ridiculous."

"All the Ebruchi will soon be here," Creysis snarled, or as close as the alien voice could probably get to a snarl with that chronic wheezing. "Even now messengers have flown to summon them to the kill."

Parck nodded, a warm glow of satisfaction filling him. Satisfaction, and the usual admiration for his commander. Once again, as he
had so many times before. Thrawn had anticipated his opponent's moves down to the letter. “And what makes you think the Admonitor will still be here when they arrive?” he asked.

“Because even now it continues to chase us,” Creysis said. “Foolishly, for it is too slow to catch us. They think to rescue you from the Ebruchi victory feast. Instead, they will lose all.”

Parck swallowed. An Ebruchi victory feast. Did that mean what he was afraid it meant? “What sort of feast?”

The gloating alien never got a chance to tell him. From across the room, one of the other Ebruchi suddenly shouted.

Creysis turned and bounded over to him, moving at surprising speed for a creature of his bulk. “What's going on?” one of the troopers muttered.

“The admiral must have made his move,” Parck murmured back, watching the guards out of the corner of his eye. At the moment their attention was on the animated conversation going on across the hangar bay, but that wasn't going to last much longer. “At a guess, I'd say they suddenly found out just how fast the Admonitor can really travel.”

The trooper glanced up at the guards. “So what are we supposed to do?”

Parck smiled. “Just get ready to duck.”

And with a highly gratifying punctuality, the side of the Zeta shuttle directly over the starboard fuel tank blew off.

And into the alien hangar bay swarmed a dozen stormtroopers.

The first synchronized blaze of blaster fire took out the guards standing over the seated troopers. “Klar!” Parck shouted, pointing across the room to where the TIE pilot stood beside his disassembled fighter. But Klar had already hit the deck, and the stormtroopers' second volley cleared away the aliens standing dumbfounded over him.

“Commander Parck?” one of the stormtroopers called.

“We're all here,” Parck confirmed, jumping to his feet and nearly falling back down again as fatigued leg muscles tried to cramp up on him. “That doorway's the only exit from the hangar bay.”

“Right,” the stormtrooper said. Six of his men were already moving to take up defense positions at the door, while two others were busily setting explosives to blow the outer hatchway. “Get your men aboard the shuttle.”

“You heard him, troopers,” Parck called. “Get moving.”

“There's coming around, Admiral,” Niriz called, peering out the viewport. “All thirty of their remaining fighters. Definitely an attack formation.”

“Acknowledged, Captain.” Thrawn said, coming back forward down the command walkway from his brief private conversation with the comm officer in his crew pit. “Launch one squadron of TIE fighters to intercept.”

“Yes, sir,” Niriz said, gesturing confirmation of the order to the fighter control officer. “Do you think one squadron will be enough?”

“More than enough,” Thrawn assured him. “With those kind of numbers, it's more important for our pilots to be able to keep out of each other's way.”

“Even with the aliens fully aware of TIE fighter capabilities?” Thrawn smiled. “They're not aware of TIE fighter capabilities, Captain. They're aware of Lieutenant Klar's TIE fighter's capabilities. There's a considerable difference.”

“Ah,” Niriz said, understanding at last. So that was what that mysterious three-hour delay had been about. Rather than loading
extra technology aboard Lieutenant Klar's TIE as part of a secret deal with Creysis, as Havered had feared. Thrawn instead been removing the critical parts of what was already there.

The TIE formation was nearly to the cloud of incoming enemy fighters, outnumbered three to one by ships four times their size. Unconsciously, Niriz held his breath...

And then the two forces collided, and the TIEs cut through the leading edge of the enemy shock force like a drive exhaust through spun snow. Eleven of the twelve targeted alien fighters were turned to instant fireballs by the Imperials' first salvo, the twelfth lasting just long enough to crab sideways into one of his comrades with a violent crash that took out both ships. The alien attack faltered, their arrogant confidence breaking visibly into sudden confusion. Taking advantage of the hesitation, the TIEs doubled back with review-stand precision, carving an equally devastating slash through the rear of the enemy formation.

"Excellent," Thrawn said approvingly. "My compliments, Captain—your work with the pilots these past few days has been well worthwhile."

"Admiral, we have a Zeta shuttle registering now," the sensor officer called. "Bearing away from the command ship."

"Have the TIE fighters clear an escape path for them," Thrawn ordered. "All turbolaser batteries, engage enemy fighters at will, but leave the command ship untouched. Helm, prepare to jump to lightspeed; target is the first system along course vector seventy-one mark five. Tractor stations, lock on enemy command ship. I want it taken intact."

The sky outside the viewport began to light up with the blaze of the Admonitor's heavy turbolasers, and the already one-sided battle collapsed completely into a rout. Creysis's command ship was trying desperately to escape, zigzagging like a wounded fish as its fighter screen literally disintegrated around and behind it. But it didn't have anywhere near the Admonitor's speed, and within seconds the Star Destroyer had closed to capture range. "Activate tractor beams," Thrawn instructed.

"Activated," the tractor officer reported, gazing at the display over his subordinates' shoulders. "Connection...is good. We have them, sir."

"Reel it in, lieutenant," Thrawn ordered. "Order the troopers in the hangar bay to stand by for boarding. All TIE fighters are to break off and return."

Three tense minutes later, it was done. "Hangar bay reports positive docking lock on the ship, Admiral," the comm officer said. "Stormtroopers have burned through in three places; boarding has begun. All TIE fighters have returned with no casualties."

"Helm?"

"Jump calculated and laid in, sir," the officer replied briskly.

"Estimated time to target system is two point five minutes."

"Acknowledged," Thrawn said. "Helm: jump to lightspeed. Fighter control—"

There was the distant rising hum of the hyperdrive, and the stars outside did their familiar surrealistic explosion into starlines. "Fighter control, confirm all TIE wings are ready to launch," Thrawn continued. "Turbolaser crews, double-check battle readiness.

"Niriz nodded toward the mottled sky of hyperspace outside. "What are you expecting to find out there?" he asked.

"Whoever Creysis answers to, of course." Thrawn said. "Despite his earlier bluster, he's not the ruler of anything. Far less the lord of all he surveys."

"Niriz frowned. "Are you sure?"

"Very much so," Thrawn assured him. "A genuine commander would never accept an invitation to board an unknown and possibly dangerous ship. Nor would he stay in the vicinity so long after imprisoning our vehicles and men, running from us instead of jumping to lightspeed. He was deliberately presenting himself as a target, hoping to force us to reveal the Admonitor's full capabilities."

"Which you of course were clever enough not to give him," Niriz said, grimacing with embarrassment at how badly he'd misread the entire situation.

"Yes," Thrawn said. A simple fact, with no undertone of pride or reproach in his voice. "Creysis is a subordinate. But he's an ambitious subordinate, willing to risk his own life and those of his troops in order to gather as much information as possible before calling the rest of the pack in for the kill."

"All right," Niriz said, forehead wrinkling with concentration. "I understand that. I also understand that it makes sense tactically for us to take the battle directly to their headquarters instead of waiting for them to gather their entire force against us. But Creysis sent out eight fighters, on eight different vectors. How do you know this is the way to their headquarters?"

"It comes down to information again, Captain," Thrawn said, his tone that of an Academy instructor trying to elicit the correct response from a student. "We've established that Creysis is the sort to send all the information his commander will want or need. Not
only that he's found a weak and promising target... He lifted one eyebrow.

And suddenly Niriz got it. "Not only that he's found a promising target," he said, "but hard evidence of just how promising that target is. That sculpture you gave him had a transponder built into it, didn't it?"

"Very good, Captain," Thrawn said, and there was indeed a note of approval in his tone. "Helm?"

"Ninety seconds, Admiral," the officer said.

"Have all stations report in," Thrawn ordered. "Whoever we find here will be in the process of mobilizing to go to Creysis's aid. When we come out of hyperspace, we'll come out fighting."

Ninety seconds later, they did.

The door to his quarters slid open, and Niriz looked up, expecting to see Admiral Thrawn step inside.

It was, instead, Commander Parck. "Do you have a moment, Captain?" he asked.

"I'm likely to have a great many moments," Niriz said, suppressing a sigh as he waved the other inside. "Is that what you've come to tell me?"

"Not exactly," Parck said. "Actually, I'm here to tell you that the admiral's turned you down. May I sit down?"

Niriz frowned. "What do you mean, he's turned me down?"

"Exactly that," Parck said, pulling over a chair and sitting down. "He's not accepting your resignation as captain of the Admonitor."

"That's ridiculous," Niriz growled, not sure whether to be relieved or outraged. "I discussed mutiny with another senior officer — that's a court-martial offense. If he's not going to send me back to Coruscant with Haverel, he has to at the very least demote me."

"As you may have noticed, Thrawn doesn't always consider himself bound by the manual," Parck said dryly. "Besides, all you did was talk about it. When the crunch came, you made the command decision to side with him. That's what counts."

"Is it?" Niriz demanded. "Fine — so I sided with him this once. What about the next time he pulls one of these stunts? How does he know he'll be able to trust me then?"

Parck favored him with an odd look. "You've got it backwards, Captain," he said. "You're an honorable officer, from a proud Core World family. There's never been any question in Thrawn's mind that he can trust you."

"You could have fooled me," Niriz growled, thinking back to his conversation with Thrawn on the bridge. "If he trusts me so much, why didn't he let me in on what he was doing?"

"Oh, you were proving you were trustworthy, all right," Parck assured him. "But you weren't proving it to Thrawn. You were proving it to yourself."

He turned to gaze in the direction of the Admonitor's bow. "There are tremendous things out there waiting to be discovered, Captain. New species, rich worlds ripe for the taking, and any number of potential threats to the Empire. Our job is to find those threats, identify them ... and eliminate them."

He looked back at Niriz. "And that's why we're here. Because Thrawn is the best."

Niriz eyed him. "So you're saying this whole thing really wasn't just the fallout from a political battle."

"Parck snorted. "Hardly. I'm sure Thrawn's enemies thought so, but as usual they were at least three steps behind him and the Emperor. No, Thrawn's been wanting to bring the Imperial presence to the Unknown Regions for a long time. His enemies merely provided a convenient excuse for the Emperor to send him here without anyone knowing the real reasons behind it. Eventually, depending on how quickly the Emperor can put down all these brush-fires, we'll be getting more ships and men to assist us. Planting bases and garrisons; maybe even a few full-range colonies."

He smiled dreamily, his eyes taking on a distant look. "The Empire is on the move, Captain. And we're the ones who are taking it there."

For a few minutes neither of them spoke. Then, hunching his shoulders briefly as if shaking himself out of a pleasant daydream, Parck stood up. "I suppose we'd best get back to the bridge," he said.

"The interrogations of the surviving pirates should be finished soon, and we'll want to be available when the admiral's ready to discuss where we go next."

"Yes," Niriz agreed, getting to his feet with an inner enthusiasm he hadn't felt in years. Yes, his career undoubtedly lay in official ruins back on Coruscant. But that was all right. What faced him now was likely to be considerably more interesting. "After you, Commander."
Roleplaying Game Statistics

Admiral Thrawn

Type: Imperial Admiral
DEXTERITY 2D-1
Blaster 7D-1, blaster artillery 5D-1, bows 5D-1, blawing parry 5D, dodge 8D, grenade 6D-1, melee combat 8D-2, melee parry 5D-1
KNOWLEDGE 3D-1
Alien species 7D-1, art 10D-2, bureaucracy 10D-2, business 10D-2, cultures 9D-1, intimidation 9D, languages 9D, planetary systems 8D-1, streetwise 7D, survival 8D, tactics 9D-2, tactics: capital ships 8D-2, tactics: feets 10D, tactics: ground assault 7D, tactics: starfighters 6D, value 7D, weapon power 8D-2
MECHANICAL 3D-2
Astrogation 7D, beaotriding 7D-2, capital ship gunnery 9D, capital ship piloting 10D, capital ship shields 9D, communications 7D-2, repulsorlift operation 5D-2, sensors 7D-2, space transports 6D, starfighter piloting 8D-2, starship gunnery 5D-2, starship shields 5D
PERCEPTION 3D-1
Bargain 11D, command 11D-2, command: Imperial Navy officers 12D-2, con 10D, gambling 7D, hide 7D, investigation 9D, persuasion 8D-2, search 11D-1, sneak 7D
STRENGTH 2D-1
Brawling 6D-1, stamina 9D-1, swimming 4D-2
TECHNICAL 3D
Computer programming/repair 7D, demolition 6D-2, droid programming 6D, first aid 3D, security 8D
Force Points: 5
Dark Side Points: 4
Character Points: 36
Move: 10
Equipment: Comlink, datapad

Capsule: The enigmatic alien known as Thrawn comes from an unknown and undisclosed world far in the Unknown Regions. His species has not been encountered before in recorded surveys, and he has revealed little of his true origins. Thrawn's own people exiled him to a planet far from their own, the punishment for advocating a more preemptive and aggressive approach to dealing with his people's adversaries. He lived alone and with few amenities, until discovered by an Imperial Victory Star Destroyer chasing smugglers into the Unknown Regions. Seeing this contact as a means to escape exile, Thrawn inveigled himself onto the Strikefoaht through a series of short, well-planned and deceptive strikes against Imperial ground forces. When Captain Parck discovered Thrawn, he was impressed with the alien's tactical ability and returned to Coruscant to present his new find to the Emperor. (For the complete story of how Captain Parck discovered Thrawn, see "Mist Encounter" in Star Wars Adventure Journal #7.)

Despite his prejudices against aliens, the Emperor saw the same qualities Captain Parck had identified: ruthless cunning, meticulous planning, and an uncanny ability to predict the actions of his adversaries. With Parck as his mentor and later his aide, Thrawn was given private Academy training, rising rapidly through the ranks to become a command officer. Thrawn's visionary tactics won him the respect of his subordinates, but ultimately fostered a growing animosity with his peers and superiors. When Thrawn became bold enough to try manipulating Imperial Court politics, the jealous Imperial Advisors and their factions impatiently ceased their in-fighting and united against him. The Emperor was lenient. Rather than executing the alien, he exiled the brilliant tactician and any others vaguely associated with him on a mission into the Unknown Region. Thrawn and his military advisors packed their bags, boarded the Star Destroyer Admonitor, and began the long and weary trip which was to be their exile.
Yet Thrawn seemed to act as if he were still diligently serving the Emperor. He treated every obstacle as an intriguing challenge to solve. Thrawn seemed to know where they were going in their Unknown Region survey, as if he had been there before and was now searching for something. As usual, few accurately speculated what Thrawn's true intentions are. And although his methods are often unorthodox and misleading (even to his own officers), Thrawn has commanded through his intimidating presence and his persistent tactical ability.

Commander Voss Parck

Type: Imperial Navy Commander
DEXTERITY 2D+2
Blaster 5D, dodge 4D
KNOWLEDGE 3D-1
Alien species 6D-2, bureaucracy 8D, cultures 7D, intimidation 7D, languages 8D, law enforcement 6D, planetary systems 7D-2, tactics 8D-2, capital ships 8D-2
MECHANICAL 3D-1
Astrogation 9D-2, capital ship piloting 8D, communications 6D, sensors 6D-2
PERCEPTION 3D-2
Bargain 7D-2, command 9D, investigation 8D, persuasion 8D, search 6D
STRENGTH 2D+1
TECHNICAL 2D-2
Computer programming/repair 5D, security 4D
Force Points: 3
Dark Side Points: 1
Character Points: 20
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink

Capsule: Parck comes from a long and proud lineage of capital ship commanders. He was born into a prominent and wealthy family on Corulag, and attended the Corulag Academy with his many siblings and cousins. In the Navy he was quickly promoted for distinguished service,
and eventually gained command of the Victory Star Destroyer Strickland. Although Parck was initially a low-ranking officer, circumstances soon catapulted him to the attention of the Emperor. While chasing smugglers into the Unknown Regions, he inadvertently discovered Thrawn, a charismatic alien exiled to an uncharted world. Taking Thrawn under his wing, Parck decided to bring this tactical genius to the Emperor’s attention. It was a great risk, for the Emperor’s disdain for aliens was well known, but Parck was persistent.

Since then Parck has risen with Thrawn, overseeing his private training at the Academy, and acting first as his mentor and later as his assistant. Parck stood by Thrawn’s side, learning what he could from the alien and the Emperor found so fascinating. He rode on Thrawn’s reputation and success, rising to prominence in the Imperial Court. But this fame also brought Parck many enemies among the Moffs, Grand Admirals, and Advisors who spent decades working their way to the Emperor’s antechambers. They resented Parck for his audacity in bringing an alien into their inner circle. They manipulated recent events to cause Parck and Thrawn to fall from Imperial favor... or so it seems. Throughout the controversy Parck stood by Thrawn’s side, knowing that the alien had greater plans than he was revealing.

Parck now serves as Thrawn’s adjutant aboard the Admonitor, serving his master’s sentence of exile in the Unknown Regions. He is fully aware that the conspiracy at the Imperial Court, his demotion and mission to the Unknown Regions are all part of Thrawn’s greater plan. Parck gives the appearance of cool confidence in both himself and Thrawn. He carries out the Admiral’s orders without question, knowing that while Parck might not understand the mysterious alien’s tactics, they are all part of a grander scheme. He knows Thrawn doesn’t always plan his tactics by the regulations, and admires him for that. To Parck, Thrawn is the sharp officer, cool diplomat, and cunning tactician he himself strives to be.

**Captain Dagon Niriz**

Type: Imperial Star Destroyer Captain

**DEXTERITY 2D-2**

- Blaster 4D
- KNOWLEDGE 3D-1
  - Bureaucracy 6D-1, law enforcement 7D, planetary systems 6D, tactics: capital ships 6D
- MECHANICAL 3D-1
  - Astrogation 6D, capital ship engineering 5D-2, capital ship piloting 7D, capital ship shields 6D, communications 5D, repulsorlift operation 4D-1, sensors 5D
- PERCEPTION 3D-2
  - Command 6D, investigation 6D, persuasion 5D-2
- STRENGTH 2D-1
- TECHNICAL 2D-2
  - Computer programming/repair 5D, first aid 3D-2, security 5D-2

**Force Points:** 6

**Move:** 10

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

**Career:** Like Parck, Captain Niriz comes from a long and proud lineage of Naval officers. He was pressured to enter the Academy by his family, and has tried his best to succeed. Niriz has since allowed his zeal in serving the Empire to motivate him. Much of his practical command and tactical experience was gleaned from reading manuals and implementing what he learned during his few months in his initial post aboard a Star Destroyer. Niriz was quick to reconsider situations and order appropriate action as standard regulations would warrant. His dutiful service was soon rewarded. After only a few months as a Star Destroyer captain, he was transferred to a military affairs bureau on Coruscant, analyzing situation reports from confrontations around the galaxy and advising high-level officers.

But everything changed when he became involved with Thrawn and Parck. The two quickly rose within the Emperor’s Court. Niriz was only marginally involved in their machinations. But when Thrawn’s star fell, everyone associated with the alien admiral was transferred to the Admonitor and sent off into the Unknown Regions. For Niriz, assignment aboard the Admonitor was part embarrassment and part benefit. He was ashamed to be associated with Imperial Court scandal. But he was truly happy to be back on a Star Destroyer bridge, even if his mission seemed little more than an exile.

Lately Niriz has found the command arrangement aboard the Admonitor difficult. He was always mindful of his actions and their consequences, especially regarding the chain of command. But Niriz quickly found himself torn between loyalty to his superior officers and adherence to Imperial procedures and tactics. More often he found orders given in response to threats were countermanded by Thrawn, who seemed to have alternate plans for dealing with hostiles. The confrontation with the Ewok pirates, however, has changed Niriz’s outlook. While Niriz commands by the regulations, Thrawn often implements unorthodox strategies to attain his ends. Niriz feels that in time he can learn much from Thrawn that no other mentor could teach him.

**General Larr Haveral**

Type: Imperial General

**DEXTERITY 3D-2**

- Blaster 5D-2, blaster artillery 4D, brawling parry 4D-2, dodge 5D, grenade 4D, vehicle blasters 5D
- KNOWLEDGE 2D-1
  - Bureaucracy 4D, intimidation 5D-1, planetary systems 3D-1, survival 4D, tactics: ground assault 5D, willpower 3D-2
- MECHANICAL 3D-1
  - Communications 4D, repulsorlift operation 5D-1, sensors 4D, walker operation 5D
- PERCEPTION 2D-2
  - Command 5D, investigation 4D, persuasion 6D, search 4D-2
- STRENGTH 3D-1
  - Brawling 5D, stamina 4D-1
- TECHNICAL 2D-2
  - Blaster repair 4D, demolition 3D-2, first aid 4D-2

**Force Points:** 6

**Move:** 10

**Equipment:** Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, datapad
Force Points: 1  
Character Points: 3  
Move: 10  
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink

Capsule: General Haverel is commander of the *Admonitor*'s ground troops. However, he often interferes in Naval command affairs, deeming it a necessity to be appraised of tactical situations from the very beginning. He likes to be in complete control of his operations, and demands to be fully informed of any developments, whether or not they actually affect his duties as ground force commander. Haverel can be hot-headed in situations where he feels others have made substandard tactical decisions. He sometimes questions orders, especially when they endanger his own soldiers.

Of all the officers sent with Thrawn on exile, Haverel is perhaps the most resentful. He had little to do with the alien and his scheme to capture Coruscant. It was Haverel's misfortune that he and his troops happened to be stationed on the *Admonitor* when the orders came that they were to resupply at Coruscant and begin a mission to the Unknown Region; a mission of indeterminate length. He and his troopers have seen little action during the journey from the Core Worlds to the Unknown Region. Although Haverel has little power over Naval matters, he has since bullied his way into several debates with the *Admonitor*'s command staff, often openly challenging Thrawn's approach to tactical situations. Haverel doesn't like Thrawn's roundabout plans. The general prefers a straight confrontation rather than subterfuge and deception.

### Zeta-Class Long-Range Shuttle

**Craft:** Telgorn Corp Long-Range Shuttle  
**Type:** Zeta-class long-range shuttle  
**Scale:** Starfighter  
**Length:** 35 meters  
**Skill:** Space transports  
**Crew:** 2  
**Crew Skill:** Astrogation 2D-2, space transports 4D-2  
**Passengers:** 10  
**Cargo Capacity:** 25 metric tons  
**Consumables:** 4 months  
**Cost:** Not available for sale  
**Hyperdrive Multiplier:** 1x  
**Hyperdrive Backup:** s8  
**Nav Computer:** Yes  
**Maneuverability:** 1D-2  
**Space:** 7  
**Atmosphere:** 350: 1,000 kmh

**Hull:** 3D-2  
**Shields:** 2D  
**Sensors:**  
**Passive:** 20/D  
**Scan:** 40/D  
**Search:** 60/D  
**Focus:** 3/4D  
**Weaponry:**  
**2 Laser Cannons (fire-linked)**  
**Fire Arc:** Front  
**Skill:** Starship gunnery  
**Fire Control:** 2D  
**Space Range:** 1-3/12/25  
**Atmosphere Range:** 100-300/1.2/2.5 km  
**Damage:** 5D

Capsule: Zeta-class shuttles are long-range personnel transports built more for speed and distance than for combat maneuvers. They were originally included in the starship complement on Victory-class Star Destroyers, but have since been widely replaced throughout the Imperial Fleet by the newer, more versatile Lambda-class shuttles.

The Zeta shuttles are blocky transports with large port and starboard fuel "tanks" – external storage containers which contain additional fuel cells and life-support components for particularly long journeys. The "tanks" are modular, and can quickly be removed and replaced with fresh ones during stopovers on urgent flights.

Admiral Thrawn specifically requested that at least one of these vessels be stationed aboard the *Admonitor* during his sojourn into the Unknown Regions. Some of his support staff assumed this might be intended for use if Thrawn were ever summoned back to Coruscant on short notice — if the alien were ever recalled from exile and forgiven.

### The Ebruchi Pirates

Few know the origins of the Ebruchi Pirates, an expansive and aggressive group which prowls the edges of the Unknown Regions, seeking to dominate what little commercial and military traffic might pass there. Little more than barbaric nomads, they wander between a series of systems they’ve discovered, hunting for stray ships foolish enough to enter from Wild Space and the Outer Rim Territories. These nomadic plunderers roam in packs of immense starships, sending scout squadrons ahead to prey on anyone unwary enough to stumble into their path. The Ebruchi base ships are large and sluggish, but sport impressive weapons salvaged from wrecks and captured vessels. The scout ships are armed frigates, the true backbone of Ebruchi fleets. Their fighters are bulky and slow; however, their menacing array of weapons and sensor pods often intimidate other smaller craft.

Several large groups of Ebruchi prowl the Unknown Regions’ frontiers. The power of these pirates is well-known to the inhabit-
ants of several nearby systems. Although these species have access to spacecraft, they do not have the numbers nor the determination to fight the savage Ehruchi. Instead, they ensure their safety by keeping the Ehruchi happy with tribute of consumables, starship components, and weapons. In return, the pirates offer safe passage within their sphere of influence, so long as it does not threaten their own activities. Those who are not intimidated by the Ehruchi are soon bullied or blasted into slavery, their worlds ravaged and looted. The pirates are not interested in building any great civilization, nor are they searching for a homeland of their own — they are simply motivated by some primeval urge to dominate others by controlling space within systems and along the few trade routes that exist.

The Ehruchi are a puzzling group in many other ways. They are much more comfortable crammed into the tight passages of starships than out in open terrain. They have existed so long in space that even when planetside they use downed spacecraft as fortresses, bases, and dwellings. Ehruchi maintain a few small supply and maintenance bases on worlds within their space, but remain isolated from the indigenous populations. The Ehruchi still venture into the open on occasion — usually to gather tribute from the locals — but prefer the safety and comfort of the shipboard environment they’ve lived in for so long.

Some speculate the original Ehruchi homeworld was somehow destroyed by war or natural cataclysm, one which hordes of survivors somehow managed to avoid by fleeing to the stars. Their own history rarely mentions defeat; it is perhaps this collective arrogance that makes the Ehruchi so dangerous at times. Many within the pirate band are of the same species, also called the Ehruchi — repulsive by human standards, with noseless and hairless heads, oval eyes set too far apart, and puckering mouths with wriggling tentacles. However, over time the pirates have accepted others into their numbers; mostly outcast aliens from nearby Unknown Regions systems.

Despite their origins, the Ehruchi seem sophisticated enough in their technology, even if it is somewhat inferior to Imperial standards. They rely heavily on it, not only for their survival in space, but for their aggressive conquests. However, it often seems as if the pirates stole and pillaged most of their technology over time rather than developing it on their own. Some of their base ships have particularly ancient specimens of machines and weaponry rarely seen in Imperial space.

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**Creysis**

**Type:** Ehruchi Pirate Captain

**DETERMINITY 2D**

Archaeic guns 3D, blaster 4D—2, dodge 4D, melee combat 4D—2, melee parry 4D

**KNOWLEDGE 3D—1**

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

**MECHANICAL 4D—2**

Archaeic starship piloting 5D, astrogation 3D, capital ship piloting 7D

**PERCEPTION 2D—2**

Bluff 4D, command (4D—1), con 5D, gambling 4D—2, investigation 3D—2, persuasion 4D—2

**STRENGTH 3D**

**TECHNICAL 2D**

**Force Points:** 1

**Dark Side Points:** 2

**Character Points:** 6

**Move:** 10

**Equipment:** Blast gun (4D—2), jeweled pendant

**Capsule:** Creysis is the captain of a scout squadron for one vast clan of Ehruchi pirates. He rules with an iron fist when necessary, but is prudent enough to know when his underlings need firm prodding or a bash on the head. Creysis keeps a cadre of trusted bodyguards and lieutenants surrounding him at all times. Sometimes they offer counsel, but more often they protect Creysis and help add to his intimidating presence. The Ehruchi pirate captain can be very blunt and straightforward, especially in dealing with strangers to his region of space. He knows what he and his pirate clan want, and he’ll go to any lengths to take it by force or deception.

Creysis is just one of several pirate captains subordinate to the commander of this Ehruchi clan. His scout group patrols the systems near the clan base ship, harassing any space traffic there and collecting tribute from peoples indigenous to those systems. Creysis can afford to be a bully among his own scout squadron, for he must often humble himself in the face of his commander. Both are typical examples of Ehruchi pirate rule through power, threats and display of strength.

Creysis is a typical Ehruchi, with tentacled pucker-mouth, widely spaced oval eyes, with a somewhat minisshaped head. He dresses in a long vest of skins sewed together; a means of furthering his barbaric appearance. Creysis likes beautiful or deadly items. He wears a jewel-encrusted gold pendant around his neck, and carries a blast gun at his side: an archaic weapon which fires chemical cartridges filled with explosives, shrapnel, and other hazardous substances.

*Game information created by Peter Schweighofer based on Timothy Zahn's "Command Decision."*
The Farrimmer Cafe

By Jean Rabe and J. Allan Fawcett
Illustrations by Christopher Trevas

The Farrimmer Cafe is an eating and drinking establishment where all manners of beings stop to fill their bellies with various delectables and quench their thirst for juicy gossip and excitement. The cafe is not usually a destination in and of itself. It is merely a stopover, a place between a lot of other places. And though there are a few repeat customers from time to time, there are no "regulars." Pilots can be found here, passing the hours until their ships are repaired and fueled in the nearby docking bay. There's frequently a spy or two lurking at one of the back tables waiting for some riveting tidbit that will net him a bonus from whatever side he's working for at the time. It's not unusual to find smugglers and bounty hunters on the lookout for hauling contracts and wanted men respectively. And, of course, there are always a few basically good and honest folks around who only want something to eat.

The proprietor is H'niib Statemast, an aging Flivian who purchased the Farrimmer a few years ago. He was tired of roaming the galaxy, and so he traded his stock light freighter for the cafe. The previous proprietor of the Farrimmer was tired of staying put, so it seemed like a relatively perfect arrangement — at the time. But H'niib is getting itchy feet, and he suspects he got the worse end of the deal.

H'niib splits shifts at the place with his partner, Grosteech, a Veethree of unknown age. The pair are assisted by two protocol droids which work as waiters and bartenders and which are always willing to lend a metal ear to sorrowful customers. A reprogrammed assassin droid serves as the bouncer, and two chef-droids round out the crew. The memory banks of the latter two droids are filled with several thousand recipes. H'niib and Grosteech split the Farrimmer profits 65/35, and have been doing quite well for themselves, as they never have to pay the help, and they claim all belongings of beings who are killed in the numerous scuffles on the premises.

The episodes below can happen in one day at the cafe, they can spread out over several visits, or they could take place at other establishments in a gamemaster's campaign.

Episode One: Now Serving …

Read aloud:

"For home cooking at its finest, visit the Farrimmer Cafe. Reasonable prices, congenial atmosphere. Have your spaceship repaired while you feast. H'niib Statemast, proprietor."

So reads the sign around the old Mynock 7 Space Station, and so repeats the bulletins that are broadcast at least hourly. The messages are in many different languages, as the cafe caters to a variety of species, and the words vary from time to time — though the theme remains the same. Visit the cafe.

Whether it was the enticing bulletins or your loudly growling bellies that brought you here is irrelevant. Here you stand — outside a place called the Farrimmer Cafe. It sits deep in the bowels of the Mynock 7 Space Station, just a short hike from the hangar bay.

The cafe doesn't look like much. And just like the few other businesses around, its facade is weathered metal. Painted images
of dozens of delicacies cover almost every centimeter of the exterior, except for the door, and you suspect that at one time the renderings were made to look appetizing. Now they look faded and chipped.

Still, the variety of smells wafting about are tempting. You pick out the scents of Yagai spiced dindra, Ukian spring-fruit pod delight, and the always popular Ssvreni treat — seasoned enyak bobs over teerlop-zikody.

Pondering what else the menu might proffer, you stride inside. The interior is dimly lit, and a cloud of smoke — perhaps from the kitchen — hovers just below the gunmetal-colored ceiling. The glowbeams spaced evenly about walls cluttered with paintings, wanted posters, and trinkets, reveal that the cafe is simply furnished. Chairs, a collection of badly battered and mismatched pilot and passenger seats — no doubt salvaged from a variety of abandoned ships — are arranged around what is passing for tables. The latter consist of relatively flat pieces of metal, such as damaged starfighter wing plates, surgical tables, doors, and floor panels, all set atop casks and barrels that likely once held spirits.

There are about a dozen patrons, half of them humans gathered around a table that looks like a section of a loading ramp. A Devaronian lounges calmly by himself in a high-backed chair in the far corner. A trio of Mrisi, likely scholars or politicians, talk at a table near the center of the room. As one, the Mrisi look up, regard you briefly with mild interest, then resume their quiet discussion.

The other two patrons, a Quaren and a Twi'lek, stand at the back of the room by a long bar made of a conglomeration of ship parts. Behind it is a Flavian, who raises a limb to greet you.

The Flavian, a desert quadruped, stands on his thick hind legs and cleans glasses with his three-toed front feet.

Cocking his equine head your direction, he snorts. Immediately, a golden-hued protocol droid appears from behind a curtain of metal beads at the back of the room and squeakily waddles toward you.

"Welcome, gentle beings, to the Farrimmer. I am your waiter. Treedee. Here is your table, one I recently cleaned. I'll give you a few moments, then I'll be back to take your order."

As you sit, a panel lights up the ceiling above you. Words slowly scroll across it, proclaiming the specials of the day. It begins in Basic, then it shifts to Mon Calamari, Klatooinian, Rodian, and Talz.

The Patrons
The characters might decide to mingle and chat with the other customers:

The half-dozen humans are passengers aboard a space liner that is being refitted with a series of hydroponic thermoautoes. Not wanting to stay around the hangar bay, they came here for something unusual to eat. Tourists, they enjoy watching non-humans and listening to whatever gossip is drifting their way. They have no useful information for the characters.

The trio of Mrisi was studying old archaeological digs along the Outer Rim, but their funding ran out. They are searching for a very wealthy patron who might finance more of their excavations. They believe they have found the site of an old human settlement that relied on mental powers, rather than devices, for transportation. They base their assumption on sculptures they recently uncovered and poems they unearthed. They are interested only in old things and cultures, and they do not talk about war, politics, and other such vagaries.

The Devaronian says his name is Aterph and that he ran away from home... couldn't handle his nagging wife. He complains at great length about this horrid woman to anyone who is willing to listen. And he likewise listens to anyone else complaining about their mates or failed romantic encounters. However, this Devaronian is not who he claims to be. His true nature is revealed later.

The Quaren and Twi'lek, Gerthylament and Ryo, are a talkative pair of smugglers looking for a new contract. Business has been slow lately, so they have been spending a lot of time in the cafe. They are certain that sooner or later a promising business proposition will walk through the door. If they are approached for casual conversation, they are quick to discuss the price of fuel, political events along the Outer Rim, and the need to find work. They do not reveal their professions unless a deal presents itself. They are merely transportation experts. However, they do their best to discover the occupations of everyone in the establishment.

The Cafe Staff

Hnib Statermast
Type: Old Flavian Cafe Owner
DEXTERITY 2D+1
Blaster 4D, dodge 4D-2, melee combat 3D-1, melee parry 3D
KNOWLEDGE 3D
The Farrimber Cafe

Alien species 4D-1, bureaucracy 3D-2, business 6D, languages 5D, streetwise 4D

MECHANICAL 2D-1
Astrogation 2D-2, space transports 3D-2, starship piloting 3D

PERCEPTION 3D-2
Barter 4D-2, con 4D, persuasion 4D-2, search 4D

STRENGTH 2D-2
Brawling 3D-2, lifting 3D, stamina 3D-2

TECHNICAL 4D
First aid 4D, droid repair 5D-1, ground vehicle repair 4D-2, repulsorlift repair 5D, security 5D, space transports repair 5D-1

Force Points: 1
Character Points: 7
Move: 8

Capsule: H'niib is a likeable sort. A crusty, old spacer, he settled down when he traded his ship for the Farrimber Cafe. That was several years ago. And for the first few years, he was happy with the arrangement. But then the place began to wear on him, and he began thinking he got the worse end of the deal. He's getting itchy feet, thinking about moving on, but he wants to get a fair price for the cafe — or a fair ship. His partner doesn't have enough credits — the Vaathkree goes through credits like they were spiced rum. The Vaathkree also doesn't quite have the head for business, and H'niib worries that the cafe would fall into ruin. He's spent too many years here to let that happen. So he's biding his time and waiting for an affluent entrepreneur to come along.

He's been a lot of places, visiting desert worlds most often. He's been to Tatooine several times and likes the spaceport, because if you know where to shop you can get deals on all manner of things.

H'niib is quick to talk to paying customers, but he's tight-lipped to people who only stop by for information and aren't interested in buying anything to eat or drink. He'll discuss intergalactic politics, ships, asteroid clusters, the food industry, desert worlds, and just about anything else his customers can think of. He's got a sympathetic ear, a soft shoulder, and plenty of good advice to latch onto. He's a relatively peaceful sort, though he realizes there will be fights in his place from time to time — due to some of the clientele he attracts. He claims the possessions of any who die in his establishment. If there are no fatalities, he forces the combatants to pay for damages — and a little more to pay for his trouble.

Gростteek

Type: Ancient Vaathkree

DEXTERITY 3D

Brawling parry 6D-2, dodge 4D

KNOWLEDGE 2D-2

Alien species 4D-2, intimidation 3D-2, languages 4D, streetwise 5D-1

MECHANICAL 2D

Beast riding 2D-2, repulsorlift operation 3D
**The Farrimmer Cafe**

Capsule: Treedee was owned by one of the engineers in the Mynock 7 hangar bay and was frequently told to monitor communications. While he was trained to handle the communications panels, he often got side-tracked listening to the various conversations going on in the bay. The irate engineer put him up for sale, and H'nib purchased him. The Flivian was having a hard time keeping waiters, so he decided buying one would fit his needs. Treedee is much happier mingling with diners than being stuck at a communications panel. He enjoys chatting, indulges himself in overhearing others conversations, and is a general busy-body.

He came by the name Treedee because H'nib started calling him Maître d', which eventually was shortened to Treedee. He adores tips, and he hides them away in a storage compartment in his right leg until he has enough for a full-treatment oil bath. He thinks the Flivian is oblivious to the storage compartment and his penchant for oil baths, but H'nib knows what the droid is up to. In fact, the Flivian is quick to drop a credit on a table when the departing customers left no tip — provided he can do so without the droid spotting him.

- **H-9PO (Silverhand)**
  
  **Type:** Droidq 79 Human-Cyborg Relations Droid  
  **DEXTERITY 2D**  
  **KNOWLEDGE 3D**  
  Cultures 4D-2, forgery 4D-2, languages 6D, streetwise 4D-2, value 6D  
  **MECHANICAL 1D**  
  **PERCEPTION 2D**  
  Gambling 4D, search 3D-2, sneak 5D-2  
  **STRENGTH 2D**  
  Lifting 3D  
  **TECHNICAL 1D**  
  Equipped With:  
  - Humanoid body (two arms, two legs, head)  
  - Two visual and two auditory sensors — human range  
  - Vocabulary/speech/sound system  
  - Broad-band antenna receiver  
  - H'9 Droid Brain  
  - TranLang 1 Communication node with 500,000 languages  
  **Size:** 1.65 meters tall

Capsule: H-9PO, an ancient protocol droid model, came into H'nib's service when his previous owner was killed outside the Farrimmer. The Flivian took the droid in and put him to work. H'nib nicknamed him Silverhand because the fingers of his right hand are silver and are from a newer model droid. H'9 accepted the moniker and the job — even though he is not especially fond of this type of work.

His previous owner was a gambler who had the droid reprogrammed to fit into his work; however, H'9's owner was prone to cheating, and someone he cheated of a lot of credits caught up to him outside the Farrimmer. H'9 was also caught in the blaster fire, where he lost part of his hand. H'nib purchased replacement parts from a customer, and he fixed H'9 up so he was practically as good as new.

The droid would rather be in a casino, but he enjoys the Flivian's and the old Vaathkree's companionship. Their company is safer than being with the likes of his former master. And the Mynock 7 Space Station promises that his skills will be put to use again. A casino is scheduled to open across from the cafe within the next several months. H'9 has been saving his tips and plans to wager them there.

H'9 enjoys watching any gambling games that go on in the cafe, and he goes out of his way to wait on those tables. From time to time he'll whisper words of advice to the various gamblers. But he's careful to make sure H'nib doesn't see him. The droid would prefer his owner not know about the gambling programs and his own plans for wagering when the casino opens up across from the Farrimmer.

- **A5**
  
  **Model:** Converted A5-series Assassin Droid  
  **DEXTERITY 2D**  
  **KNOWLEDGE 1D**  
  Languages 4D, streetwise 5D  
  **MECHANICAL 1D**  
  **PERCEPTION 2D**  
  Search 3D-2, sneak 5D  
  **STRENGTH 2D**  
  Brawling 5D, lifting 4D  
  **TECHNICAL 1D**  
  Equipped With:  
  - Humanoid torso (two arms, head, torso)  
  - Repulsorlift propulsion unit  
  - Armor plating (10D to all locations)  
  - Internal blaster rifle (5D damage, 5/30/100/200, mounted on right forearm)  
  - Two visual and two auditory sensors  
  - Vocabulary/speech system  
  - Broad-band antenna receiver  
  **Move:** 8  
  **Size:** 1.6 meters tall

Capsule: A5 was a bargain. Grostek was making his rounds of the station when he came across a smuggler who was looking to unload some of his cargo. The smuggler was worried about keeping an assassin droid in his hold, so he sold it to the old Vaathkree for only a few hundred credits. Grostek spent the next several months reprogramming it in his spare time and convincing H'nib it was safe enough to keep in the cafe. The finished product is A5 the bouncer. The droid only uses its blaster as a...
last resort — when it appears the old Vaathkree and the Flivian are in danger. Otherwise, AS goes hand-to-hand with the offenders and tosses them out the front door.

**The Food and Beverages**

If the characters order any of the specials of the day, they find the food superb. The cost of any meal ranges from one to 10 credits. The beverage menu is much simpler, and may be supplemented with additional selections: luum, spiced luum, smuggler’s ale, Gingerly grog, horstberry brandy, horstberry cider, Lerothek milk, spirevine tea, Yartigan well water, Quarren sea dew, weg brew, passion fruit syrup, snig, boiled snig, Tatooine yagbitter, Harmon Zizzlebrew, Kenley’s lager, and bendberry dark. Prices are one to three credits a mug, eight to 30 credits a bottle.

**Episode Two: There Is No Motion**

Read aloud:

“Have you made up your minds, gentle beings? I hearfully recommend the Tenbah Squid Pie with Roosha topping. It is just simply ... oh dear, I will have to come back for your order later.”

Treedee glances at the front door, looks toward the barkeep, then quickly squeaks toward the back of the cafe. Another protocol droid, this one an older model, joins Treedee, and a third droid separates itself from the room’s shadows and floats through the beaded curtain in the back. The last droid moved so fast, you couldn’t quite make out all its features or determine its make, but it looked a bit like an assassin droid with a couple of odd attachments here and there.

The chattering in the Farrimmer stops, and you forget about the droids for a moment and turn your attention to the front door. A trio of grizzled-looking Correllians in faded brown robes slowly shuffles inside.

The Corellians, Renthor, Kyn, and Ulbert, have been here twice before — which is why the droids have made themselves scarce. The droids want to remain intact.

Renthor, Kyn, and Ulbert are former pupils of an ancient Force-user, though they have no Force powers and are not Force-sensitive. They studied philosophy from the old man because they believed strongly in his doctrines of “peace through pieces.” Unfortunately, the old Force-user was not quite sane, and the oblivious Corellian trio doted on his every word.

The Force-user abhorred blasters and any type of energy weapon, and as the years passed he became fanatical about destroying all mechanical devices. He even destroyed his lightsaber, as it had mechanical components.

His hatred of machines, coupled with his tendency to corrupt Jedi sayings, including the Jedi oath, has been adopted by his Corellian pupils. A segment of the oath — “There is no emotion, there is only peace” — was his favorite. But his version was — “There is no motion, there is only pieces.” By tearing blasters into pieces, there is peace.

Following their teacher’s instructions, the three Corellians have been traveling between space stations and planets, looking for people who believe in the Force. They talk at length to those who believe in the Force, then they try to dismantle anything mechanical those individuals own.

Then there will be no motion — only pieces.

The only exception to their dismantling is space ships and stations. Their teacher explained ships are necessary so they can travel about and carry out the Jedi mission. And dismantling space stations would only kill those aboard. Killing is wrong, the ancient Force-user emphasized.

Read aloud:

You watch the three men drift from table to table, idly chatting. The Misriss shake their heads at the men, and you hear a mumbled, “No, sorry.”

The humans likewise shake their heads, then they point the men toward your table. After a moment, the Corellians come your way.

“Do you believe in the power of the Force?” the tallest Corellian asks as he pulls up a chair.

“Do you believe there’s an energy that binds us together?” another adds.

They look at you expectantly.

If the characters say they don’t believe in the Force, the Corellians sadly shake their heads and leave. They visit with the Devorian for a few moments, then they exit the cafe, and the droids come back out to wait on the customers.

However, if any of the characters admit they believe in the Force, the Corellians appear instantly relieved. Read aloud:

“Too many in this part of the galaxy have no regard for the awesome power of the Force,” the tall Corellian says.
"We were fortunate to study under an ancient Jedi," another continues. "When he died we took it upon ourselves to carry out his orders and follow his teachings."

"Yes, there is no motion," the third interjects, "I am Kym. And this is Ulbert."

"The Force is all around us," Ulbert states. "Its energy flows through us and gives us life and purpose. The Force is more powerful than any government."

"There is no motion," the tall one interrupts again. "My name is Renthor."

"Yes, there is no motion," the one named Kym agrees. "Do you carry weapons? May we see them that we may enhance them and make them better in the way of the Force?"

Of course, their interpretation of making them better is to destroy them — and to destroy anything else mechanical, including cybernetic body parts.

If the characters present their blasters, the Corellians take them and try to destroy them. They've been at this a while, so they are quick and efficient. If the characters are openly carrying weapons but do not draw them or hand them over, the Corellians use their pick pocket or brawling skills to grab them. A Moderate roll means success.

The Corellians fight only to defend themselves, and they use brawling skills. They do not use metal weapons.

**Renthor.** All stats are 2D except: dodge 6D+2, brawling parry 6D, perception 3D, bang 4D, con 4D-2, persuasion 5D, search 5D, Strength 2D-2, brawling 6D-1, stamina 5D-2. Move: 10.

**Ulbert.** All stats are 2D except: Dexterity 3D, dodge 5D-2, brawling parry 8D, Perception 4D, command 6D-2, gambling 5D, persuasion 6D, Strength 3D-2, brawling 7D-2. Move: 10.

**Kym.** All stats are 2D except: dodge 4D, brawling parry 7D, perception 3D, bang 4D, con 4D-2, persuasion 4D, search 4D, Strength 3D, brawling 6D, stamina 5D. Move: 10.

For a Corellian to destroy or damage something, he must make a brawling attack. Below are a list of weapons and devices, and next to them the brawling Difficulty and number of rounds needed to destroy it.

**Weapons damaged by the Corellians can be repaired with a Difficult blaster repair roll.** Characters are allowed a Perception roll to be alerted to the Corellians' intentions. A Moderate roll allows the perceptive characters to take quick action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>Brawling Difficulty</th>
<th>Rounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comlink</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Datapad</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microbinoculars</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording rod</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lightsaber</td>
<td>Heroic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold-out blaster</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting blaster</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaster pistol</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy blaster</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaster carbine</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaster rifle</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting rifle</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowcaster</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocol droid</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2 droid</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the characters overcome the Corellians, the three explain they really were just trying to carry out their mentor's wishes. They explain in detail the doctrine of "There is no motion, there is only pieces."

The characters can release the Corellians or turn them over to the spaceport security. Killing the Corellians is severely frowned upon and results in a jail sentence. The Corellians were unarmed. Their possessions include a couple of handfuls of credits and a few broken gears and cracked circuit boards.

**Episode Three: Such A Deal**

A few moments after the Corellians have been taken care of, Silverhand and Treeade return to waiting on customers, and the bouncer droid moves to stand by the kitchen door. Now the characters can get a good look at this droid. It definitely is an assassin droid, but it obviously has been tinkered with.

Treeade brings the characters whatever they ordered. He fusses over each one, giving the character a napkin, pushing him closer to
the table, adjusting the utensils and plates. This is Treede’s attempt to garner bigger tips.

As they start to dig into their meals, an elderly man and a protocol droid enter the cafe. They are a successful team of con artists who travel from station to station collecting credits from unsuspecting marks.

Their con is simple: the old man claims that his son was killed in a space accident and that he inherited this droid. Seeing that he has no need for a droid, the man tries to convince the heroes to buy it.

The hook in this scam is that the droid is programmed to look for opportunities to speak away from its “new” masters and return to the old man. When the odd pair enters the cafe, use the following description to set the scene:

The automatic doors slide open and an strange pair walks into the cafe. The first figure is an elderly human dressed in dusty gray robes. He leans on an old wooden cane. His companion is a shiny protocol droid with bright yellow eyes and a slight bluish tint to its metallic skin.

The droid walks several paces behind the old man, waiting patiently for him to navigate around the tables.

After a few moments, the two start mingling with the humans and the Mrissi, then they head toward your table.

“Hello friends, my name is Sleightan and this is my, ah, er, droid L7-BO. He is real smart and can speak a whole bunch of languages and knows all about aliens from all across the galaxy. Now I am sure that a group a space-faring fellas like yourselves could use a droid like this. I’d like to sell him to ya, how about 3,000 credits? I know it may sound like a lot, but he is all I got left after the Empire took away everything I owned. What do ya say?”

Sleightan is very good at reading people, and he has decided that the heroes are fair game for a “hard-luck” sell.

He is pretending to be an old spacer down on his luck with only this protocol droid left between him and a life of poverty. He’s actually fairly wealthy. But he keeps his credits elsewhere. If asked about where he got the droid, Sleightan scowls, purses his lips, and pulls his chair close to the heroes:

“Well, me and L7 don’t go back that far. See, he used to belong to my son, Armbrus, who made his fortune as a pilot, flying things and people all over the Outer Rim for a price. He was an honest man, and he never did no smugglin’ or anything to get in trouble.

Then one day he gets stopped by this Imperial ship, and they say he was hauling engine parts to some far-off world. And I know that to be a lie. Well, the Imperials threw my son in a detention center, and then I get a note from one of those official-looking Imperial bureaucrats that said my son was killed while trying to escape. They confiscated my son’s ship and took nearly everything on board except good old L7, which they said I could have. Seems the Imperials don’t have much use for droids, and neither do I.”

“Without my son sending me a few credits every month, things are getting a little tight. I figure if I could sell L7 for a fair price, I could use the money to make ends meet for a while.”

Sleightan continues telling stories about his son and all the fun times they had flying places when he was younger. He tries to impress upon the heroes the sincerity of his need to sell the droid. He claims to really like the droid, but times are tough. If the heroes won’t buy L7, he says he’ll sell the droid to the Mrissi, but they don’t want to meet his asking price.

Sleightan haggles over the price of the droid only grudgingly. He lowers his price quite a bit, and eventually lets the droid go for a paltry 2,250 credits.

Sleightan. All stats are 2D except: Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D, dodge 5D, Knowledge 3D+2, business 4D+2, streetwise 5D+2, value 4D+2, Mechanical 2D+1, Perception 4D, bargain 5D+2, con 6D+1, persuasion 5D+1, brawling 7D+2, Technical 2D+2, droid programming 4D+2, droid repair 3D+2. Move: 8. Datapad with Imperial letter giving him the protocol droid (forged), holo of his dead son, sporting blaster (3D+1).

If the characters want to speak with the droid, L7 is more than willing to talk. However, the droid is programmed only to speak when spoken to (Sleightan learned a few lessons early). The droid gladly tells the tale of Sleightan’s son, Armbrus, although his renditions tend to be very boring. L7 is fluent in over 4.5 million languages, conversant in several million more, and knows a great deal about alien races and cultures. He also has considerable information on planetary systems and governments. L7’s petite, and appears to be a well-maintained and properly functioning protocol droid.

If the characters acquire L7, Sleightan departs with his newfound wealth.

The droid immediately begins plotting its return to Sleightan in the docking bay.
L7-B0. All stats are 1D except: running 4D, dodge 3D, Knowledge 3D, languages 6D+2, cultures 3D, planetary systems 6D, con 4D, hide 3D, sneak 4D. Move: 7.

L7 will look for an opportunity to make its departure when the characters are occupied by more pressing matters — such as a brawl or an entertaining encounter. The droid uses its sneak skill to help it slip away.

L7 is also a skilled artist and story-teller. If such an opportunity to sneak away does not arise, he begins to complain of pain in his servodio or some other component and excuses himself to see to his own repair. He is a very quick thinker and if one of the characters asks to repair L7, he says that he prefers to visit a local repair shop just around the corner.

If the characters notice L7 making its departure (which is unlikely), they are free to give chase, but they find the droid fleet of foot. L7 knows the spaceport very well and is quite adept at moving through stores.

If all else fails, L7 begins to shout “Help, help, they are with those crazed Corellians and they are trying to disassemble me!” while running through the spaceport. The inhabitants of the spaceport investigate what is happening — the sheer number of them allow L7 the ability to escape.

**Episode Four: Food Fight**

Pandemonium erupts in the kitchen. The chef droids were starting to prepare zdrinbagh, shell-creatures native to a few of the Outer Rim planets. Their meat is prized because it is light and tender. The zdrintarhag are shipped live to keep them fresh — normal practice is for the droids to release a stun gas canister in the kitchen, to which the droids are immune but which puts the zdrintarhag to sleep. Then the droids open the seal on the crate and slaughters the sleeping zdrintarhag. Unfortunately, the gas canister was old and not potent, and the zdrintarhag were not affected. The chef droids had no way of knowing this, as the zdrintarhag weren’t making any noise. So the unsuspecting droids released the seals — and out came two dozen slavering, angry, and very hungry zdrintarhag. Since the droids couldn’t readily be eaten, the zdrintarhag charged through the kitchen and into the dining room. Read aloud:

As you continue enjoying your meal, you overhear a conversation from the kitchen.

"Shall I tell H’nib they’re loose?" you hear a metallic voice say. "No need for that," comes the reply. "He’ll discover in a moment that all of them are free!"

A moment later the beaded curtains clatter and several half-meter high shelled creatures dart into the dining room and toward all the patrons.

The Mriss leap up on their table.

"No!" cries the startled Devoronian. He runs toward the bar and ducks behind it, while at the same time the Flivian bartender picks up a heavy ladle and strides out toward the center of the room.

The protocol droids stand in mute amazement, and the bouncer begins firing its built-in laser at the creatures.

The half-dozen humans stand on their chairs, a few of them taking out metal rods and aiming them at the beasts.

About a dozen of the shelled creatures run toward your table, their four claws clacking as they come. Their pointed teeth gleam with the distance.

The characters have no way of avoiding this fight. If they stand on the table, the zdrintarhag jump up to get them. If they run toward the doors, the zdrintarhag overtake them. The little creatures move faster than any of the patrons. Zdrintarhag are one-half meter tall, and a quarter-meter wide. They have four legs, which give them a move of 16, and they have four claws. Their teeth are razor sharp, and their hide is incredibly thick and resilient against energy attacks.

**Zdrintarhag**
- **Dexterity 30, Dodge 5D, Perception 2D, Strength 3D, **
- **Initiative 7D**
- **Special abilities**: Claws and teeth do STR damage; shells offer +2D bonus against energy attacks. +1D against physical attacks. Move: 16.

Just as the characters get embroiled in the fight, they hear the Flivian yell, "Just stun them if you can, please! If you blast them too hard the chefs can’t make stew out of them!"

The humans, Mrissi, H’nib, and the bouncer take care of one dozen of the beasts. That leaves one dozen for the characters to handle. If it appears the characters cannot handle the zdrintarhag, the bouncer droid assists them.

During the confusion, the Devoronian slips away. He skitters out from the far side of the bar, dashes for the door, and flees without suffering a single zdrintarhag bite.

Further, the protocol droid L7 also tries to capitalize on the zdrintarhag scuffle. He begins by edging toward the door, then
slipping out when it appears the characters are occupied. If L7 makes it outside the cafe, he has effectively escaped and the characters are out their credits.

After the zdrinbaghs have been taken care of, Treedee and Silverhand return to work, and the bouncer starts gathering the carcasses and taking them into the kitchen.

The Mrissi managed to stun two of the beasts, and H'niib gives them a bottle of spiced lwm as a thank-you. The humans stunned three, and H'niib gives them a jug of passion fruit syrup. The bouncer droid stunned seven. If the characters stunned at least seven zdrinbaghs, the grateful Flivian says their meals and drinks are free.

**Episode Five: Tall Tales**

You watch the refitted assassin droid carry the last of the zdrinbagh carcasses behind the beaded curtain and into the kitchen beyond. The protocol droids pick up the overturned chairs, dropped plates, and readjust the tables.

The Flivian wipes off the bar and looks up as an old Vaathkree waddles in the front door. H'niib nods to him, and the Vaathkree makes his way to the bar.

“Something odd happen in here?” the Vaathkree asks.

“A few zdrinbaghs got loose,” H'niib replies. “Another bad stun gas canister. The kitchen is a mess, but nobody died. The customers helped round up the creatures.”

The golden droid with silver fingers passes by your table.


Behind Silverhand, Treedee cleans off the table where the Devaronian was sitting. He collects a substantial tip and sticks it in a compartment in his leg, then moves on to the next table.

“Evening, H'niib, Grosteek.” The voice comes from the front door. The speaker is a Sullustan. Dressed in a flight suit and carrying a satchel, he seems like a pilot fresh in from the landing bay. He selects a table near the front. “Give me the special.”

The droid with silver fingers quickly brings him a steaming bowl. The Sullustan inhales the aroma then looks at you. He grins, scratches his large ears, picks up his bowl and joins you.

“I'm Julept,” he says as he takes a bite of some type of boiled and battered rodent. “My third time here. You been here before? Where you from? Where you bound?”

The Sullustan indulges in some small talk for a few moments, and does a little word-association game to help him remember the characters' names, then he offers them a proposition.

“I like to swap tall tales,” he says. “A good story is worth more than a whole satchel full of credits. So here's what I'll do. I'll tell you a story, and then a couple of you tell me a story in exchange. If your story is better than mine — and we'll let old H'niib be the judge — I'll give you this.”

He reaches into his satchel and pulls out a small box and sets it on the table. Quickly opening it, he points to the gadgets inside. “This is a Biotech Fastflesh Medpac. They're worth about 500 credits and they're great if you find yourself in a fire-fight. Much better than a regular medpac. You tell a better story, it's yours. In fact, I have three of them. You tell three better stories, and they're all yours. But if I tell a better story, you'll have to buy me lunch and one case of spiced lwm. That's 12 bottles to a case at 15 credits each. That'd cost you...”


If the characters don't want to participate, the Sullustan finishes his meal and moves on to visit with the humans, then the Mrissi —
go to the next episode. If the characters want to participate, reveal that the medpacks are indeed what the Sullustan claims and are valued at 500 each. Continue:

"Now, shall I start?"
The Sullustan doesn't wait for a reply.
"Ages ago, in the early days of the Empire, I had a Wookiee friend. He hated anything to do with the Imperials. He piloted a modified light freighter, had it rigged so he didn't need any crew. Well, he'd go around from world to world, starport to starport, and he'd pick up a lot of information about Imperial activities. With me so far? Eventually the Wookiee found the proverbial motherload of juicy gossip. He learned Darth Vader was on Byss, resting at the Emperor's private resort.

"Well, my Wookiee friend had to go. He was certain he could kill them both and walk away without a wound. Wookiees are pretty headstrong.

"I'm not sure how he got past the planet's defenses. Byss is a terrible place, you know. But he did it. And he located the continent — and the very area — where Vader and the Emperor were rumored to be.

"He set his freighter down in the wilds, camouflaged it up real nice, and struck off toward the base he'd spotted from the air. Now, Wookiees are pretty big, so you have to give my friend credit for being able to sneak around so well. Of course, when he got caught sneaking, which happened a couple of times, he'd bash a few heads to keep from being captured.

"To make an interminably long story short, my Wookiee friend managed to capture the Emperor. He trussed him up, stole him over his shoulder, and then he thought he'd explore some more. After several minutes of searching, he discovered Vader's quarters. He snuck into Vader's bed chamber. The old Dark Lord of the Sith was sleeping on a bed, hooked up to some kind of a machine. His black armor, cape, and helmet were on a chair nearby.

"The Wookiee quietly padded over to the gear, picked it up, and disconnected Vader's machine, and crept toward the window. He managed to drop the Emperor and Vader's armor and cape outside, and had just about gotten all the way out the window himself, when a hand grabbed his calf.

"The Wookiee howled and looked. There was Vader, near to naked as anyone but his mother had seen him, tugging and tugging on the Wookiee.

"My friend tried desperately to get out that window, but Vader kept on pulling and pulling and pulling on his leg — just like I'm pulling yours."

The Sullustan sits back smugly. "Good story, huh? Let's hear yours."

H'nib listens intently to any tales the characters devise, then he declares a winner. If the characters' story or stories were better, they get the improved medpacks. If the Sullustan won, the characters owe H'nib 346 credits for the case of spiced rum and the Sullustan's meal. Shortly afterward, the Sullustan glances at his chronometer, says he must be going, and departs. The humans and the Mrissi tell the characters they, too, enjoyed the stories.

**Episode Six: A Friend In Need**

The six humans finish socializing, pay their bill and leave. The Mrissi show no signs of going anywhere — neither do the Quarren and Twi'lek.

Several more humans enter, select a table, and look over the menu. Silverhand is quick to tend to their orders.

Treedee makes his way toward your table from the kitchen and delivers a large plate of steamed Ithorian yazstrimskizzies. "Compliments of the staff of the Farriminer Cafe — in thanks for your assistance in dealing with those strange Corellians who wanted no motion — only pieces. Sorry it took so long, but yazstrimskizzies take quite a while to marinate." The smell of the yazstrimskizzies fills the air. Treedee bows politely and heads back toward the kitchen.

As you sample the delicacy, the door to the Cafe swings open, and a dashingly human strides inside. He is well over two meters tall and is dressed in fine clothes with a blue cape hanging from his broad shoulders. A well-polished blaster hangs off his shiny belt. He looks around the cafe briefly, and begins walking directly toward your table.

The new patron's name is Bon Sejour, and unless prevented, he pulls up an empty chair, sits down at the characters' table, introduces himself, and orders a round of Harmon Kizzlebrew (which is an excellent compliment to the yazstrimskizzies) for everyone at the table. Once he has made himself look like he fits in, read aloud:

Treedee is quick to deliver the round of Kizzlebrews.

"An excellent choice sir, not many people know of the highly complimentary tastes of steamed Ithorian yazstrimskizzies and
Harmon Kizzlebrew. It is no surprise that these strange two culinary inventions from such distant parts of the galaxy have found a common place here at Mynock 7's Farrunner Cafe.

Bon tosses a few coins on the droid's tray, and gives him a polite nod. The droid turns and walks into the kitchen, sticking the coins in a slot in his leg.

Bon turns to you, "Now where were we?"

Characters who were keeping an eye on Bon may learn something from the coins he tossed on the droid's tray. By making a Moderate Perception roll, they discover one of those coins is unusual. Those who notice this, or state they were trying to get a better look at the coins, may attempt a Difficulty cultures roll. Success reveals that one of the coins is a rare Karltianon Fiskin, an extremely valuable coin from the Old Republic usually found only in collections of true historians.

Bon is not officially a member of the Alliance, but he has many friends who are actively involved, and he tries to do what he can to help out the cause. It is evident he is on the light side of the Force. He is extremely street wise and suspects the characters are either members of the Alliance or sympathetic to it. He recently pulled off a spectacular heist (stealing a collection of unique Old Republic artifacts) from a local crimelord, Randar Dowellin, and is trying to avoid the bounty hunters sent after the pieces of the collection. Evidently, the crimelord laced many of the pieces with a chemical tracer.

Bon makes small talk with the characters, especially attractive females. He especially enjoys talking about the activities taking place in the sector. He is well versed in the local customs and dining (the Farrunner is the only cafe in the entire sector).

He is a self-proclaimed expert in many fields, and he is quite at home talking about technical issues such as hyperdrive technology and computer systems. Bon alludes to his willingness to help the Alliance by talking about some of the atrocities the Empire has committed in this sector (starting tax on smuggled bases, imposing curfews, and unlawfully boarding and confiscating cargo).

**Bon Seqours.** All stats are 2D except: Dexterity 3D, 1, blaster 6D, dodge 6D-2, running 4D-2, Knowledge 2D+1, cultures 4D, streetwise 6D-1, culture 4D+1, Mechanical 3D-2, space transports 6D, starship gunnery 5D-2, starship shields 4D-2, Perception 3D, con 5D, gambling 4D-2, persuasion 5D, Strength 3D, brawling 6D, stamina 5D, first aid 4D-2, starship repair 5D-2. Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), sporting blaster (3D-1), stolen coins.

Bon also talks about the problems that many local crimelords pose, particularly along the Outer Rim where there are fewer organized groups to stand up to them. If asked what he has done in response to any of these threats, he simply smiles, winks, and says, "We all do what we can." If the heroes question him about the strange coin, Bon declines knowing what it is. When the conversation starts to die down, a group of men enter the cafe. One carries a small scanning device.

Once again the doors to the Farrunner Cafe swing open and a group of five tough-looking men dressed in green uniforms enter. One carries a small scanning device. He turns to the leader.

"Sir, we have lost the signal; it seems that there is a large amount of interference in this establishment."

The leader looks around the room. "Well, there aren't too many people here. We'll do this the old fashioned way."

Four of them, including the leader, head for H'ulb while two others stand by the door.
While the men start covering the bar, Bon turns toward you and whispers, "It seems that Dowellin's men were a bit closer than I suspected. Luckily the tracer chemical is confused by the bubbling of the Harmon Kizzlebrew. We are equally lucky that Dowellin's men are not as well educated as I am. As long as we play our cards right they'll eventually go away."

On the Run

The men are agents of the crimelord Randar Dowellin searching for the people responsible for infiltrating Dowellin's stronghold and robbing him. They have been using a scanner to track the items, but over time the chemical is losing its potency. The villains have tracked things this far, and have no intention of letting the coins slip away now. The bounty hunters' tactics are simple.

Two of them prevent people from entering or leaving the building by guarding the door, their hands never far from their blasters. The other four split into two groups and start talking with the staff and customers. They start with H'nib and work their way through the room.

If the characters point fingers at Bon, the bounty hunters try and capture all of them, believing that the heroes are Bon's accomplices. If the characters confront the villains, the bounty hunters try to force them to sit down and wait their turn. If the heroes try and bluff their way past the bounty hunters, a fight breaks out.

Eventually, Treedee enters from the kitchen. This triggers the bounty hunters' scanning device (Treedee has the coin in the secret compartment in his leg). The bounty hunters draw their blasters and begin to take aim at the droid. Bon pulls his weapon from under the table, muttering about not letting the poor droid get blasted, and aims at one of the bounty hunters.

Whenever a fight appears unavoidable, H'nib dives for cover behind the counter, with the familiar chant of "No blasters, no blasters" ringing out.

The bounty hunters rely on hand-to-hand skills or their weapons (which are set for stun). They are intent on capturing the heroes, hoping they can be interrogated later to learn about the other pieces of the collection. If the characters respond with deadly force, the bounty hunters respond with more deadly force.

The protocol droid L7 tries to escape if he has not already done so.

6 Bounty Hunters. All stats are 2D except: Dexterity 4D, blaster 5D, dodge 4D+2, running 5D, streetwise 6D+1, Mechanical 2D+2, space transports 4D, starship gunnery 4D+2, starship shields 4D+2, Perception 3D, search 3D, sneak 5D, Strength 3D+2, brawling 3D+2, first aid and 4D+2. Move: 10. Blast vest (+1 energy, +1D physical, torso only), heavy blaster pistol (3D).

H'nib's assassin droid is just inside the kitchen when the initial fight breaks out (he's making sure all the zdrinbagh are dead). The droid does not know which group started the battle, so it won't attack unless fired upon. The droid walks into the middle of combat and attempts to put halt to the fight by ordering everyone to throw down their weapons.

The bounty hunters recognize the droid for what it is, and blast it to pieces by the second round.

Given the size of the bar, all ranges are considered short range. Characters may use any of the usual tables for cover. These provide partial cover (.2D to difficulty numbers to hit). The tables have 2D material. Strength to resist blasters, while the bar is made of stronger material of 4D Strength.

After the battle, the droids get rid of any bodies. Bon thanks the characters profusely and bids them farewell. He tips H'nib and makes his way for the exit, reminding the heroes that he owes them a favor. If they ever need him, they can leave word with H'nib and he will come to their aid.

Episode Seven: Let The Wookiee ...

Throughout the day, more people come and go from the Farrimmer, as new ships dock and crews disembark seeking to stretch their legs and perhaps get a bite to eat. Sometime in the middle of the afternoon three humans and a Wookiee enter. They pull up a large table near the heroes, and begin a game of sabacc. Read aloud:

The doors to the Farrimmer Cafe swing open once again and three men and a Wookiee enter. The men seem to be in good spirits and smile broadly. Sitting down around a large table not far from your own, they order a round of drinks from the ever-vigilant Silverhand.

The men and Wookiee reach into their pockets and place small piles of credits in front of them, and the Wookiee produces a deck of sabacc cards and a randomizer unit. The first hand is dealt quickly, and soon the group is consumed by the cards and the growing pile of credits on the table.

The characters do not have to get involved in the card game. The card players are open, however, if the characters wish to participate.
All they need to do is ask and prove they have at least 250 credits. If the characters are willing and able to play, let the game begin.

None of the members of the gambling group cheat, although some of them are highly skilled players and could detect if the characters are cheating. The men's names are Rosen, Benchar, Carewa, and Wookiee's name translates to Cecil. Each of the players start with 250 credits, and as the game progresses most of the credits move around the table and eventually stop in front of Cecil.

Unless one of the characters is cheating, determining the winner of any hand of sabacc can be based upon the higher result winning the hand. Gamemasters who are familiar with sabacc can run the actual game if they desire.

If the characters are cheating, an opposed gambling skill roll is used between the cheating character and the gamemaster character to determine if the cheating is detected. If Cecil and his friends notice a character cheating, they become extremely angry, take the cheat's credits and kick them out of the game — resorting to physical force if necessary.


Cecil the Wookiee Mechanic. All stats are 2D except: Dexterity 2D-2, bowcaster 4D-2, brawling perry 4D-2, streetwise 3D, survival 3D, Mechanical 3D, repulsorlift operation 4D, gambling 5D-2, gambling sabacc 6D-2, Strength 3D, brawling 7D, lifting 6D, Technical 3D-1, droid programming 4D-1, space transports repair 5D-1. Move: 11. Bowcaster (4D), sabacc cards with random order unit, 250 credits. The sabacc game lasts five or six hands. The pot of each hand runs between 40 to 60 credits, with the winner taking the pot. Cecil, the Wookiee, is not a very good sport; when he loses he bellows loudly and growls at the winner. When he wins a hand, he laughs as he pulls in the credits.

If an individual character wins more than two games, Cecil becomes very upset. Rosen whispers to that character that Wookiees are not good losers.

If the heroes take the hint, they will lose some of their credits to Cecil to keep him happy. If the character keeps winning, Cecil throws the table across the cafe, growls, and accuses the character of cheating. The heroes ill have to think and talk quickly to prevent Cecil from trying to pull the winning character's arms out of his sockets. The heroes should have to come up with a good story and make a moderate Con or persuasion roll to avoid a fight.

If the characters manage to avoid a fight with Cecil, the gamblers take their winnings (if any) and leave the cafe. If a fight breaks out, the three men do not engage in combat unless they are either attacked first, the characters try to outnumber Cecil (more than two on one), or the characters draw weapons. Cecil prefers to fight by throwing large, heavy objects such as tables, chairs, and some of the characters. Silverhand and Treeedee duck into the kitchen to avoid becoming missile weapons.

If a scuffle commences, H'nib dives behind the bar screaming the immortal words "No blasters! No blasters!" H'nib does not call the port authorities — he simply has the losers of the fight escorted into the street by the winners.

This encounter presents another opportunity for the protocol droid L7 to escape.

Episode Eight: A Hot Tip

Read aloud:

A large human dressed in a starport security uniform strides into the cafe. A blaster hangs from his right hip, a vibroknife from his left. Bulges near his chest suggest more weapons.

"Seems we had a very dangerous man wandering around today," the security officer says. "A bomber, a hired assassin. We just got a communication on him from sector authorities. He's a Devaronian with a scar running down his left cheek.

"They think he came in on a passenger shuttle this afternoon. One of the engineers in the bay says he left several minutes ago on a modified Firespray-class ship. A few minutes after he took off, there was an explosion in the bay. Took out a light freighter. We've sent a couple of ships out after the Firespray to bring it back. It's too bad. If we would have got the communication a half hour earlier we could have closed down the bay and we wouldn't have had to chase him — or clean up the mess."

"I think he was here about an hour ago," H'nib interjects. "Sitting at the back table."

"That's why I stopped by. I'm warning anybody who's seen him to check their premises real carefully — just in case he planted a
bomb or something. We think he set the bomb in the hangar bay exactly one hour before it went off."

The spaceport officer nods to the Flivian and leaves.

The Flivian wrenches his hands and strides toward your table. "You were such a help with the escaped zdrinbagh," he begins, "You might have helped us and me search the place?"

If the characters decline, they can either leave the Farrimmer Cafe or get blown up. There is a bomb. The Devoranion was hired to cause as much damage as possible to the spaceport. He planted a bomb in several businesses and in the docking bay. Other individuals will locate most of the bombs elsewhere — but someone needs to search the Farrimmer Cafe to be certain it's not a target. Where to search?

**Eleven Tables:** Ask the characters which tables they are searching. An easy *search* roll reveals a dropped credit. Eight credits can be found laying around the base of the tables. If the characters reveal they've discovered credits, Treedee claims those must be tips he dropped. "Hand them over, please."

A difficult *search* roll reveals a broken comlink under one of the table legs. Inside the comlink is a computer chip. The chip is several years old and details the deck plans of a Corellian Corvette. A heroic *search* roll causes part of a thick-based chair to pull away, revealing a secret compartment. The Flivian had no idea it existed. Inside is a Merr-Sonn Anti Riot Tangle Gun 7, detailed in *Cracker's Rebel Field Guide*. The Flivian does not care if the characters keep the items, since they are helping him.

**Behind the Bar:** A moderate *search* roll reveals a zdrinbagh that managed to hide in the shadows. It attacks the character who discovered it.

1 Zdrinbagh. Dexterity 3D, dodge 5D. Perception 2D, Strength 3D, brawling 5D. Special abilities: Claws and teeth do STR damage; shells offer +2D bonus against energy attacks, -1D against physical attacks. Move: 16.

Very difficult *search* roll reveals a dusty bottle. Wiping away the dust shows a label — Shashay Idlewil Liquor. A moderate *cure* roll reveals that the liquor is very expensive — this bottle is worth about 300 credits. The Flivian is unaware of its value. Unless the characters tell him what he's got, he's willing to sell it for 40 credits. But he refuses to conduct the business deal until after the entire cafe has been searched.

**The Kitchen:** Any searching here finds food, pots, pans, spices, and the like. The chef droids want the characters to explain what they are looking for. They insist on helping if a bomb is mentioned — the droids have no desire to be blown into metal bits.

**The Other Customers:** The humans object to being searched. If the characters insist, the humans storm out of the cafe and say they're going to the hangar bay — where they'll be safe and unmoledled.

**The Droids:** Treedee, the bouncer, Silverhand, and the chef droids permit the characters to search them. A difficult *search* roll reveals the compartment in Treedee's leg. The droid objects strenuously to anyone looking inside — that's where he keeps his stash of tips. Anyone who presses the matter with a moderate *con or persuasion* roll can convince the droid to give in. Inside his leg compartment are a few handfuls of credits and a small sack. Opening the sack reveals a few credits on top and a Micronite explosive charge rigidly to a hold-out blaster pack and detonator. The bomb is set on a timer, and by the time the characters discover it, there isn't much time left to disarm it — only five rounds. Because the device has been so carefully engineered, it takes a difficult *demolition* roll to disarm it. Failure causes the bomb to go off.

If the characters fail to disarm the bomb or did not find it after a reasonable amount of time, determine where they are searching within the cafe and where Treedee is standing. The bomb inflicts 7D damage to those within 1–2 meters; 5D to those within 3–7 meters; and 3D throughout the rest of the cafe.

If the characters successfully disarmed the bomb (and happened to find the Shashay liquor), H’nilb gives them the bottle as a thank-you. Otherwise, the Flivian gives them each a bottle of spiced rum.

**Episode Nine: Has Anyone Seen My Snuzzleguff?**

Shortly after the bomb is dealt with, Brugor, a large Gamorrean mercenary armed to the hilt, pushes his way inside the cafe. Brugor wields a small, battered scanning tool which is pointing toward the ventilation system. Brugor is looking for his small pet that escaped its cage and is running loose in the spaceport. Brugor is not the smartest creature, and he needs the heroes' help in capturing the small and deadly pet. Read aloud:

Like it has so many times before, the door to the Farrimmer Cafe opens slowly, letting more patrons enter the small cantina in

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search of a bite to eat or perhaps a quick drink before heading back into space.

The figure standing in the doorway is a massive being, nearly as wide as it is tall. He hefts a large axe in one meaty paw and some sort of small computer device in the other. He shuffles inside.

Away from the shadows, you can tell he is a Gamorrean dressed in battle armor. The porcine-faced creature points his computer up at the ceiling and grunts expectantly.

Bnugor spends a few moments searching the cafe with the old scanning tool before trundling over to the heroes and tossing the scanner on the table, shattering the worthless tool. The large Gamorrean grunts and points around the cafe and at the heroes.

**Bnugor the Gamorrean.** All stats are 1D except: Dexterity 4D, melee combat 5D, melee combat: vibro-axe 7D, melee parry 5D, bludgeoning parry 5D, intimidation 5D, search 3D, Strength 5D, brawling 6D. Move: 10. Vibro-axe (STR-3D-1).

If the heroes purchased L7 (and miraculously he has not escaped yet) the droid offers to translate. Otherwise, Difficult language rolls will suffice, or Silverhand can translate.

If one of the droids translates, read aloud:

"It seems, sirs, that this poor creature, Bnugor, is a mercenary on board a ship scheduled to leave the spaceport shortly. He has not yet reported for duty because his pet, a snuzzleguff named Snowball, escaped his quarters and is loose in the spaceport. He has tracked the creature this far, but he has lost the trail. I am afraid that the scanner appears inoperable, so if you are to help Bnugor, you are going to have to find the creature some other way."

The Gamorrean grunts again loudly, and the droid's eyes dim slightly.

"Sirs, there seems to be one more slight problem. Snuzzleguffs are not very large creatures, only about point-two meters in diameter, and their diet consists primarily of meat.

"Unfortunately, they can be very aggressive when hungry, and they are ... uh, very poisonous. Bnugor wants his pet returned unharmed and will be very upset if for some reason Snowball is not returned safely."

The heroes are confronted with a dilemma: Bnugor will not attack them unless forced to defend himself, but he has nothing of value to offer the heroes for their help in recovering his pet. However, if the characters do not help Bnugor, the snuzzleguff may attack someone at the cafe.

Snowball escaped from the small cage in Bnugor's starship cabin and made its way through the spaceport looking for something to eat. Given the relatively few places that food is available on the spaceport, Snowball has made his way to the Farrimmer Cafe.

The snuzzleguff is a tiny creature. Snowball is covered with white fur and is a very fast creature. The snuzzleguff has a natural immunity to gravity, which gives it the ability to leap and fly at incredible speeds.

Snowball has made his way into the cafe's ventilation system and is "stalking" the droids in the kitchen, looking for an opportunity to snatch some food. Snowball is not an intelligent creature, but he does survive by cunning instincts.

**Snowball the Snuzzleguff.** Dexterity 5D, dodge 7D, Right 7D. Perception 4D, sneak 5D, Strength 2D, brawling 4D. Special abilities: can fly quickly for short distances, poison bite does 1D damage and victim must make a Difficult stamina roll or become incapacitated. Move: 18.
In order for the characters to capture Snowball, they are going to devise a clever plan. They can use food from the kitchen as bait, since Snowball is attracted to any food left unprotected.

Characters who attempt to ensnare the creature should describe the trap they are trying to build and make a Difficult Technical attribute check. Characters who describe an especially clever trap may add an additional 1D for this check.

If the characters simply attempt to grab Snowball (once they find him) they must make a Very Difficult brawling roll to succeed. If they don’t have some kind of cage to put Snowball in (a pot from the kitchen also works well), the snarling guff tries to bite them.

If the heroes attempt to use weapons or blasters, Brugor does everything he can to prevent them from harming Snowball (up to and including using his vibro-axe). Once the heroes have captured Snowball, Brugor takes his “pet” and leaves the cafe.
"You tell him!"

Despite being somewhat ineffective through his thick gloves, Lhojugg wrung his hands to accompany his pacing. Fortuna's nonchalance was beginning to eat away at his patience.

"It was you, Lhojugg, who was responsible for the Master's townhouse during our guest's stay," said the Twi'lek. His head-tails twitched in synch to the smile spreading across his pale face.

The two passed the carved archway into the smoke, dank and criminal bustle of Jabba the Hutt's Townhouse throne room. The room was filled, alcove to alcove, with all manner of seedy bounty hunters. It was posting time, an annual event as recorded on the Tatooine calendar. For two days straight the Hutt crimelord had been handing out bounty notices to hunters new and old.

Bib Fortuna and Lhojugg the Nimhanel cautiously parted their way between two large armored Trandoshans, moving closer to the center of affairs: the raised dais of the Hutt crimelord.

"Ahh ... Bib, Lhojugg ... lee hiyatt. Bo studda," prompted the gristy slug-like gangster, curling his words around the smoking end of his hooka. Jabba pushed aside a datapad and gave a number of deeds to his silvery protocol droid standing behind him.
A slight silence followed, although Lhojug was certain the entire galaxy could hear the collision of his knees. He cleared his throat, hand-groomed the red-tufts of hair growing from the sides of his snout, and stepped forward.

"Most masterful sire, I'm afraid I must announce a discrepancy in my last inventory of the townhouse."

Jabba's large slit-pupilled eyes glanced to the translator droid for a moment, and then paused for the Nimbanel to spit it out. Obfuscation, he mused, the language of bureaucrats and Nimbanean.

"It appears that our guests may have made themselves too much at home on their last stay," piped in Fortuna.

"Hmm ... it took you two days to determine that Megrerrr stole something?" rumbled the Hutt.

"Yes, Master. Of course, as you know, the damage deposits do cover the standard party requirements, replacement of wall-hangings, veterinarian checks on your kayven whistlers, replacement of walls. But I'm afraid anything somewhat irreplaceable is missing," said Lhojug. "One of your droids, Master. From accounting, reference number CZ-3, I'm afraid."

It was all Fortuna could do to suppress a tentacle giggle-wiggle. Not 20 minutes ago Lhojug was hollering at the top of his lungs about the missing droid, and now he was reporting the event with the ferocity of a sand-mouse. He could be so spineless at times. Of course Fortuna's own bracing of himself was a matter of protocol, not fear. Of course.

There was an awed silence, aside from the rustling of modern armor as the roomful of bounty hunters shifted position to watch the mighty Hutt chew out his lackeys.

"Haw, haw, haw, haw," the Hutt's chuckle echoed in the hall. "Well, this most important matter must be handled immediately."

The Hutt's massive smiling head turned on what passed as a neck, scanning the assembled hunters. "Takeel, closn niat lie!"

A gasp worked its way around the room, followed by the clatter of metallic spheres and the shuffle of footfalls as a Snivian pulled himself out of the crowd, chasing after the ammunition for his primitive weapon. "Yes, your ... uh, Hutness?"

Jabba looked over the hunched, overweight Snivian with unkempt hair. "Congratulations, you have pulled the first bounty of the day. You are to find a most valuable piece of property, starting at docking bay 83. Megrerrr's ship should still be in port. Of course, you realize the importance of being inconspicuous, don't you, Takeel?"

"Uhh ... I-inconspicuous?" Takeel stuttered as the protocol droid handed him a fresh warrant.

"I'm counting on you, Takeel."

"Yes, of course, sir. I can't fail you!" shouted Takeel, as he rushed out of the throne room, barely managing the exit.

For a moment, a silence crystallized over the room, followed immediately by a resounding guffaw initiated by Jabba, seconded by his Kowakian jester Salacious Crumb, and carried out by all in the room.

Lhojug and Fortuna stood stunned, staring at each other. Jabba's massive belly-laughs subsided enough for him to shout to the assembled bounty hunters, "Snaggletooth, look after your brother."

The suns beat down with their relentless regularity on Mos Eisley's center, causing the sandstone structures to shimmer with haze of heat. Despite this, Mace Windu walked with a skip in his step and a catchy tune in his head. He skipped out of the cantina, heading to his shop in the shade of the wreckage in the center of Mos Eisley.

Mace threw a small restraining bolt from hand to hand, admiring its shine as it twirled. Mace, a Squib, always had an attraction for the shinier things in life. It was for this reason he abandoned his position in the Squib Reclamation Fleet and became a droid dealer on Tatooine. At times, his partner, the Jawa Agulaae, could be a spoiler to his fun, but the two managed to barely pull a profit each season.

He walked into the small structure nearly concealed by a pile of refuse and scrap, into the relative coolness of his shop/room. His sensitive smell receptors on his arms picked up on the stench that Agulaae was in here recently. He had since grown used to the scent of Jawa. It wasn't that bad, to his thinking. It was much better than that of an Ugor.

Mace placed the restraining bolt in a worn and pitted spice rack barely hanging on his wall. He hoisted himself to his bed, which was actually a bantha-skin comforter spread over the rusted ring of a chandelier. He closed his large doe-eyes, dreaming pleasant nikta-inspired dreams.

His tipsy reverie was interrupted as Agulaae entered his room, ruffling through a bin for coolant tubing. An unwritten rule at the Jawa Trader's shop is if you can't find it, look in Mace's room.

"I sold that droid you picked up," squawked Agulaae's hand-held transliterator. She hadn't mastered Basic, and the salvaged transliterator unit sufficed, when it worked.
“Snazzleggg...” replied Mace.

“Alseep again?” Agualia shook her head, fine layers of dust shaking off her hood. “I swear Mace, I don’t know how you get anything done.” She kept rifling through Mace’s stuff, opening the spice rack. The restraining bolt fell onto the floor.

“Mace...” Agualia called. “Great Jawenko, Mace, where did you get this? Mace, wake up.”

Mace half-opened his eyes, slowly bringing the Jawa and the restraining bolt into focus. “Hnn... what? Oh, the bolt. It was from the kooky white-type standing-upright droid I found for you.”

“The business droid? The droid I just sold? Mace gets down, this is imported...” Agualia stopped, banged the transliterator against a table. “Mace, this is important.”

“What, what is it, Aggy?” asked Mace, rubbing his eyes, plopping down from the chandelier.

“This,” said Agualia, shoving the bolt in the Squila’s snout. She nodded at the raised lettering on the bolt’s rim. In aurabesh it read “Jabba the Hutt.”

“Aggy...” grinned Mace, “you know I can’t read.”

“Gone?”

“Yes, sir...” said the long-nouted Jenet lackey, with a shiny borg-brace wrapped around the base of his skull.

Opun Mcgrrr hoisted up the belt on his shaggy tunic, twisting his face in a visage of anger and incredulity.

“When did we lose the blasted droid? The thing had mighty important files in it.”

“Well, sir,” the Jenet reported. “It would seem that yesterday, while you were making certain arrangements with Lady Valarian, the droid went missing from your rented garage. I’ve questioned the locals, but they couldn’t seem to care less.”

“You did mention my name, didn’t you,” questioned Mcgrrr. The burly Corellian had an ego well supported by his ample frame.

“Yes, sir” sighed the Jenet, again wondering how and why he was in this current position. “Much to my incredible amazement, it seemed to have no effect.”

“Strange... that droid must be found. Retrieve it, and do not rest until you find it.” Mcgrrr spun around, taking a belt of whatever liquid he kept in his silver flask.

Ten thousand kilotons of data storage ability, and I’m playing lost and found. “Yes, sir.” the Jenet said aloud. “May I add, sir, that looking for droids appears to a popular past-time on Tatooine at this moment?”

“The Imperial’s... that’s right.” Opun’s single eyebrow bent in pondering. A team of stormtroopers was spotted in Mos Eisley this week. Everyone knew that stormtroopers are rarely seen in Mos Eisley, but this past week was strange. “Best to avoid them.”

“Unerring strategy, sir.” the Jenet said as part of his amplified brain worked on hyperspace algorithms in order to inject some amusement in his dismal day.

The dim conference room in the townhouse echoed with the clacking and blipping of Lhojugg’s datapad. His mind pondered the situation over and again. Fortuna poked his head and one of his head-tails into the room.

“It doesn’t make sense, Fortuna. According to the inventory, CL-3 is supposed to hold class-red information. It’s listed here as one of Master’s principal business droids. I can’t figure it out.” Lhojugg nibbled on the stylus for a moment. “Why did the Jabba leave it in the open?”

“Then don’t figure it out.” The wheels of Fortuna’s mind clicked. To make a Nimbolet solve a puzzle, be sure to give him the right incentive. “I don’t think Jabba expects you to.”

The sneer that crossed Lhojugg’s face caused the stylus to clatter on the desk. “This is business, Fortuna. And our Master’s business is my business. You do little more than announce those who come before him.”

“Of course, Lhojugg,” said Bib, bowing out the door. The current storm has almost passed, and the patient Twilek reaps the rewards, as the saying went. The palace was soon to have a vacancy.

“Okay, okay, it’ll be okay... we’ll just explain to Jabba... that we accidentally...” Agualia was pacing as she and Mace wandered through the sandy streets of Mos Eisley. Agualia stopped and turned, realizing the Squilb was not there.

“Mace... iheek nikka!” she cursed, a particularly nasty Jawa disparagement alien to the transliterator’s database. She tiptoed a few meters, in a futile attempt to peek past the relative giants wandering the streets.

“All right,” she heard, “let’s say you gave the Quarron half of my order, but he must give me the money he was to pay you, yet you still...”
retain the interest, but you allow me to have the topping of my choice." Through the woven hood, Aguiile's accurate ears were able to trace the Squib to where her nose told her dewback ribs were roasting.

There, in the shade of a striped awning, stood the tiny Squib, in the shadow of a two-meter tall Whiphid. The betasked shaggy mountain of muscle did not seem amused, and the squid-laced Quarren behind him seemed remarkably confused. The Whiphid's nostrils twitched, and he looked in Aguiile's direction.

"Jawa, tell your partner that we don't serve him anymore," growled the tooth face. His clawed hand grasped the sauce brush with a cluster of clenched tendons.

"My apologies, Fillin ... my partner, of course, enjoys your wares so ..."

The jittery Jawa pushed the Squib aside. "Mace, we are leaving ..." a slight adjustment. "we are leaving." She bowed away from the Whiphid, while Mace hollered something about renegotiation.

"Mace," she said, spinning the Squib to face her. "We don't have time for this. That trader can be anywhere. We have to find him."

"Aggy, Aggy, Aggy," Mace shook his short muzzle, "I was going to ask for information as part of a sidebar bargain concerning the amount of napkins. You have to understand the rules of the street."

"No. You have to understand that the Bloated One has a thousand eyes, and twice as many 'heads' — twist a dial here, "twice as many ears. If he finds out it was us who caused one of his droids to disappear, we're Sartace-stoppers. And Jabba's not the type to negotiate."

"Not negotiate?" the Squib's eyes widened, "and Hutt's are civilized? Bizarre."

The two small droideka dealers crossed from the busy marketplace to the speeder rentals shop. It was Aguiile's hope that the trader she sold the droideka to rented the speeder she saw him use, and that the Arcona dealer at the shop would recognize the description.

"Hmmm ..." the Arcona carefully scratched his leathery brow with one of his massive claws. Wrinkles formed on the corner of his aged, glittery green eyes as he probed his memory. "Yeah, I think the fella you're describing was Corellian. Right. He rented the Mobquet, he did. I'll look it up in the records, but only if you can fix those brath bearing brackets."

"Not a problem, Unut. Tomorrow morning, you'll get them." Visions of a happy twin sunset were dancing in Aguiile's head. They were going to get through this. "Mace, get off of there."

The Squib sat in the worn saddle of a sleek Starhawker speeder bike, leaning back, pretending to be riding a bucking bantha. The speeder rocked on its support blocks, its repulsor field inactive due to faulty brath brackets. As usual, Mace's own little world precluded Aggy's nagging.

"Mace ..." the Jawa straightened as the Arcona returned, plugging away at a large button datapad.

"Here we go," said the old-timer. "Yep, I've got his name, and his docking bay, too."

He turned the datapad to face Aguiile, and she stood on her toes as her eyes gobbled the data.

"A many tanks —" better to flick the translocator switch on and off real quick, "thanks, Unut. You'll have that speeder up and running by next midday."

The last of the bounty postings had been delivered, and now Jabba relaxed to a recorded piece from the Modal Nodes. His tail swayed to the slow, Wroonian blues rhythm of Tacharaim Mist Night in 4/4 time. Even Salacious was remarkably somber in the dim townhouse throne room.

And then the moment was ruined.

"Your eminence," called Lhojugg, walking briskly into the room.
The two Gamorreans at the door, who had been soothed by the music, snorted in his direction, their hands moving to their axes.

"Huuuooaa ..." grunted the Hutt, his eyes opening wide, and then reducing to slits. "What is it, Lhojugg? This had better be good."

"Yes, sir." Lhojugg swallowed, his mouth impossibly dry. He consulted the datapad in his hand. "Sir, I've found evidence of conspiracy. Here, in this very townhouse."

"Oh? How so?" the Hutt's tubby hands clenched into impatient fists.

"Upon further investigation of the whole CZ-3 matter, I discovered that the droid, which has a class-red security designation, was transferred just prior to McGregor's visit. Through some sort of incredibly inept clerical error, outside of my department, the droid was left in the open storage receptacle in the townhouse when potentially hostile visitors, McGregor and company, were present. I tried to track to the error back to the source, and discovered that whoever changed the placement order used your clearance. Someone used your pass codes, sir!" Lhojugg finished, with more than a small sense of pride. His dramatic lecture-style pacing brought him into the center of Jabba's throne room.

There was a hiss of air as Jabba exhaled forcefully through his large nostrils. "Lhojugg, you have erred. I did not ask you for this investigation." The Hutt's greasy fingers danced over the controls on his armrest. The Tolcchanum Mist-Night had since increased in tempo, to symbolize the tempestuous mist-gales that inspired the song. The Gamorreans each took a step back, and Salacious' gaze was fixed on the dark ceiling.

"Sir, I... I was merely concerned about the security of..." Lhojugg stuttered.

"Your investigation is over." Jabba pressed a small ultrasonic squelch button on his armrest. A rust-encrusted cage crashed down over the Nimbale, and the Hutt helped himself to a fat toad as creaky chains lifted the cage up to the ceiling.

As the song reached its hurricane-crescendo, the cage lifted past the wire-mesh screen keeping back the hungry kayven whistlers. The strong blasts of kloo horns and Dornian Bashniquel created a cacophony of flats to Lhojugg's sharp screaming. By the time the music settled back to its quietly introspective coda, the whistlers had eaten, and the rustling of the mesh had ended. The drops of blood that fell from the ceiling created a syncopated rhythm the Bith musicians would have most likely enjoyed.

The trip to Docking Bay 87 had proven to be a partial success. The Corellian trader that the Arconan speeder dealer had directed them to did indeed recognize Agilae, if not Mace. While the trader freely complained about the quality of the business droid she had sold him, the Squib entertained himself by studying the shinier parts of the trader's freighter.

"Its processors must have been sun-fried," the trader had said, peppering his speech with a few Socorran curses. "The thing didn't even have enough sense to follow me."

After demanding a full refund, which Mace managed to bargain down to a half-refund, a new transponder coupler, and the recipe to his mother's almond-kweyvu crisp-munchies, the trader conceded, and said he sold the droid back to another group of Jawas. By the description of the cloak patterns and merchandise Agilae was able to figure out it was Jek Nnik's group.

The two dealers returned to Unut's speeder shop, and rented a speeder to go into the patch of wastes where Nnik's sandcrawler was known to patrol. The two dealers not only had to pay the Arcon for the speeder, but they also promised to replace the entire control/interface units on the Starhawk speeder.

This is getting expensive, Agilae thought, wiping a patch of grime from the inside of the Mobquet speeder's windscreen. Mace was, as always, maddeningly oblivious, sticking his head away from the windscreen, his gray fur bristling in the wind. His eyes glinted behind the mismatched goggle lenses.

"Mace, you'll get sandflies in your teeth," said Agilae.

"I haven't eaten yet, Aggy." the Squib whined.

"You ate all my snit-spie snacks!"

"That's snacking, not eating."

She shook her head, and instead concentrated on what approach she would take with Jek. She adjusted the trim on the speeder's control, smoothing out the travel over the rocky terrain.

Jek and Agilae were passing acquaintances, but most Jawas who operated around Mos Eisley knew of her from her shop. Despite this, Agilae was quite uneasy. She never got along with other Jawas, and was an outcast among her people. She preferred mechanical company to those of her species. She stomached Mace because he managed to show some profit, but the competitive nature among Jawas often bothered her. She knew Nnik would only take hard cash, and their reserves were dwindling.
"Aggy, big-Jawa metal-thing-ship! Over at there-o'clock!" Mace squeaked.

Aguilae squinted her shining eyes, seeing the hulking vehicle as a mere speck on the horizon. This was Nikk's territory, all right. She fired the Mobquet's overdrive, leaning into a hard turn, and kicking a spew of gravel and sand behind them.

It had taken nearly three hours for Takeel to find docking bay 83, and another hour for him to walk there. Of course, behind him he left a trail of passersby clued into his search as he asked them for directions. The hunch-backed Snivvian wandered past the small tapscle built out of a small adobe hut, looking for last minute visual clues, such as a number 83, when his memory failed him.

"Excuse me," he stammered to a trader walking by.

"Don't touch me."

"Uh... pardon me," he muttered to a militia man.

"I have no change."

"One moment, if I could..." he faltered to a moisture farmer.

"Blasted street scum, out of my way."

"I was wondering..." he fumbled to a white droid.

"Bzz-nikk, bzz-nikk."

Takeel looked at the malfunctioning droid, a tall, battered-white droid. It shook its head as if its seals were not tightened around its neck. At the very least, it seemed to acknowledge the Snivvian in its near-empty photoreceptor.

"Do you know where docking bay 83 is?" he asked.

The droid stopped in its tracks. For a moment, it seemed as if it were to fall over, but instead, it prodded its arm toward the direction from where it had wandered.

"A thousand thank-yous, sir," said the Snivvian, leaving a trail of pellet-style ammunition behind in his path.

Aguilae slowed the Mobquet to come parallel with the lumbering crawler. The din of ancient metal, poorly lubricated servos, and shuddering steel overcame the wince of the repulsorlifts. She pulled out a small, scratched comlink from one of her pockets, and keyed a standard Jawa channel.

"Nikk, hikkeuko, obiwoogo. " she hissed, her transliterator not picking up from its place on Mace's seat. Mace, in the meantime, was leaning out the speeder, waving like a windmill.

For a few moments, it seemed as if the sandcrawler was to continue, but a sharp squeal of angry engines brought the crawler to a halt. Mace, of course, thought his waving did the job. Aguilae brought the speeder tight to the crawler's ramp, and rehearsed her monologue in her head one more time.

With a veritable shriek, the lethargic crawler lowered the ramp, and several pairs of sickly glowing eyes peered from the darkness. "Nhakek, Aguilae," a voice croaked out from above, with an unmistakable contempt applied to the name.

Traders and humans often joked that Jawas were nothing to be afraid of, but now, the mob of five or so, looking down the ramp, blasters drawn, were enough to make Aguilae's stomach quiver.

Mace, predictably, was still waving.

The Jawas parted, and Jek stepped out, his arms open. "Aguilae, you spoke of a deal?" he croaked in his native tongue. The Jawa, with a tan and brown cloak stitched together, walked down the ramp. He had his toolod blaster tucked in his belt, but there was no mistaking its presence, and the swagger that accompanied it. The four other Jawas followed, several steps behind Jek. Their eyes never left the speeder.

Aguilae, the name humans gave her, inhaled, steeling her pride. With it, she caught a whiff of the disgust and disdain the Jawas were emitting. She had discarded her Jawa name, to live and sell among the humans, and they had not forgotten. She made sure to kick away the transliterator, no need to goad these live on any more than necessary.

"Show no fear, show no fear, show no fear."

"Yes, Jek," she spoke in her tongue, "a deal that you shall find quite profitable."

"Truly. Now, you understand that this is our territory," Jek hissed, his hand caressing the clay handle of his blaster. "This makes your presence even less welcome."

He must have smelled the fear, Aguilae thought. She instead concentrated on her hunger. Hunger and fear smelled very similar to Jawas, so she thought hard on the empty stomach and the spore snacks that Mace had eaten. A touch of loathing wouldn't be too hard right now, either.

"So even you must understand the magnitude of the deal that would bring me out this far," Aguilae responded coolly. One of the Jawas behind Jek whistled a laugh.

"Aguilae, or Khea Nkud, have you forgotten what this double
sunrise brought today?"

"Today?" she paused. The use of her name had thrown her, but
today... Her birthday? The start of the storm season? The end of
the growing season? No. That wasn’t it.

Then she picked it together, a tribute to her skills as a scavenger.
The crawler, following its course past Mos Eisley, to these parts, on
its way to the swap. The annual meeting of all the Jawa sandcrawler
in the area to exchange goods.

Then she placed the scent the Jawas exuded. Avarice, stronger
than usual. Her eyes followed the gaze of the four Jawas behind Jek,
and they all were staring at the shiny speeder.

Jek drew his blaster, as the quartet of Jawas each brandished
hydrosprinters like clubs. "It’s time you came home."

The shaking of the sandcrawler made Aguilae’s work even
harder. She was tucked into a cramped sleeping compartment in
the uppermost of the crawler’s 15 levels. The dented metal door was
locked shut. Twin worn plastic straps dug into her shoulders, and
this particular sleeping module was designed for a taller Jawa since
her feet failed to touch the floor. She rocked back and forth, making
her almost drop the delicate piece she was working on. She twisted
small screws fine with her multitool, and used what little light her
eyes generated to work on the wiring. A few more touches, and she’d
be done.

A trail of scent, this time of curiosity, and something else waited
to her nostrils. She tucked away her tinkering as the door opened,
shedding the dim corridor light into Aguilae’s eyes. Jek cast a
shadow over her, undoing the brass that kept her snug to the wall.
"Were these accommodations really necessary?" she hissed, rubbing
her shoulder.

"There’s wisdom in precautions: it’s what the elders teach us."
Jek lowered her to the deck. "But, that’s right — you haven’t heard
the words of the elders in, what, eight seasons?"

"Seven and a half, actually." She pushed Jek’s arms back, brushing
the sand from her tunic. She took a look around. Without the
blindfold they forced her to wear when they placed her in the
sleeping closet, she could finally see the crowded, oxidized comp-
partments in the upper level. The sunlight spilling in from the left
showed her that the bridge was nearby. A group of Jawas stood
clustered on the right. Their stench showed significant annoyance.
She looked a moment longer and saw the gray-turreted Squib among
then, staring at the ceiling of the compartment.

"I’m surprised you noticed." Aguilae added, her eyes darting from
corner to corner.

"I’ve been keeping an eye on you, Khea." Jek paced, holding a
droid caller in his hand, supposedly examining it with interest. "You
know what they say about you, don’t you? You know what your tribe
is going through?"

"No," she said, wondering how long she would have to humor
him, "but I’m sure you’ll tell me."

"I won't have to. They’re certain to be at the swap, and we’ll finally
put you where you belong. You must follow our ways, Khea. A female
cannot abandon her role in the tribe and the meets. It’s dangerous.""Somewhere in the dark folds of her hood, Aguilae grimaced. So,
this is how it’s going to be. She paused, letting Jek savor his last glottal
syllable, all the while trying to dredge up those holoscripts that Mace
had gotten from a Dorcin traveler. How did they go..."

"Is that it?" she said, louder than she intended. "Is that it, really?"
The other Jawas moved closer, their scents betraying their
curiosity. Again, Aguilae concentrated on her hunger so that her
excitement would not come through in her scent.

"What do you mean?" asked Jek.

"Oh, come on, Jek. You expect me to believe that you’re taking me
to the swap with you just to teach me an elder lesson?" She walked
closer to him, an action he obviously was not expecting. "That you
would remotely jeopardize your claim to that speeder by having me
along? Why not be honest, for a change. I’m not some farmer you’re
trying to hoodwink."

For a brief moment, while quoting the dialogue some Ho’Din
floozies had recorded on another world untold years ago, who then
undoubtedly went on to a multi-holo contract. Aguilae regretted
concentrating on her stomach. These words were making her
queasy.

"There are those fire-eyes I’ve missed," Jek smiled, reaching his
grubby little hands to touch her shoulders.

"Just try it, Jek. I don’t care. Take me back to my father. Even if he
decrees it, I will not bond with you." She let the last word hiss off her
lips, with all the intensity she could muster. Inside, a part of her
raged. Jawas, she mused, they may know droids, but they’re strange
to grade-b holomelodrama.

Jek stomped his foot on the ground. "It is the way, Khea!"

"No, it’s your way. Not mine."
For a handful of heartbeats, all that was heard was the ubiquitous rumbling of sandcrawler treads. Jek turned, filling the compartment with his stench of impotent rage. He turned, looking at the Jawas peering in from the corner.

"Put her away," croaked Jek. "We'll let her father deal with her." Jek stormed out of the chamber as the other Jawas grabbed Aguliel and forced her into the compartment. She did her best to feign a struggle, all the while peering past the Jawas.

Her cue had been received. Mace was not there.

It was as if it was Haggleday morning, and Mace was but a fuzzling again. The hairs on his arms bristled as he looked around the room in which he squeezed his tiny frame.

There, in the corner, was a canted R4 unit. Tucked away under a pile of optical cabling was the pot-belly shape of a B1-B unit. A charred WED15 unit had become little more than a hodgepodge of manipulators, but it was still enough to make Mace's heart soar. He tried to run in seven directions at once, and ended up sitting down, catching his breath.

He collected his flighty mind, and got a better sense of his environs. It was quite ingenious, actually. The room was a hidden compartment of sorts, its angles lined with heavy steam venting pipes. If any competing Jawa tribes had a hold of sensor technology, this room would read as a hot spot, but no details within could be gleaned.

In this case, it was the repulsorlift signature of their speeder that would be concealed. Mace jumped behind the controls, taking a cursory look at the dash. The readouts looked positive; it seems the Jawas hadn't had a chance to give it the once-over, yet. A little voice inside his head brought him back to the situation at hand. Aguliel had given him a chance, and he couldn't miss it. But he wouldn't leave without her.

He reached into one of his hidden pockets, plucking out a handful of chronometers. He quickly found the one that worked. Fifteen minutes. He'd give her fifteen minutes.

In the meantime, he thought, as his gaze came across a slightly carbonized red R5 unit and a power droid, he'd best find a way to keep himself busy.

About five hours ago the Jenet had immediately determined a search radius based on the average foot speed of a Delban Serv-O-Droid CZ unit, with about 15 or 20 years' worth of wear on a pelvic servomotor.

Of course, the outside odds of probability always had a way of presenting themselves to the Jenet, and it wasn't until the last 200 meters of his search that he spotted something.

The Jenet toggled down the throttle switch on his small repulsor-scooter and came to a hover as he pulled out a pair of macrobinoculars. He was about 10 kilometers from the town center now, where the domed buildings were fading away into the sands like some desert mirage. He allowed a quick grimace as the image intensifiers brought his quarry into view.

Tucked away, on the sunlit side of a small adobe garage, between a vaporator and a garbage bin, was a white humanoid droid, attempting to walk through the wall. The amount of sand it had kicked up behind it indicated that it had been there for, oh, 15 minutes, according to the Jenet's calculations. The droid seemed to pay very little attention to the fact it kept walking into the wall, and it carried on, following its distorted programming.

The Jenet looked around, eyeing no scavengers, and parked his speeder. He walked toward the garage, slowing away his macros. With the droid on the sun-side, and most of the vagrant Jawa scavengers clustered in the shadows of the buildings, it was spared.

Giving the droid a visual inspection, the Jenet surmised that either the droid had simply had its logic reactors burned out from the heat, or was loaded with so much extra software that its primary processors were slowing down to the state of mechanical senility. This almost evoked a chuckle from the Jenet. Why anyone would load such a faulty, outdated model with any software was beyond his computing.

He paused when he saw that the restraining bolt that should have been on the droid's chest was gone. He quickly dismissed it, applied a fresh bolt imprinted to Opun "The Black Hole" Megrrrr; led the droid back to his scooter, and while he secured it with some synthrope, ran through his long memory of other Jenets who had considerably better careers than he did.

The sandcrawler had stopped. There was some commotion coming from the bridge, but Aguliel instead concentrated on closing the small hatch on her transliterator. They couldn't have arrived
at the swap yet. It was too soon.

The small plastic piece clicked into place, and she turned her attention to what was happening beyond the metal door of her compartment. From the smell of things, Jek and the Chief were gone. There was only one other Jawa, either tired or bored, probably in the control room.

Agualae closed her eyes, made a silent promise to her gods, and hit the switch on the jury-rigged translocator. "Quickly, get the prisoner out, now!" the small device squawked in Jawa, in a near approximation of Jek's voice.

She tucked the device away and grabbed onto the straps supporting her shoulders. She pulled herself up on them, bending her legs and placing them against the door. She smelled the lone Jawa come closer and fiddle with the locking mechanism. She listened for the final click.

She then kicked with all her strength. There was a dull thud as the door flew open, sending the Jawa reeling. The hapless hooded scavenger flew into a discarded pile of oxidized cowlings, crumpling into an unconscious heap.

Agualae used the sharpened end of a conductor strip she had pulled out of the translocator, and cut the shoulder straps. She dropped down on all fours, taking a quick look around. No one was there, save for the incapacitated guard. She skittered to him, gave his equipment pokes a quick inspection, pocketed a few pieces, and scooted to the bridge.

The controls, as would be expected, were a mess of sand-encrusted screens, levers and toggle-switches either taped down or held in place with flexor cord. Entire banks of displays had burned out and had since been transformed into makeshift storage bays, full of droid heads and useless electronics. She peered out the viewport and immediately ducked down.

"Imperials, she thought, had they seen me?"

She dared a second look. There, outside, in front of the crawler, several white-armed stormtroopers with colored shoulder guards stood over a group of Jawas. The Chief, Jek, and three others were there, gesticulating wildly about something. The troopers were all armed. Heavily armed.

Off to the north, barely visible behind a ridge, was a vehicle almost as large as a sandcrawler itself. Vaguely cylindrical in shape, with a pair of deadly-looking turret-mounted cannons on its ventral side. It was just pulling up. Those fools on the ground can't even see it, she thought.

Time was running out. She ducked out of the bridge, moving to one of the access crawl-tubes that crisscrossed the interior of the crawler.

"Ten twenty-three reporting. They're not in the repair bay, sir. The stormtrooper spoke into his comlink, while Mace squeezed himself tighter into the corner. He was obviously green, Mace reasoned, since he didn't even take any of the great bits littering the bay. The trooper left, and Mace emerged. He looked at the R5 unit he had claimed, again wondering how the trooper could leave such a fine specimen behind. He would never understand Imperials.

Mace was halfway through loading the power droid onto the speeder when a clank behind him caught his ear. Maybe the trooper had returned. He grabbed a pair of arms off the nearest WED15 unit, and stood perfectly still.

"Mace, nice try. Do you do any celebrity impressions?" Agualae snickered, pulling herself out of the covered crawl-tube opening. Without her translocator, she knew Mace wouldn't understand her, even more so than usual.

"Aggy!" Mace shouted, running to give the Jawa an embrace. With the robot arms still in hand, Mace succeeded in wrapping the hug around her twice. "Aggy, there's Imperials-type-trooper-guys right here in crawler-ship-thing!"

"We've got to get out of here before —" A sudden shriek of stressed metal cut her off. There was a horrible shudder, and the room began vibrating, resonating through all the little loose pieces of droid anatomy in the chamber.

"We're moving. Odd, what with the stormtroopers —" she was cut off again, this time by the squeal of a blaster bolt, then a sudden roar of an explosion.

"Mace ... we ... go now!" Agualae croaked in Basic. She looked at the steam vent piping that lined the chamber, and hoped that the Imperial sensors weren't looking too closely at the chamber to notice the sudden flare of a repulsor signature. That they didn't even touch the speeder struck her as odd. What did they want in the first place?

"Coming, Aggy." Mace crouched next to the main servo of the door-gate for the chamber. Fastened to the servo with syntherope, bonding gel, and what looked like the rubber tread from a LN droid, was a cluster of vac-tubes, power cells, liquid viats, and wiring.

"You've been busy," she commented. Mace struck a small flamer
he kept tucked away in a hidden pocket, and lit an oily rag-wick. He jumped into the speeder, and covered his head.

"There was a sharp crack as Mace's impromptu bomb turned into a thousand sparking filaments, and the servo split in two. With a heavy creak, the ramp lowered. Halfway.

"Crip..." Agulaae cursed. Three more blasts rocked the crawler, and the treads began making a staccato wailing that did not sound at all well.

"Hang on," yelled Mace, pulling on his goggles.

"Wait, Mace..." But there was no waiting. Mace gunned the engines. With the added weight of the two droids in the back seat, the speeder tilted back enough to make the 45 degree steep angle of the ramp. The top thruster barely cleared the doorway.

For a few exhilarating seconds, the speeder was airborne. Whatever forces that controlled time and space seemed to find these two scavengers entertaining at the very least. They weren't decapitated by their exit. Nor did the speeder shatter when it returned to the ground, though for a few terrifying moments it sounded as if it was going to.

But, most amazing was their direction. The troopers were attacking from the northwest, and the speeder's chamber was oriented to face the southeast. With an entire burning crawler between them and the fleeing speeder, the Imperials would be hard pressed to have detected Mace and Agulaae.

Mace was at full throttle, despite the warning buzz of the speeder's thermostat. The sound of blaster fire was gradually fading away under the roar of the repulsor, and the crawler was growing to just a speck on the horizon, billowing thick, oily smoke into the clear sky.

Agulaae looked back, knowing that Jek and his tribe were gone. All that, for nothing. She had survived, though, and she wasn't taken home. That was all that mattered, but the droid was gone. She snorted an ironic laugh. She didn't even know if Jek had the droid to begin with.

The R5 and the power droid warbled fragments of conversation to each other in the awkward silence that accompanied most of the journey. Mace may not have known much, but he did recognize when Agulaae wanted to be left alone. At least, most of the time.

"Oh, hey, Aggy, you know what the R5 told me? He said the koovy white-type standing-upright droid we're looking for wandered away from the crawler before they even left the city."

The speeder's thrusters were momentarily drowned out by the loudest curse Agulaae had ever uttered.

**U**nul Poli took the small receipt chit the Jenet had given him and gave a quick visual inspection of the scooter he had returned. Everything seemed to be in order, save for some extra syntherope that the renter had left on the cargo cowling, but the credit was good, and that's all that mattered.

"Doing a little hunting?" Unut asked, painfully conversational.

"No," the Jenet replied, not looking up from the datapad he was tapping, updating expenditures to Mcgrrr's account. "Why?"

"Oh, no reason. Ordinarily, those smart enough to survive on
Mos Eisley's streets knew better than to ask questions, but the Jenet looked harmless enough. "I was just wondering about the rope, that's all."
"The rope is there to hold the droid down," the Jenet responded.
"Are there no sub-adult schools on Cona?"
"Mister, in my school, they taught us the difference between a droid and empty desert air," said Unut, crossing his arms.
To this, the Jenet's ears perked up, although no one could have seen them for the borg implant. He looked back at the speeder.
And there, in the shadow of Unut's stall, was his scooter, trailing some torn and frayed syntherope from its cowl.
The borg implant quickly provided the Jenet with over three hundred thousand expletives appropriate for the situation. Instead, he inhaled, wilted his pores to radiate dignity, and said, "Excuse me."
As the Jenet turned and left, Unut could not help but laugh. This was definitely one to tell his staff.
"Hey, Wioslea, you'll never guess — What's this?" Unut paused midstep, his glittering eyes spotting an oxidized, sand-pitted tri-thrust speeder parked in his lot.
His clerk, a tall comic-faced Vuvrian, looked up nervously. "We just bought it, from a moisture farmboy." She rubbed her oddly shaped hands, and stared at the clunker for a moment.
"How much?" Unut rumbled.
"Two thousand." Wioslea barely squeaked.
"Two thousand, what, is your brain baked? What are you, entering your second grubhood?"

Takeel positively beamed. He did it. He found the droid. He knew he could. He looked around, hoping his brother would notice. He — wait, the droid.
An ice-cold second of sheer panic on a hot desert world melted away as Takeel saw the droid wandering about 15 meters behind him.
"I said follow me," he bellowed. "How dumb can you be?"
The humanoid business droid continued its buzzing, and shuffled along awkward legs, barely avoiding passersby.
"Will you hurry it up, I gotta get you to Jabba's," the Snivvian urged.
But if the droid had any care as to who Jabba was, and how important it was to rush to him at this moment, it made no indication. It continued its buzzing and shuffling.

"Why Jabba wants you I don't know," said Takeel, getting behind the droid in an attempt to steer it in the right direction. "You're so stupid."
The speeder had broken down three blocks from the shop, and Jek's Jawas had taken Agiliac's rental chit from her. It was, without question, the worst day she had ever had. And now, appropriately, she was helping Mace shepherd two droids through the bustling alleyways so that no one would steal them.
"Isn't that, she mused, how this all started?"
"Come on, cheer up, Aggy!" Mace insisted, allowing his exuberance to cover the fact that he was skimping on his share of the lifting of the damaged R5. "We got these kooky droids, and a story to tell too!"
"Swell, a story; that'll put dinner on our tables and nikta in your liver," she snarled, knowing full well Mace couldn't understand her. She was out a translocator, out a transponder coupler, she hadn't found the parts for Unut's Starhawk, and she was sure the Arcona was going to charge them for towing the speeder the three blocks. And, to top it all off, there was no trace of the business droid anywhere.

Until three seconds later.
"Mac! Mac! Nekkel juuurw obwegadada! Dinkle obwegadada!" She shouted, gesticulating madly.
"I said I was sorry, Aggy, it's —" Then Mace saw what she was pointing at. There, not 20 meters away, in a shadowy space between two buildings, was the droid, a Snivvian, and a Jenet holding a blaster.

"I'm afraid that this is my property," the Jenet said, emphasizing the point by slowly waving his blaster.
The hunchbacked Snivvian had drawn his own weapon, a laughable anachronism of polished metal. "No way, grubber, you don't know what I went through to get this thing."
A small part of the Jenet dating back to before the borg surgery screamed internally. "I'm sure it very interesting, but you see, the droid is my property."
"Oh yeah, I don't see your name on it," snapped Takeel.
"First of all, you don't know my name. Secondly, I doubt you can
walked out carrying a smoking blaster. An unlikely form, he walked through the parting onlookers. He stood about 1.4 meters tall, and looked remarkably similar to Takeel.

"Brother!" exclaimed Takeel, nearly forgetting the situation entirely. "You shot my droid!"

"You fool!" fumed the Jenet, "Have you any idea what you've just done?"

"Yes. I've gathered some rather incriminating evidence about your employer for my employer." The Snivvian, known to some as Snaggletooth, pulled out a datapad from his belt. He displayed it so the Jenet could see, all the while keeping his blaster trained on him. Its small screen showed a grainy holo image, with time-code counter ticking away at the bottom. The first scene was very dim, and showed a fat, slobbish man and his Jenet attendant sneaking around what appeared to be Jabba's townhouse. The image skipped for a bit, and the time-codes showed a significant advancement. There, in the brightly sunlit streets, was the Jenet, producing a labeled restraining bolt, and moving out of the camera's view. Then the image skipped again, and replayed the images just prior to the droid's demise.

From the skewed angles, and wobbly picture, a borg implant wasn't required to surmise that the droid's photoreceptors had been recording the images.

"So, that's why it was so vacant," The Jenet muttered. "The droid's capacities were stretched running whatever transceiver rig the Hutt patched into it."

"Very good," Snaggletooth said, "Jabba has all sorts of holos of Megrrrr now. Stealing a business droid? From your host, even! Such bad form. Not to mention what sort of secrets you let spill in the two days you had the droid."

"One and a half, really," The Jenet snched. He looked down his muzzle at the scruffier of the two Snivvians. "Tell me, what role did he have to play?"

"Purely accessory," Snaggletooth added. "Very good, brother. You found your first real bounty. Looks like Ephant Mon won the bet. I wonder what Jabba has to pay."

Takeel had missed everything said after "Very good" and relished the praise of his brother.

"Tell your employer to be at Jabba's palace by 2300, and tell him not to try anything stupid. His ship is impounded, and he's not going anywhere." Snaggletooth lowered his blaster, then turned to his brother.
"And I believe these are yours," he said, giving his brother a handful of small centimeter-gauge metal sphere ammunition.

Mace hadn't gotten it, the whole situation they'd witnessed, and Aguilae was certain she couldn't explain it to him even if she had the transliterator. The point was, if the suns shone on them through good skies, then Jabba would ignore the second theft of his business droid by Mace.

And if not, well, they'd deal with that when it came.

They managed to salvage what was left of the droid, knowing that since it had transmitted all of its holographic information to Jabba or Snaggletooth, no one would need the charred remains. Maybe they could sell it to someone, or maybe some other Jawas would come in from the swap.

She wouldn't mention Jek to them. He and his tribe deserved that much. Let their scraps be found by those scavenging; she would not tip off anyone to its location. She and Mace had taken their share. The CZ's motivator looked like it would fit in the R5, and the power droid seemed fine.

A few years back, she would have picked the sandcrawler remains clear. But not now. That was too much of the Jawa way, and she had chosen this life. And she was going to stick it through. Someday, she was going to make a fortune.

Roleplaying Game Statistics

**Aguilae**

*Type*: Jawa Trader  
*DEXTERITY* 2D  
Blaster 3D-1, dodge 4D  
*KNOWLEDGE* 2D  
Languages 3D, streetwise 3D-2, value 4D-1  
*M E C H A N I C A L* 3D  
Ground vehicle operation: sandcrawler 5D  
*PERCEPTION* 1D  
Bargain 4D-2, con 4D-1  
*STRENGTH* 1D  
*TECHNICAL* 3D  
Computer programming/repair 5D, droid programming 6D-1, droid repair 6D

**Mace Windu**

*Type*: Squib Trader  
*DEXTERITY* 4D  
Dodge 3D  
*KNOWLEDGE* 3D  
Alien species 4D-1, cultures 5D, languages 4D, value 6D-2  
*M E C H A N I C A L* 3D  
Astrogation 4D-1, capital ship gunnery 3D-2  
*PERCEPTION* 4D  
Bargain 7D, con 5D-2, search 4D  
*STRENGTH* 2D  
*TECHNICAL* 2D  
Computer programming/repair 5D

*Force Points*: 1  
*Character Points*: 8
Lhojugg

Type: Nimbanel Clerk

DEXTERITY 3D
KNOWLEDGE 3D

Alien species 4D, bureaucracy: Jabba the Hutt’s organization 6D-2, business: Jabba the Hutt’s organization 7D, streetwise: Jabba the Hutt’s organization 6D-2, willpower 5D, value 6D

MECHANICAL 1D
Repair/ liftoff operation: sail barge 5D
PERCEPTION 3D
Bargain 6D, command 5D, persuasion 5D
STRENGTH 2D

TECHNICAL 1D
Computer programming/repair 5D
Character Points: 5

Move: 10

Equipment: Batapad

Capsule: Lhojugg is the leader of a cadre of Nimbanel clerks and bureaucrats employed by Jabba the Hutt on Tatooine. Lhojugg claims to be a direct descendent of the original Nimbanel who approached the Hutts for inclusion in their criminal empire. A perfectionist, Lhojugg demands weekly datamemos and progress reports from his staff, and logs the names of all his underlings who break procedure or office syntax for reports to the Hutts. Jabba has long ignored these reports, leaving Lhojugg to administer the petty details by himself, but the Nimbanel has become more and more annoying in the past few months. Lhojugg loathes Bib Fortuna, particularly the Twilek’s position in the organization compared to his actual responsibilities.

To Lhojugg, order means records. He records, tabulates, and appends everything he does in countless datamemos. The unwritten rules of an organization like Jabba the Hutt’s mean that allegiances often change with a single hand of sabace or a flick of a vibroblade, and the word on the street is not to be taken lightly. Lhojugg has wrapped his bureaucratic mind around this shady fringe culture with remarkable ease, as he has numerous files about loyalty murmure, fudg, whispers, and rivalry reports. Lhojugg longs to show Jabba this collection, but is such a perfectionist that he will not present it until it is properly cross-referenced, ordered, and footnoted.

Lhojugg wears a flat red and tan uniform like the other Nimbanel employed by Jabba. He has pink skin, a circular snout, lidless eyes, and tufts of reddish hair protruding from his chucks. Humans and other species find it hard to differentiate between individual Nimbanel.

Jek Nikik

Type: Jawa scavenger

DEXTERITY 2D
Blaster 3D, dodge 4D
KNOWLEDGE 2D
Survival: desert 4D-2
MECHANICAL 3D
Ground vehicle operation: sandcrawler 3D-2
PERCEPTION 1D
Bargain 4D, con 3D-1
STRENGTH 1D
Climbing/jumping 2D-2
TECHNICAL 3D
Computer programming/repair 4D-2, droid programming 5D
Character Points: 2

Move: 8

Equipment: Jawa ionization gun (-1D to blaster, 3D ionization damage), tool kit

Capsule: Jek Nikik is a young lieutenant to his crawler chief, and commands respect from the Jawas serving aboard the massive fortress-home that plies a particular stretch of desert. Nikik grew up friends with
Jawa radical Het Nik, and always looks forward to meeting his friend at the Jawa swap. Jek believes in the ways of the Jawas, but found Het’s different ideas of Jawa strength and aggression interesting. Agulaa’s own ideas of independence were an intriguing alluring to Jek’s ideals, but that did not stop him from wanting to marry her.

Like other Jawas, Jek loves to collect scrap and acquire as much machinery as possible. With the ancient sandcrawler being their main tool of survival in the desert, much of the machinery gathered by the Jawas goes directly to keeping the massive vehicles running. Jek often dreams of having the fastest, strongest, largest sandcrawler among the Jawas.

Jek stands about a meter tall, and is all but concealed in the folds of a filthy brown robe. Two sickly yellow eyes glow from within the darkness his hood, and Jek wears belts and handoliers of tools, trinkets and spare parts.

**Opun \"The Black Hole\" Mcgrrrr**

**Type:** Minor Corellian Crime Boss

**DEXTERITY 3D**
- Blaster 4D-2, dodge 4D

**KNOWLEDGE 2D+2**
- Alien species 4D, bureaucracy 4D, intimidation

**MECHANICAL 2D-1**
- Space transports 4D

**PERCEPTION 3D**
- Bargain 4D-2, command 6D

**STRENGTH 4D**
- Brawling 6D, stamina 6D

**TECHNICAL 3D**
- Demolitions 4D

**Character Points:** 4

**Move:** 10

**Equipment:** Blaster pistol (4D), datapad, 6,000 credits

**Capsule:** A minor smuggling chief and gun-runner out of the Ion Corridor, Opun \"The Black Hole\" Mcgrrrr was the son of the infamous Mcgrrrr, the founder of the Black Hole pirate gang from the Delphon system. A proud Corellian, Mcgrrrr is actually thoroughly unimpressive, attaining whatever status he does have from his mother’s name and the work of his underlings, such as the Jenets Tols Venga, and even his wife, Cyra. Mcgrrrr’s pride and joy is the ownership of the Holiday Towers on Cloud City, property that Jabba the Hutt has long had his sickly yellowed eyes on.

Although Mcgrrrr was quick to stamp his name and ugly visage on all his property, his organization is actually run by a tireless staff of underlings. Most of his cut-throat mercenaries and bodyguards are loyal to him for his cruel tastes and his raucous parties.

Mcgrrrr is a burly human male who把自己 in furs from animals he claims to have killed with his bare hands. While this point is never disputed, Tols Venga knows better since his perfect memory has the exact numbers from the receipts.

**Tols Venga**

**Type:** Jenet Cyborg

**DEXTERITY 3D**
- Blaster 4D-1, dodge 3D-2, running 4D

**KNOWLEDGE 3D+2**
- Bureaucracy 6D, business 7D, languages 4D, planetary systems 5D, streetwise: Mcgrrrr’s organization 8D, willpower 5D

**MECHANICAL 2D+1**
- Repulsorlift operation 3D-2

**PERCEPTION 3D+1**
- Bargain 4D, command 5D, investigation 4D

**STRENGTH 2D+2**
- Swimming 4D

**TECHNICAL 3D**
- Computer programming/repair 5D

**Special Abilities:**
- **Enhanced Memory:** A Jenet that has at least 1D in any Knowledge skill automatically gains a +1D bonus to use that skill because of its memory.
- **Augmentation:** Because Jenets can memorize coordinates and formulas, a Jenet with at least 1D in augmentation gains a +1D to its roll.
- **Borg Construct:** Increases computer programming/repair reflected in stats above. Increases any Knowledge or Technical skill by +1D. Can hold four knowledge cartridges, with a maximum of 6D worth of additional information.
- **Hearing:** Jenets’ advanced hearing gives them a bonus of +1D for Perception checks involving hearing.
- **Swimming:** Jenets can advance their swimming skill at half the normal Character Point cost.
- **Climbing:** Jenets can advance their climbing skill at half the normal Character Point cost.
- **Flexibility:** Jenets can disjoin their limbs to fit through incredibly small openings.

**Character Points:** 5

**Move:** 12 (running), 10 (swimming)

**Equipment:** Datapad, blaster pistol (4D), Biotech borg construct A‘6, several knowledge cartridges
Capsule: As a young Jenet, Tols underwent cyborg surgery in an attempt to supplement his already impressive memory. He had hopes of becoming a highly-placed Jenet government official, but the surgery tore away at his personality and his pride in his people; instead he wanted to be an Imperial official. The Emperor’s own bigotry against alien species precluded his placement in any self-respecting Moff’s office, and the Jenet twice avoided slavery. He eventually became the expeditor of an incompetent bounty hunter, and then joined Opun “The Black Hole” Mcgrrrr’s small organization in the Iron Corridor. In truth, he is the one who keeps the organization running, carefully giving Mcgrrrr the illusion of control.

If Tols thought it was worth his while, he could easily set himself up as the head of the organization. But having spent more than enough excursions in a ship’s hold full of cut-throat mercs and pirates, he realizes that their loyalty is not worth a grain of Kessel spice. Although he maintains his loyalty, he is secreting a sizable bank account from Mcgrrrr’s coffers, so that he can return to Garban with a sizable “retirement sum.”

Tols wears a Biotech Cyborg Construct Aj’6 around his head, the state-of-the-art in biomechanical interfaces. With this construct, Tols can supplement his knowledge with specific loadable cartridges. Tols also has a direct link with certain computer systems. The sheer amount of information flowing through the mix of hardware and cerebral system is astounding, but Tols rarely shares it with others for he feels no one deserves his knowledge. Indignant, and always silently suffering, Tols goal in life is to find respect.

- **Takeel**

  Type: Snivvian Fool  
  **DEXTERITY 2D**  
  **KNOWLEDGE 2D**  
  Streetwise: Mon Esley 4D-1  
  **MECHANICAL 2D**  
  Perception 3D+1  
  **STRENGTH 2D**  
  **TECHNICAL 1D-2**  
  **Adaptive Skin:** Snivvians can survive in temperature extremes of minus 30 degrees standard, to temperatures up to 45 degrees standard without harm or protective gear. They do wear clothing for cultural reasons. Snivvians tough skin give them a 1D armor bonus to resist physical damage.  
  Character Points: 3  
  Move: 8  
  Equipment: Masket (3D)

Capsule: One of the first new sets of twins born to the Snivvian people, Takeel and his brother Zutton were viewed as a terrible omen of more strife to come to the long-suffering Snivvians. In an effort to prevent the terrible Blood Code from causing Takeel or his brother to turn into tyrants, they were placed under close observation as infants. As Takeel was the first to speak or walk, he underwent a personality reprogramming, leaving him a simpleton. Takeel gravitated to Tatooine, where he became little more than a vagrant and a spice addict. He adores his brother a great deal, and wishes to follow in his footsteps, becoming a bounty hunter to impress him. Takeel’s “bounty hunting” is actually little more than turning in lawbreakers to the Empire and hiring himself out as a cheap, but inept, mercenary.

Takeel sat in the Mon Esley Cantina that fateful day when Luke Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi hired a Corellian smuggler to take them to the Alderaan system. He was in an adjacent booth, when his ears perked up on mention of “droids.” He was going to turn the fugitives in when he realized that the droids in question were not the ones he was looking for. He left the shade of the cantina to continue his search.

Jabba the Hutt has no qualms in keeping Takeel around his entourage, because the Snivvian amuses him. Zutton hates the way the Hutt uses his brother for entertainment, but cannot say anything to the crime lord. Snaggletooth is always a few steps behind Takeel, to make sure he doesn’t get into trouble, but their relationship barely qualifies as brotherly.

- **Snaggletooth**

  Type: Snivvian bounty hunter  
  **DEXTERITY 2D**  
  Blaster 3D, dodge 4D-2, grenade 5D  
  **KNOWLEDGE 3D**  
  Art: painting 4D-1, planetary systems 4D, streetwise: Thalassian slavers 3D, value 4D  
  **MECHANICAL 2D**  
  Space transports 4D  
  **PERCEPTION 4D-1**  
  Command 4D-2, investigations 5D, search 4D-2  
  **STRENGTH 3D**  
  Stamina 4D  
  **TECHNICAL 2D**  
  First aid 6D  
  **Adaptive Skin:** Snivvians can survive in temperature extremes of minus 30 degrees standard, to temperatures up to 45 degrees standard without harm or protective gear. They do wear clothing for cultural reasons. Snivvians tough skin give them a 1D armor bonus to resist physical damage.
Spare Parts

Force Points: 1
Character Points: 10
Move: 10
Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (50), datapad, painting set, modified Ghotoc freighter Longest Winter

Capsule: Zutton was born twin brother to Takeel. He was spared the personality programming, and feels shame for his dim-witted brother. When Takeel had trouble grasping basic composition, Zutton was creating masterful paintings. When his parents were captured by Thalassians, Zutton accompanied an Iotran bounty hunter in a strike against the slavers. He was intrigued by the Iotran, and began painting symbolic images about bounty hunters. To fully understand the dynamics of hunter and prey, Zutton became a hunter, working under the nom de plume of Snaggletooth. As a hunter, he is actually quite capable, drawing the attention of legitimate law enforcement organizations and criminal elements. Zutton is a careful hunter, never taking a life unless he has to. It is rumored that after every acquisition, he creates a painting dedicated to the target. He is now in his "criminal period," solely accepting bounties from the likes Jabbas the Hut.

Jabba amuses himself by testing Zutton's patience by exploiting his brother. Although Zutton doen't love Takeel like other brothers do each other, he does feel responsible for his limitations. Zutton feels immense rage over not being able to stop the Hut. Instead, in the cargo hold of his ship the Longest Winter, he paints all sorts of angry expressionist paintings of the Hut. Lhojugg knew of this collection, and has logged it in his files.

Snaggletooth is a short Snivvian, about 1.4 meters tall. He wears a red jumpsuit with black piping, and black gloves. Whenever possible, Snaggletooth tries to take live captives. After each acquisition, as he hauls his prey to the Imperial authorities, Snaggletooth extensively questions the prisoner about what it feels like to be captured, and to be prey.

This month West End Games' Tales of the Jedi Companion takes fans back 4,000 years before the Star Wars films, to a time when the Jedi Knights were the protectors of peace and justice in the Old Republic. For a sneak preview at this fascinating period of Jedi Knights, The Official Star Wars: Adventure Journal presents a story of a young Jedi coming of age and facing...

The Most Dangerous Foe

By Angela Phillips

Illustrations by Mike Vilardi

"Deen, tell me a story!"
"All right, Mavis, what kind do you want?" Deen Voorsan settled his back against the bulkhead. The star cruiser Republic's Return had been assigned to evacuate command and technical personnel from
Yavin Base. Deen had offered to settle the crew members' children in their quarters while they were on bridge duty.

"Tell me a story about a dragon," said Mavis, nestling into Deen's lap.

"Oh, no," said Mavis' brother Tarn, hanging out of his bunk into the aisle. "Not another dragon story. Too scary — they keep her up at night."

"Not all dragon stories are scary," countered Deen. "And not all dragons are scary."

"They look scary," put in another child.

"But things aren't always what they seem," Deen said. "Let me tell you a story my grandmother used to tell me, that happened far, far away and long ago..."

"How long ago?" asked Tarn.

"A million, zillion years?" asked Mavis.

Deen laughed. "Not that long, Mavis. More like a few thousand years. Back in the high times of the Old Republic, when the Jedi Knights were the defenders of peace and justice..."

"Mistress Tannis — it's finished."

"Let me see."

Sixteen-year-old Vici Ramunee assumed the salute stance and thumbed the activation switch on her lightsaber. A shaft of light leapt up between her hands. Mistress Tannis smiled in approval, her indigo eyes sparkling.

"Very good, Vici," said the Onnati. "Your lightsaber is an extension of your mind and a bridge between you and the Force. Use it carefully, as you would any of your other skills, and never draw it in anger."

Vici bowed and, quenching its flame, returned the lightsaber's hilt to her belt. "Mistress," she said, "am — am I a Jedi now?"

The blue-skinned Jedi teacher laughed, a tinkling silver sound. "Always the eager one, aren't you Vici. Patience. One would think the three years you've spent here at the Praxem have been a lifetime — but the time is by you to return to your homeworld is sooner than you think. Tomorrow you will face one final test, and once you have completed it — then you will be a Jedi."

Vici's brow wrinkled. "What sort of test, Mistress? And what if I fail?"

Mistress Tannis shook her head, her feathery white hair rippling over her shoulders. "Do not think of failure."

Vici met her teacher at the Praxem gate shortly before dawn. "You will have from sunrise today to sunrise tomorrow morning to complete your quest, Vici," Tannis said. "As the day breaks, you will head north, into the forest, where you will find the river that will guide you. By nightfall you will be at the foot of the mountains. Travel up the river valley until you reach the Cave of Truth, where Jedi have been tested for thousands of years."

Vici, shivering from cold and excitement, tried to remain still, remembering that a Jedi should not feel the chill and a Jedi stays calm.

"When you succeed in this quest," Tannis continued, "you will be a Jedi Knight. You will have faced your most dangerous foe and triumphed."

"What foe?" Vici asked, startled; Tannis had never told her she was going to have to fight anyone.

Tannis simply smiled and shook her head. "That is for you to learn, child. Now empty your pouch, Vici, the sun will be up in moments and you are to carry nothing with you on your journey."

"Nothing?"

"Nothing. No food, water, or tools. All you will need you will find in the Force. And do not trust your physical senses — they will deceive you."

"Must I leave my lightsaber?" Vici asked.

"With your other tools, yes," said Tannis. She watched Vici lay it aside; "You may keep your jewelry," she said as the girl started to remove it.

"Thanks, Vici thought, I'll just whack my enemy in the head with my necklace! What's the point of building a lightsaber if you don't use it?"

"Use the Force to protect you," said Tannis. Vici started, wondering if the Jedi Master could read her thoughts. "With the Force as your ally, you may overcome all things," Tannis said. "Now go."

As the blue-white sun rippled over the horizon, Vici turned one last time to her teacher. "Mistress Tannis," she said, "what if I fail?"

"The Force is with you. Do not think of failure."

Vici found the river easily and followed it north through the woods. The day warmed quickly as the sun rose, and Vici found herself enjoying her walk. The straight gray trunks of trees rising to a ruffled blue-green canopy overhead reminded her of home; the
crunching of leaves under her feet and the calling of birds in the
treetops brought back memories of combing the uplands along Lir
Lake, gathering tills blossoms with her parents. Now the leaves were
brighter, crisper, with every color and shape impressed into her
senses, and the birds seemed somehow more alive — she knew
where each one sat without looking, knew the message of each song
without pausing to think. The Force drew Vici together with the
forest, as if there were no divisions between them, and she gloried
in it.

By mid-day, however, Vici was hungry. She knelt to drink from the
stream; the water was cold, clear, and fresh as any at home. Knowing
that she had to keep on if she were to reach her destination in time,
Vici planned to rest for only a few moments.

In stillness Vici suddenly became aware of the presence of a
human searching through the forest. "Who's there?" she called
aloud; the person was coming closer, and searching for her, she was
certain. Vici wondered if this were her enemy come to challenge her
already. She leapt to her feet, tensed and ready, reaching out
through the Force. He's looking for me, she thought, he's nervous,
his not coming to fight me, he's ...

"Veni!" she cried, spotting her 10-year-old brother scrambling
along the river bank. "Veni Ramunea, what are you doing here?"
"I didn't want you to be alone!" the boy said, splashing to her
through the creek. "I was hiding just inside the gate this morning. I
heard what Mistress Tannis said, about you having to meet a
dangerous enemy, and I didn't want you to have to do it all by
yourself. And I brought you this." He held out Vici's lightsaber.

Vici rolled her eyes and sighed. Vici, who had only come to the
Jedi Praxeum that year, was utterly devoted to his elder sister.
Sometimes too devoted.

"Veni, the whole point of this test is that I do it alone! Now go back
to your classes."

"But Vici," said the boy, "I wanna come with you. And ... and I
don't know how to get back. I might get lost. I gotta stay with you."

"You're just saying that so I'll let you stay — you won't get lost and
you know it. You just follow the river, then you turn east when the
woods get thin, and find your way back to the Praxeum by sensing
the others' presence."

"I don't know how to do that yet!" protested Veni. "I have to come
with you!"

Vici gave up. "All right, kid, you can come with me as far as the
cave, but no farther! You'll have to wait outside when I go in."

Veni grinned. "Here," he said, "take your lightsaber."

"No," said Vici, "Mistress Tannis told me not to bring it."

"Well, what do I do with it?"

"You carry it — don't try to use it," Vici added quickly, seeing the
excitement in the boy's eyes, "just hang it on your belt. Now come
on, we have a long way to go."

A few minutes later, Veni said, "Are you hungry, Vici? I made a
sandwich. I uh, took a few bites off it, but you can have ...

"Finish it yourself," she said.

"All right."

"Are we nearly there?" Veni asked as the sun began to descend.

"We're getting closer," said Vici. "The trees are thinning out and
the ground is rising. Mistress Tannis said the cave was at the end of
a valley in the mountains."

"Can't we rest? I'm tired. Are we supposed to walk all day and all
night?"

"You're not supposed to be here at all, kid. You wanted to come,
remember?"

"Oh, yeah," Veni sighed. "But can't we rest?"

"You can do whatever you like. I'm looking for the cave."

Veni sighed again but kept trudging along beside his sister. Vici
felt sorry for the boy, but she reminded herself it was his own fault
— nobody had made him follow her.

"I'm hungry," Veni said.

"Tough. You ate the sandwich. Also his fault, Vici thought,
thought it didn't make her feel any less concerned for him. The boy's
complaints were bringing her own discomfort to her attention as
well. She too was tired and hungry, and caught in a state between
eagerness to reach the goal of her journey and fear of what she might
find. A Jedi is centered, she told herself, a Jedi feels no extremes.
Hunger and weariness are only of the body; a Jedi's strength flows
from the Force. It grew harder, though, for her to will away her exhaustion
as the path grew steeper and the ground more rocky. Still she kept
on, and her brother followed behind her.

By late afternoon, Vici and Veni had climbed well past the tree
line. The valley seemed lifeless except for a few tufts of flowering
vende and clusters of spiny planimals nestled against the eastern
wall of the canyon to catch the last rays of the sun. By dusk they
would have crept by moonlight to the west side of the valley, to
absorb the light of dawn; Vici watched their tiny photoreceptors
glittering in the sunset like jewels hidden in pins cushions.

"What's that?" she hissed abruptly, halting in mid-stride.
“What’s what?” responded Veni, bumping into her.

“Listen,”

Now they both heard it — a faint pounding and thumping coming from far ahead of them, like pistons pumping in a distant machine.

“What is it?” Veni asked.

“Shut!” said Vici, closing her eyes and opening her mind; she recoiled at what she found.

“What’s wrong?” demanded Veni, sensing his sister’s distress.

“It’s alive,” Vici said. “It’s alive, and it’s big, and it’s coming toward us.”

“How big?”

“Huge.”

The thumping quickly grew louder; small pebbles began dropping off the canyon walls and dancing about the ground.

“We gotta get out of here!” said Veni, turning to run.

“No,” said Vici, grabbing his shoulder. “Hear how fast it’s coming? We’ll never outrun it.” She looked for somewhere to hide, but the rock laces offered no cover. Neither was climbing an option; she felt confident that with a little push from the Force she could scale the sheer walls, but her brother...

“What do we do? What do we do?” Veni’s eyes were wide with terror as the increasing vibrations shook a slab free from the canyon behind them to crash into fragments on the ground. Even the planimals had begun edging away from the sound.

“I’ll just have to fight it,” said Vici, taking up a firm stance. “Veni, give me my lightsaber.”

“But Mistress Tannis...”

“Told me not to bring it. She didn’t tell you. Hand it over.”

Veni complied. Vici activated the blade, its red light splashing around the valley and drawing a few planimals towards her. A plume of smoke from the end of the canyon heralded the approach of the creature. Coming around the bend into view, it was truly monstrous: over 10 meters of scaly, segmented body overshadowed by enormous leathery wings. Veni, hiding behind his sister, trembled at the sound of 20 powerful reptilian legs plunging toward him in deadly synchronization. Vici tried to muster her fear, concentrating on the mighty power of the Force she knew she held tightly in her hands. The creature drew closer, and they could see a hideous, misshapen head, wrinkled and glittering, and dozens of needle-like teeth in a jaw large enough to swallow Veni whole. It slowed to a stop as it approached them. Vici took full advantage of what she felt was the beast’s momentarily confusion and swung her lightsaber in a wide arc; the creature reared several pairs of legs off the ground to avoid the blow.

“Magnetic meteors!” the creature exclaimed. “What kind of a salute is that? What is Mistress Tannis teaching at the Praxuem these days... anyway?”

Vici froze in mid-slash, dumbfounded, as the creature threw seven sets of legs into reverse, backing away from the humans.

“Wait,” it said, “were you attacking me?” It snorted a puff of steam from its nostrils with a sound Vici assumed was a laugh. “The Sith Wars must be going badly, if Tannis is forced to graduate Jedi who can’t tell friend from foe.”

“You—you’re our friend?” asked Veni. Fear gave way to curiosity, and he moved out from behind his sister.

“You’d better hope so,” it said with another snort. “I am Willm Lywin of the Dulfogquvin, guardian of this valley, and have been so for 600 years, give or take a decade. I have come to escort the initiate—I take it that would be you,” it said, looking at Vici with a friendly twinkle in its eye, “to the Cave of Truth.”

Vici hung her head in embarrassment, quickly stuffing her deactivated lightsaber into her pouch and wondering if Lywin could notice how red her face was. It probably can, she thought. “Master Willm,” she said, “I am so sorry!”

“Oh, don’t feel bad, child,” the creature said with a ripple of its vast wings. “It’s not as if this hasn’t happened before—remember, I’ve been helping train Jedi for centuries. Let this be part of your lessons: never rush into conflict, no matter how threatening a situation may seem.” It made an odd, chuckling sound. “The hardest thing for human initiates is always ‘don’t be hasty.’ Humans are such a fidgety species— but very interesting,” it added, with a glance toward Vici and her brother. “Now come along, let’s go. The young lady has work to do before dawn, and the sun has set.”

“So you see,” continued Vici, who had been talking to Lywin as they walked, “our parents weren’t too happy to see us go, but they understood the responsibilities of being Force-sensitive and let us come here.”

“Say, Master Willm,” Veni put in from his perch on the creature’s back. “Where are you from?”

“I told you I’ve been here for six centuries,” it said.

“You were born here?” Veni asked.

“Ahh no— before I came here, I escorted a Praxuem ship for about four hundred years.”

“And before that?”

“Oh, that was so long ago, it wouldn’t interest you little humans. Your sister’s stories are much more entertaining. Now tell me, Vici,
how exactly did you help your parents in their work?"

Vici herself was sure that the life of a thousand-year-old Jedi Star
Dragon must be much more interesting than an explanation of the
flahsh distillation, but she respected her escort’s obvious wish for
privacy and continued. "Well, I'lahsh is made from the nectar of the
tall blossoms, and since each blossom contains only one tiny droplet
of nectar, it takes hundreds of thousands of blossoms to produce
the year's vintage. And because the blossoms are so delicate, they
can't be harvested by machine or even by droid - they have to be
picked by hand, one flower at a time."

"And this is your task?" asked Lywin. He had produced a small
datapad from beneath a scaly fold of his skin and was occasionally
tapping information into it as he walked.

"We all join in the harvest, the whole family - brothers, sisters,
cousins, everyone. It’s so beautiful in the springtime, the flower
grows over everything with little golden trumpets glowing, and the fra-
grance is all around you until you feel you could get drunk from just
breathing. And the flocks of nerfles like white and black specks all
over the meadows, and the thrantas with their gondolas winging over-
head, and Lir Lake flowing into the sea, with the cetians leaping and
singing in the spray. When Delaya is bright in the night sky, some-
times we hardly even sleep, we just keep bringing in the flowers,
singing and laughing, all night long. With so many people to be paid,
the money doesn't go too far, but I think it's worth it - how could
anyone be paid more than to be able to walk the uplands in springtime? Alderaan is the most beautiful place in the galaxy, and
I can hardly wait to see it again."

"Papa and Mamma wouldn't mind getting more money," put in
Veni. "Especially since number nine boiler broke down."

"I know," said Vici, "but it's still beautiful." She sighed. "I do wish
I could help Mum and Papa with money. They worry so much. All
their messages to us keep saying how they need this or want that,
and can't afford to buy it."

"Humans do seem overly preoccupied with money," said Lywin,
tapping away at his datapad.

"Don't Dreena, um, Dono, uh, Star Dragons use money?" asked
Veni.

"No."

"Then what do you use?"

"As a medium of exchange? We usually trade information. For
example, I consider your sister's explanation of I'lahsh production a
fair reward for escorting you - I have often heard of I'lahsh, but
had no idea what it was." It paused upon the path. "Ah, here we are,
little ones — the Cave of Truth."

"But that's a dead end!" Veni protested. The valley ended in a cleft
piled high with rocks and boulders, over which the beginnings of the
stream were trickling.

"Oh, little Jedi, I think your sister knows better than that," said
Lywin with a friendly snort.

"My physical senses will deceive me, Vici recalled and reached out
to the Force. Sure enough, she found that the mound of stone
concealed an opening into the cliff side. The largest of the boulders
was too heavy for human arms to lift, but through the Force... I
began carefully levitating each stone away from the opening and
setting them in a pile to one side.

"Can I help?" asked Veni.

"No," said Lywin, "this is part of her test."

Soon Vici had cleared away enough small stones for the larger
boulders, now unsupported, to roll away from the opening. The
stream dropped down in a waterfall, silver beads in the moonlight,
curving a dark tunnel. Vici shivered in excitement; here was
where the real adventure began.

"Calm yourself, little Jedi," Lywin admonished gently. "Through
peace we feel the Force."

Vici took several deep breaths, slowing her pulse and calming her
mind. When she felt herself centered once more, she asked, "What
am I to do now?"

"Enter the cave," said Lywin. "It is now five hours until dawn. You
have that long to search out the cave and face its challenge. Your
brother and I will wait for you here. Go, and may the Force be with you."

Vici bowed in salute to Master Wllwm and turned to enter the cave.
Cold drops of water hit the back of her neck like icy needles; she
shook them off and walked on into blackness.

The cave seemed to be a straight tunnel, dark except for moon-
light filtering in from the opening, boring into the heart of the
mountain. Vici began walking quickly. The path sloped down, and
soon the light of the entrance was gone. Vici was walking in total
blackness. After a time she quickened her pace, eager to meet the
challenge of the cave. Suddenly she found herself fetched up against
a solid wall. A dead end? she thought. That's impossible! But no
matter how she probed, physically and mentally, she found no way
forward. Well what do I do? She laughed. Of course, she thought, how
silly of me! "Don't be hasty," Master Wllwm said. I must be passed an..."
opening in the wall on my way down. She began retracing her steps, slowly and carefully.

She found a doorway concealed in the rock-face on the right side of the tunnel: slight pressure slid it open. She moved down the new tunnel cautiously; she was not going to make the mistake of rushing past a door again. The next door led her right again, the next after that, left. Time passed, whether minutes or hours she could not tell; the darkness of the tunnels was complete. Vici could not have seen less if she were blind, yet her sense of the tunnel walls through the Force more than compensated. She did not lose her path again, and continued turning: left again, right, left again. She wondered how much farther she had to go, and how much time she had left, but she resisted the temptation to hurry, calmly opening one door after another.

Unexpectedly Vici came upon a well-lit chamber. After so long in blackness her eyes stung, and she covered her face with her hands, slowly adjusting to the light. Vici opened her eyes again and began to make out the contents of the room.

It was not as bright as it had originally seemed. The illumination came from a small fire burning in a hearth-niche to Vici’s left. Between Vici and the hearth was a large chair, its back to her; across from the chair was a table. All the details of the room, from the way the walls curved into the low, domed ceiling and the colored glass screen before the hearth to the plantlike forms of the carved table legs, brought back memories of Vici’s home, and she suddenly realized how badly she wanted to be there, and how truly tired she was.

And how truly hungry. The table was laid with a supper for one; across the room she could see a pile of little cakes, what seemed to be a quarter roast bhillen, cheese and fruit, and a pot of tea with steam curling gently from the spout. Is this for me? she wondered. I’m so tired — I could sit down, just for a minute, and have some food —

still, Vici, she told herself, you know if you sat down you’d fall asleep in two seconds and not wake up in time to finish the test. I can always come back. No telling what could happen if my enemy caught me napping. Besides, remember what Mistress Tannis said. This may not be what it seems ...

She thought she caught a glimpse of movement on the table and moved closer.

“Ugh!” she cried as a rat leapt from the cake plate to the floor. Her stomach churned as she saw that the cheese was a writhing mass of maggots; shiny black beetles scuttled out from beneath the bhillen and the fruits burst and collapsed in a puff of rot. “How revolting!” she said and turned away from the table ...

... Only to cry out in alarm at the occupant of the chair behind her: a skeleton, clad in moldering tunic and breeches identical to her own. She clutched at her pendant in horror as the firelight winked off its twin at the breast of the corpse. What can this mean? she began to think, but no sooner had she begun to calm her jangling nerves when the apparition of death faded away into nothingness; Vici turned, and the table was empty as well, its loathsome contents vanished like a dream. Vici shook her head. "Cave of Truth?" she said. "More like the Cave of Lies! Still," she mused, "perhaps that’s part of the test — to find the truth behind the lies?" She began probing for a door. She found it behind a curtain.

It opened into chaos: a black, yawning void filled with rushing winds. Surely I’m not supposed to just leap out into that! she thought, drawing back and slamming the door. However, it was the only way forward. She checked the room again; she found no other openings, and the door she had come in by wouldn’t open again. "Well," she said, "this must be it." She opened the chaos-door again; wind blew back her hair as she stood on the threshold. This room looked safe, but wasn’t — well, sort of, she thought, so maybe? She drew a deep
breath. "May the Force be with me," she said and stepped out into the void.

The winds lifted her like a feather on a gentle spring breeze. Sooner than she would have liked, however, she found herself deposited upon a ledge. Two doors opened before her onto a pair of tunnels, one sloping up, the other down. Which one do I take? she wondered. She closed her eyes; down, she decided, the down one feels right. She started along it.

The passage began growing smaller. Soon Vici found herself stooping, then crawling on hands and knees as the tunnel shrank around her. Part of her mind began wondering if she'd taken the right tunnel. No, she thought, it still feels like the right way, even though it's certainly not easy.

Eventually she was forced to crawl along on her belly. I hope that whomever I'm supposed to fight doesn't catch me like this, she thought. And I hope I don't run into any more rats and bugs, even illusionary ones. She paused, peering forward in the gloom. She could see a faint light ahead, and she crawled toward it.

"At last," she sighed, wriggling from the tunnel into an open chamber. Drawing a few deep breaths, she looked around. This room was merely a rough cave; streaks of pale gold light cross-crossed about the walls in a glowing web. An archway opened on one side. Vici got up and, brushing dirt from her tunic, moved toward it, when a flash from the floor caught her eye. She looked more closely and saw, lying near the wall as if dropped and forgotten, a fist-sized crystal glowing with its own inner light: a coruscum gem, the most highly prized jewel in the galaxy, formed in the core of a gas giant. That's worth enough credits to let my parents hire half of Alderaan to pick 'till blossoms and still have cash to spare — and it's just lying in the dust, waiting for me to pick it up? I don't think so. This must be another test, she thought, to see if I can resist it. "All right, Mistress Tannis," she said, "I'm getting the hang of this cave ... Ouch!" she said, trying to walk out the door. The threads of light crossing the opening had stung her flesh like hot wires, and even as she drew back they glowed fiercely. Vici moved a hand toward them again: their light intensified as they bent toward her. She backed away; they faded. She moved closer to a wall, and the light strings there began to move and glow threateningly. I've got to get past this web, she thought — do these strings respond just to me, or to any movement?

She reached out to take the coruscum gem, planning to throw it at the web. The strands closest to it sprang to life, moving to wrap themselves around the stone, throbbing fiercely. Vici's fingertips stuck to the stone; with effort she jerked her hand away, her fingers smarting. Reevaluating her plan, Vici nudged the gem through the power of the Force, and more glowing threads were wound to it. She looked over her shoulder at the doorway, the light threads covering it had been partially tugged aside. It's like a myrin being balled up in spiderweb, the way the strands stick to the jewel, she thought. I hate to think what could have happened to me if I had just grabbed it. She continued to nudge with her mind, rolling the jewel carefully around the edge of the floor until all of the glowing net was wrapped about it and the passage out was clear.

The next chamber was lined with softly glowing mirrors that threw Vici's image back upon her in dozens of distorted reflections. She shut her eyes and sensed her way forward. I must be near the end, she thought. My foe must be near.

"Hello?" she called. "I'm Vici Ramunee — is anyone going to challenge me?" Her voice echoed around the mirrored labyrinth but met no answer. She opened her eyes.

A ficker of a color different from her clothing caught her eye; she turned to see, as if through a window, the familiar grounds and buildings of the Praxum. She reached out a hand, and the image faded away. She rounded the next corner of the maze, and thought she caught a glimpse of her parents. "Papa?" she called. What does this mean? she thought. It's all illusion. She tried to follow the images through the maze as they flashed and faded across the mirrors — friends, family, places she'd known — but they seemed to lead her around in circles. "This is getting silly," she said. "Am I supposed to fight someone, or not?" She closed her eyes again. All right, this way, she decided.

The next time she opened her eyes, she found herself in a mirrored cul-de-sac. How can I have gone wrong? she wondered as she turned around. A mirrored panel slid shut behind her; now she was enclosed in a mirror-lined box. "Oh, I see," she said, "new puzzle — get out of this room." She began systematically probing the walls for an exit, but found nothing. Examining the floor found a puddle of water in one corner. Vici knelt down; water was seeping in through a hairline crack between the walls, but she still couldn't find a door. Looking around, she saw water beginning to leak in at the other seams of the room. Her feet were quite wet.

"Well, this is nice," she said. "If I could use the Force to turn myself into a water molecule, I could squeeze out. Now where's the door? And where is my enemy?"

She continued unsuccessfully testing the walls, floor and ceiling
of the room as the water kept rising. When it got to her knees, she stopped, as a cold thought hit her. "It's a trap," she said softly to her reflections. "My enemy's led me into a trap somehow."

She started pounding on the wall, her mirror reflections made it look as if a crowd of young women were fighting. "This isn't funny!" she said. "Is my most dangerous foe supposed to be water?" She threw her shoulder against a wall; she and her reflection met with a dull thud. "This isn't fair!" she cried. The water was coming faster now, rising visibly. "This isn't fair!" she repeated. "Who are you? This is no way to fight, to drown someone! Show yourself! Come on out and face me!" Vic's eyes darted frantically about the chamber, but all she saw were frightened reflections and the rising water. "What kind of crazy test is this?" she asked. "If you don't let me out, whoever you are, I'm going to cut my way out! And then you'd better be ready to defend yourself, because I'm going to cut my way through you!"

She drew her lightsaber, preparing to strike the mirror using all of her strength, but the shocking sight of a young woman attacking with blazed weapon, hip-deep in murky water, face twisted in a furious grimace, froze her in mid-swing. "I look awful!" she thought. "Like some kind of deranged Dark Jedi. No wonder Mistress Tannis said don't draw it in anger — I could scare the pants off half the galaxy with that face ..."

"Don't draw it in anger," she said, lowering the blade. "And I'm pretty angry now ..." She deactivated the lightsaber. The reflection did likewise. She laughed at it. "You don't look so dangerous now," she said. "Maybe we should have gone on and attacked our enemy after all ... A dangerous-looking enemy?" she mused. The water was up to her chest. "Am I supposed to fight my reflection?" she asked herself. "How?" She reached out to the mirror; the mirror hand reached gently back. They touched; Vic's hand passed through the mirror as through the surface of the water. Not stopping to think, Vic washed through the wall.

"Congratulations, Vic," said Mistress Tannis, sitting in the small room Vic had entered. "You have passed your test."

She blinked, confused. "But I haven't fought anything."

"Haven't you?" said Tannis. "Think back — what have you faced in the cave?"

Vic thought. "Well, I missed a door — I was impatient ..."

Tannis nodded. "Impatience can be a deadly enemy to a Jedi."

"And I was tired, and hungry, but everything in the room I found decayed and vanished — like all matter," Vic added in realization.

"So in that room I fought physical limits ..."

Tannis nodded.

"And the wind — I fought fear, and the tight tunnel was doubt, and the coruscum, that was greed. And the mirrors were, were ..." She paused. "I kept trying to follow things that seemed important, but they led me nowhere. When I let the Force guide me, instead of trying to find the way myself, I moved on."

"And the last room?"

She thought. "Fears and impatience, again — and anger. I fought myself. Am I my own worst enemy?"

Tannis smiled gently. "Nothing outside of us may separate us from the Force."

"Only our own emotions," said Vic as understanding filled her mind.

"And if we remain open to the Force," said Tannis. "Then we are Jedi, and nothing can hurt us. We have nothing to fear," said Vic.
“Good story,” murmured Mavis sleepily as Deen ended his tale.
"Yes, I really like it," said a young man’s voice from the doorway.
Deen started at the intrusion. "Sir, how long have you been...
"No don’t get up," the man said, laughter in his voice. "I just came
to thank you for repairing my droid.
"Oh, yes, of course, Sir," Deen said, trying to seem properly
eFFECTED while still covered with children. "The rest of the tech
crew wanted to wipe his memory, but I figured with the things he’d
seen...
"He’d want to keep his memory," finished the pilot. "Thanks. And
thanks for the story. I loved it. I wish I’d been able to hear stories like
that when I was a kid."
Deen grinned and nodded. "We don’t have anything to worry
about now, Sir, now that you’ve joined us, do we?"
"Not if we remain open to the Force."

Roleplaying Game Statistics

Vici Ramune
Type: Young Jedi
DEXTERITY 3D
Brawling parry 3D+2, dodge 4D, lightsaber
4D-2, melee combat 4D, melee parry 4D, running 4D+1
KNOWLEDGE 2D
Cultures 3D, cultures: Alderaan 4D+2
MECHANICAL 2D
Boat riding 3D
PERCEPTION 4D
Search 5D, sneak 4D-2.
STRENGTH 2D
Climbing/jumping 4D, stamina 3D-2, swimming 3D+1
TECHNICAL 2D
First aid 4D, lightsaber repair 4D
Special Abilities:
Force Skills: Control 2D-2, sense 2D-1, after 3D
Control: Control pain, emptiness, hibernation trance, reduce injury, remain conscious, resist stun

Veni Ramune
Type: Jedi Apprentice
DEXTERITY 3D+2
Brawling parry 4D, running 4D+1
KNOWLEDGE 3D
Cultures: Alderaan 4D
MECHANICAL 2D-2
Boat riding 3D
PERCEPTION 3D-1
Con 4D, persuasion 4D-2, search 3D-2, sneak 4D
STRENGTH 2D
TECHNICAL 2D-1
First aid 3D-2
Special Abilities:
Force Skills: Control 1D
Accelerate healing, concentration, liberation trance
This Character is Force-sensitive.

Force Points: 1
Character Points: 3
Move: 10
Equipment: Pouch with food and several small rocks

Capsule: Ten-year-old Veni is the fifth child of the Ramune family and the second to be born Force-sensitive. Although his abilities were discovered at the same time as his older sister's, he was deemed too young to leave for the Praxeum then. He spent two years eagerly anticipating his opportunity to follow Vicli into her exciting new life.

Outgoing and cheerful, Veni quickly made friends with the other young apprentices at the Praxeum. His closest attachment, however, is still to Vicli, and he goes out of his way — even disobeying Mistress Tannis and her assistants — to be with his sister or offer her any help he feels she might need. He also tends to either overestimate (or sometimes underestimate) his budding skills with the Force, depending on which he wants out of a situation. This willfulness should be considered part of his immaturity, however, and not a sign of any deep character weakness.

Veni has a much more adventurous disposition than his sister. The idea of spending his whole life making Tiatsh does not appeal to him; instead, he wants to travel the galaxy when his years of Jedi training are finished. Still, like his sister Vicli, he gives love of his family the first place in his heart.

### Mistress Tannis

**Type:** Onswati Jedi Master

**DEXTERITY 3D**
Brawling parry 5D, dodge 6D, lightsaber 7D, melee combat 5D, melee parry 5D

**KNOWLEDGE 3D**
Alien species 6D, bureaucracy 5D, cultures 7D, languages, planetary systems 5D, scholar 6D, scholar: Jedi history 7D, survival 5D, willpower 5D

**MECHANICAL 2D**
Astrogation 4D, beast riding 4D, space transports 4D

**PERCEPTION 3D**
Bargain 5D, command 6D, hide 4D, investigation 4D, persuasion 5D, research 6D, sneak 5D

**STRENGTH 2D**
Brawling 5D, climbing/jumping 4D, stamina 3D

**TECHNICAL 2D**
First aid 5D, lightsaber repair 6D

Special Abilities:
Force Skills: Control 5D, sense 4D, after 4D

Force Powers:
Control: Absorb/dissipate energy, accelerate healing, concentration, control pain, detoxify poison, emptiness, liberation trance, reduce injury, remain conscious, resist stun

Sense: Combat sense, danger sense, instinctive astrogation, life detection, life sense, magnify senses, preceptronic telepathy, sense Force

Alter: Telekinesis

Control and Alter: Accelerate another's healing, control another's pain, return another to consciousness

Control, Sense, and Alter: Affect mind, control mind

Sense and Alter: Desensitize other's senses

This character is Force-sensitive.

**Force Points:** 7
**Character Points:** 16
**Move:** 10
**Equipment:** Comlink, datapad, lightsaber (5D)

Capsule: Mistress Tannis, leader of the Teyan Praxeum, shares with the other members of her species not only the exotic Onswati physical traits of blue skin, feathery iridescent hair and huge indigo eyes, but also their intellectual traits of boundless curiosity and intense mental concentration. Tannis has channeled these energies into the study of the Force. She is a master of both the practices and the traditions of the Jedi; anyone looking into her deep blue eyes will see reflected in them the wisdom of hundreds of years of Jedi lore.

Tannis firmly believes that all Force-sensitive individuals have an obligation to themselves and to the galaxy to be trained in the ways of the Jedi. Even if a person has other career plans or commitments in mind, Tannis feels Jedi training can only be an asset to him or her, just as the Force flows through all life, so must the Jedi take places through all walks of life, becoming wise citizens and concerned leaders across the Republic. Tannis also believes that all persons with the ability to use the Force must gain the moral understanding of the weight of the powers they possess, lest, in ignorance, they be reduced to the dark side.
Teyan Praxeum and the Cave of Truth

The Jedi training center, or Praxeum, was founded on Teya IV by a group of Jedi which included the Duimuogwuin Wilm Lywin; Mistess Tannis is only the latest in a noble line of Jedi Masters who have taught there.

The facility houses 40 apprentices of various species and levels of training, as well as Mistess Tannis herself and nine fully-trained Jedi who have chosen to assist her in her teaching. Mornings at the Praxeum are devoted to physical and mental skill training: exercises, martial arts, levitation and telekinesis, and, for the advanced students, lightsaber combat. The afternoon sessions are devoted to academic studies. Mistess Tannis places special emphasis on the history and traditions of the Jedi and the Republic, since she believes those who do not learn from the mistakes of the past are doomed to repeat them. Evenings and any free time are dedicated to running and maintaining the Praxeum; it is a small but self-sustaining colony, employing no droids or other outside assistance, as Mistess Tannis also believes that Jedi should learn through action responsibility for both themselves and the communities of which they are part.

The so-called Cave of Truth is where Tannis both tests and teaches final lessons to her students before they are sent off into the greater galaxy. It contains a complex maze of passages, rooms, and tunnels, containing variable real and artificial dangers and temptations, enhanced both by the use of sophisticated holographic projectors and by Tannis' own Force powers.

Apprentices are escorted to the cave entrance by Wilm Lywin, who engages the students in conversation to learn their priorities in life, hopes and fears, strengths and weaknesses. Lywin's centuries of experience enable the Star Dragon to learn more from a few hours' conversation than the apprentice probably knows about himself. Lywin uses a datapad to communicate with the computers controlling the cave challenges and with Mistess Tannis, who waits at the end of the cave; in this way, the tests are tailored to individual Jedi trainees. The object of the quest through the cave is for initiates to recognize their own weaknesses as the only true obstacles they face, and that opening themselves to the Force will give them the strength they need to overcome them.
thing, the doors of most of the buildings are too small to admit him. Lywin lives in specially designed quarters deep within the mountain housing the Cave of Truth; these chambers are strictly private, and no one except possibly Mistress Nannis has seen inside them. It is assumed that they contain scientific equipment Lywin uses for the sorts of esoteric research Star Dragons seem irresistibly drawn to; it is known that Lywin keeps more and more to himself as time goes by, sometimes not participating in the affairs of the Praxem for several years at a stretch. New apprentices coming upon the creature in the forests outside the Praxem are in for a shock until Lywin introduces itself and its warm personality puts them at ease.

Like all Star Dragons, Lywin keeps his past shrouded in mystery. The Dunoguwin mentions that he spent many centuries acting as a sort of living star-fighter escort for a space-going Praxem before the founding of the school on Teya, but that is all. Indeed, surprisingly little is known about this last living member of the Praxem's founding group. It's not even known what Lywin eats; however, the rumor spread by some older (though not necessarily mature) students that the Star Dragon feeds on "little apprentices who ask rude questions" is definitely false.
Adnerem

**Appearance and Biology:** Adnerem are a tall, slender, dark gray species dominant on the planet Adner. The head is triangular with a wide brainpan and narrowing face. At the top of the head is a fleshy looking lump, which may appear to humans to be a tumor. It is in fact a firm hollow echo chamber, which functions as the Adnerem ear, equally as well as bilateral ears of other species. Adnerem are bald, except for a vestigial strip of hair at the lower back of the head. Female Adnerem often grow this small patch of hair long and decorate their braids with jewelry.

The Adnerem hand is four-digitied and highly flexible, but they lack a true opposable thumb. Adnerem can grow exceptionally long and sturdy nails, and the wealthy and influential often grow their nails to extraordinary lengths as a sign of their idleness. Their eyelids are narrow to protect against the overall brightness of Adner’s twin suns and the eyes are lightly colored, usually blue or green, to better separate the twin suns’ reddish light.

Adnerem are descended from a scavenger/hunter precursor species. Their distant ancestors were semi-social and banded together in tribe-packs of five to twenty. This has carried on to Adnerem today, influencing their modern temperament and culture. They remain omnivorous and opportunistic.

**Temperament:** Although every personality type is represented among Adnerem, the dominant temperament is cool, collected and patient. Outwardly calm and dispa-
sionate, inwardly intense, the Adnerem are deeply devoted to systematic pragmatism. Each Adnerem seeks to further its position in life by working to improve their steris (the principle social/economic group; see below), while seeking to further their personal goals. While individual Adnerem work hard to increase the influence and wealth of their steris, most do so out of self-interest. Adnerem do not usually form especially strong emotional attachments to individuals and do not particularly display their emotions. This has led to a reputation of being a remote and manipulative species.

Sometimes a pair of Adnerem form a close friendship, a bonding called the sterika. The two become very close partners and come to regard their pairing as an entity. This partnership is strictly personal and traditional and can be compared to marriage: the Wookiee life-debt. There is no rational explanation for this behavior; it seems to be a spontaneous event that usually follows a period of individual or communal stress. Sterika is not sought after by Adnerem in the same way as human love, although unpaired Adnerem do seem to envy this close bond. Only about 10 percent of Adnerem are sterika, and always belong to the same steris.

**History and Culture:** The primitive tribal bands of Adnerem prehistory have evolved into a subtle and complex social system. The base unit of society is the steris, a group of five to 100 individuals dedicated to providing mutual support and group advancement. The steris is a social/economic organization unbounded by genetic ties. The Adnerem have no social classes and judge people for the power of their steris and the position they have earned in it, not for accidents of birth. For the same reason, there is little social differentiation due to gender.

“Rank” is not applicable to Adnerem. Adnerem have difficulty dealing with aliens who consider rank to be an important consideration. “Position,” in Adnerem terms, is a matter of knowledge, influence, and personal ability. The idea that a person could be installed in a job they are incompetent in is utterly alien to the Adnerem.

A steris is also a physical area: a house, large building, compound, farm, village, or ship. Steris (the members of a steris) usually live together, sharing housekeeping and maintenance duties, or hiring another steris to keep house. A single, isolated, steris is likely to be quite large and autonomous. Steris in towns tend to be of moderate size, and urban steris vary wildly depending on their neighborhood and economic status. Steris-houses are usually divided into two areas, public and private. Adnerem are highly territorial, and their private steri (and the individual quarters therein) are jealously guarded. The public section is open to any non-enemy, and this is where many steri conduct their day-to-day business.

The buildings themselves are usually earth-bermed disks of one or two floors. The earth provides insulation from the twin suns’ heat and the round shape helps conserve and evenly distribute heat in the cold arid night. Small outbuildings sometimes jut from older buildings, and a large steris may have two or three buildings connected by enclosed walkways or garden courtyards.

A Adnerem are born into a steris, raised by adults in the care-giving profession (who may or may not be their parents) to the age of six local years, then handed over to a school-steris. From the sixth to fourteenth year an Adnerem is presented with a broad education, gradually evaluated and finally, at age 14, required to choose an initial vocation. A young Adnerem spends the next 10 years of life studying its chosen profession as a sort of apprentice, earning its keep and paying off some of the investment the steris has made in it. At age 24 the Adnerem is ceremoniously cut loose from their steris and must choose a steris to join. Roughly 50 percent choose to join their original steris, unsurprising since that steris usually offers special incentives to rejoin. Once an Adnerem has joined a steris it will likely remain there for the rest of its life. Although relocation is possible and socially acceptable, it is difficult and the steri have traditional disincentives to this alternative — primarily forfeiture of all assets in the old steris, and a slight stigma attached to the relocator. An Adnerem usually only joins a new steris if they are assured a considerable advancement or incentive.

This social structure was well in place when a Duros scout discovered the planet almost 5,000 years ago. Little has changed since. The overall history of Adner is a litany of which steris has achieved or lost power, who strategically moved from one steris to another, and the raids and cold wars that resulted.

**Politics:** Steri interact considerably, exchanging goods and services. Larger steri tend to accumulate small client steri to provide the large steri with more resources. Powerful steri generally do not abuse their position simply to avoid triggering a raid-war. Adnerem do not wage what the galaxy considers full-scale war. Instead they conduct raid-wars; rare, lightning-fast, small scale, small arms conflicts that flare up between powerful steri or rise suddenly from a coalition of lesser steri against a single dominating steris. A raid-war does not aim to annihilate the enemy (which may
be a useful ally or tool in the future, after all), it seeks simply to adjust the dynamic balance between steri. A raid-war usually flares up over an otherwise unresolved dispute, if a powerful steri is abusing its position, or if a steri has grown too large for the comfort of its neighbors. Usually a steri will splinter its assets and reduce size rather than allow this to trigger a raid-war. A steri of 64 adults is the traditional maximum size.

**Technology Level:** Mainly due to long-term immersion in the galactic economy, Adner has stabilized at an Information Age level.

**Trade and Technology:** The pragmatic Adnerem long ago adopted a twin strategy for surviving in the long term. The Adnerem do not trust the whims of the galactic economy and have invested in maintaining their planetary self-sufficiency, rather than permanently specializing their planetary economy.

They have funded this wise course by their second strategy: investing in operating industries, primarily entertainment and pleasure, on-planet and off. Hundreds of thousands of tourists and thrill-seekers flock to the casinos, theme parks, and pleasure houses of Adner, which have 2,000 years of practice at keeping current and fresh entertainments. Imports tend to be specialty items or information products. These entertainment facilities are run by large steri with Adnerem management and alien employees.

The Adnerem hire aliens with highly developed special skills for many of these tourist industries — in the entertainment zones a visitor is more likely to see more non-Adnerem than Adnerem. Aliens do not count as steri members, except under rare circumstances of exceptional service and loyalty. This allows a steri's resource base to expand well beyond the traditional limits.

**Adnerem in the Galaxy:** For the most part the Adnerem are a stay-at-home species, preferring to excel and compete among themselves. Some steri have taken up interstellar trading and run either a large cargo ship or a fleet of smaller cargo ships. A few steri have hired themselves out to corporations as management teams on small- to medium-sized projects.

Recently, a steri set itself up as a mercenary company, hiring highly qualified aliens to perform as special operations units, with the steri acting as command and control. This company, the Interstellar Strike Force, is quickly gaining a reputation as a superior special forces company well worth their high price.

Some steri turn their business skills to crime, mastering mid-level local system crime rather than galactic-scale criminal empires. Adnerem can be quite amoral about maximizing profits and minimizing losses and do so with a ruthless, cut-throat efficiency. Unlike the egotistical Hutts, Adnerem crimelords go about their business quietly, eliminating problems in an almost invisible fashion. Criminal steri maximize their profits by pursuing the broadest possible base of income from small cuts of operating crimes instead of major single-shot operations. A steri would far rather take a small weekly percentage from an enforcement racket than pull a robbery.

**Gamemaster Notes:** Adnerem are usually encountered on their homeworld. Off-world they almost always travel with other steri members. Despite the steri orientation, Adnerem are fairly asocial and introverted, and spend a great deal of their private time alone or in very small groups.
Personality Notes: Adnerem are quiet and remote. Largely introverted, they tend to focus exclusively on their vocation. Social occasions are very small, usually in groups of less than five. Adnerem in a group of more than 10 are almost always silent (public places are very quiet), but two interacting Adnerem can be as active as 10 aliens, leading to the phrase “Two Adnerem are a party, four a dinner and six a funeral.”

Suggested Skills: Adnerem can have any skills, but few have starship abilities. Social skills tend to be one-on-one or small group skills. Knowledge skills tend to be broad and unspecialized. Business is a very common skill among Adnerem.

Notable Personalities: Esero, a casino owner on Adner (see Wanted By Cracken, page 52) is a paranoid and exceptionally asocial example of his species. His ateris is small but very rich, and relies heavily on its alien employers.

Average Adnerem. Dexterity 2D, Knowledge 3D, Mechanical 1D, Perception 3D, Strength 2D, Technical 1D. Move: 10.

**Adnerem**

Attribute Dice: 1D

**Dexterity** 1D/3D

**Knowledge** 1D+2/4D+2

**Mechanical** 1D/3D

**Perception** 1D+2/4D+2

**Strength** 1D/3D

**Technical** 1D/2D

Story Factors:

Behind the Scenes: Adnerem are usually encountered as the managers behind the scenes, rather than front personnel.

Move: 10/11

Size: 1.8–2.2 meters tall

**Lasat**

Appearance and Biology: Lasat are an obscure species from the far reaches of the Outer Rim. No complete survey of their homeworld, Lasan, has been performed, but the initial survey reveals it as a warm, arid planet with extensive desert and plains, separated by high mountains. The Lasat are well adapted to this environment, with large, thin, and pointed heat-dissipating ears, a light fur that insulates against the cold desert night, small oral and nasal openings, and large eyes facilitating twilight vision. The Lasat are carnivores with canines in the forward mouth and bone-crushing molars behind. The Lasat are covered with light brown fur, longer in males than females. The face, hands, and tail are bald, and males heads tend to bald as they grow older.

Temperament: Lasat tend to be furtive, indirect and sneaky. Though carnivores, they typically capture their food by trapping, not hunting.

History and Culture: Lasat history is related primarily by their oral tradition, since their written history remains a primitive hieroglyphic script. Most of the oral history is typical mythology with core truths hidden in a fanciful set of heroic tales. Lasat legendary heroes are clever, stealthy, and highly skilled trappers. The Lasat social structure is largely tribal and nomadic, although two regions have developed early stage city-states, complete with social stratification. Tribal Lasat wander the plains of Lasan following bantha herds as they migrate between seasonal grazing grounds. Banthas provide wool, meat and hides to the tribes, but are yet to be fully domesticated and must be trapped for the nomads to subsist from them. Lasat nomads live in tents made from hides over a bone frame, with interiors divided by combinations of stiff woven screens as walls, curtains as doorways, and decorative tapestries. Lasat city buildings are mud-brick shells creating one or
two large cavities, divided and furnished similarly to the nomadic tents. Floors are covered by rugs, sitting mats, and cushions. Internal light is natural, allowed in by small window-slits, or from bantha-grease oil lamps.

**Politics:** In both tribe and city-state, hereditary religious rulers maintain a warrior-police caste to keep local order and conduct small-scale wars on their neighbors. The city-states are increasingly using nomad tribes as mercenaries in these small wars, and the nomads are gaining political and economic power.

**Technology Level:** Lasat technology ranges from late stone age to early feudal. More primitive tribes use stick-and-bait traps to catch small game, and nets and spears to catch medium-sized game. Larger herbivores are outside the Lasat grasp. The more technologically advanced Lasat keep semi-domesticated herds of herbivores. “Civilized” Lasat are in the process of developing simple metal working. Lasat chemistry is disproportionately advanced — superior fermentation and, interestingly, simple but potent explosives are at the command of the city-states, under the control of precursor scientist-engineers (although the Lasat word for these professionals would correspond more closely to the Basic word “magician”).

**Trade and Technology:** Little trade has occurred between the Lasat and the galaxy. Some free-traders have landed there, but have found little to export beyond the finely woven Lasat rugs and tapestries.

**Lasat in the Galaxy:** Only a handful of Lasat have been sighted in the galaxy at large, simply due to their isolation. Apparently the first to appear in the galaxy were victims of slavers, but they were quickly granted their freedom and discarded after it was discovered that they make poor slaves and some of them could easily transform common chemicals into dangerous explosives. The descendants of these slave Lasat in the galactic mainstream have tended toward bounty hunting, mercenary soldiering, and hired-muscle jobs.

**Personality Notes:** Lasat are self-centered, cowardly, and sneakier. They generally do not use pronouns to refer to themselves, always calling themselves by name, although they do use pronouns to refer to others, actually preferring not to speak another’s name.

**Suggested Skills:** Although they have no inherent ability with chemistry or explosives, a high percentage of Lasat have chemical skills, such as demolition, simply from a cultural tendency. Other skills favored are those that allow long-range ambush, such as blaster rifle.

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Notable Personalities: The most well-known Lasat is probably Puggles Trodd (see Tatooine Manhunt in Classic Adventures: Volume Three), an independent bounty hunter working the Outer Rim Territories. Puggles is fairly typical of Lasat; unwilling to face a one-on-one fight, he is proficient with ambushes.

**Average Lasat.**
- **Dexterity 3D.** Knowledge 2D, Mechanical 1D, Perception 2D, Strength 2D, Technical 2D. Move: 10.

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**Lasat**
- **Attribute Dice:** 1D
  - DEXTERITY 2D/4D-1
  - KNOWLEDGE 1D-2/3D-2
  - MECHANICAL 1D/3D-2
  - PERCEPTION 2D/4D
  - STRENGTH 2D-2/4D
  - TECHNICAL 1D/3D
- **Story Factors.**
  - Misunderstood Identity: Lasat are occasionally mistaken for Wookiees by the uninformed, despite the height difference and Lasat tail, and are sometimes harried by local law enforcement over this.
  - **Move:** 10/12
  - **Size:** 1.2–1.9 meters
Chikarri

**Appearance and Biology:** Chikarri are rodentian natives of Plagen, the main planet of the Pax system along the Enarck Run, just on the edge of the Mid-Rim. These chubby-cheeked beings are the masters of Plagen’s temperate high-plateau forests and low plains, and through galactic trade have developed a modern society in their tree and burrow cities.

Chikarri are short, covered in thick short fur, have enlarged front teeth, chubby cheeks, long pointed ears, and a bushy tail. Highland Chikarri have gray or reddish-brown fur, and lowlanders range from tan to medium brown. They are herbivorous, mainly eating nuts, berries, and grains grown in extensive agro-forest combines and grassland farms. Chikarri speech is high-pitched, and communication in Basic suffers from a species-wide lisp.

**Temperament:** An energetic and flighty species, the Chikarri have a great love of bright objects and tend to hoard valuables and stores. They have an unfortunate tendency toward kleptomania, but otherwise tend to be a forthright and honest species, other than a tiny minority of burglars. Not a particularly brave species, their first response to danger is usually to flee.

**History and Culture:** First discovered several hundred years ago on a promising hyperspace route (later to be the Enarck Run), the Chikarri sold port rights to the Klatooinian Trade Guild for several tons of gemstones. The flow of trade along the route has allowed the Chikarri an enviable development in technology for relatively low costs. The Chikarri absorbed this sudden advance with little social disturbance, and have become a technically adept species.

Chikarri society is based on the nuclear family; a married couple raising a litter of offspring, the offspring departing upon maturity to marry and create a separate home. Chikarri live in compact, modern apartments, both in the cool, tall goldleaf trees that characterize plateau communities, or the cool, sprawling burrow cities of the dry plains.

**Politics:** The internal politics of the Chikarri revolve around relatively standard economic issues. The governing bodies of the cities (there are no nation-states on Plagen) are half elected and half chosen by lot. The elected governors are drawn from a social group of professional governors and the randomly selected ones are from the general population. Only outright insanity, overwhelming disability, and serious criminal offense is considered a bar to random selection. Resident aliens (10 years of residency required) are subject to random selection. Reactions to being drafted into governance range from civic pride to heartfelt anger.

Chikarri are not a particularly aggressive species, and although personal or inter-family violence flares up occasionally, organized warfare is unknown among them. The main division in Chikarri society is between highlanders and lowlanders. Chikarri geography is unusual in that the low-lying plains are parched, while the high plateaus have lakes, the main source of fresh water. Lowlanders grow most of the local staple crops and mine a few low-grade precious metal deposits, exchanging these for water and technology from the highlanders. Both sides are characteristically stingy, and the trade balance between food and water is a constant source of irritation between the two groups. This irritation leads to little more than resentment and bitterness, and is unlikely to escalate beyond harsh words. Highlanders consider lowlanders to be stingy, mean-spirited misers with no technical aptitude. Lowlanders think of the highlanders in exactly the same terms. Off-worlders usually find the whole situation ridiculous.

**Technology Level:** Chikarri are modern, but lack heavy industry. Maintenance of technology is dependant on port traffic.

**Trade and Technology:** Chikarri import median grade technology cheaply due to their proximity to a well-trafficked trade route. Their main export is agro-forest products; wood, fruit and nuts. The Chikarri have a deep attraction for bright and shiny jewelry, and independent traders travelling this route routinely stop off to sell their flashy cheap gaudy bangles.

Two medium-sized security specialist companies are based on Plagen. Chirrit & Chirrit Locks, Vaults and Safe manufactures and installs some of the finest security compartments in the galaxy. Trecker Security Systems develops first-rate security systems for corporations throughout the region.

**Chikarri in the Galaxy:** Not an especially common species in the greater galaxy, the Chikarri are mostly found in the systems nearest their homeworld. Chikarri are often employed in repair jobs, or as acrobatic-tumbling entertainers using their forest-born jumping and climbing skills. A small number of Chikarri have turned their technical and physical attributes to criminal activity. Chikarri burglars are a small but highly successful minority among the criminal element. These degenerates usually specialize in jewel theft.
Personality Notes: Tremendously active and cheerful beings, the Chikarri are usually busy and bustling about their business, considering activity to be an end in itself, and hoard away their earnings. Notoriously tight with money, the Chikarri are the subjects of thriftiness jokes up and down the Enarc and Harrin Runs. Wealthy Chikarri do not show off their riches. One joke says you can tell how rich a Chikarri is by how old and mended its clothes are — the more patches, the more money. The main exception to this stinginess is bright metals and gems. Chikarri are known for their shiny baubles, weakness up and down the Twin Star Runs.

Suggested Skills: Chikarri are technical wizards, especially good at repairing older equipment, saving the cost of replacement. Chikarri are often found in handy-skill jobs. Any repair skills are appropriate. Climbing/jumping is also commonly developed by the highland Chikarri for living in tree cities.


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

Story Factors:
- Hunters: Chikarri are hyperactive and hard working, but are driven to hoard valuables, goods, or money, especially in the form of shiny metal or gems.
- Move: 9/11
- Size: 1.3–1.5 meters tall.
The Imperial Star Destroyer Interrogator maintained its support position, matching coordinate planes and acceleration bursts with its nav computer specifications. From the observation deck, several levels beneath the flight bridge, the commanding officer stared through the transparisteel platform as the Imperial II-class Star Destroyer maneuvered into the mouth of a vacuous, black nebula. Gliding from the sinister shadow of undistinguished space, the Interrogator was an impressive sight, a precisely honed dagger tip against the starless backdrop of space.

An advanced point ship, his vessel was moving in to investigate a little-known area of space known as the Nharqi's I. The term, despite its romantic appeal, was a crude variation of a lingering smuggler dialect, which he understood to mean "the death place." Starless, featureless, menacing — the foreboding nebula was a testimonial to seemingly endless continuity.

Chewing nervously at his lower lip, the young captain stared into the faceless void, wishing he could lose himself inside it. The Nharqi's I could be no colder or more forbidding a place than the anonymous darkness of Lord Tremayne's waiting room. And the Nharqi's I, a hideous, mythical leviathan that lurked within the nebula, could certainly be no more terrifying an entity than the Emperor's leading High Inquisitor himself.

In the midst of the sparsely furnished, cruelly antiseptic interior of the waiting chamber, the young captain noticed only one chair sitting against the far wall. He wondered how many Imperial officers had sat in that chair and how many had lived to tell about it. The numbers were quite disproportionate to each other, he was certain, and he congratulated his decision not to sit in it.

Though he was not a superstitious man, the captain was confident that he enhanced his chances of survival if Tremayne should come and find him standing in anticipation of this meeting. He had,
in fact, been standing, respectfully at attention, for the past three hours, waiting for the Dark Adept to address him personally.

And if his diligence had no bearing at all upon the outcome of their meeting, at least he would have the satisfaction of meeting High Inquisitor Tremayne and his potential execution with a small measure of dignity.

The others died on their feet, his subconscious told him. Admiral Orzel, Admiral Ranes, Captain Needa. His esteemed mentor and friend, Captain Nolana. And there were others who did not directly come to mind. What makes you so different?

The inability to answer that question brought a hollow, unsettled feeling to the bottom of his stomach. Clasping his hands tightly behind his back, the young captain swayed back and forth on his heels, an impatient habit learned on the bridge and honed by the daily stresses of commanding a ship in the Emperor's most prestigious war fleet. It was a peculiar fixation on motion that he was working to eliminate and had regulated it with some success. In any case, the swaying did not trouble him quite so much as the violent tremors that shook his hands.

The captain brushed his fingers over the front of his uniform and straightened the insignia, chiding himself for allowing a physical manifestation of his concerns to appear. The last impression he wanted to make before leaving this world was the empty illusion of fear.

Fear. That was not the way to run a ship or motivate its crewmen and support personnel. Fear inspired mistakes, tension among the crew, which accounted for more mistakes and erroneous decisions in judgment. Ultimately, the end result of such tension was failure and more fear. Respect was what they taught in the Academy, respect and subject to authority.

Discipline is the immediate compliance to all orders, undeviating respect for authority, and above all self-reliance.

The young captain grinned as the memorized definition came to mind—a recurring echo from his days at the Academy. He remembered the fear of those early days of training, when everything had seemed so beyond reach. He remembered his initial clumsiness with orders and superior officers, the ambiguity of doubt, and the gradual breaking down and re-establishment of his pride. There was indeed a certain arrogance in the mastery of discipline, the mastery of self. There was incalculable self-satisfaction in obeying orders, respecting the High Command, and in being recognized for the ability to think clearly in a crisis. These things combined evoked
man in a position of power — with respect and deference rather than fear. After all, it was not his command that had sent a full squadron of Imperial TIE bombers to the cloudy, defenseless world of Qlothsos.

His subordinate, the ambitious senior lieutenant, had picked up some peculiar signals from the nearby planet. It was a frequency that nearly matched a set of earlier transmission codes that had been intercepted from an Alliance operative. Suspecting a hidden Rebel garrison, the senior lieutenant sent the TIE bombers to destroy it.

All this had transpired while the captain was asleep in his bed. He was only awakened by the lieutenant after the facts were collected and the casualties calculated. There were only minimal injuries to report, no damages to craft or equipment. But nearly 60 civilians, most of them prominent Imperial citizens, were dead — among them a high-ranking Kuat Drive Yards engineer, his wife, and two sons who were on holiday in the capital.

Evidently, the cloudy blanket of atmosphere covering the planet played havoc on the identification beacons built into the concussion missiles. One went astray and demolished a secluded section of the residential community, which lay only a kilometer from the suspected Rebel compound. Hours after the fatalities were counted, Lord Tremayne’s summons had come through directly. And without the added apprehension of military aide to share in his inner torment, the captain came to meet with the High Inquisitor alone.

But now, he regretted that decision. The briefest contact with another human, however succinct, might have eased his anxiety and given him something to dwell on besides this impending meeting.

The industrious senior com-scan officer would have been an excellent choice. A family man and father, he was an inquisitive talker — one reason the captain had over looked him as his military aide. A loyal and competent leader, the com-scan officer always had time to devote to the love of his wife, nearly 300 light years away, and to the newly born child he had never seen, except through holos and rare face-to-face transmissions.

The balance seemed to anchor the talkative officer in a way the captain had come to admire and finally resent. But after today, all that would change. After assuring High Inquisitor Tremayne that the ambitious senior lieutenant would be punished to the fullest extent — court-martialed, convicted of manslaughter, the destruction of Imperial property, and harassment of loyal Imperial citizens — the captain would promote the com-scan officer as his new advisor and begin to share in this esoteric life.

The door to Tremayne’s chamber abruptly opened. The captain
fatal consequences. Here the captain was fully cognizant of what was happening to him. There would be no noxious fumes to dim his senses and lessen the blow. He could feel every sensation in vivid detail, from the cold kiss of the deck plate against his palms to the coarse fabric of his uniform as it chafed his elbows and knees.

Unable to raise his head and beseech Tremayne for a second chance, the young captain could only stare into the flowing black hem of the Jedi’s robes. As his consciousness waned, he imagined himself being drawn into that black fabric and into an alternate world as dark and starless as the Nharquis’ nebula surrounding his ship.

What a fitting end to my life, he thought with numb pleasure. The first small bone broke beneath the pressure and he felt his body relax.

Born into a prominent bloodline and class, Jovan Vharing attended the Imperial Naval Academy, a decision made for him by traditional family dictates rather than of his own accord. But there were no regrets to that course; and he delved deeply into the best of himself to impress mentors and superior officers alike. For his concentrated efforts in detail and accuracy, he graduated in the top two percent of his class — a distinguishing achievement. Newly commissioned as a lieutenant, he went on to a prestigious posting as senior tracking officer aboard a Victory-class Star Destroyer.

His ambition and eye for competent and cost-effective action made an early reputation for him — then a newly graduated officer, serving in the desolate Outer Rim, in the area of space commonly referred to as the wild frontier. And while it was no auspicious duty for an officer of his caliber, it was to be a short-lived tenure with many notable accomplishments that would earn him the sympathetic eye of Captain Nolaan. Having also served on the Outer Rim as a junior officer, Nolaan took an instant liking to Vharing. To spite several of his junior officers, Nolaan called in several favors and arranged for Vharing’s transfer — to the bridge of the Interrogator, where he made no attempts to shield his partiality.

Within one year, Vharing would live up to the high expectations set for him by his ill-fated mentor. After Nolaan’s untimely execution, Vharing became one of the youngest men to achieve the rank of captain. As such, he would be one of the youngest officers to ever...
receive command of an Imperial Star Destroyer. And with it, he inherited the burden of Tremayne’s exacting demands and the resentment of every Imperial officer on the bridge.

Death was a shadowy cloak surrounding the capitancy of the Interrogator. Promotion was by succession—the kind of succession one sees in a toppling house of sabacc cards. Vharing’s promotion to captain was simply a complicated ploy by his executive colleagues to stay well out of Lord Tremayne’s omniscient shadow. Vharing, as did his predecessor, would serve as a buffer. When the next blunder surfaced, when the next inaccuracy arose, his would be the name spoken by Tremayne and his would be the neck crushed by the wrath of the High Inquisitor.

So as with all things, Vharing threw himself, mentally and physically, into the endless pursuit of perfection. His was the highest efficiency rating in the fleet and his men the most steadfast and loyal. At a formal dinner for the executive staff of the Interrogator, Vharing was forced to fend off the curious inquiries of his fellow officers, who for the last six months had stood by and gawked in envy of his ability to motivate men and support staff, even under the most extreme circumstances. When asked what was his single, greatest achievement, Vharing replied, “Serving under High Inquisitor Tremayne.”

A moment of quiet met the comment; the jovial atmosphere usurped by a darker, fearsome mood. Staring at each other and then at Vharing in turn, the assembled Imperial officers were speechless and deferred to the talents of their more outspoken members.

“Are you insane, Vharing?” General Parnet whispered. The disgruntled officer glanced over his shoulders, as if expecting High Inquisitor Tremayne to be nearby in the shadows, listening.

“Oh come, gentleman,” Vharing scolded, raising his goblet in a toast. “The man is not so dreadfully as all that — oppressive, demanding, unforgiving. He’s no different than our drill mentors back at the Academy or any of the superior officers under whom we served before our grand appointments to executive commission.

“And there’s your mistake, Vharing.” Parnet said evenly. His cruel, handsome face was as expressionless as the shadows flanking the corners of the room. “Failure at the Academy was expulsion. Failure in the line of duty oft times means re-assignment to some shameful task, demotion, perhaps court-martial in the worst cases. Here — he put his goblet down to candidly decline the toast to Tremayne. “Here the penalty for failure is death. And that my friend, is the longest fall any man can take — alone or with his friends.” Parnet paused and glanced around the table at each of his colleagues in turn, waiting for a consensus from the group.

“Well spoken,” Lieutenant Ulam concurred. He swallowed the entire portion of his wine and set the goblet aside as the first warm charge rushed through him, warding off the intoxicating chill brought on by Tremayne’s name.

Vharing met Parnet’s statement with a thin smile, marveling at the black mockery of fear behind the General’s insipid eyes. “Then to Death, gentlemen,” he raised his goblet, “the longest fall.”

As Vharing’s face met the cold embrace of the deck floor, he was as a dead man. Hot surges of agonizing sensation lanced through his battered skull and he awoke from that desperate state — alive by every indication of the pain that swept through his heightened senses.

With a child’s wondrous delight, he experienced the sharp agonies of living — the nagging aches and stiffness of his joints, the
twisted pinch of his uniform, chafing uncomfortably at his skin. One of his insignia pins had broken in the fall and was piercing the muscle of his chest. Dead men do not bleed, he thought to himself, feeling the warm adhesive of his blood against the fabric of his uniform.

There was a dull roaring in his ears as his physical faculties returned. A momentary stab of pain confessed itself to be a separated rib, possibly two, suffered in the fall to the waiting room floor. His right index finger would not move on command and any effort to coerce it brought a secondary wave of sensory anguish. And there was more. Something was terribly wrong — he could not breathe.

In desperation, Vharing searched the room, his lethargic eyes slow to focus on his surroundings. The delay in his vision brought terrifying images back to his bewildered brain, making the few objects in the immediate area seem gigantic in comparison to his frail, battered body. This appalling effect redoubled his terror, prolonging the agony of his asphyxiation.

Why doesn’t he finish it? Vharing demanded of himself, unable to speak. His throat was on fire. The salted aftertaste of blood repulsed him and caused him to gag, aggravating his desperate circumstances.

Then as his will to survive conquered the army of dull senses numbing his brain, Vharing opened his mouth. The frigid chill of the waiting room sliced at his tongue as he took his first gasp of air. The experience was a miserable agony to endure; the icy sting swept through his mouth and then into his nostrils.

Vharing coughed, continuing to wheeze as his lungs began to function. “Alive?” he rasped, startled by the hoarse growl of his voice. Had Tremayne left him for dead? Impossible.

Slowly rising from the floor, Vharing swallowed with deliberate caution. He closed his eyes, near fainting, as the agony in the back of his neck intensified. There was undoubtedly some damage caused by Tremayne’s wrath, but nothing the surgeon droids in the Interrogator’s sick bay could not fathom. Spreading his fingers wide and wiggling his toes inside the hardened leather of his boots, Vharing grinned and turned for the door.

Pausing momentarily, he stared at his reflection in the observation glass, noticing the thin trickle of blood running from the corner of his mouth and from one nostril. Quickly pulling the handkerchief from his pocket, he moistened the corner and dabbed at the wound. The injury at his chin would bruise by morning, but he was not worried. He would wear the bruise as a mark of distinction among his colleagues.

Hurrying through the bulkhead door, Vharing stepped into the corridor and abruptly fell back against the wall. The overhead illumination grids were blinding to him. Hands shielding his eyes, the young captain blinked back painful tears and quickly made his way through the wide passage. His heart was pounding frantically in beat to the patriotic cant that still lingered in his memory.

Everything was so poignantly clear. The detail of the deck plates, an organized mosaic of tiles along the corridor floor. Though indiscernible to the preoccupied mind, he could see the variations in shade and texture. The illumination grid panels troubling him from overhead were spaced exactly one and one half meters apart, two meters in the corners where the corridors intersected, and three meters where the passage led off to the enormous labyrinth of the officers’ quarters. A sanitizing chemical taint rose in the air, stinging his nostrils for the first time as his heightened senses allowed him to experience, with fullness, the world around him.

Yes, everything was exquisitely clear to him, including his plans for Lieutenant Leeds! He would call a complete escort of Imperial stormtroopers to accompany him to the bridge. Then he would head directly to the command center and he would arrest the ambitious lieutenant in front of everyone. And at the expense of several favors of his own, he would oversee the court-martial procedures himself. Admiral Henmat, as yet a keen friend of his, would gladly preside over the entire affair, insuring a judgment of gross negligence against the lieutenant. Leeds would become the scapegoat, buried in a list of charges ranging from murder to treason; while Vharing’s own record remained perfectly clean and clear.

After snapping the restraints on Leeds’ wrists himself, the young captain would summon his com-scan officer, Lieutenant Walera front and center. With great ceremony, befitting a field promotion in combat, he would advocate the industrious young officer to the rank of senior lieutenant in front of the entire bridge crew. And as Nolaan had done for him, Vharing would take Walera under his wing, insuring him a place on the executive staff as his personal military aide.

At the end of corridor, the turbolift was situated between an auxiliary maintenance shaft and a small storage room. Closing his eyes, Vharing rubbed at his neck, barely able to tolerate the excruciating pain, which seemed to intensify as he moved closer to the turbolift. His hands gently caressed the area under his throat and he felt the disfigured swelling of his larynx and the distended glands along the sides of his neck.
caused a crippling streak of pain to shoot through him. There was a literal explosion of sensory information at the base of his skull as his brain shuddered in agony. Gritting his teeth against the anguish, the captain forced his body into a rigid pose. Once he had given the order for the jump into hyperspace, he would officially turn the bridge over to Walran and would retire immediately to the medical bay for a complete physical examination.

As the pilots signaled the all clear for the jump to hyperspace, Vharing opened his mouth to give the command—a loud, tortured wheezing escaped his throat. He tried to swallow but the tightness in his throat would not give. Lieutenant Walran turned to him, as if looking through him, and then turned back to the pilots' station. Strengthening his shoulders in a haughty imitation of his commanding officer, Walran nodded to his subordinate and gave the order for the jump to hyperspace.

Vharing winced beneath the onslaught of the hyperdrive engines as the shriek of the motors jolted his bones, right down to his teeth. There was a secondary explosion of light and color as the telltale points of stars elongated and stretched across the viewscreen, becoming the seamless fabric of hyperspace. As the radiant glow intensified, Vharing squinted, desperately afraid to close his eyes against the brilliance. For to close them would mean never to open them, never to see this world, or exist within it again. But the glare was too intense; the pressure at the base of his skull too powerful. He was forced to escape into a world where there was no light, no sound—just blackness.

Neck broken, his spinal cord pulverized at the base of his skull, Captain Jovan Vharing was dead. His head swung listlessly back and forth from his shoulders as two stormtroopers dragged his corpse from High Inquisitor Tremayne’s waiting room.

**Roleplaying Game Statistics**

- **Captain Jovan Vharing**
  - **Type:** Imperial Line Officer
  - **DEXTERITY 2D-2**
  - **Blaster 5D, dodge 4D-1**
  - **KNOWLEDGE 3D**
  - **Bureaucracy 5D, cultures 5D-1, intimidation 3D-1, planetary systems 3D, tactics 5D-2, willpower 5D**
  - **MECHANICAL 3D-2**
  - **Astrogation 5D, capital ship piloting 5D, communications 5D-1, sensors 5D-2**
  - **PERCEPTION 3D-1**
  - **Command 3D-1, investigation 4D-2**
  - **STRENGTH 2D-1**

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The Longest Fall

Nothing the medical droids can’t see to, he told himself. His tongue was also swollen, all but blocking the airway to his lungs. Vharing paused, leaning against a heavy equipment chest. Loosening the collar of his uniform, he swallowed a cool draft of air, in the hopes that the chill might alleviate some of his discomfort.

Puzzled that he had not yet reached the turbolift, the captain fough off a bout of panic. His heart quickened as he opened his eyes. For every step he had taken, it appeared as if the lift entrance had moved three steps beyond him. Vharing closed his eyes again, rubbing the sensation back into them as the numbing cold of Tremayne’s waiting room prevailed over his senses.

“Delirium,” he whispered, willing the tension and anxiety to leave him.

When Vharing again opened his eyes, he was standing on the bridge of the Interrogator. What a breathtaking sight she was—a tribute to the perfection and dedication of the Imperial technicians that created her. Lieutenant Leeds was nowhere on the flight bridge. Vharing smiled with concealed satisfaction, reminding himself to pay a visit to the destitute ambitious officer, if only to offer a few choices as to his next career, as foreman in one of the Emperor’s spice mines.

Vharing nearly laughed aloud at the thought. Brushing his hand reflectively over his lips, he took a deep breath and clasped his hands behind his back. He swayed rhythmically back and forth on his heels, conscious of the habit but too intrigued with the rapture of living to care.

Across from him, Lieutenant Walran was speaking with the navigation team. A set of new insignias adorned his uniformed breast, casting a steady, proud glare over the dramatic gray of his formal command appointments. It pleased Vharing to see the newly promoted Senior Lieutenant so fully engaged in his work and enjoying it. He seemed well at ease on the bridge and from the atmosphere, the crew was at ease with him too.

Ahead of them, the nebula was breaking up into fragmented sections of discernable stars and distant planets. The bridge crew was preparing to leave this sector, bracing themselves for the jump into hyperspace. When had the order been given? Shrugging off that uncertainty, Vharing straightened his broad shoulders. He wanted to pose for the crew to show his complete confidence in the new bridge officer. In his absence, Walran must have received the orders and was prepared to carry them out.

Vharing raised his chin with a measure of pride. The action
Bravado 4D+1, swimming 4D
TECHNICAL 3D
Capital ship repair 3D, security 5D+1
Dark Side Points: 3
Character Points: 3
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, datapad

Capsule: Jovan Vharing is an imposing figure on the bridge. There is a presence about him that suggests a maturity that goes well beyond his age of 27 years. Self-motivated and ambitious, Vharing’s manner is underscored by a genuine integrity that is the envy of his fellow officers.

His belief in the individual has earned him the respect and loyalty of his crewmen. By the same token, his confidence in that loyalty is often called into question by his colleagues—who resent his ability to motivate men, even in crisis.

Though many believe the duty of captain fell to Vharing by sheer circumstance, Vharing is a capable leader, efficient, and focused. These qualities made him an asset to the endeavors of High Inquisitor Tremayne and his on-going quest to seek out Force-sensitive individuals throughout the galaxy.

— Senior Lieutenant Leeds

Type: Bridge Officer
DEXTERITY 3D
Blaster 4D+2, dodge 4D
KNOWLEDGE 3D
Bureaucracy 4D, planetary systems 3D+2, tactics 4D+1, willpower 5D
MECHANICAL 3D+2
Capital ship piloting 5D, sensors 4D
PERCEPTION 3D
Bargain 4D+2, command 4D+1, hide 4D
STRENGTH 2D+1
Brawling 3D+2, stamina 4D
TECHNICAL 3D
Capital ship repair 4D+1, security 5D
Dark Side Points: 3
Character Points: 9
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink

Capsule: Not particularly well-liked by his colleagues or crew, Lieutenant Leeds is a man who lets nothing stand in his way, not even Imperial protocol. A glory-seeker, he is overly eager to please his superiors, and will risk lives, equipment, and materials on half-thought-out military ploys.

At 36, he still maintains the rank of senior lieutenant and has been passed over for promotion due to his short-sighted strategy and numerous tactical blunders throughout his career. As a result, Leeds has been attached to various Imperial Navy commanders as an aide. His superiors hope he will learn something through a mentor, but Leeds is too headstrong for such an arrangement to work. He is reckless and an under-achiever—which explains his need to grossly overcompensate his authority in order to prove himself worthy among his peers.

— Lieutenant Walreran

Type: Com-Scan Officer
DEXTERITY 3D
Blaster 3D, blaster artillery 3D+1, dodge 4D
KNOWLEDGE 3D
Alien species 4D, bureaucracy 4D, cultures 3D+2, planetary systems 3D, tactics 3D+2
MECHANICAL 3D+2
Astrogation 4D+1, capital ship piloting 5D, capital ship shields 5D+2, communications 5D, sensors 4D+2
PERCEPTION 3D
Command 3D+2, persuasion 4D+1
STRENGTH 2D+1
Brawling 3D, stamina 3D+2
TECHNICAL 3D
Capital ship repair 5D+2, capital ship weapon repair 4D, security 4D+2
Character Points: 7
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, datapad

Capsule: Following in the footsteps of his idol, Captain Jovan Vharing, Lieutenant Walreran believes in empowerment of the individual. Though less imposing and stern than his superior officer, Walreran’s easy-going nature and good looks often win over crewmen and support personnel alike, bringing the best quality work out of the men under his charge.

A husband and father, Walreran brings those family ideals and structure to his work relationship aboard ship. He sees Vharing as a stern but doing father. Walreran views Leeds, his only rival, as a jealous older brother, and attempts to stay well out of Leeds’ way—a personal, as well as professional courtesy.

A com-sec engineer first and a bridge officer second, Walreran brings a quality and pride to his work. Though somewhat talkative, he is currently being groomed for possible promotion.
meeting room, like most others at Chiron base, is dimly lit and sparsely heated at night to conserve resources. Still, Chiron base is now home. Although nothing pretty to look at, its location on Tonark II is ideal for hit and run tactics on Imperial convoys. You peer at your chrono, wondering what it would have been like to snuggle under the warm blankets for three more hours. Suddenly the door swishes open, piercing the silence.

Captain Amarith strides into the chamber—not a wrinkle or blemish can be found on either her uniform or black polished boots. Your superior officer moves to the head of the table and pauses to choose her words carefully.

"Thank you for responding to my urgent summons. I apologize for disturbing your sleep, but a delicate situation has arisen." She pauses again, as if uncertain how to continue. "You are ordered to proceed directly to the Gambit, my personal ship, without discussing this meeting with anyone. Board, take off, and plan a hyperspace jump using the coordinates in the nav computer to proceed to your destination. Only when you are safely en route should you play this holovid."

Captain Amarith glances from side to side as she produces a small black disk from a concealed part of her uniform. She places it on the table’s glossy surface and slides it toward your group. She continues in a scratchy whisper, "It contains information on your mission. I wish I could tell you more, but I fear there are traitors at the base.

"The Gambit is equipped with all the necessary items you’ll need on the mission. And please be careful with my ship. I would like it returned in one piece. Good luck and may the Force be with you." With that, she turns and hastily exits the chamber, the resounding clack of her boots betraying her otherwise stealthy movements.

You leave the briefing room and cautiously enter the sprawling hangar bay. It appears barren save for a warbling astromech droid working on a battered A-wing fighter. You make your way to the far side of the bay before you catch sight of the sleek-shaped space yacht, the Gambit. She must be 30 meters long and is covered with opaque transparisteel windows. The hull is spotless and polished to the point that it glints, even in the hangar’s dim light. Nestled between two carbon-scored Y-wing fighters, the pleasure vessel stands out like a bantha on a salt flat.

You trot up the boarding ramp and make your way to the bridge. You’re amazed that the Captain trusts you with her vessel.
for this mission. Within minutes, the engines are warm and you're streaking out of the bay, being careful not to graze the delicate hull on the bay doors. The ship climbs steadily, without the slightest whine of its engines. In moments, the coordinates are down-loaded and with the pull of a lever, the pinpoints of stars stretch into the white lines of hyperspace.

**Episode One: A Secret Mission**

This mission has just been assigned to Chiron Base personnel since it is relatively close to Ando, where the characters will be traveling. Since the base's starfighter squadron is more suited for preying on Imperial shipping, Amarith assigned the characters her own ship, most often used to transport deep-cover Rebel operatives to sensitive areas throughout the sector.

Once the characters are settled in the *Gambit* and have initiated their jump into hyperspace, they may play the holovod Amarith gave them. Read aloud:

The shimmering non-corporeal image of Captain Amarith suddenly springs into being on the holoprojector platform. She wears her meticulous uniform, standing neatly at attention.

"Greetings. I regret not briefing you at the base, but this is a highly secret mission and I couldn't jeopardize it by discussing the details where they could be overheard."

The image blinks, then continues. "You are en route to Ando, a water world several hours away. The planet is under tight Imperial watch, so you have to bluff your way onto the surface. I suggest that you pose as affluent tourists visiting exotic locations. The *Gambit's* appearance supports this claim and there is an entire wardrobe of expensive clothes in the aft storeroom to maintain this cover. I've also had fake travel passpads forged for your group."

The image pauses, as if waiting for an answer. "After you have landed, you are to proceed to the Azure Overlook, a popular tourist spot perched above the ocean. Your contact is an Aquala Aqualish with a black eye-patch covering his left eye. He has descriptions of your group, so he'll make first contact."

"Additional equipment is hidden in a secret compartment in the aft storeroom. Help yourself to whatever you feel the mission requires, but remember not to waste anything. The Alliance has trouble obtaining supplies, and resources should be conserved if possible. The *Gambit's* computer also contains datafiles on Ando and the Aqualish, so you might want to peruse them."

"As a final note: it is against Imperial law to possess an armed ship on Ando. Thanks to this vessel's previous owner, the weapons are well-concealed. While near Ando, don't reveal them unless absolutely necessary. Good luck and may the Force be with you."

With a deep breath, Captain Amarith salutes before the projection wavers and winks out.

**The Gambit**

- **Craft:** SoroSuub Luxury 2800
- **Type:** Modified private space yacht
- **Scale:** Starfighter
- **Length:** 37 meters
- **Skill:** Space transports: SoroSuub Luxury 2800
- **Crew:** 1, gunners: 2
- **Passengers:** 8
- **Cargo Capacity:** 50 metric tons
- **Consumables:** 1 month
- **Cost:** Not for sale
- **Hyperdrive Multiplier:** x2
- **Hyperdrive Backup:** x12
- **Nas Computer:** Yes
- **Maneuverability:** 1D-1
- **Space:** 7
- **Atmosphere:** 350h: 1,000 kmh
- **Hull:** 3D
- **Shields:** 1D-1
- **Sensors:**
  - **Passive:** 25/1D
  - **Scan:** 5D-1
  - **Search:** 75/2D-1
  - **Focus:** 3/3D
- **Weapons:**
  - **Double Laser Cannon (concealed in none)**
    - **Fire Arc:** Front
    - **Skill:** Starship gunnery
    - **Fire Control:** 2D-1
    - **Space Range:** 1-3/12/25
    - **Atmosphere Range:** 100-300/1.2/2.5 km
    - **Damage:** 3D-2
  - **Blaster Cannon (retractable)**
    - **Fire Arc:** Turret
    - **Skill:** Starship gunnery
    - **Fire Control:** 1D-2
    - **Space Range:** 1-5/10/15
    - **Atmosphere Range:** 100-500/1.5 km
    - **Damage:** 2D-2

**Capacities:** The *Gambit* is Captain Amarith's personal ship on loan to the Rebels for this mission. The ship's previous owner, a Ho'jin crime lord, was put out of business by Captain Amarith during a clash between his organization and the Alliance. The Captain took a liking to the vessel and claimed it for her own in the name of the Alliance.
The precursor to the Luxury 3000, the Gambit is smaller, but of roughly the same design and layout. Used as a mobile base by the crime lord, the ship appears to be a typical pleasure vessel. Instead, improved shield generators, concealed weapons, a re-vamped sensor array, and a carefully reinforced hull make it the perfect vessel for covert operations. However, the interior remains plush and comfortable enough to deceive even an astute customs inspector.

The Aft Storeroom

Captain Amarith has outfitted the Gambit with some specialized equipment helpful to Rebel operatives on deep-cover missions. The items are hidden in a concealed compartment in the ship’s aft storeroom. A Very Difficult search roll is required to locate the compartment. An Easy roll is needed if the searcher knows the compartment exists. The items found here are considered on loan to the Rebels and should be returned at the end of the mission. As Captain Amarith mentioned, supplies are scarce, so the Rebels shouldn’t waste this equipment. At the gamemaster’s discretion, additional character points can be awarded for the cautious use of these supplies.

The hidden storage compartment contains four blaster pistols (4D), five blocks of detonite (5D), three remote fuses, two timer detonators, five blaster power packs, five fragmentation grenades (3D), six comlinks, one PS-9 burst tracker, four empty datapads, a pocket computer, four medpacs, two fast flesh medpacs (from Cracken’s Rebel Field Guide, page 15), and two macrobinoculars. In plain sight in the aft storeroom are fake travel passpads for each character plus a complete wardrobe of expensive clothes. A starship repair kit is stowed in the engine room. It includes hydrospongers, arc welders, plasma welders and a myriad of other tools. Eight breath masks dangle on pegs near the exit hatch.

If the characters want more information on their destination, they may consult the ship’s computer.

### Ando

- **Type**: Terrestrial
- **Temperature**: Temperate
- **Atmosphere**: Type I (breathable)
- **Hydrosphere**: Saturated
- **Gravity**: Standard
- **Terrain**: Oceans, rocky outcroppings, swampy islands
- **Length of Day**: 26 standard hours
- **Length of Year**: 342 standard days
- ** Sapient Species**: Aqualish (N), humans
- **Starports**: 3 standard class, 1 Imperial class
- **Population**: 720,000 (Aqualish) and 80,000 (Quara), 15,000 humans
- **Planet Function**: Aquatic resources, tourism

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**Government**: Imperial governor

**Tech Level**: Space

**Major Exports**: Aquatic foodstuffs

**Major Imports**: Luxury goods, high technology, non-aquatic foodstuffs

**Capsule**: Ando is a world dominated by oceans rich in aquatic biomass. Nineteen percent of the planet is covered with oceans, while the remaining five percent consists of rocky outcroppings and marsh-covered islands. The planet is home to the species called the Aqualish. Fishing the bountiful oceans provides food to the inhabitants of Ando, with some surplus for export.

The Aqualish used to harvest the oceans for food and even began to export some of the excess. Recently the Empire has enforced a ban on all commercial fishing by the native Aqualish. Now Imperial fishing platforms scour the oceans, providing food for the population. Despite this, high technology, fish catches are down, the food imports have increased, and the Empire now subsidizes the planet’s income. This has caused a lot of civil unrest. Now the Aqualish are little more than unemployed slaves of the Empire.

Ando is inhabited by two species of Aqualish. The finned Aquala inhabit the watery areas and the fingered Quara inhabit the islands and rocky areas. In general, Aqualish tend to be a rude, obnoxious and violent species. They are known to go to great lengths in pursuit of revenge and look for any reason to start a brawl. Although they possess spacefaring technology, it is stolen from other cultures and “adapted” to Aqualish requirements. Needless to say, this patchwork equipment tends to be indestructive and prone to breakdowns.

Today Ando is ruled by the Empire, but over the last few months the Empire has tightened its grip on the planet. The Imperials watch over the Aqualish and institute laws which no doubt benefit the Empire, although their true schemes haven’t surfaced yet. Ando is currently under strict Imperial law. Due to the war-like Aqualish, it is absolutely illegal to possess a starship or vehicle with weapons on the planet. Likewise, personal weapons are also forbidden, although they are usually concealed if carried.

### Episode Two: Planetfall on Ando

Read aloud:

A shrilling beep signifies the end of the hyperspace journey. Your group crowds onto the bridge of the Gambit, anxiously peering out the transparisteel viewport. The ship eases into realspace — a vibrant blue planet can be seen suspended in the inky darkness ahead.

Veering the ship toward the planet, you begin your approach. A pair of TIE fighters runs a perpendicular course to your ship, patrolling nearby. They soon disappear behind the bulk of a moon bookmarked with huge craters and other blemishes.

Plunging into the atmosphere, you are nearly blinded by the
brilliance of the sun’s reflection off the glass-like surface of water. The planet seems entirely covered by water, save for an occasional island here or there. In the distance, a huge square-shaped metallic platform is nestled on the water. Before you can get a closer look, the comm unit snaps to life...

"Unidentified ship, please state your business by order of the Imperial Government," says a gravelly monotone voice.

The communications officer asks for the ship’s name, reason for arrival, and desired destination. When this information is provided and the transponder codes are checked, starport control assigns the Gambit to land in docking berth 14 in Quantill City. There an Imperial customs team waits to inspect the ship. The customs team consists of Customs Officer Fen and four Imperial Army troopers.

**Customs Officer Fen.** All stats are 2D except: blaster 4D, dodge 4D+1, business 3D, law enforcement 5D, Perception 3D+2, con 4D, investigation 4D, search 4D+1, Strength 3D+1, Move 10, Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, customs uniform, datapads, hand scanner.

**4 Imperial Army Troopers.** All stats are 1D+1 except: Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D+1, dodge 4D+1, grenade 3D-2, heavy weapons 3D-2, Perception 2D, Strength 3D+1, brawling 4D, Technical 1D, Move 10, Blast helmet and blast vest (-1D physical, -1 energy, torso and head only), blaster pistol (4D), comlink.

The customs team searches for any ship weapons or stowed armaments. They do not discover the concealed weapons, as the areas are heavily shielded to prevent detection. Fen notes the extra shield generators and improved hull construction, but a Moderate con roll convinces him they are nothing to note in his report. If Fen is not convinced, he charges an extra 100 credits for the necessary permits. He discovers the secret compartment in the aft storeroom on a Very Difficult search roll. A Difficult con roll is needed to convince him not to search here at all, but if he discovers it, the Rebels need to act fast. A bribe of 250 or more credits keeps him quiet, but the Rebels have to pursue this strategy, as Fen does not suggest it.

The docking fee is 50 credits per day, plus 400 credits for refueling and technical services.

The Azure Overlook

Quantill City is the largest city on Ando, situated on a large rocky outcropping in the southern hemisphere. The outcropping juts out of the warm ocean with spectacular wind-swept cliffs providing breathtaking views. The Quara city houses over 25,000 fingered Aqualish — nearly 7,000 Aquala and Quara areas also reluctantly make their home here. The city is clearly divided into Aquala and Quara areas and the opposite races are rarely seen in the wrong neighborhood. Being the largest city on Ando, it is bustling with tourism and Imperial activity.

The Azure Overlook is located on the opposite side of the city from where the Rebels dock the Gambit. They can find the Overlook’s location by accessing the landing bay computer or asking directions. It is easily a 45 minute walk, or the Rebels can take a repulsorlift shuttle at the cost of one credit per passenger. As the Rebels travel to the overlook, they spot humans (especially Imperials) everywhere. Most are low-ranking Imperial officials, but there are a few sightings of Imperial Army troopers and stormtroopers. As long as the Rebels mind their own business and don’t display any weapons, they are left alone.

The Azure Overlook is located in a Quara neighborhood. The overlook is a breathtaking rock garden perched nearly 600 meters above the crashing waves of the ocean. The garden is as large as a city block, riddled with paths that wind their way around naturally cut formations and carefully sculpted statues. Alien plants and lichens are strategically cultivated to top off the scene. This area was originally created by the Aquala to remind them of the planet’s natural beauty, despite being placed in the industrialized city. Then, during an interstellar war, the Quara took control of the overlook and have kept it ever since. The location fell soon into disrepair until the Quara realized how popular a tourist spot it is. Today the gardens are well maintained and bustling with tourists, off-duty Imperials, and Quara.

The overlook is packed, just like most days. Many visitors are tourists, usually affluent humans, but other species are present, actively taking in the sights and snapping holos. Many Quara Aqualish are also present, usually up to no good. Most are thugs, crime lord henchlings, or just petty thieves plying their trade on the tourists. A young band of Quara takes an interest in the Rebels and begins to follow them. When the opportunity presents itself, they confront the characters in a secluded area. They believe the Rebels are just another group of rich tourists (as they appear to be) and intend to make a quick credit. A Moderate intimidation roll, a Difficult bargain roll, or a display of weapons scares the band off. Otherwise, they strike to subdue.
5 Quara Aqualish Thugs. All stats are 2D except: Dexterity 2D+1, blaster 3D, dodge 3D, brawling parry 2D+2, Strength 3D, brawling 3D+2.
Move 10, Club (STR 1D+1).

Meeting Koral-tae

Allow the characters a chance to explore the Azure Overlook before being approached by Koral-tae. Read aloud:

Your tense group is approached by a solitary figure adorned in an aqua-colored billowing cloak. A voluminous hood enfolds the figure's face in shadow. As the figure presses forward, its fur-covered fingers pull back the hood, revealing a gnarled Aqualish face lined with wrinkles. As he breaks a sly smile, your attention is riveted to a black eye patch covering his left eye.

This Aqualish is indeed Koral-tae, the Rebels' contact. Astute characters recall that Koral-tae is supposed to be an Aquala, but clearly he possesses the furred fingers typical of the Quara. Allow the characters to be suspicious, but after a while Koral-tae explains his hands—they are carefully tailored gloves that fit over his fin-like hands. It is dangerous to be an Aquala in a Quara section of the city. Koral-tae introduces himself, guides the characters to a secluded part of the overlook, and relates his information to the Rebels.

Several months ago, the Imperial presence on Ando increased virtually overnight. An Imperial governor replaced the do-nothing Imperial prefect, and the Empire seized military control with the construction of an Imperial garrison. Over the next few weeks, even the Imperial personnel began to arrive. Outspoken or unruly natives were quieted or taken away. The Empire saw a need to control Ando, and it did so with ease.

Two months ago the Empire put an end to all Aqualish commercial and recreational fishing. Since harvesting the oceans supported the planet's economy, the Empire gladly assumed the burden. Six huge repulsorlift fishing platforms arrived, and began harvesting the oceans for the Empire. Despite the advanced technology, the Empire does not seem to be catching enough fish to support the planet and must import food to subsidize the now unemployed Aqualish. In addition, the salt marsh areas have been enclosed with power fences and are under tight Imperial security. The Empire is up to something big, and Koral-tae wants to get to the bottom of it.

Koral-tae

Type: Retired Aqualish Rebel Operative
Dexterity 3D+1
Archaic guns 4D+2, blaster 5D-1, brawling parry 3D+2, vehicle blasters 4D-1
Knowledge 2D+2
Inimidation 3D, streetwise 3D-2, survival 3D
Mechanical 3D
Ground vehicle operation 4D-1, hover vehicle operation 4D, repulsorlift operation 4D-2, sensors 3D-2, space transports 4D, starship gunnery 4D
Perception 2D+2
Bargain 3D-1, com 4D, search 3D-2, sneak 3D
Strength 3D-2
Brawling 4D-2, swimming 3D-1, stamina 4D+1
Technical 3D-2
Armor repair 3D, blaster repair 3D-2, computer programming/repair 3D-2, first aid 4D-2, security 3D
Special Abilities:
Force -2D to all attempts at movement in liquids -2D
Dexterity penalty when using equipment not designed for fins.
Force Points: 1
Character Points: 12
Move: 10
Equipment: Custom-made hold-out blaster (usable with fin-like hands, 3D), comlink, cloak, datapad, custom-made gloves, black eye patch
Capsule: Koral-tae is a retired Rebel operative who frequently worked directly with Amarth during her field days. Two years ago, shortly after her partner's latest promotion, the discouraged Aqualish retired. He returned to Aquala, leaving the struggles of the galaxy to the more tenacious younger generation. He resumed his trade as a commercial fisherman, content to co-exist with the passive Imperial rule on his homeworld.

But months ago, the Empire instituted a tighter grip on Aquala. Koral-tae slowly began to seethe, and as the Imperial rule became harsher, Koral-tae found himself doing little things to thwart the Empire. When the Empire unexpectedly put a halt to all commercial fishing, he could take no more. He contacted Captain Amarth for help. Now he is determined to discover the Empire's dark designs on his home planet.

Koral-tae is a grizzled Aqualish who has served his prime. However, he is in excellent physical shape from long hours on a repulsorlift trawler. On the exterior, Koral-tae is gruff, crude, and to the point. Deep down he is kind, dedicated, and even eloquent, but he enjoys the facade of a tough fisherman. He bitterly despises the Empire for bringing its galaxy-wide struggle to his home.
Episode Three: Night Fishing

Koral-tae desperately wants the Rebels to get onto one of the many Imperial fishing platforms to investigate their activities. However, he still needs another day to finalize the arrangements. In the meantime, he urges the Rebels to sneak into the coastal marsh area — which is under Imperial control — in an effort to determine what is being guarded. Koral-tae suggests a nighttime reconnaissance mission with the aid of some rented speeder bikes from a close friend; however, the final operation plan is up to the Rebels.

If the Rebels agree to Koral-tae's plan, he leads them to Sylond's Speeder Rentals. Sylond is an Aquaria friend, but he is not associated with the Rebel Alliance. For a 500-credit deposit (provided by Koral-tae), he rents one speeder bike to each character. Should they become damaged or lost, he charges them the fees below (which must be paid by the Rebels). Koral-tae can lend the Rebels 500 credits (his life savings) to help pay for damages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Damage</th>
<th>Fee in Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superficial</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destroyed</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ikas-Adno Starhawk Speeder Bikes. Speeder, maneuverability 3D, move 140; 400 km/h, body strength 1D.

The speeder bikes can carry two people and are completely unarmed. They are in decent shape but well-used. Koral-tae does not accompany the Rebels — he’s making final preparations to get them on board a fishing platform. Before they depart, he informs them that a power fence protects certain areas of the marsh, and warns them of the local salt marsh life: snakes, lizards, and insects, some quite large.

Sortie By Darkness

The coastal area is located about 20 kilometers from Quantill City. Shortly after entering the marshy coastal lowlands, the Rebels encounter their first obstacle: a power fence. The 20-meter-high fence is essentially raw energy arcing between heavy metal posts placed 30 meters apart. Contact with the fence causes 6D stain damage. If the characters examine the area near the fence posts — and make a moderate search roll — they find a small metal box that houses a power generator hidden in the brush every 500 meters.

Although it is too high to fly over (the speeder bikes have a flight ceiling of only 10 meters) the fence can still be bypassed using several methods. The fence posts have a Strength of 3D — destroying one disables a 30 meter section of the fence. If a generator is found, a difficult security roll overrides the fence along a 500 meter section. An easy security roll can reset the fence to prevent discovery by a patrol. If the Rebels merely want to short out a section of the fence, they must make a moderate technical roll; but once the fence is short circuited, it can’t be reset. Other plans may also succeed at the gamemaster’s discretion.

As the characters fly their speeder bikes within the perimeter fence, they attract the attention of a salt marsh predator. An Andoan marsh lizard, a full four meters long, mistakes the lead speeder bike for its favorite nocturnal prey, the gray flinger bird. The creature explodes from a quagmire in a spewing curtain of mud and water. After the lizard realizes its mistake, it concentrates its attacks on the soft morsel (the rider) thrown from the speeder bike.

The initial attack occurs on the speeder bike. Keep in mind the lizard’s bite is character-scale but the speeder bike body strength is speeder-scale. If the speeder bike is damaged, the characters owe Sylond a repair fee.

Andoan Marsh Lizard

Type: Giant carnivorous marsh predator

- Dexterity 3D + 1
- Perception 3D
- Search 3D + 2
- Strength 3D + 1
- Brawling: Bite 3D + 2

Special Abilities:

- Bite: Does STR + 1D damage
- Claws: Does STR damage
- Hide: Provides +1D against physical attacks
- Move: 13 (walking), 12 (swimming)

Size: 2.5–4.5 meters long

Capsule: The Andoan marsh lizard is the largest predator that inhabits Ando’s coastal swamps. The creature has a dull brown scaled hide that affords it suitable protection. The marsh lizard has a flat head with eyes pointing up at a 45 degree angle, allowing the creature to lie submerged and see above the water’s surface. It has four long legs, the front pair ending in sharp claws (used as secondary weapons) and the rear being oversized paddle-like flippers. Although adept at swimming, the marsh lizards are somewhat awkward on land. They have a short, flat tail that acts as a third flipper for increased swimming speed and doubles as a rudder to make turns.
Poachers in the Mist

Eventually the characters reach the intertidal coast region. This area is a rocky shoreline dotted with tidal pools. These pools range in size from a meter to 50 meters in diameter. Investigating any of the larger pools reveals they are teeming with juvenile fish, including Andolan mineral-fish. More than 50 percent of the fish on Ando use these tidal pools as breeding and nursery areas. The Imperials are guarding and protecting the Andolan mineral-fish, a fish so important that the Empire ended all commercial fishing on the planet. The presence of mineral-fish also explains the power fence and the Imperial skiff patrols.

Allow the Rebels a chance to explore the area and draw some conclusions. Then, inform them of a light source a few hundred meters up the coast. If they investigate, they discover a cargo skiff manned by four Quara Aqualish poachers. The poachers were hired by a minor Quara crime lord named Bosk-toth to collect juvenile Andolan mineral-fish. Bosk-toth has found sedrelion (a compound extracted from the mineral-fish — see Creatures of the Galaxy) is a hot black market item. Besides the Empire, his poaching operation provides the only method to obtain sedrelion or mineral-fish.

The Aqualish poachers are collecting the fish with long handled dip nets. They are placed in specially constructed live wells attached along the sides of the skiff. The fish are then transported back to Bosk-toth’s distribution center, secluded in Quantill City, for sedrelion extraction. Currently the ship’s live wells contain 22 juvenile mineral-fish, each about third of a meter long.

While the characters are spying on this illegal operation, a poacher scout spots them. The cowardly hirelings panic and open fire on the Rebels with blaster rifles. They continue this exchange for a few rounds before they try to escape up the coast in their skiff, continuing to fire.

4 Quara Aqualish Poachers. All stats are 2D except: Dexterity 2D+1, blaster 3D, dodge 3D+1, Strength 3D, blunting 3D+1, repulsorlift operation 2D-2. Move 10. Blaster rifle (5D).

Modified Ubrikkan Bantha II Cargo Skiff. Speeder, maneuverability 1D, move 70; 200 km/h, body strength 1D.

Several rounds later, another skiff approaches from the opposite direction of the fleeing poachers. This skiff is part of an Imperial patrol, armed with a light repeating blaster mounted on the bow. The poachers perform a reckless 180 degree turn and head toward the characters. Hopefully the Rebels also turn tail, or else they must engage the Imperial skiff while the poachers successfully get away. Executing a 180 degree turn requires a Difficult repulsorlift operation roll.

The skiff is piloted by one Imperial Army trooper, whose two companions fire the light repeating blaster at the poachers and the characters.

3 Imperial Army Troopers. All stats are 1D+1 except: Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D+1, dodge 4D+1, grenade 3D-2, vehicle blasters 3D-2, repulsorlift operation 3D. Perception 2D, Strength 3D-1, blunting 4D, Technical 1D. Move 10. Blast helmet and blast vest (+1D physical, +1 energy, torso and head only), blaster pistol (4D), blaster rifle (5D), comlink.

Aratech LS-95 Light Skiff. Speeder, maneuverability 1D-2, move 90; 250 km/h, body strength 1D-1. Weapons: light repeating blaster (character scale, damage 6D).

The characters might decide to split the scene — their speeder bikes are the last vehicles involved in the chase, so escaping isn’t a problem. However, they might choose to bloody some Imperial noses or take out the Aqualish poachers on their way out.
If they continue in the chase and roll a 1 on the Wild Die for repulsorlift operation, they run into some complications. For each 1 on a skill roll Wild Die, roll on the “Marsh Hazard Table” to liven up the chase.

**Marsh Hazard Table**

During the chase, a roll of 1 on the Wild Die for repulsorlift operation causes a complication. Roll 1D and consult the chart below:

1. An Imperial scout trooper joins the chase (see stats below): no more than three troopers can arrive in this way.
2-3. Fog patch: all die rolls are at -1D for two rounds.
4-5. Thick vegetation: if characters fail a Moderate repulsorlift operation roll to dodge, they take 2D damage.
6. Rocky outcropping: if characters fail a Difficult repulsorlift operation roll to dodge, their speeder bike takes 2D damage.

If the Rebels are having an easy time escaping, or to further complicate matters, three Imperial scout troopers on speeder bikes can enter the chase. They try to cut off any fleeing characters or poachers, firing at will. Their speeder bikes have lasers, which should provide the characters with a challenge, considering that their own speeder bikes are unarmed.

3. Imperial Scout Troopers. All stats are 2D except: blaster 4D, blaster carry 4D, dodge 4D, Mechanical 3D, repulsorlift operation: speeder bike 3D-2, blaster 3D. Move 10. Hold-out blaster (3D-2), scout armor (+2 physical and energy), blaster pistol (4D), survival gear.


**Episode Four: Special Delivery**

Koral-tae meets the characters after they return to Quaintill City from their nighttime salt marsh expedition. Regardless of the mission’s outcome, he has good news. He arranged for the characters to deliver a cargo of pressurized gas to the repulsorlift harvester factory *Bountiful* in the morning. This will be the perfect opportunity for the characters to discover why the Imperials are the only ones allowed to fish on Ando. Koral-tae tells them to meet him at docking berth 22 at 0700 hours tomorrow.

The next day Koral-tae greets the Rebels at docking berth 22. A small transport airspeeder rests in the bay, but no other personnel are present. Koral-tae anxiously boards the shuttle and explains the controls to the most likely pilot. The coordinates of the harvester factory are in the shuttle’s main computer. He then shows them the cargo: 10 unlabeled metal cylindrical tanks, each three meters high, holding some kind of pressurized gas. Koral-tae wishes them good luck and encourages them to get moving.

**Transport Airspeeder.** Speeder, maneuverability 2D, move 140; 400 kmh, body strength 2D.

When the characters depart, read aloud:

The transport airspeeder skims above the surface of Ando’s placid ocean. The controls are sluggish in comparison with the *Gambit*, but not as stiff as a cargo skiff. Occasional clanks are heard from the cargo hold, cramped with ten metal tanks. The airspeeder’s computer occasionally beeps as you home in on the harvester factory’s coordinates.

Ahead, a large metallic object can be seen nestled in the blue-green waters of the ocean. The square platform is huge, over 100 meters long, and perhaps 40 meters high. Smokey stacks and box-like protrusions dot the surface of the vessel. The top of the platform has two landing pads, one small and one large. A cargo crane is perched near the larger pad.

As the shuttle approaches, the fishing platform *Bountiful’s* command crew contacts them, directing them to land on the smaller pad.

The characters land their airspeeder transport on the *Bountiful’s* upper deck, on the smaller of two landing pads. While their transport fits snugly on the smaller pad, it looks like the large pad could accommodate a starship the size of a bulkfreighter. Three repulsor platforms marked with hazard signs allow access to the lower decks—one is for personnel, another for light equipment, and a third for heavy materials and large cargo. A tall cargo crane peers over the entire upper deck. Astute characters who make Difficult Perception rolls notice the general inactivity on the platform, and that nobody
is in the cargo crane's control cabin to operate its tractor beams.

Moments after the airspeeder lands, two of Bountiful's crew members rise up onto the deck on the cargo repulsor platform. They direct the characters to unload their tanks onto a repulsorlift for transport belowdecks. If the characters engage in some small talk, they might be able to discover from these two crewmen that the tanks hold liquid nitrogen: a gas used to cryogenically preserve objects.

Once the tanks are loaded from the transport to the repulsorlift, the characters are directed ride the cargo repulsor platform and bring the tanks to the holding and storage areas on Deck 4. When they arrive below, two crew members instruct them to unload the tanks into the bow dry storage room.

**Repulsorlift Harvester Factory**

- **Craft:** Ubrikian HV6 Harvester Factory
- **Type:** Repulsorlift fishing platform and processing plant
- **Scale:** Walker
- **Length:** 120 meters
- **Skill:** Repulsorlift operation, harvester factory
- **Crew:** 10
- **Passengers:** 120
- **Cargo Capacity:** 20,000 metric tons
- **Cover:** Full
- **Altitude Range:** Ocean surface to 25 meters
- **Cost:** 2.5 million credits
- **Move:** 25-70 kmh
- **Body Strength:** 3D

**Capsule:** The Ubrikian HV6 is an immense repulsorlift platform used to harvest sea life from a planet's oceans. The platform can float on the surface or hover above the water to avoid rough seas or harvest shallow areas. The platform is equipped with power scoops and retrieval systems capable of harvesting 25 metric tons of fish per day. The platform is staffed by more than 100 workers who process the catch moments after it is hauled on board. Processing includes sorting, cleaning, preparing, packaging, and storing the catch.

**Searching for Clues**

Clever characters can find ways to sneak off and explore the Bountiful for clues revealing why the Empire is so interested in Ando. If most of the characters are busy unloading the pressure tanks in the forward hold area on Deck 4, some might be able to slip away with an Easy sneak roll. Although they'll be able to explain their presence in nearly every area aboard the harvester, there are a few areas (most notably the aft dry storage) guarded by stormtroopers. They'll have to use diversionary tactics to slip past the stormtroopers, since they are less likely to be conned than the rest of the crew.

Wandering around the Bountiful, the Rebels can make several general observations. Characters making Moderate Perception rolls realize the harvester is not functioning to maximum output. Actually, the scoops haven't been deployed in six days, the crew just lounges around, and the processing plant is meticulously clean. Chatting with the harvester's crew might reveal a few clues. The workers know little of the Empire's agenda on Ando. They know the Empire is interested in collecting certain live species, and every three days a bulk freighter named the Eclipse shows up to spirit them away. Most have heard that there are cryogenic chambers on Deck 4 but have not been allowed there themselves.

**Deck 2: Crew Quarters**

**Scoop Engines:** This area houses the engines used to deploy and retrieve the scoops.

**Bridge:** This spacious chamber is the nerve center for all the operations of the vessel. The entire front wall is transparisteel, overlooking the ramp and scoop units. The other walls are lined with computer terminals and work stations used by the 10 crew members needed to operate the vessel, especially while the scoops are deployed. At this time, however, only four technicians monitor the bridge instruments. If characters can find a way to distract the crew or sneak inside unnoticed, they might access the computers. A Moderate computer programming/repair roll reveals that the Bountiful hasn't transferred a bulk order of fish in weeks. Despite this, a bulk freighter named the Eclipse lands here every three days to pick up something listed only as "Ando Project materials." The next pickup is this afternoon.

**Crew Quarters:** Each of these areas can accommodate 30 crew members. They are cramped, messy, and smell slightly offensive.

**Barracks:** This room used to be another room for the crew, but has been converted to barracks. This room is off-limits to most personnel and is meticulously clean. Ten stormtroopers and 12 seatroopers are stationed here, all of whom want to know why the characters are snooping around ...

**10 Imperial Stormtroopers.** All stats are 2D except: Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D, grenade 4D+2. Move 10. Blaster rifle (3D), stormtrooper armor (+1D to energy, -2D to physical, -1D to Dexterity and related skills).
**Bountiful**

**Repulsorlift Harvester Factory**

**Deck One - Upper Deck**

- Scoop Engines
- Rec Room
- Bridge
- Storage
- Mess Hall
- Crew Quarters
- Crew Quarters
- Barracks
- Crew Quarters
- Crew Quarters

- Crane
- Landing Pad
- A
- B

**Deck Two - Crew's Quarters**

- A
- B

- Key to Repulsor Platforms:
  A - Crew Platform (access to Deck Two)
  B - Light cargo Platform (access to Deck Two - Three)
  C - Heavy cargo Platform (access to Decks Two - Four)

**Deck Three - Processing Plant**

- Scoop Engines
- Cleaning & Prep.
- Packaging
- Receiving
- Processing

**Deck Four - Holding/Storage**

- Equip. Storage
- Bow Dry Storage
- Belly Hatch
- Cold Storage
- Alt Dry Storage
- Cryogenic Chambers

*NOTE:* Deck Five (not shown) contains repulsor generators, fuel cells and desatination plant/fresh water storage.
12 Imperial Scatoopeers. All stats are 2D except: blaster 4D, brawling parry 4D, Mechanical 3D, waveskimmer operation 3D-2, Strength 2D-2, brawling 3D-2, swimming 4D-2. Move 10/12 (swimming), Blaster speargun (5D), speargun (4D), scat trooper armor (+1D to energy and physical, +2D to swimming).

Mess Hall: This chamber is part kitchen and part dining area for the crew.

Rec Room: This is a common area adorned with several tables and chairs. Numerous holovid projectors, holo-game tables, and other entertainment devices line the walls. Several bored crew members lounge about this room.

Storage: This room is a storage area for small equipment and everyday items used by the crew.

Deck 3: Processing Plant

Ramp: This sloped ramp leads from a pair of blast doors to the water. The scoops draw the fish onto the ramp and into the vessel. The scoops are currently inoperative.

Receiving: Here workers remove and sort the catch, and place the fish on a power belt to the cleaning room. There are no workers here, and the belt is shut down.

Cleaning and Prep: The catch is cleaned and filleted here before going on another powerbelt. Everything has been shut down.

Processing: The catch arrives in this chamber where it is again sorted depending on the processing needs. Equipment can sterilize, cook, dice, or grind the catch as needed. An inoperative power belt would normally send the processed product again to the final chamber.

Packaging: Here the catch is canned, flash-frozen, fresh packaged, dried, smoked, or vacuum-packed. The final product is sent down the repulsor platform to the hold.

Deck 4: Storage

Bow Dry Storage: This area is used to store foodstuffs that don’t require refrigeration, equipment and supplies — like the pressurized gas cannisters the characters are unloading here. Only a few crates of canned, dried, smoked, and vacuum-packed fish are piled along the chamber’s walls.

Belly Hatch: This hatch is used to off-load cargo through the belly of the vessel. Since it is a separate magnetically sealed chamber, the hatch can be opened while the vessel rests on the ocean, providing access into the water.

Equipment Storage: The lower bow storage areas are crammed with spare parts for the scoop engines above.

Cold Storage: This huge chamber holds processed fish under cold storage. The room is divided to contain batches at different temperatures.

At Dry Storage: This storage bay is guarded at all times by a pair of stormtroopers. Foodstuffs that don’t need refrigeration are usually stored here; however, eight cryogenic stasis units are stacked along the back bulkhead. These cylindrical units, each two meters high, are covered with flashing lights. Metal pressurized gas tanks (like the ones the Rebels are transporting) are stored nearby. Next to these are a dozen black insulated metal boxes, each four meters long. A control panel staffed by two technicians stands to the left of the units. The stilts units can place a human-sized creature in cryogenic (or deep freeze) sleep by gently lowering the temperature. The creature, if maintained at a constant temperature far below freezing, can survive indefinitely. Each cryogenic cylinder contains one Andoan mineral-fish.

Covert Operation

The Empire’s insidious operation is concealed in the Bountiful’s belly. The harvester functions at only a fifth of its awesome potential, just enough to give the casual observer the facade of routine work.

Andoan Mineral-Fish

Andoan mineral-fish are covered with a thick shell. The half-meter-long fish have a spiked tail and several short shelled fins used for locomotion and to crush rocks for food. The mineral-fish feeds entirely on minerals and metals dissolved in the waters they inhabit. For more details on these strange fish, see Creatures of the Galaxy, pages 6-7.

Andoan Mineral-Fish. Dexterity 1D, Perception 1D, Strength 1D. Special Abilities: tail does STR-2D damage. Fins do STR-1 damage. Shell adds +1D to Strength to resist damage. Mineral-fish can sense large concentrations of minerals and metals. Move 8 (swimming).
Using the belly hatch, Imperial seatroopers enter the ocean on daily forays. They hunt Andoan mineral-fish with blaster spearguns set on stun. The stunned fish are carefully returned to the *Bountiful*. They are moved to the aft dry storage room and placed in cryogenic stasis. The fish are loaded into the black metal stasis chambers. Every three days, the medium bulk freighter *Eclipse* makes a pick-up from the *Bountiful*. The cryogenically preserved mineral-fish are loaded onto the *Eclipse* and spirited off the planet.

**Eclipse Arrives**

Exploring the harvester platform reveals many clues, but poses more questions. Why is the Empire capturing live Andoan mineral-fish and transporting them off planet? The characters don’t have much time to contemplate these clues — while they’re finishing their investigations, the *Eclipse* lands on the upper deck’s larger docking pad. The characters witness the crew transfer the cryogenic canisters containing the mineral-fish into *Eclipse’s* hold — if they are resourceful, they might gain information or even a free ride.

The obvious course is to follow the *Eclipse* or determine its destination. Although the most likely methods the Rebels can use are outlined below, the gamemaster should be prepared to improvise and reward resourceful players for original plans.

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**Eclipse.** Capital, astrogation 4D, space transports 4D-1, space 2, atmosphere 225, 650 kmh, hull 2D, shields 1D-2. Weapons: 2 laser cannons (starfighter, fire control 1D, damage 3D).

The *Eclipse* is a modified Action IV medium bulk freighter. The Empire uses this nondescript vessel to reduce suspicion while hauling special cargo for the Ando Project. The Empire added a weak shield generator and two laser cannons to the ship for additional protection. The cargo bay is occupied by a 1.5 million liter water tank and its pumping/filter machinery.

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First, the Rebels can try to sneak onto the *Eclipse* and stow away. This is actually a simple task. The cargo crew accepts any offers of help loading the black insulated boxes. Each stowaway simply needs to make a Moderate sneak roll to slip off into the cavernous cargo bay and find a suitable spot in which to hide.

The characters can try a second method which also involves helping the crew load the cargo bay. A Moderate sneak roll allows a Rebel to slip away into other parts of the *Eclipse*. By accessing a computer terminal (there is one in the cargo bay, one in the main corridor and a third in the bridge) with a Moderate computer programming/repair roll, the astrogation coordinates to a system named Uridia can be downloaded onto a datapad. Armed with the coordinates, the Rebels could split up, some hiding aboard the *Eclipse* and the others following in the *Gambit*. Of course, all the characters could return to Quantill City and plug the astrogation coordinates into the *Gambit’s* nav computer.

The Rebels might also think to plant the PS-9 burst tracker on the *Eclipse*. Placing the tracker requires an Easy hide roll, but the characters must have brought the device with them to the *Bountiful*. When the *Eclipse* reverts to normal space, the device sends a tight-burst transmission and relays its coordinates to the Rebels.

Finally, a Difficult computer programming/repair roll on the *Bountiful’s* or the *Eclipse’s* computers can call up the cargo transfer manifests. A Very Easy Perception roll reveals that the *Eclipse* makes a pick-up on the *Bountiful* every three days. Deductive reasoning (or an Easy Knowledge roll) concludes that the *Eclipse’s* destination can’t be more than 1.5 days from Ando. A search of the *Gambit’s* computers shows that the only system within 1.5 days of Ando is Uridia. By default, it is the only place the *Eclipse* can reach.

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**Episode Five: Showdown at Uridia**

The characters somehow follow the *Eclipse* to Uridia — if they stowed away aboard the freighter, they’ve already passed through the system’s defenses: refer to “Sneaking Inside the Base” below. Rebels following the *Eclipse* in the *Gambit* emerge in the Uridia system to find a gas giant and three tiny iceball planets surrounding a cool star. A Difficult sensors roll reveals a faint power source emanating from one of the gas giant’s nine moons. The power source originates from an Imperial facility on the lifeless moon.

Uridia’s desolate location provides ample security, but the Imperials have yet another defensive surprise for the unwary. Orbiting the moon are 16 DTX detector satellites, forming a loose web-grid that detects energy sources. A Difficult sensors roll reveals the satellites before the Rebels trip the system. If they trip the detection grid, the Imperial facility immediately goes on alert (see sidebar,
Uridia

Type: Desolate moon
Temperature: Cool
Atmosphere: Type III (breath mask required)
Hydrosphere: Arid
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Barren, crater fields
Length of Day: 19 standard hours
Length of Year: 412 local days
Shantytown: Limited services
Population: 200
Planet Function: Imperial research facility
Government: Imperial administrator
Tech Level: Space
Major Exports: Uridium
Major Imports: Boots, stufs, mid and high technology

Capsule: Uridia is a lifeless moon orbiting an immense gas giant. Many decades ago the moon was heavily blast-mined by the Old Republic for its trace deposits of Uridium. Even when properly refined, it can be used to enhance the effects of laser weapons. The mineral was found in such minute quantities that it was soon determined too expensive to extract. Sporadic mining operations continued until a huge explosion devastated the moon 32 years ago. The blast removed nearly 30 percent of the moon’s mass while stripping away half its atmosphere.

Today Uridia is a pock-marked, irregularly shaped hunk of rock with a trace atmosphere. Humanoids must wear breath masks to prevent slow, painful suffocation. For years the Imperials have taken an interest in finding a more economical method to extract Uridium. Using Andoan mineral-fish, they may have finally succeeded.

“On Alert”), once characters have detected the grid, they may make another Difficult sensors roll to locate a gap caused by the uneven dispersal of satellites around the moon. A Very Difficult space transport roll allows the ship to slip through the grid undetected.

The Rebels might decide to open a larger hole in the grid by destroying one or more satellites. It takes a Difficult starship gunnery roll (due to the size of the satellite) to hit one. Each satellite destroyed (or heavily damaged) reduces the subsequent piloting roll by one difficulty level. Since the system is faulty and the satellites malfunction all the time, destroyed satellites don’t cause a quick response from those monitoring sensors at the Imperial facility below.

If the Rebels sneak past the satellite grid, they can land the Gombit a safe distance away from the Imperial research station without detection. Using breath masks, they can travel over the broken terrain to the base and continue their investigation.

Sneaking Inside the Base

The Imperial research base is a low, windowless structure partially sunk into the ground. Several warehouse-sized sections are attached to a main entry bunker. The only other features near the facility are two temporary TIE fighter hangars (each holding four fighters) and a large landing pad. If the characters acted quickly to pursue the Eclipse back on Ando, they find the bulk freighter still docked on the pad.

The bunker itself has one armored entrance, although large bay doors lead into the sections on both sides. Since this is an isolated facility, no guards patrol the area outside. To enter any of these doors, a character must make a Moderate security roll — failure sets off an alarm and puts the entire facility on alert (see below). Rebels who stowed away on the Eclipse may sneak inside the base through the loading bay while the cargo is transferred.

Once characters are inside, they can search the facility for clues revealing what the Empire is doing with the Andoan mineral-fish.

Living Area

These rooms are all housed within the bunker structure. It contains personnel quarters, offices and control areas for basic facility maintenance.

Security Post: The main bunker hatch leads to this entry chamber. A few sleek, low-back sectional sofas line the walls, and an empty desk stands near one door. The area acts as a station for a quartet of security droids that keep a constant vigil on the facility. Unless an alert is sounded, three roam the facility and one can be found here.

4 Rim Securities K4 Security Droids. All stats are 1D except: Dexterity 3D, blaster 7D, dodge 8D, running 4D, search 3D. Body armor (+2D physical and energy), internal blaster rifle (5D), security entry card.

Barracks: This room is outfitted with a dozen bunks and corresponding lockers. Twelve stormtroopers are stationed here. Half of this chamber is partitioned off to provide living space for 10 TIE fighter pilots and five ground support technicians.

12 Imperial Stormtroopers. All stats are 2D except: Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D, grenade 4D-2. Move 10. Blaster rifle (5D), stormtrooper armor (+1D to energy, +2D to physical, +1D to Dexterity and related skills), security entry card.

Mess Hall: This full service kitchen is staffed by three SE4 servant
The Aquaculture Facility on Uridia

The research area is contained within one of the warehouse-sized sections attached to the bunker. It can be entered through the vehicle testing lab's bay doors or an interior accessway from the pump room.

Equipment Storage: This chamber is used to store miscellaneous lab equipment, computer components, and data storage cabinets.

Office Cubicles: These eight cubicles are work stations for the facility's eight chief scientists. Each is equipped with a flat work area and computer terminals linked to the labs.

Mini-Labs: These four separate labs contain work benches, standard chemical equipment and a computer terminal. Each has a separate climate control apparatus. Temperature, atmospheric composition, humidity, photoperiod, and even gravity can all be manipulated for a variety of testing environments.
On Alert

If the Rebels trip the DTX detector satellite grid, or run into base personnel who sound the alarm, the entire Imperial facility goes on alert.

The TIE fighter pilots report to the hangar domes. Half take off to perform overhead reconnaissance while the other half remain ready to launch. All non-security personnel report to their quarters and lock themselves in. Any prisoners working in the labs are returned to the brig. All doors are automatically locked, requiring a Difficult security roll or a security entry card to open.

The stormtroopers split into three teams of four. Each team is assigned an area to search room by room: the living area, the research lab, and the hatchery. The security droids exit the base and patrol the surrounding terrain. At the first sign of trouble, the droids can be summoned with a comlink signal.

Weapons Testing Lab: The large chamber contains several work benches with galvon pattern cutting machinery and piles of disassembled blasters. One side of the room is a shooting range, complete with a holo-projector target system. This room is used to test blasters enhanced with Uridium. There is a functional enhanced blaster pistol on the table. The Uridium galvon pattern gives the blaster a damage code of 5D — rolling a 1 on the wild die causes it to explode when fired. The explosion causes 3D damage in a five meter radius and destroys the blaster.

Vehicle Testing Lab: This huge chamber is used to apply sedrellium to the hulls of vehicles and Uridium components to vehicle blasters. Several dismantled speeder bikes rest on power lifts, and a fully functional TIE fighter with unattached solar panels sits in the chamber.

Experimental Labs: These two labs contain work benches, lab apparatus, computer terminals, and various sizes of holding tanks and raceways. These rooms are where the research team conducts experiments to determine a method of culturing Andoan mineral-fish in captivity.

The Hatchery

This portion of the facility is maintained at a constant temperature. The light panels are set with timers to produce 16 hours of light and 10 hours of darkness to simulate the effects of Ando’s summer. Special dimmers simulate a 45 minutes dawn and dusk each day.

Saltwater Storage Tank: This tank holds 15 million liters of sea water, used to supply the entire facility. The huge tank circulates water through several filters, plus ultraviolet and radiation sterilization. A conduit from the landing pad outside leads directly to this tank to facilitate loading water of the Eclipse.

Pump Room: This room contains a huge pump used to deliver water to all parts of the facility. Should the pump be sabotaged, most of the experiments here would fail.

Fuel Cells: These fuel cells provide power to the facility. Most of the power operates the pump and filtration system.

The Ando Project

The Empire has a vast number of credits to spend on research and development of weapons to combat the Rebel Alliance. The Ando Project is an example of one such program. The Empire is very interested in using Uridium to enhance its laser weapons — scientists believe laser barrels with galvon patterns formed from Uridium have increased power.

Uridium is present on this moon in minute amounts. Current techniques are not adequate for economical Uridium mining. But by placing the raw moon rocks in water inhabited by Andoan mineral-fish, the creatures can feed off the rock and its contents. The Uridium is deposited and concentrated in the fish’s tissue and can then be extracted. The process takes time and a lot of mineral-fish.

To make the project effective, mineral-fish needs to be cultured in captivity; so far all attempts have failed. This facility, with its extensive research lab and hatchery, has been designed to discover the secrets of using mineral-fish. The sedrellium normally present in mineral-fish is a bonus; the Empire is also tinkering with its application in TIE fighters hulls.
Biological Filtration Chamber: A huge biological filtration unit fills this chamber. The unit is a 40-meter diameter transparisteel cylinder packed with fist-sized duroplastic balls. Water is pumped in at the top, 20 meters above the floor, and trickles down through the plastic balls, collecting in a reservoir below. Microorganisms living on the balls strip the water of waste materials and the trickling increases the dissolved oxygen in the water. The reservoir then feeds into pipes, delivering water to the rest of the hatchery.

Breeding Chamber: Eight 30-meter diameter duroplastic tanks line this chamber. Each holds a dozen mated pairs of mineral-fish captured and brought here from Ando. Fertilized eggs are harmlessly removed from the female by hand and sent to the incubation chamber for hatching. Pipes carry water from the biofilter chamber to the tanks, with the overflow returning through drain pipes in the floor.

Incubation Chamber: This room is maintained at a slightly higher constant temperature than the other hatchery areas. Collected fish eggs are brought to this chamber and placed in shallow trays stacked on top of each other. The racks of trays run the length of the floor and to a height of 10 meters. However, only a few dozen of the thousands of trays are currently occupied.

Growout Chamber: By far the largest chamber at the facility. Four-week-old mineral-fish fry are brought here to mature. Nearly the entire room is cluttered with various-sized raceways and tanks, but few hold any fish. Scaffolding supports catwalks that criss-cross these huge tanks. Pipes from the biological filtration chamber deliver water to these tanks and the excess exits via drain pipes for recirculation.

Workshop/Storage: Large tools and equipment are stored here for the everyday upkeep of the facility. Huge workbenches line the walls for use in maintenance and fabrication of the hatchery infrastructure.

Loading Bay: This large area houses six repulsorlifts used in loading and unloading cargo ships. A pair of blast doors leads to the landing pad. Two heavy duty cargo ships crewed by four worker droids are parked here. This droid team makes forays onto the moon's surface to collect Uriddium-enriched rocks for the mineral-fish to process.

Rebel Objectives

This episode is open-ended for the Rebels. Their objective should be to explore the facility by force or subterfuge to determine its purpose. Searching, forcing Imperials to talk, questioning the captured Mon Calamari or Aqualish, or accessing the main computers helps them discover that the Imperial base is an aquaculture facility. Sabotaging or destroying the facility is a good idea, but a more prepared team can be sent at a later time to put the operation out of commission. The gamemaster should base the Rebels' character point awards on their actions.

Accessing any of the terminals throughout the base requires a Moderate computer programming/repair. Each success reveals one of the following pieces of information: a floor plan to the facility, the information summarized in the "Ando Project" sidebar, research information on the unsuccessful attempts to cultivate the mineral-fish, detailed technical readouts on the Uriddium galven pattern used to enhance laser weapons, or technical readouts on sedrellium-reinforced starship hulls.

Characters can use the detonite located in the Gambit's aft
storeroom to sabotage the facility (if they arrived on Uridia with their ship). Sensitive areas include the saltwater storage tank and the pump room. With a Moderate demolitions roll and the minimum amount of detonite, the facility can be flooded. Add a few well-placed charges in the research wing and hangtry, and the facility would suffer irreparable damage. Of course, a few passes from the Gambit with several blasts of laser fire could level the place.

Escape

If the Rebels aren't careful, their escape could be difficult. If they all stow away on the Eclipse to get to Uridia, they must find a way to use the bulk freighter to get off the moon. They might sneak back on board and hope to ride back to Ando (if they didn't put the entire facility on alert), or they might shipjack the vessel.

The characters might think to neutralize the TIE fighters in their hangars near the facility. They can try capturing all the TIE fighter pilots in the barracks, or may sabotage the fighters themselves. The Rebels can jam or destroy the TIE fighter hangar doors with a Moderate demolitions roll.

If they aren't grounded, the TIE fighters provide quick pursuit if the characters' escape is spotted — especially if the base was put on alert and four starfighters were launched for recon patrol.

4 TIE Fighters. Starfighter, starship piloting 4D-1, starship gunnery 4D, maneuverability 2D, space 10, atmosphere 415; 1,200 kmh, hull 2D. Weapons 2 laser cannons (fire-linked; fire control 2D, damage 5D).

Should the Rebels escape, they return to their base and report to Captain Amarith. She reviews their report, and commends them for any information they discovered about Imperial activity on Ando and Uridia. The characters are awarded service medals if they destroyed the hangtry facility on Uridia, and are given rewards by the Mon Calamari if their aquaculture scientists were rescued from Imperial imprisonment.

Gamemasters are encouraged to award character points according to each Rebel's actions and the group's overall success. Five character points should be awarded for completing the mission, with additional points given for individual actions and additional objectives achieved (rescuing the prisoners, destroying the base).

About the Authors...

Jim Anderson spends his time masquerading as a graphic artist for a large, mid-western telephone company while waiting to hear whether he's gotten the lead in the next Star Wars movie. He currently lives in a tiny, southeast Michigan apartment with four — no, three fish, and a prickly pear cactus named Mona.

Craig Robert Carey was recently apprehended by the Fugitive Gamemaster Retrieval Corps in the Melwood Nunataks of Antarctica. He holds a bachelors degree in history from the University of California at Santa Barbara. Trevor J. Wilson is a college student in California intending to major in finance. "Beast" has mastered not only the Wookiee language but also the hairstyle, and is also a fan of Rush (the Kansas howl, not the band). Both are co-authors of Alliance Intelligence Reports and members of the infamous Gotham Highlanders campaign.

Chris Doyle received a fishery science degree from Rutgers University, and puts it to good use as the senior aquaculture scientist at an aquatic lab. Recent New Jersey home-owners, Chris and his wife, Lisa, share their house with a pair of cats, Nixie and Whisper. A veteran of the Role-Playing Game Association Network, he's penned more than 20 rounds of sanctioned game scenarios, served as a regional director, and won a pair of Network Service awards. As a freelancer, he has contributed to West End's Kathol Outback, and the Shadows of the Empire Planets Collection. Many future projects are in the works.

J. Allan Fawcett is a health programs consultant who dreams up game adventures while sitting in airports and flying across the country to meet with clients. He has penned a myriad of tournaments for roleplaying systems such as Star Wars, the Advanced Dungeons & Dragons game, and Chill. His first Star Wars adventure received rave reviews and was run at conventions throughout the United States. Allan lives in Minnesota, a place where the winter reminds him of the inhospitable planet Hoth.

Pablo Hidalgo is a freelance artist from Winnipeg, Manitoba, who specializes in illustration and animation. He is a member of the Manitoba Society of Independent Animators, and co-instructs animation courses for young people. He has a disturbing amount of Star Wars trivia kicking around in his head, and does a mean Lobot impersonation.

Patricia A. Jackson is an administrative assistant at Jackson Elementary School in York, Pennsylvania. When not chained to a
computer, she enjoys playing Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game. Her various contributions to the Star Wars Adventure Journal have each contained snippets of Old Corellian.

Kidnapped as a boy by space pirates, Timothy Squire O’Brien rose from a lowly cabin boy to become the captain of a pirate fleet, scourge of the spaceways, dreaded across the galaxy! After retiring to an obscure backwater world, he now writes memoirs cleverly disguised as space opera and roleplaying games.

Angela Phillips works as a substitute teacher in her hometown of Hampton, Virginia, but hopes to eventually make a living as a novelist. She began studying writing at Duke University in the summer of 1982, at the age of 13. She had begun holding fllash tasting parties for other teenage Star Wars fans in her home the year before, despite the fact that none of them knew exactly what “flahsh” was.

Jean Rabe lives in rural Wisconsin, wedged between a cornfield and a dairy farm. She is the author of several fantasy short stories and novels, including Dawning of a New Age, the first novel in the DragonLance Fifth Age line. She is the editor of two science fiction gaming magazines — JTAS: The Journal of the Traveller's Aid Society, and FASA’s MechForce Quarterly. And in her spare time she proofreads computer game manuals. She worked for TSR for many years as the coordinator of its Role-Playing Game Association Network. Prior to that she was a newspaper reporter and news bureau chief covering courts and police in the Midwest.

Paul Sadow maintains a full schedule of freelance and full-time game design and editing for West End Games. Between bouts of writing, he files regular newslet reports on Imperial activity in this sector for Imperial Defense Daily.

Timothy Zahn is the author of Heir to the Empire, Dark Force Rising and The Lost Command, all New York Times best-selling Star Wars novels. His most recent book is Conquerors’ Legacy, the final book in his Conquerors Trilogy. His contributions to The Official Star Wars Adventure Journal include “First Contact” in Journal #1 and “Mist Encounter” in Journal #7.

About the Artists...

Kathy Burdette is a writer and freelance artist living in Virginia enjoying the life of a shiftless science fiction addict. In her spare time she writes short fiction, works part-time at the College of William and Mary, and shipjacks light freighters from the local starport.

Matt Busch began drawing “stick” TIE fighters at the age of four. Aside from the Star Wars Adventure Journal, Matt has contributed to other Star Wars sourcebooks for West End Games. As an entertainment illustrator living in Los Angeles, he has worked on many television commercials, books, magazines, comics and trading cards. He has also worked on many advertising campaigns for motion pictures, including the recent film The Devil’s Own. When asked where he gets his talent, Matt claims that, “The Force runs strong in my family…”

In his spare time Robert Duchinski enjoys illustrating and escaping into the Star Wars and TSR realms through various roleplaying games and novels. He is a graduate of the duBreq School of Art and Design, and hopes to someday become a special effects artist for Industrial Light and Magic.

Scott Neely is a self-taught artist from Pennsylvania who has grown up with Star Wars. “I’ve always been fascinated by the story and the ship,” he said. He started his art career doing freelance work, then moved into advertising art.

Doug Shuler has been a freelance artist for eight years and has done work for many prominent game companies, including GDW, Steve Jackson Games, ICE, White Wolf, FASA, and West End Games. His illustrations continue to appear on new cards for Magic: The Gathering and Metamorph by Wizards of the Coast. A Star Wars fanatic, he lives in Boulder, Colorado, with his wife Jordan, their young daughter, Brianna, and five maniacal cats.

Chris Trevas is an illustrator and graduate from the Center for Creative Studies in Michigan. He has been a Star Wars fan since the beginning and enjoys depicting new characters and situations from that far away galaxy. While currently working in the gaming industry, Chris’ artwork can be found in many projects for West End Games, including The Official Star Wars Adventure Journal, the Shadows of the Empire Sourcebook, and Kothol Rift.

Mike Viard has been freelancing as an illustrator for eight years, breaking in with Game Designers Workshop and Digest Group before catching on with West End Games. “My very first WEG project was doing some pencils for Ponana (The Bot Abuser’s Manual).” While he may have grown up with Star Wars, Mike didn’t buy much of the merchandise. “I’ve had to scramble to get whatever I can since much of it is a great help in producing illos … and it’s an excellent excuse to buy some really cool toys!” Of course, he has to share them with his two young children.
SPECIAL FEATURE

Readers of The Official Star Wars Adventure Journal have come to know “Fragments from the Mind’s Eye” as a place to find amusing Star Wars humor. While the cartoons are entertaining, there’s only so much an artist can do with one page. So when the Journal received Jim Anderson’s “Bungo n’ Rusti Get Carry-Out,” we knew we had a special treat...

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

Sullust.

Bungo!

Sullust control... this is the Chubby Gundark.

Are you flying?

Copy, Gundark. You have permission to land.

Don’t you think of anything but food?

Good, because I’m hungry!

You only ask that because you’re a droid.

Bungo n’ Rusti Get Carry-Out
by Jim Anderson

November, 1996

Star Wars Adventure Journal • 285
This is fun.

Biscuit Baron

I enjoy nothing more than watching you consume a Bantha Breakfast Biscuit. Extra blue sauce, please.

Being a droid, Rusti, you fail to realize how good this is!

You could compare it to the best oil bath you've ever had really.

Do you know how many people in the Empire have never even tasted one of these?

How many?

Lots!

really.

Then why not load up the ship with Bantha Breakfast Biscuits and spread the word around the galaxy?

We can't do that! It's against company policy.

Ah, another ship. Let's see what they have for us.

... to carry non-SoroSuub cargo. I know. We'll just say they're consumables. With the way you eat, who would argue?

No problem, except for that Star Destroyer coming up on us!

Sullustan Cargo Barge! Prepare to be boarded!

Ah, another ship. Let's see what they have for us.

Captain Winkle, we found nothing out of the ordinary except several crates of Bantha Breakfast Biscuits.

Blue sauce?
Plenty, sir! Inform the men there'll be a special meal tonight!

Excuse me...

You tell Mousman that we will take what we want! And we'll be lucky if we don't shove what's left down his throat!

He, uh... said... "Thanks."

Thats all they left? Those Bantha Breakfast Biscuits cost a month's wages!

Well, let's count ourselves lucky and get out of here.

One crate? Out of forty?!

The Chubby Gundark comes out of hyperspace somewhere in the Outer Rim.

There it is! Gastrula!

Hello. How's it goin'?

How many times have you asked, "Where can I get a really good Bantha Breakfast Biscuit?"

And so started the Great Bantha Breakfast Biscuit Run between Scullstard and Gastrula. Bungo and Rusti made several hundred thousand credits over a two-week period... until...

Well, until it was discovered that certain preservatives in the Bantha Breakfast Biscuits, when mixed with stale ship's air and the Gastrulan atmosphere, caused a chain reaction that spontaneously created life which immediately set out to consume the entire planet... urp.
All of this is completely unknown to Bungo and Rust.

We sold all but two cases of Bantha Breakfast Biscuits that run.

We must be slipping.

Meanwhile, in Barge number one...

RRRRR

So, what exactly does a droid do with all that money?

Hull Breach!!

What would cause that?!!

What is it?

Weeoo! Weluuoo!

It appears to be a giant bantha eating through the hull.

But... but that's company property!

It's moving this way?!! Jett is on the Barge!!

Whatever it is, it's moved to Barge Two!!

We'll buy them a new one!!

Okay...

Look!! There it is!!

To save the ship! Where's the blaster?

Bardon my asking, but doesn't that sound a bit... Bungo? Where are you going?
Now, if I were a giant, amorphous bantha, where would I go?

and soon...

Eep!

Meanwhile...

Seems little point both of us dying.

Escape pod.

Stang! wrong turn!

Aaahh!

uh... nice amorphous bantha.

ROAAAAA

EEK

BISCUIT BARON
Blue Sauce
Okay, you culinary experiment gone wild...

"Take This!"

Sploosh!

It still smells in here.

We'll have to get this done professionally. That's gonna cost...

As well as the lost barge and cargo.

Aaaa! Kaaa.

Eew.

We'll be lucky to break even.

We're going to dispose of that last crate of contaminated Bantha Breakfast Biscuits?

Ooh, I've got special plans for this.

Pot Pot.

And later...

Look out! Star Destroyer!

Rusti are you there?

You're alright?

I'm picking you up.

Uh... yes.

Bunge?

I was going to get help.

We've got a big mess to clean.

Attention Sullustan Cargo Barge...!

Here we go again.

They're all yours! Oh, and we're really sorry we're all out of Blue Sauce!
Roleplaying Game Statistics

**Bungo Bung**

- **Type:** Sullustan Trader
- **DEXTERITY 2D-1**
- **Blaster 4D-1, dodge 5D**
- **KNOWLEDGE 2D+2**
- **Alien species 4D, planetary systems 7D**
- **MECHANICAL 4D-1**
- **Astrogation 6D, space transports 6D-2, starship gymnery 5D**
- **PERCEPTION 3D**
- **Bargain 5D**
- **STRENGTH 2D**
- **Stamina: consumption of Bantha Biscuits 6D-2**

**Technical 3D-2**

- **Space transports repair 6D**
- **Special Abilities:**
  - **Enhanced Senses:** Sullustans get +2D to search and related Perception checks in low-light conditions due to their vision and hearing.
  - **Location Sense:** Sullustans cannot get lost in a place they have visited before. They get -1D when making an astrogation roll for a planet they have visited before.
- **Force Points:** 2
- **Character Points:** 7
- **Move:** 10
- **Equipment:** Comlink, datapad, holdout blaster (3D), Sullustan cargo barge drives

**Capsule:** A native of Sullust, Bungo left the relative safety of the catacombs and lava flows of his home world to seek his fortune among the stars, working his life away for the SoroSub Corporation. He spent his childhood learning a trade in the caverns of his father's boaboo fungus farm. This mostly consisted of sitting in a chair daydreaming, while or burns droids created new and exciting breeds of boaboo fungus, nurtured them, mashed them into boaboo juice, and short-circuited from all the excess moisture (boaboo fungus is very moist), leaving a mess all over the fermentation room floor. Bungo would then clean up the mess and transport the rest of the juice to the great markets of Grinn Gor city. This was the perfect training for a future career in the SoroSub Transport and Supply Division. So he left the farm and signed on with the Transport Division, preferring to escape to the tranquility of super novas and space pirates that travel beyond Sullust afforded. Bungo always had the stars in his eyes (pretty amazing for a species that evolved underground; it's a wonder Sullustans ever developed space travel at all ...). This was his opportunity to pilot a starship.

Bungo is a very gentle and generally trusting individual. Were he aware of the relationship SoroSub has with the Empire, he would jump to the forefront of opposition, mostly to calm the ulcer he would develop from worrying about it too much.

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**42-RST [Rusti]**

- **Type:** Phinex Cybernetics Corporation RST Model Translator Droid
- **DEXTERITY 3D**
- **Dodge 2D**
- **KNOWLEDGE 3D**
- **Alien species 4D, bureaucracy 5D, languages 6D, planetary systems 4D**
- **MECHANICAL 1D**
- **Sequences 2D, space transports 3D**
- **PERCEPTION 1D**
- **Bargain 3D, con 2D, sneak 4D**
- **STRENGTH 2D**
- **TECHNICAL 6D**

- **Computer programming/repair 5D**

**Equipped With:**

  - **Humanoid body (two arms, two legs, head, torso)**
  - **Two visual and two aurial sensors**
  - **Vocabulary speech/sound system**
  - **Phinex translator unit**

- **Move:** 7
- **Size:** 1.5 meters tall

**Capsule:** The Mephout entrust all diplomatic positions to the females of their species (Mephout male tempers tend to flare at the most inappropriate times). So they created their translator drones in the female image as well. Not only protocol droids, the RST models were programmed merely to translate languages, not to interpret the nuances of cultural meanings. It is in this area that protocol droids have the clear advantage. But the RSTs are remarkable in that they carried out almost all translating duties throughout the Mephout Dominion — an isolated sector on the edge of the known galaxy — until its recent discovery by the Empire.

RST models are very susceptible to electromagnetic pulses that can easily fry their delicate rationale circuits and even their life preservation programming. This has caused more problems during important government functions than male Mephout lobidos. It has resulted in a dozen assassinations, half a dozen declarations of war, and one marriage proposal. The RST models were immediately replaced by the more advanced protocol series droids.

Rusti was a gift to Bungo — though she was meant as a reward for services rendered, in reality it was just the Mephout's way of getting rid of some obsolete hardware.
**Chubby Gundark**

Craft: SoroSub Transport Systems `Nyubba-class Cargo Barge Driver
Type: Cargo barge driver
Scale: Starfighter
Length: 22 meters
Skill: Space transports; `Nyubba-class
Crew: 2
Passengers: 2
Cargo Capacity: 200 metric tons
Consumables: 2 months
Cost: Not available for sale
Hyperdrive Multiplier: x2
Hyperdrive Backup: x16
Nav Computer: Yes
Maintainability: 1D
Space: 3
Atmosphere: 260/59kmh
 Hull: 5D
Shield: 1D
Sensors:
Passive: 10/10
Scan: 25/1D
Search: 40/2D
Focus: 2/3D

**Weapons:**

2 Double Laser Cannons

Fire Arc: Turret
Skill: Starship gunnery
Fire Control: 1D-2
Space Range: 1-3/12/25
Atmosphere Range: 100-300/1.2/2.5 km
Damage: 4D

**Capsule:**

If the bulk freighter and the container ship are the workhorses of the SoroSub Transport and Supply Division, then the `Nyubba-class cargo barge driver is the worknerf. Though the majority of cargo is hauled using bulk transportation, the use of smaller ships like the Nyubba freighters still accounts for nearly 20 percent of all SoroSub's cargo transfers. Not particularly pretty, they manage to get the job done. They are slow and lightly armed, making them excellent targets for pirates if they stray too far from designated shipping lanes. The ships are almost fully automatic, only requiring a crew of two: usually one Sulistan and one droid to monitor ship systems and pilot during landing and takeoff.

Additional cargo barges can be attached fore and aft of the barge driver, since the freighter's main engines are offset on a lateral strut. The average configuration for hauling is the main engine with three barges fore and three aft, though it's uncommon that several more are hauled at one time. Extra barges have a Hull of 3D and a cargo capacity of 400 metric tons. Add +1 to the difficulty of any space transport roll for each of the first eight barges. For each additional large past eight, add +1D to difficulties. There is a rivalry among `Nyubba-class freighter pilots who can haul the most barges over a prescribed distance. The Chubby Gundark holds the record for the most barges hauled over 55 parsecs with an uncontrolled landing: 15 barges!

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**Giant Amorphous Bantha Breakfast Biscuit**

Type: Mutant breakfast delicacy
**DEXTERITY 2D**

**PERCEPTION 2D**

**STRENGTH 4D**

**Brawling 9D**

**Special Abilities:**

**Gut:** Does STR damage

**Teeth:** Does STR damage

**Teeth:** Does STR damage

**Blueberry Vulnerability:** These creatures are killed instantly (and rather explosively) when smeared with Biscuit Baron blue sauce.

**Move:** 15

**Size:** Varies

**Capsule:** Not much is known about these giant, amoebic ruminants; they are a new lifeform, and no one has gotten close enough to study one without being consumed. What is known is that they're big, they're mean, they'll eat anything that happens to find itself placed in front of them. Several laboratory chefs working for the Tagge Company learned this the hard way from inside the gut of what they thought was going to be their morning meal. Imagine their terror when they popped a couple of Bantha

**Breakfast Biscuits**

into the autochef and out came their worst gastronomic nightmare. Though accidentally created when Biscuit Baron preserves somehow bonded to bantha genetic material, these beasts are now being considered for use as biological weapons by the Empire. Until such time as they can be controlled, however, the Tagge Company has restricted Bantha Breakfast Biscuits from being shipped to those planets which they refer to as "inadequately prepared to delight in this yummy breakfast delicacy." Come hungry, but carry plenty of Biscuit Baron blue sauce with you!
All aspects of the Star Wars roleplaying game boil down to a mechanic called the "Star Wars Rule of Thumb."

Pick a difficulty number. If the character’s skill roll is equal or higher, she succeeds.

Whenever interpreting the rules during play, keep in mind this basic mechanic. Keep the story moving, focus on the characters, and the players aren’t likely to argue about the rules: All they’ll care about is the excitement of the game!

Chapter One: Characters

Note: In Star Wars, Second Edition, this section is in Chapter One, “Beginning Characters,” pages 7–15.

Character Advancement

Clarification: Specializations are considered “separate” skills when they’re selected. They improve independently of the skill upon which they were originally based.

Clarification: A character can only improve a skill one pip between adventures.

Improving Skills

Improving Skills. Character Point Cost: Number before the “D.” Training Time: None if the character used the skill in the last adventure. One day per Character Point spent to improve the skill if the character has a teacher; two days per Character Point if the character is training on his own. May reduce training time one day per additional Character Point spent (minimum: one day).

Improving Specializations. Character Point Cost: 1/2 the number before the “D.” Training Time: None if the character used the skill in the last adventure. One day per Character Point spent to improve the skill if the character has a teacher; two days per Character Point if the character is training on his own. May reduce training time one day per additional Character Point spent (minimum: one day).

Improving Advanced Skills. Character Point Cost: Two times the number before the “D.” Training Time: One week per Character Point spent if the character has a teacher; two weeks per Character Point without a teacher. Characters must train to improve advanced skills.

Note: Some advanced skills have different rules. Check the skill’s description.
Chapter Two: Attributes and Skills

Note: In *Star Wars, Second Edition*, this section was Chapter Four, "Attributes and Skills," pages 72–91.

Knowledge Skills

Use the following general guidelines for selecting difficulties:

- **Very Easy**: General, common knowledge that almost anyone would know.
- **Easy**: Most people would know this.
- **Moderate**: Professional level of knowledge. The average person who has an interest in the subject would know this much.
- **Difficult**: Professionals would know this much about a given subject; the average person would be hard-pressed to give much information.
- **Very Difficult**: This represents detailed, comprehensive knowledge of the subject. Professionals and scholars would probably have to research a subject to gain this amount of knowledge.
- **Heroic**: Only a very small number of people would know this much information.

Scholar

*Time Taken*: One round to several days.

*Specialization*: Particular field of study — *archaeology, Jedi lore, history, geology, physics*.

This skill covers formal academic training or dedicated research in a particular field. *Scholar* also reflects a character's ability to find information through research. Characters often choose a specialization to reflect a specific area which they have studied. Specializations are subjects often taught at the great universities throughout the galaxy, including archaeology, botany, chemistry, geology, history, hyperspace theories and physics. Specializations can also be topics a character can research on his own.

*Scholar* represents "book-learning," not information learned from practical experience. Gamemasters can choose to allow players a limited benefit under certain circumstances — the character is applying theory in a real-world situation.

The *scholar* difficulty is based on the obscurity and detail of the information sought.

Tactics

*Time Taken*: One round to several minutes

*Specializations*: Type of military unit — *squads, fleets, capital ships, ground assault*.

*Tactics* represents a character's skill in deploying military forces and maneuvering them to his best advantage. It may be rolled to gain general knowledge of how to best stage certain military operations: blockading a planet with a fleet, invading an enemy installation, assaulting a fixed turbolaser battery.

This skill may also be used to determine the best response to an opponent's move in battle: what to do if the enemy entrap's your ships in a pincer movement, how to proceed in the assault should reinforcements arrive, what to do if a unit becomes trapped behind enemy lines.

Although *tactics* rolls might reveal how best to handle military situations, the final outcome of a battle hinges on other skill rolls — *command* for the leader, and the combat rolls of both forces.

*Tactics* difficulties should be based on various factors in a battle: how many units are involved, the setting, and the difference in training and equipment between units.

When rolling this skill, characters are often seeking ways to deal with military situations. The better the result, the more hints a
gamemaster should give to help the character win the battle. Hints can take the form of reminders about different moves the enemy can make, suggestions on how to maneuver the character’s forces, or (for especially good rolls) risky and unanticipated moves which could throw the enemy off guard.

**Mechanical Skills**

**Astrogation**

*Time Taken:* See Chapter Seven, “Space Travel and Combat.”

**Jet Pack Operation**

*Time Taken:* One round

This skill represents a character’s skill at using jet packs. Jet packs rely on pulling in surrounding atmosphere and mixing it with fuel, so they can only be operated within atmospheres.

**Rocket Pack Operation**

*Time Taken:* One round or longer

This skill represents a character’s ability to use personal, self-contained rocket packs. These backpack units contain all the chemical thrust components for propulsion and maneuvering, and can be used in zero, low and high atmosphere conditions.

**Strength Skills**

**Brawling**

*Clarification:* Brawling has a difficulty of Very Easy unless the target parries.

**Lifting**

*Lifting* difficulties depend upon the weight of the object to be lifted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Difficulty Level</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Difficulty Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 kg</td>
<td>Very Easy</td>
<td>1 metric ton</td>
<td>Heroic+10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 kg</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>1.5 metric tons</td>
<td>Heroic+20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 kg</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>2 metric tons</td>
<td>Heroic+30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 kg</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>2.5 metric tons</td>
<td>Heroic+40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 kg</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>3 metric tons</td>
<td>Heroic+50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>750 kg</td>
<td>Heroic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Increase the difficulty based on how long the character wishes to lift the object:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Difficulty Level Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-6 rounds (up to 30 seconds)</td>
<td>No increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-10 rounds (up to 3 minutes)</td>
<td>+1 difficulty level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 10 minutes</td>
<td>+2 difficulty levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 30 minutes</td>
<td>+3 difficulty levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 1 hour</td>
<td>+4 difficulty levels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the first hour, the character must make a new *lifting* or Strength roll every hour at the same difficulty as for one hour. If the character fails the roll, he must rest for twice as long as he was *lifting* the heavy weight.

**Technical Skills**

**Using Repair Skills**

Repair times, difficulties and costs are generalizations. They may be customized as needed in game play. The first repair roll is made after 15 minutes of work. Additional repair roll times are noted in skill’s description and altered depending upon the situation. The costs are always a percentage of the item’s original value. If someone else does the work for the characters, double or triple the cost.

**Drives:** A Difficult repair roll is needed to replace a destroyed drive. The cost is 35% of the craft’s original value.

**Hyperdrives:** A Moderate repair roll is necessary to fix a damaged hyperdrive.

**Maneuverability:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maneuverability Dice Lost</th>
<th>Repair Difficulty</th>
<th>Repair Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-1D</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2D</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-3D or more</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Move or Space:** To repair lost “moves,” check the chart below for difficulties and costs.
### Moves Lost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moves Lost</th>
<th>Repair Difficulty</th>
<th>Repair Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Drive destroyed and must be replaced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Shields:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shield Dice Lost</th>
<th>Repair Difficulty</th>
<th>Repair Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-1D</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2D</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-3D</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-4D or more</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Weapons:** Difficulties depend on how badly weapons are damaged. The repair cost is a percentage of the weapon's original cost, not the cost of the vehicle it's mounted on.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Damage</th>
<th>Repair Difficulty</th>
<th>Repair Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lightly</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavily</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severely</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destroyed</td>
<td>May not be repaired</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Improving Vehicles, Vessels and Weapons

**Modification Limit:** Stats may only be increased one "pip," one Move level or one hyperdrive level at a time.

Increases in the charts below reflect modification above the original stat. Using these rules, no system may be improved more than +1D-2, or more than 4 moves.

A new improvement roll can be made every month of game time. As with repairs, the costs are a percentage of the item's original value; if someone else does the work, double or triple the cost.

**Hyperdrives:** The difficulty and cost depends upon the old hyperdrive modifier compared to the new one.

### Old/New

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old/New</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>x4/x3</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x3/x2</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x2/x1</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x1/x1/2</td>
<td>Heroic</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Failure on these modification repair rolls could permanently damage hyperdrives, or cause them to function sporadically.

### Maneuverability:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pip Increase</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+1</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+2</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1D-1</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1D-2</td>
<td>Heroic</td>
<td>-25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Move or Space:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move Increase</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+5</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+10</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+15</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+20</td>
<td>Heroic</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To boost a starship's Space stat, use the chart below. (The ship's new Move can be found on the chart "Ships in an Atmosphere" on page 110 of Star Wars, Second Edition.)
Shields:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pip Increase</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+1</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+2</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1D</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1D+1</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1D+2</td>
<td>Heroic</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weapons: Can improve fire control and/or damage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pip Increase</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+1</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+2</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1D</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1D+1</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1D+2</td>
<td>Heroic</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range Increase</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+15%</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+20%</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+25%</td>
<td>Heroic</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter Four: The Rules

Note: In Star Wars, Second Edition, this section was Chapter Three, "Basic Mechanics," pages 52–54 and 58–60.

The Wild Die

If a "1" comes up on the Wild Die, the gamemaster may choose to just add up the dice normally (instead of having a complication occur or subtracting a character's other highest die).

Clarification: The Wild Die rule applies to all die rolls, including damage rolls in combat!

Difficulty Numbers

The highest difficulty level is Heroic, covering any difficulty number above 30. Some situations specify to add a number to the Heroic difficulty: "Heroic+10" means a difficulty number of 41-50, "Heroic+20" means 51-60 and so forth.

Scenes and Rounds

Note: In Star Wars, Second Edition, this section was in Chapter Two, "Gamemastering," pages 27–30.

Rounds

Each round has two phases:
1. Initiative
2. Roll actions

1. Initiative. The character with the highest Perception on each side rolls his Perception. High roller gets to choose whether his side goes first or last.

2. Roll Actions. The first side acts now. Acting in Perception order (highest to lowest), every player tells you, the gamemaster, how many actions his character is making (so you can assign the multiple actions penalty). Each player rolls his character's first action.

This process is repeated for each character on the second side. If every character has taken his first action, the characters on the first side take their second actions. Characters without second actions are skipped. Then the characters on the second side roll their second actions.

This continues until every character on both sides has taken all actions.

Reaction Skills. When a character gets attacked, he can use "reaction skills" to get out of the way. See "Reaction Skills" under "Chapter Five: Combat and Injuries."

Gamemaster Tips

Combined Actions. Combined actions are used when groups of characters work together to accomplish a single task.

Aside from working on the task, the only other thing a combining character can do is use reaction skills.

The character with the highest command or Perception is the leader. He can only command as many characters as he has command skill dice.

If he's supervising only, he rolls his full command skill. If he's
commanding and working on the task, this counts as two actions and he suffers a -1D penalty to his command roll.

Select a command difficulty based on the difficulty of the task, the skill of the characters involved and how well they work together. (Use your judgment.)

If the command roll is successful, the combined action bonus is -1D for every three characters combining. Add a -1 for one “extra” character and a -2 for two “extra” characters. If the commander fails the roll, subtract 1D from the bonus for every point the roll failed by. (A bonus cannot go below 0D.)

The combined action bonus is added to the character with the highest skill who’s working on the task.

If a group of characters are combining actions on a combat task, the bonus can be split between the attack roll and the damage roll. If a task requires two or more skill rolls, the bonus can be split up among any of those rolls.

**Character Elements**

*Note:* In *Star Wars, Second Edition*, this section was in Chapter Three, “Basic Mechanics,” pages 54-58.

**Character Points**

*Clarification:* Characters may spend two Character Points for skill or attribute uses, including attacks.

Characters may spend five Character Points on specializations, when dodging or parrying (including vehicle and starship dodges, and lightsaber parries), or when using *Perception* or *control* to resist others’ Force powers.

*Clarification:* Characters may use Character Points or a Force Point in a round; they may not use both.

Character Points and Force Points may be spent at any time.

**Chapter Five: Combat and Injuries**

*Note:* In *Star Wars, Second Edition*, this section was in Chapter Three, “Basic Mechanics,” pages 60-68.

**Reaction Skills**

Characters use “reaction skills” to block or avoid attacks. The game’s reaction skills are *dodge*, *melee parry*, *brawling parry* and *lightsaber* (if your character is wielding a lightsaber). *Repulsorlift operation* and other vehicle skills can be used to perform a “vehicle dodge” to avoid enemy fire. *Capital ship piloting*, *space transports* and *starfighter piloting* can be used to perform a “starship dodge” to avoid attacks.

When someone attacks a character, the target character declares the reaction and must roll the skill before the attack roll is made. The reaction skill roll is the attacker’s new difficulty number and is in effect for the rest of the round.

The character can use up any remaining actions for a reaction or have the reaction be an extra action, accepting a higher multiple action penalty for the rest of the round.
Combat Modifiers

Called Shots. Attackers can make a "Called Shot" against a small target. Add +1D to the difficulty for a target to 10 centimeters long. Add +4D to the difficulty for a target one to 10 centimeters long. Add +8D to the difficulty for a target less than a centimeter long.

Scale

The scales, from "lowest" to "highest," are character (creature), speeder, walker, starfighter, and Death Star.

The scale modifiers reflect the differences between small, fragile targets (like characters) and large, tough targets (like Star Destroyers).

- When targets of the same scale are shooting at each other, ignore the modifiers; roll hits, dodges, and damage die codes normally.
- When using the scale rolls, apply the difference between the two scales; this is now called the "adjusted modifier" (just to show that you're not using the raw numbers).

Example: A landspeeder (speeder-scale) is firing at an AT-AT (walker-scale). The landspeeder has a modifier of 2D; the AT-AT has a modifier of 4D. The adjusted modifier is 2D.

Lower Against Higher. When a "lower" scale character or vehicle is shooting at a "higher" scale character or vehicle:

- The higher scale gets to add the modifier to the attack roll; if the higher scale target makes a vehicle dodge, it rolls its normal maneuverability.
- The higher scale target gets to add the modifier to the roll to resist damage; the lower scale weapon rolls damage normally.

Example: The landspeeder fires at the walker. The landspeeder's blaster cannon has a fire control of 2D and a damage of 3D-1. The walker has no maneuverability (0D) and a body strength of 6D.

The landspeeder gets to add the adjusted modifier of 2D to its roll to hit. If the landspeeder hits, the landspeeder rolls the cannon's normal damage of 3D-1. However, because the walker is of a higher scale, it gets to add the adjusted modifier of 2D to its body strength of 6D; it rolls 8D to resist damage.

Higher Against Lower. When a "higher" scale character or vehicle is shooting at a "lower" scale character or vehicle:

- The higher scale attacker rolls its normal attack roll; the lower scale target adds the "adjusted modifier" to its vehicle dodge roll to avoid the attack.
- The higher scale attacker adds the "adjusted modifier" to its damage roll.

Example: Assuming the walker survived the blast (and that's a pretty safe assumption), the walker's commander decides to return fire.

When the walker fires, it uses its fire control normally. The landspeeder, because it is a lower scale vehicle, adds the adjusted modifier of 2D to its maneuverability to dodge the attack.

If the walker hits with its blast, the walker adds the adjusted modifier of 2D to its normal weapon damage. The landspeeder only rolls its normal body strength to resist damage.

Damage

The Second Edition Character Damage Chart is still used, but there's a new level of damage: "wounded twice."

Wounded. A wounded character who's wounded a second time is wounded twice.

Wounded twice. A character who's wounded twice falls prone and can take no actions for the rest of the round. The character suffers a penalty of -2D to all skill and attribute rolls until he is healed. A wounded twice character who is wounded again is incapacitated.

Mortally wounded. A character making a Moderate first aid total can "stabilize" a mortally wounded character. The character is still mortally wounded but will survive if a medpac or bacta tank is used on him within one hour (Moderate first aid total); otherwise, he dies.

Stun Damage. Weapons set for stun roll damage normally, but treat any result more serious than "stunned" as "unconscious for 2D minutes."

Healing

Natural Healing. Characters who are wounded twice must rest for three days before rolling to heal. Use the chart for wounded characters to determine whether they heal.
Wounded characters may worsen to wounded twice. Wounded twice characters may improve to wounded or worsen to incapacitated. Incapacitated characters may improve to wounded twice.

**Chapter Six: Movement and Chases**

*Note: In Star Wars, Second Edition, this section was Chapter Five, "Movement," pages 92-98.*

- **Characters and vehicles may only make one move per round:** Pick one of four speeds.
- **Cautious Movement:** Characters or vehicles move up to half their Move.
  - In Very Easy, Easy, and Moderate terrains, cautious movement is a "free" action; it's not considered an action and the character doesn't have to roll her running or vehicle operation skill.
  - In Difficult, Very Difficult and Heroic terrains, roll against the terrain difficulty but reduce the difficulty one level (i.e., Very Difficult terrain is Difficult to cross). In these terrain types, cautious movement counts as an action.
- **Cruising Movement:** Characters or vehicles move at their Move rate (equivalent to a walk or cruising speed). This counts as an action.
  - Characters and vehicles can automatically cross Very Easy, Easy, and Moderate terrains. Characters and vehicles must roll to cross Difficult, Very Difficult and Heroic terrains.
- **High Speed:** Characters or vehicles move at double their Move rate.
  - Characters must roll to cross Very Easy, Easy, and Moderate terrains.
  - Increase the terrain difficulty by one level in Difficult, Very Difficult and Heroic terrains. (Difficult terrain is Very Difficult to cross.)
- **All-Out:** Characters or vehicles moving all-out move at four times their Move rate. Characters or vehicles making all-out movement may not do anything else in the round (including dodge or parry).
  - For Very Easy, Easy and Moderate terrains, increase the difficulty one level (i.e., Easy terrain has a Moderate difficulty to cross). For Difficult, Very Difficult or Heroic terrains, increase the difficulty two levels.

**Partial Moves.** After picking a "move speed" (cautious, cruising, high speed or all-out speed), a character or vehicle can move anywhere between half and the full move speed.

**Acceleration and Deceleration.** Characters may increase or decrease their movement speed up to two levels per round. Vehicles may increase or decrease their movement speed up to one level per round.

**Long-Distance Movement:** All-out movement takes its toll after extended periods of time.
Characters or animals going all-out must make stamina rolls every minute. The first difficulty is Very Easy; increase the difficulty one level for each additional roll. If the character fails the roll, she must rest for twice as long as she was moving all-out.

High speed movement requires stamina rolls once every 10 minutes. The first roll is Very Easy and increase one difficulty level for each additional roll.

Vehicles going all-out must make body strength rolls every 10 minutes. The first difficulty is Very Easy; increase the difficulty one level for each additional roll.

If the vehicle fails the roll by 1–10 points, it's suffering strain and must "rest" for twice as long as it was moving all-out. If the vehicle fails the roll by 11 or more points, the vehicle has suffered a mechanical failure and requires a Moderate repair roll and at least one hour of work.

High speed movement requires body strength rolls once every hour. The first roll is Very Easy and increase one difficulty level for each additional roll.

**Maneuvers.** The movement difficulty includes basic maneuvers: straight-line movement, a couple of turns and other simple movements.

For more complex maneuvers, add difficulty modifiers as needed:

- 1-5 Maneuver is fairly easy
- 6-10 Maneuver is somewhat difficult and requires a certain amount of skill.
- 11-15 Maneuver is very difficult and requires a very talented (or lucky) driver or pilot.
- 16+ Maneuver appears to be almost impossible. Only the very best drivers can pull off a maneuver of this difficulty.

**Character Movement Failures.** Movement failures remain as listed in Star Wars, Second Edition, page 95 except as noted below.

7-10. Fall. The character falls halfway through her Move, but manages to catch herself and is now kneeling. She may take no actions for the rest of the round and suffers a -2D penalty to all actions for the next round.

11-15. Minor Tumble. The character falls one-quarter of the way through her Move. She may take no actions for the rest of the round and the next round.

A character moving all-out takes 1D damage; characters moving at slower speeds take no damage.

**Collision Damage.** Collision damage depends on how fast the character or vehicle was moving:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move</th>
<th>Character Damage</th>
<th>Move</th>
<th>Vehicle Damage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cautious</td>
<td>1D</td>
<td>Cautious</td>
<td>2D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruise</td>
<td>2D</td>
<td>Cruise</td>
<td>4D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Speed</td>
<td>3D</td>
<td>High Speed</td>
<td>6D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All-Out</td>
<td>4D</td>
<td>All-Out</td>
<td>10D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ramming.** Add -1D to the movement difficulty for the ramming vehicle. Ramming counts as a separate action: the pilot suffers an additional -1D penalty.

If the pilot beats the new difficulty number, he rams the target. If the pilot rolls below the original difficulty number, he suffers a "movement failure." If the pilot rolls above the original difficulty number, but below the new difficulty number, he crosses the terrain safely, but the ramming attack fails.

**Vehicle Damage**

Vehicle damage is modified as follows:

**Lightly Damaged.** Roll 1D to see which system is damaged.

1-3. Vehicle loses -1D from maneuverability. (If the vehicle's maneuverability has already been reduced to 0D, the vehicle suffers -1 Move.)

4. One on-board weapon was hit and destroyed.

5-6. Vehicle suffers -1 Move.

**Heavily Damaged.** Roll 1D to see which system is damaged.

1-3. Vehicle loses -2D from maneuverability. (If the vehicle's maneuverability is 0D, it suffers -2 Move.)

4-6. Vehicle suffers -2 Move.

**Severely Damaged.**

3. Overloaded generator. The engine or generator begins to overload and will explode in 1D rounds, completely destroying the vehicle.

**Lost Moves**

Lost Moves add together. For example, a vehicle that suffers a -1 Move result, then a -2 Move result is at "-3 Moves."
-1 Move: The creature or vehicle can no longer move at all-out speed; it's limited to high speed.
-2 Moves: The character or vehicle is limited to its cruising speed.
-3 Moves: The character or vehicle is limited to its cautious speed.
-4 Moves: The vehicle's drive is disabled and it cannot move until repaired.
-5 Moves: The vehicle is destroyed.

**Vehicle Speeds**

In a vehicle's Move listing, the "kmh" listing represents its all-out speed. A vehicle's "high speed" is half the all-out speed. A vehicle's "cruising speed" is one-quarter its all-out speed. A vehicle's "cautious speed" is one-eighth its all-out speed.

**Chapter Seven: Space Travel and Combat**

**Note:** In *Star Wars, Second Edition*, this section is Chapter Six, "Space Travel," on pages 104-112.

**Making Calculations for the Jump to Hyperspace.** Calculating a route takes one minute if the character is using a well-travelled route or is using pre-calculated coordinates. (In emergencies, a character can try to jump into hyperspace in one round instead of one minute. The astrogation difficulty is doubled and the character rolls each round until he either beats the difficulty number or suffers an astrogation mishap.)

Calculating a route between known systems takes about half an hour. These calculations take a few hours if the ship has never jumped to the destination system before. If the character doesn't know where he is, it takes one day to determine his ship's current position and then compute hyperspace coordinates.

**Starship Movement**

Starship movement works just like vehicle movement.

A ship can move once per turn. The pilot picks one of four speeds: cautious, cruising, high speed and all-out speed. The terrain difficulties are modified by speed, just as in vehicle movement.

**Acceleration and Deceleration.** Starships may increase or decrease their speed one level per round.

**Maneuvers.** Apply the same modifiers as for vehicle movement.

**Movement Failures.** Use the same results as for vehicle movement failures. If a starship gets a "collision" result and there's nothing to run into, the ship goes spinning wildly out of control for the rest of the round and the next round.

**Starship Weapons**

**Tractor Beams.** A captured ship that doesn't resist can automatically be reeled in towards the attacker at five Space units each round. If the target ship resists, roll the tractor beam's damage against the target ship's hull code. If the target ship's hull code roll is higher, the ship breaks free. If the tractor beam rolls equal to or higher than the target ship, find the result on the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tractor beam damage roll ≥ hull roll by:</th>
<th>Space units reeled in:</th>
<th>Target ship's damage:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>No damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-1 Move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-2 Moves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-3 Moves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-4 Moves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Starship Damage**

Starship damage is modified as follows:

**Lightly Damaged.** Starships can be lightly damaged any number of times. Each time a ship is lightly damaged, roll 1D to see which system is damaged.

1. Ship loses -1D from maneuverability. (If the ship's maneuverability has already been reduced to 0D, it suffers -1 Move.)
2. One on-board weapon emplacement was hit and destroyed.
3. One on-board weapon emplacement was rendered inoperative by a major power surge; it's lightly damaged.
4. Hyperdrive damaged. Double the time to calculate any astrogation courses; if the pilot wants to try to jump to hyperspace in one round, add an extra -10 to the astrogation difficulty. The hyperdrive may be fixed with one hour of work and a moderate repair roll.
5. The ship loses -1D from its shield code. If the ship has no dice remaining in shields, it suffers the controls ionized result.
6. The ship suffers -1 Move.

**Heavily Damaged.** Heavily damaged ships have taken a much more serious amount of damage.
If a heavily damaged ship is lightly damaged or heavily damaged again, it becomes severely damaged.

Roll 1D to see which system is affected:

1. Ship loses -2D from maneuverability. If it already 0D, it suffers -2 Move.
2. Ship loses a weapon system. All weapons of one type in one fire arc are disabled for a major power surge or system failure.
3. Weapons system destroyed. All weapons of one type in one fire arc are destroyed.
4. Hyperdrive damaged. Increase all astrogation difficulties by -10 until the drive is fixed with a Moderate repair roll and one hour of work.
5. Ship loses -2D from shields. If it has no shields remaining, it suffers "2 controls ionized."

**Severely Damaged.** A severely damaged ship which is lightly damaged, heavily damaged or severely damaged again is destroyed. Roll 1D to determine which system is affected:

1. Dead in space. All drives and maneuvering systems are destroyed. The vehicle is adrift in space.
2. Overloaded generator. The ship’s generator is overloaded; unless it’s shut down, the generator will explode in 1D rounds and destroy the ship.
3. Disabled hyperdrives. The ship’s hyperdrives — main and backup — are damaged. The ship cannot enter hyperspace until they are fixed with a Moderate repair roll and one hour of work.
4. Disabled weapons. All weapons systems lose power. Roll 1D: 1–4: Weapons are severely damaged but may be repaired. 5–6: All weapons aboard the ship are destroyed.
5. Structural damage. The ship is so badly damaged that it begins to disintegrate. The crew has 1D rounds to evacuate.
6. Destroyed.

**Chapter Nine: The Force**

**Note:** In *Star Wars, Second Edition*, this section is discussed in Chapter Seven, “The Star Wars Universe,” on pages 138–152.

These rules allow gamemasters a firmer hand in controlling the powers available to Jedi characters.

**Tremors in the Force.** Jedi cause "tremors" whenever they use the Force; these ripples can be detected by other Jedi.

A Jedi who sparingly uses the Force and then only uses it in a minor way creates the faintest ripples, detectable only by powerful Jedi at close ranges.

However, a Jedi who often uses the Force in grandiose displays creates very noticeable ripples which can be detected by other Jedi at vast distances. Those who rely on the Force as a crude instrument of power are very likely to draw the attention of people whom they’d much rather avoid...

**Premonitions and Visions.** Some Jedi characters experience premonitions, dreams and visions. Such occurrences have been known to warn Jedi of impending danger or summon them to "crisis areas" where their unique abilities are needed.

**Force Skills**

Characters must be Force-sensitive to learn Force skills.

When characters receive their first die in a Force skill (control, sense or alter), they receive one Force power.

**Force Skill.** Character Point Cost: Number before the “D.” Double character point cost without a teacher. Training Time: One day per Character Point spent if the character has a teacher. Two days per Character Point without a teacher. Training time may be reduced by one day for each additional Character Point spent (minimum of one day).

**Force Powers.** A Jedi may be taught a new power. Each time a Force skill is improved one pip. The new power is chosen by the teacher and must use the im-
proved skill (for instance, a Jedi improvising control could not learn a power based solely on alter).

A character may be taught a Force power without improving a Force skill, but the character must spend five Character Points.

A power that uses two Force skills counts as two powers when being taught powers.

A Jedi character cannot use a power that has not been learned.

The Lure of the Dark Side. When a character with Dark Side Points uses a Force skill, her skill roll gets a bonus of 1D per Dark Side Point.

A Jedi may refuse this bonus, but the difficulties of all Force powers should be increased by at least one difficulty level to reflect the intense concentration needed to avoid the dark side’s temptations.

A character who has gone over to the dark side no longer receives this bonus.

Intuitive Powers. It is well-known that some beings can push themselves to feats of great strength or endurance. Likewise, Jedi characters, when faced with an incredible challenge, may exhibit powers they had not previously learned.

At the gamemaster’s discretion only, characters may be “granted” powers in exceptional circumstances. This reflects the Force’s mystic and often unpredictable nature.

Gamemasters may grant the power for “free,” require the Jedi to spend a number of Character Points or Force Points to learn the power, or set other conditions. Gamemasters may grant a Jedi a power on a one-time basis to indicate the importance of a task, or to “reward” characters who have performed exceptionally well by allowing them to “subconsciously” learn a new power.

Dark Side Characters

Returning to the Light. Dark Side characters can return to the light, but it’s not easy.

A dark side character must prove her commitment to the light by spending a Force Point in a selfless manner at a dramatically appropriate time. Often, this requires the character to make a heroic sacrifice.

When a character is redeemed, the dark side exacts a final toll: she loses all Force Points and Character Points. The character’s Dark Side Point total drops to five ... she must alone to remove the Dark Side Points or else she could very easily fall back under the sway of the dark side.
Galactic newnets are, for the most part, Imperial-approved news sources, which is a polite way of saying they are censored and slanted to favor the Empire. Nonetheless, they are important sources of news. There is no question that Imperial Holovision and Galaxy News Service are the two most powerful of these networks.

**Imperial Holovision:** One of the most influential and powerful of the galaxy’s news services. IHV has over 28,000 bureaus on planets throughout the Empire, and the various independent powers around it, including glorious Hutt space, the Corporate Sector Authority, and the Tion Hegemony. For each of these 28,000 bureaus, IHV has at least one additional local network to draw news from.

**Galaxy News Service:** GNS has a similar infrastructure, but does not tend to extend coverage to independent powers. It seems to have a slight edge over IHV in scooping big stories close to Coruscant.

Regional newnets do not have the galaxy-wide distribution that the Big Two have. They serve a smaller, more local market, often a sector, or cluster of sectors. Some have established links with one of the Big Two for more extensive distribution, but this is of limited utility, since only the stories deemed newsworthy by IHV or GNS are approved for galactic distribution. TriNebulon News shows signs of expanding, and is increasingly available along the major trade routes.

**Core News Digest:** CND is far from the only newset operating in the Core, but it is one of the major Core newnets which is widely circulated beyond Core boundaries. CND covers everything newsworthy in the Core, with the proper Imperial spin, of course. Beyond the Core, CND’s most popular articles deal with Core politics, economics, and sports.

**DARPA SectorNet:** A conglomeration of smaller local news networks which cover newsworthy events in the DARPA sector, especially news emanating from Esseles, the sector capital. DARPA sector is a key industrial center in the Core, and its official newsnet is widely carried throughout the galaxy.

**Colonial NewsNet:** A network which covers most of the colonies. Its news is gathered by 18 independent local news networks, each of which covers a number of systems. Colonial News Net is pro-imperial and very much a champion of law and order. This causes some friction between Imperial political offices and the Colonial News Net, because the latter expects the Empire to obey its own edicts and laws. When its representatives fail to do so, Colonial News Net does not hesitate to criticize the offending officials.

**TriNebulon News:** TNI is the voice of the Empire in the Outer Rim Territories. It covers about a quarter of Outer Rim systems officially, though it has a much wider circulation through alternative distribution channels. TNI is something of a sensational news organ, and favors a tabloid approach to news coverage. It has a reputation for focusing on trivial stories, while ignoring more substantial issues, but this seems to be changing over time.

**NovaNetwork:** Covers the same territory as TNI, and with similar editorial policies. It is very protective of its trademarks, and maintains a somewhat precarious balance between favoring pro-imperial nationalist policies and individual rights.

**Sektor 242 NewsLine:** Sektor 242 NewsLine is one of the few major newnets of the Outer Rim which largely refuses to sacrifice integrity and accuracy to New Order ideology.
It escapes Imperial censorship by simply ignoring stories which it cannot criticize openly without persecution. Sektor 242 has a blind spot when it comes to economic reporting.

Special interest newsnets do not have specific regional or territorial beats. They are often circulated by the same distribution networks which carry the major news organs, but are themselves independent.

Coruscant Daily NewsFeed. The CDF reports on events in the Imperial capital, and gives readers and viewers a glimpse into life on Coruscant. It often can be relied upon to profile those in favor at Court (it is always useful to know whom one must flatter), and report on surface events at Court. Naturally, those interested in more than fluffy gossip about those in favor must look elsewhere. The only people criticized in CDF with conviction are those who have fallen irrevocably out of favor in Court. This is a safe editorial policy, since such figures are usually dead.

Imperial Defense Daily. IDD covers the defense industry, and is widely regarded as the premier source of expert information on defensive and offensive systems. Naturally, IDD limits its coverage to non-classified programs and battlecruft, though the reporting is so thorough that “blind spots” in coverage of funding, manpower, and resources can often indicate where black programs are impacting Imperial machine to those who know what to look for. Many system governments and independent organizations use IDD to shop for their own defense packages.

Human Events Network. HEN concentrates on Imperial High Culture as it is applied everywhere in the Empire. Most of its coverage is centered on the Core Worlds with close cultural ties with Coruscant, but it does cover the Colonies, Mid Rim, and Outer Rim Territories as well, spotlighting worlds and programs which present the Empire in a good light.

New Order Progress. New Order Progress, which until recently represented Coruscant’s New Order Party, is now the official commentary magazine of COMPNOR’s Coalition for Progress. It covers the arts, sciences, economics, and education—all, naturally, with the proper Imperial spin. It also serves as an unofficial support organ for local New Order political parties and clubs in various Imperial systems.

Hergie Trading Journal, Basic Edition. The Hergie Trading Journal is one of the finest financial publications available in the galaxy (its editor-in-chief is currently a Hutt). Its Basic Edition is widely read by investors, traders, and government officials throughout the Empire, though no one is particularly anxious to brag about it, since the Empire would much rather you read the human publication which is its closest rival, the Corellian Times.

Independent Traders’ Infornet. The ITI is a semi-legal publication which serves the spacer community. It covers a wide range of issues of interest to small-time independent traders and merchants. It is not circulated through normal newsnet channels, but is easily found in spaceport kiosks. It specializes in researching fields and new markets and trends in trading which independent spacers cannot afford to investigate on their own.

Galactic Resorts. Galactic Resorts is one of the thousands of special interests magazines which...
throughout the newset infrastructure. I single it out for personal reasons. When I travel, I enjoy staying in line accommodations, and GR's profiles of luxury resorts, vacation locations, spas, and hotels are very helpful in selecting those which cater to the needs of Hutt. GR's hundreds of roving freelance reporters cover a wide variety of resorts catering to a wide variety of tastes and species.

There are thousands of subversive newset networks circulating, which are independent of or hostile to the Empire. We'll profile a few of the more prominent and important in our coming series. Here is a summary of these newset:

**Nal Hutta Kal'namok, Basic Edition.** Naturally, we begin with this glorious publication, the Hutt newset *Nal Hutta Kal'namok*. The *Nal Hutta Kal'namok* covers economic and political issues related to the buying, selling, and transportation of contraband goods. It is regarded as one of the most elite of financial journals, and is widely read throughout the Empire, though seldomly openly.

**Cynabar's InfoNet.** Cynabar's InfoNet — which recently dropped out of sight for a few months after igniting a fierce Imperial attempt to eradicate it — is back in business. The big CYN covers news of interest to smugglers, and often features inside information not yet available to other news outlets. CYN is very exclusive, and few are asked to join its select group of subscribers (and invitation is the only way of obtaining a subscription to this very expensive newset). You may be sure you have made a name for yourself as a smuggler if you are a CYN subscriber. No one knows for sure, by the way, just who or what Cynabar is.

**Holonet Free Republic.** The HFR is one of the rather tedious pro-Rebel Alliance newset networks, which promotes the bias of its ideology to all who will listen. I mention it because HFR has one of the most efficient and wide-spread network of courier droids around, and broadcasts in nearly every Imperial-held system.

**Aldevraan Expatriate Network.** Another Rebel-affiliated newset. This one is worth following because its reporters were professionals before joining the Rebel cause, and still maintain high journalistic standards despite their ideology. They cover many of the same stories as the mainstream Imperial press, and have friends in many important places. They provide a useful counter to the pro-Imperial news, as long as you keep their own bias in mind.

This concludes our summary of the main newset networks we will be covering in our special edition. Data packet XL-J109 contains the complete breakdown of these and 35 additional newsets.

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**Galactic Resorts**

37:8:14/GLR/J25L/GRC.4/ARC/ENT/T. Marelle

**Jazz Musician Roi Debuts New Slug**

By Tanda Marelle

AR Copula, Greccaia: Flamboyant jazz musician Fitz Roi debuted his new sound slug *Tymis Downbeat* at the Arcopula Brass Music Festival this week by performing live several selections from the slug for a crowd of fans numbering in the hundreds of thousands. The crowd was particularly lively since this is the first live performance Roi has given at a music festival since losing his trademark heirloom pistols at the Pride Danza Festival two years ago.
This is Roi's third trip out to the Rim in as many years, and it is rumored that he is on the verge of picking up a sponsor again, one who resides in the Outer Rim Territories (no word yet on who that might be, however). Roi announced at the concert that he is beginning a new impromptu concert tour. His tour is scheduled to begin on Arcopolia's sister world of Gambolla, so local fans will not have far to travel to catch his next concert.

Galaxy News Service

37:9:2/GNS/SHAI/CAD.2.BLA/GEN

Luxury Liner Lost With All Hands — Terrorist Sabotage

CADOMAI, BRELLA: The Calabar Queen, one of the exclusive luxury starliners of the Imperial Corusc Line, exploded without warning as it entered final approach to Cadomai, a small resort world located on the Hydian Way hyperlane near the Empire's border with the Corporate Sector. Justice Action League terrorists claimed responsibility for the act, and stated in a press release that since the Empire was bringing its military might to bear on independent worlds of the Colonies and Outer Rim Territories, they were bringing their war of terror to the Core Worlds in retaliation.

Investigators with the Imperial Transport Commission are rushing to the scene to determine the cause of the disaster, but early reports by the Space Rescue Corps and local law enforcement agencies suggest that the accident truly was a result of sabotage.

Core citizens are in an uproar about the incident, and are demanding that Imperial officials do something about the threat of terrorist action in the heart of the Core. "The Empire stands for law and order," said Jerri Gabell of Citizens Against Unrest. "It has to respond to this threat, or people are going to lose confidence in the Imperial system."

Moff Harlow of Catarion sector promises immediate action. "But before we jump in with both feet, we must be sure JAN, or some other Rebel terrorist organization, is truly responsible," he said in a press conference convened this morning. "I know emotions are high, but we must wait for the ITC investigation to submit its findings before taking any action. I do promise that if terrorists turn out to be at the root of this sorry affair, we will take drastic actions to prevent its repetition."

Among those who died in the disaster were several Moffs and governors, as well as prominent high-ranking officers in the Imperial Army and Navy.

Eynabat's InfoNet

37:9:13/CYN/CR.1.JPC/GEN

Thrown Said to be Returning to Core

COURSCANT NODE: Word has it that Grand Admiral Thrawn, long absent from the hustle-bustle life of inner system intrigue, is en route for Coruscant. He has spent several years commanding one of Palpatine's roving armadas in border systems near the Outer Rim, destroying pirate bands, Rebel fleets, and alien ne'er-do-wells alike.
And doing a fine job of it, from all we've heard.

Why should we care that one of Palpatine's Grand Admirals is returning to the fold? Well, mainly because he is a grand admiral. Palpatine has elevated few beings to this most august of military ranks, and only one not of pure human stock — Thrawn is an extremely dangerous and capable man. It would be a good idea to be on guard until we learn exactly what the Emperor means him to do. A loose grand admiral is not someone to turn one's back on.

TriNebulon News

37:9:21/ TRI/ 4D57/GAM.4_DOK/GEN

Tombat Sacks Famed Collection of Rim Whiphid Tycoon

GAMBOLLA, DOCK CITY: In the dregs of the Outer Rim Territories, the art collection of the Whiphid business tycoon Baron Galkow is recognized by those educated few who live there an oasis in a cultural wasteland. This oasis has been plundered by the infamous art and jewel thief known only as the Tombat.

The heist occurred at some point during a local holiday late last week, when Galkow hosted a huge party in the apartments above the museum. The theft of several priceless artworks stored in a sealed vault in the museum.

basement was discovered early the next morning, a small trademark quila stone announcing to the galaxy that the Tombat has struck again.

Inspector Zanza Gafua, IOTC's special investigator assigned to the Tombat case, has arrived on the scene, and promptly gone to work. He has interviewed many of the people who were present at the party, from local ministers and political figures, to entertainers and members of the glamorous press, to members of the staff. He has not reported substantial leads thus far, though observers suspect he might have pieced together more than he is letting on, especially since he arrived on Gambolla within a day of the heist — far too soon for a transport from the Mid-Rim to reach this remote planet.

Baron Galkow's famed private museum, open to the elites of the Spadja sector (and to those others he wishes to impress), contains ancient artifacts from pre-Republic era, many of which are the sole representatives of their kind. The collection, valuable beyond measure, was protected by an extremely sophisticated security system. Alas for Baron Galkow, the security system which can keep out the Tombat has yet to be invented.

Colonial News Nets

37:10:3/COL/ NKL/5/BET.5_AL/ECO

Bethal Apoica Timber Industry Revived by Aggressive Replanting Program

BETHAL, ALTOONA: Nearly three years have passed since a greeblet insect plague devastated Bethal's Apoica hardwood timber industry, but an aggressive re-
planting and restoration planting program has shaved decades off the estimated period of non-production.

Bethal's economy historically has relied on its timber exports, and the past few years have been very hard on the planet's populace. Fortunately, Moff Tendel's declaration of Bethal as an Imperial disaster world has won it aid and emergency funding which have been crucial in keeping the economy from totally collapsing.

The funds have also made it possible to begin restoration programs, including reseeding, the purchase and planting of saplings from offworld growers, and salvaging of damaged forests. Bethal has also made an attempt to diversify its economy beyond timber by introducing new agricultural programs which encourage farmers to use land razed by the greeblebacks for more traditional crops while awaiting the maturation of the first new generation of apocia trees.

It is expected that the apocia industry will require another three decades of tending before Bethal can once again begin producing processed timber planks near the rates it was before the disaster occurred.

Do you have questions about the Star Wars Roleplaying Game? Have them answered by the West End Games Star Wars staff! Send a letter with up to three questions to:

West End Games
Attn: ISB Intercepts
RR3 Box 2345
Honesdale, PA 18431

We'll try to answer your questions in an upcoming issue of the Official Star Wars Adventure Journal. Since some questions may be too specific to address in this column, you may want to include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a response.

Please try to phrase your questions so that they may be answered with a "Yes" or "No." All material (including letters) published by the Official Star Wars Adventure Journal becomes the property of Lucasfilm Ltd. Questions are subject to editing for publication.
A battered warship, impossible odds, and an ancient evil...
(Saving the galaxy has never been this much fun!)

The DarkStryder Campaign

The DarkStryder Campaign Boxed Set

A New Republic task force has been dispatched to the distant Kathol sector to topple Moff Kervio Sarnic, who possesses mysterious alien artifacts called DarkStryder technology. This boxed set contains two 95-page guidebooks (featuring an introductory story by Timothy Zahn), dozens of color character and ship recognition cards, and a perfect inner featuring detailed deck plans of the New Republic vessel, the FarStar.

The Kathol Outback

The FarStar has pursued the renegade Imperial Moff Sarnic into the uncharted reaches of the Kathol Outback. Join the crew of the FarStar as they track Sarnic's forces through this isolated and dangerous region of space. The 95-page campaign supplement features five new adventures that continue the DarkStryder saga as well as extensive source material on the Outback, allowing gamemasters to expand the scope of the DarkStryder Campaign.

The Kathol Rift

Having successfully traversed the dangers of the Kathol Outback, the FarStar arrives at the dreaded Kathol Rift, a mass of charged particles and radiation storms that most ships seek to avoid at all costs. The Rift— which has long had a reputation of being banned and cursed— hides many secrets, one of which may be the final clue that leads to Moff Sarnic. This 95-page campaign supplement features five new adventures, as well as background information on the dangerous Kathol Rift.

A New Available... Endgame

The final DarkStryder Campaign supplement has arrived. Prepare for mystery, intrigue, action, and terror like any you've ever seen in the Star Wars galaxy! The FarStar has tracked Sarnic to his hidden staging area near the Kathol Rift. The 128-page book features a full-length adventure that completes the DarkStryder Campaign story arc as well as detailed source material on Kathol, Sarnic's forces, and the final showdown with the most dangerous enemies in the galaxy!
The Fall
All Special Ops or SpecForces units have their share of difficult times or missions gone wrong, but the Scandium Team was simply plagued with one disaster after another. The high rate of casualties, fatalities and destroyed equipment was in no way an indication of the team members' poor skill or lack of training; they were in fact very competent operatives.

The Scandium Team has a tragic history that is infamous throughout Alliance ranks. In the Welte-ir system of the Trax sector, the team encountered two elite Imperial armor units (one suspected of being a Royal Guard contingent undergoing field exercises). Vastly outnumbered, the Scandium Team was able to escape, but at a great price: 15 of the 21 operatives perished during a four-day struggle on the Bresnan plains. Seven operatives had already been lost by the time of the Welte-ir Massacre.

Harovan Toth
Operative Role: Pilot and Advisor, former Infiltrator
Current Location: Suoripr Sector HQ (Delta Base), New Kiage
Species: Human  Sex: Male  Age: 41

Harovan Toth was young when Republic President Palpatine declared himself Emperor and established the New Order. Toth eventually located the bedraggled Rebel unit on his native Reyson, and was soon transferred to the Alliance Outpost on Dantoone (which would eventually grow to become a Rebel headquarters base).

Within weeks of arriving on Dantoone, Toth met civilian adv-
visor Tisha Rostek, with whom he eventually fell in love and fathered a daughter, Samona. After a year of his joining the Rebellion, Toth was among the first fully Alliance-trained infiltrators. Harovan, though embroiled in a very lopsided struggle against a huge tyrannical force, was relatively happy with his life. Unfortunately, when his daughter was a year-and-a-half old, Toth's wife was killed during the Battle of Thovinack. Harovan sent Samona to the Alliance safe world Isis, where Reysonian dissenters cared for her.

As the war intensified, so did Harovan's involvement. He was eventually given the opportunity to lead one of the first infiltration units in the resistance, what Alliance operatives now refer to as the "Old Suicide Squads."

Toth served as Scandium Team leader for several years and achieved the rank of Lieutenant Commander before his tenth mission (the Welte-ir incident), after which he was forced — and more than willing — to retire. A number of missions, particularly the last, had gone sour, and just by the nature of the many assignments Scandium had completed, many operatives had perished.

Plagued by terrible memories, the newly-promoted Commander Toth requested of all his following commanding officers to be given non-combat assignments. He served for some time at Yavin Base, then after the destruction of the Death Star, was transferred to the temporary Thila Command base. He was eventually given permanent assignment at Suoripr Sector Headquarters ..., Delta Base.

Though he remains somewhat bitter as a result of his prior experiences, Harovan has enjoyed his assignments at Delta Base and receives regular communication from his daughter, who is now a lieutenant and pilot for the Alliance.

In his youth, Toth was the ideal intelligence operative: completely nondescript in appearance. He is of average height, weight and build, though beneath his clothing are numerous and extensive scars. He has brown hair which has begun to thin in recent years, and formerly vibrant green eyes. Toth, now in semi-retirement, currently
serves as a patrol pilot at Delta Base and is content to simply police the jungle environs of New Kikage. He is also occasionally called upon for his advice and opinion, but has made it quite clear he has no intentions of ever returning to the field.

**Harovan Toth**

**Type:** Infiltrator

**DEXTERITY 3D**

- Blaster 7D, brawling parry 9D, dodge 4D-2, melee combat 8D, melee combat: vibroknife 6D-2, melee parry 3D, thrown weapons 4D, thrown weapon: asician dagger 6D

**KNOWLEDGE 3D-1**

- Alien species 4D-1, bureaucracy 4D-1, intimidation 5D-1, languages 6D-1, law enforcement: Imperial 5D-1, streetwise 3D-1, survival 5D-1, survival: urban 6D, willpower 5D-2

**MECHANICAL 2D-2**

- Astrogation 3D-2, beast riding: Gracian thumper 4D, capital ship piloting 3D-2, communication 4D-2, repulsorlift operation 3D-2, repulsorlift operation: Imperial 1-47 4D-2, sensors 3D-2, space transports 4D-2, walker operation: AT-ST 3D

**PERCEPTION 3D-2**

- Command 4D-2, con 6D-2, commerce 4D, hide 5D-2, investigation 4D-2, search 6D-2, sneak 5D

**STRENGTH 3D**

- Brawling 7D, climbing/jumping 5D, stamina 6D-1

**TECHNICAL 2D-1**

- Computer programming/repair 4D-1, demolition 4D-1, droid programming 3D-1, first aid 4D-1, first aid: Talaron 5D-1, repulsorlift repair 3D-1, security 5D-1

**Force Points:** 1

**Characters Points:** 12

**Mover:** 10

**Equipment:** Comlink, flight suit, hunting blaster (3D-2)

**Korgath**

**Operative Role:** Infiltrator

**Current Location:** Commenor

**Species:** Talaron

**Sex:** Male

Though dressed in the standard attire of a fierce Talaron hunter (an infamous group of hunters/assassins), Korgath is an extremely devoted Alliance operative who does his very best to hinder the Empire any way he can.

Korgath served as Toth's first officer during the Scandium Team's tenure, and is the only Scandium Team Infiltrator to still actively work the position. Korgath continues to maintain the practices he led while part of his old unit: continual close

Though many of his former partners knew him as a warling individual, his reputation throughout the galaxy is as a hard, cold Talaron hunter. It is an image he works very hard to maintain, giving threatening looks to anyone who might dare look him in the eye, and brawling any bar patron who may bump him. He is considered to have an extremely bad attitude by those who encounter him in the field.

As an operative, Korgath has virtually been given free roam. Though "officially" an Infiltrator, he is for most purposes a solo Special Operative (for information on such classifications, see pages 20 and 21 of the Galaxy Guide: For Writers, from the Rim). Korgath most often frequents seedy locales where his Talaron hunter attire is recognized (and respected) by the locals.

Korgath is a middle-aged Talaron male, somewhat shorter than the average Talaron. He has a number of scars from his many misadventures as a Rebel operative, including a large blaster scar across his chin and right cheek.

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**ADDENDUM/PERSO**

For worked with Korgath a number of times, and his incredible luck never ceases to amaze me. He gets himself into more scrapes and tight jams than some Coriolan smugglers-tame Rebel Heroes we know, but he always manages to get out of them. I'm concerned he's come to the point that he feels he has lived his life and is now just doing as much damage to the Empire as possible before he makes the Final Jump.
Korgath
Type: Talonoid Hunter
DEXTERITY 4D
Blaster 6D, brawling 5D, dodge 5D, grenade 4D-2, melee combat 5D-1, melee parry 6D, vehicle blasters 4D-1
KNOWLEDGE 2D-2
Alien species 3D-2, bureaucracy 3D-2, intimidation 6D-2, languages 4D-2, planetary systems 4D-1, survival 5D-1, willpower 4D-2
MECHANICAL 2D-1
Astrogation 4D, beast riding: coloss 3D, space transports 3D-1, starship shields 3D
PERCEPTION 3D-1
Command 5D-1, con 4D-1, hide 5D-1, investigation 6D-1, search 7D-1, sneak 5D-1
STRENGTH 3D-1
Brawling 6D-1, climbing/jumping 4D-1, stamina 5D-1
TECHNICAL 2D-1
Armor repair 3D-1, blaster repair 3D-1, computer programming/repair 4D-1, demolition 5D-1, first aid 3D-1
Force Points: 1
Dark Side Points: 3
Character Points: 11
Move: 11
Equipment: Blaster carbine (3D) with vibroblade (STR-1D-2), comlink, pouch, protective helmet and vest (+1D physical, -1 energy), survival kit, sword (STR-2D)

Lieutenant Opit-Wenbruh
Operative Role: Heavy Weapons Gunner
Current Location: Secar System
Species: Tren  Sex: Male  Age: 58

When Nopsin, the Tren's third and final colonized planet, overwhelmingly voted in favor of joining the Empire, the few Tren resistance movements that had not been destroyed by their own kind gave up all hope of ever convincing their people to join the Rebellion. The Tren's dedication to the order had once again prevailed over their sense of right and wrong; Opit-Wenbruh, as a young idealist in the Nopsin military, was devastated by the actions of his people... but until his service in the military was complete, there was little the Tren soldier could do.

When Opit-Wenbruh's service to the Nopsin military ended, he began a personal crusade to see the Empire's destruction and repent for the atrocities that he had (in his own mind) allowed to occur during his military service. His first action was to join the newly formed Rebel Alliance: because of his prior experience with heavy weapons he was made a gunner in the recently commissioned Scandum Team. His service with the Scandum unit was exceptional and he was personally commended by then-Major Cracken for the Scandum Team's part in rescuing Cracken during the Tynquay Skirmishes.

After Scandum Team disbanded, Opit-Wenbruh left field duty to become a weapons technician and for a brief time also dabbled in design. Eventually his fears of returning to active duty began to recede along with the pain caused by the memories of the Scandum Team's tragedies. Upon request he was reinstated as a heavy weapons gunner within the Brute Team, an elite force of gunners formed to create a "cushion" of firepower between Rebel positions and Imperial forces. He serves well with the Brute Team, but hopes to one day rejoin his old companions and form a new team, a prospect that seems improbable.

Opit-Wenbruh has a short, sturdy build and callous dark blue-purple flesh, a build typical of his people. His large, square jaw and sloping forehead combine to give him a deceptively "simple" countenance. Unlike most Tren, however, his sense of justice is greater than his desire for order. Though the memories of his Scandum Team service are painful, they cannot compare to the feeling of being betrayed by his own people when they joined the Empire. It is for this reason that, of all the surviving members of Scandum Team, he has been the least affected by its tragedy.

Opit-Wenbruh
Type: Heavy Weapons Specialist
DEXTERITY 3D-2
KNOWLEDGE 2D-2
Alien species 3D-2, languages 4D-1, survival 5D-2, survival: arctic 6D-1, willpower 5D-2
Aven Cholus

Operative Role: Carrier/Hauler Pilot
Current Location: Rebel Fleet
Species: Human  Sex: Female  Age: 42

Aven Cholus was born to the prestigious and Imperially allied Cholus family of Pencael IV. At an early age she was trained in the ways of spacecraft with the hope that she would one day join the Academy like her older brother Senn (now a highly decorated commander in the Imperial Navy).

But Aven had no interest in joining the oppressive Empire. Rather, she deserted Pencael IV at the first opportunity and joined the infant Rebel Alliance... leaving behind a wealthy and certainly prosperous life in the process.

Her first few assignments with the Alliance consisted of transporting cargo and personnel, but soon her skill as a pilot became evident and she was assigned to the new Scandium Team. When Jouffer Talamiin, Scandium Team's lead pilot, was permanently disabled during the battle of Gendrah-Narvin, Aven Cholus was chosen to take her place. In her new position of leadership, Cholus quickly gained the respect of her teammates, especially Harovan Toth.

Aven safely led the team through many dangerous space battles, including one low altitude chase through the gas clouds of Pendry for which she was awarded the Valance Star. She served with valor and dedication for a number of years.

After the team's last and most tragic mission, Aven Cholus was the first to propose disbanding Scandium Team. The unit's numerous disasters had finally become too much for her to deal with and she could no longer perform to the best of her ability. She thought that with the nightmare of the Scandium Team behind her she would once again be able to fly with the excellence that had marked her early days of service. Unfortunately, that did not prove to be the case.

Once the team disbanded, Aven was appointed leader of Gale Team, a freighter unit formed from the remnants of the Kuennox Smugglers. She was to replace the team's original leader who had died during a recent mission: Ozik Poyiu had headed the group back when they were the Kuennox Smugglers. However, her new teammates resented the fact that command of Gale Team had been given to an outsider. The team felt that command should have been given to one of the original smugglers. This resentment affected their ability in combat which, when coupled with Aven's poor leadership, resulted in several costly mistakes. Eventually Aven Cholus was demoted and assigned the duties of a carrier/hauler pilot, once again transporting cargo and personnel as she had when she first joined the Rebellion.

Aven Cholus is a woman haunted by the tragic memories of Scandium Team. During the Well-eir Massacre, she was charged with retrieving those Scandium Team operatives trapped along the Umbel Banks. Numerous Imperial fighters delayed her long enough that many of her friends perished waiting for her at the landing zone.

The loss of virtually all her friends and the guilt she incurred...
during the team's last mission have nearly crushed her spirit, and Rebel Command has had no choice but to relegate her to a position where her depression can cause little harm. Her condition has worsened — and been accentuated by — the poor service she exhibited during her brief command of Gale Team.

Next to Harlan Toth she has been the most affected by the tragedy of Scandium Team.

A lightly-built human woman, Cholus wears her long brown hair in a ragged bun. She has tired blue eyes that reflect her haggard mood and lack of enthusiasm for her work. She is a far cry from the woman who joined the Rebellion with such enthusiasm long ago.

Aven Cholus
Type: Pilot
DEXTERITY 3D
Blaster 4D-2, brawling parry 4D, dodge 5D, melee combat 4D, vehicle blasters 4D-2
KNOWLEDGE 3D
Alien species 4D, languages 4D-1, planetary systems 6D, survival 4D, willpower 4D-2
MECHANICAL 4D
Astrigation 6D-1, capital ship gunnery 5D, communications 5D, repulsorlift operation 5D, sensors 6D, space transports 6D, starfighter piloting 7D-1, starship gunnery 6D-1, starship shields 6D
PERCEPTION 3D
Command 5D, persuasion 4D-2, search 4D-2, sneak 4D
STRENGTH 2D
Brawling 4D-2, climbing/jumping 4D, stamina 4D, swimming 3D-2
TECHNICAL 3D
Computer programming/repair 5D, first aid 4D, space transports repair 6D, starfighter repair 5D-1, starship weapon repair 4D-2
Force Points: 1
Character Points: 8
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), datapad, headset commlink, 2 medkits, vacuum suit, vibroknife (STR-2)

The Agent
Craft: Modified Senator Fleet Systems Azurita-class Freighter
Type: Modified light freighter
Scale: Starfighter
Length: 25 meters
Skill: Space transports: Azurita
Crew: 1, gunners: 2
Crew Skill: see Aven Cholus
Passengers: 8
Cargo Capacity: 65 metric tons
Consumables: 2 months
Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1
Hyperdrive Backup: x1.5
Nav Computer: Yes
 Maneuverability: 1D
Space: 338,950 km²
Hull: 4D-2
Shields: 3D
Sensors:
Passive: 15/0D
Scan: 35/1D
Search: 45/2D
Focus: 8/2D
Weapons:
Turbolasar Cannon
Fire Arc: Turret
Crew: 1
Scale: Starfighter
Skill: Starship weaponry
Fire Control: Turret may be controlled from pilot’s seat and fire control (7)
Space Range: 1-15/35/50
Atmosphere Range: 200-30/10km
Damage: 5D
2 Twin Laser Cannons (fire-linked)
Fire Arc: Turret
Crew: 1
Scale: Starfighter
Skill: Starship weaponry
Fire Control: 1D
Space Range: 2-12/25
Atmosphere Range: 100-400/12/2.5 km
Damage: 4D

Capsule: One of the last models of Azurita-class (which went out of production about a decade ago), The Agent is the only surviving craft of those that were part of the Scandium Team’s core ships. It isn’t clear why Aven Cholus has decided to keep the vessel, considering the many unpleasant memories it must hold for her. But she loves the ship more than almost anything, and takes extreme good care of it and its systems. Highly modified, The Agent has seen a number of extremely heavy lightfights, and has the carbon scoring and blaster marks to prove it.

Rith Tar’ak
Operative Role: Alliance Recruiter
Current Location: Douss System
Species: Ebranite
Sex: Female
Age: 56

Rith Tar’ak, along with her late sisters Nyik and Tor’ara, formed the Scandium Team’s small desert infiltration force called Sandstorm Unit. As Ebranites, they were perfectly adapted to such work. Rith was the best of the three; she was and still is considered one of the foremost experts in desert and cavernous survival within the Rebellion.

Rith’s fight for freedom began the day Imperial Governor Evitch Jenyon assumed control over her homeworld, Ebra. As a warrior of clan Rull, one of the few Ebranite clans that still maintained a warring society, she was already prepared for the battle that lay ahead. When the clan leader announced they would raid a nearby Imperial facility, Rith and her sisters were the first to volunteer their services.

During the brief assault the Ebranite attackers were easily slaughtered by the Empire’s superior forces. Rith and her sisters, along with a handful of other survivors, were taken captive and forced to harvest the local strain of lu-ramin that was grown in nearby caverns.

Soon after the sisters’ enslavement, Rith devised and led a daring escape. The group abducted an Imperial pilot and forced him to take them off Ebra where they were captured by a Rebel vessel traveling through a nearby system. When brought on board they explained the situation and were quickly accepted into the Rebel Alliance. They are believed to have been the first Ebranites to formally join the Alliance.

The sisters served all over the Kesh sector (which includes the Douss system) before they were transferred to one of the Rebellion’s first team of infiltrators—the Scandium Team. They acted as the team’s lead infiltrators for desert and cavernous
terrain, but were simply called Sandstorm Unit. Of all the Scandium members they had perhaps the best record of success—quite an accomplishment considering who their teammates were. Their skill, however, could not save them during the team’s last mission; Nyk and Tor’ara were killed and Rith was seriously wounded.

Once Scandium Team was shut down Rith was transferred to Yttarun where, for a brief time, she led a small but highly decorated desert task force in one of the early SpecForce wilderness regiments. Though Rith excelled at leadership it did not appeal to her; she turned down a huge promotion to colonel and instead requested a position with Recruitment. She is currently the last one of two given the task of recruiting and training the people on her native Ebra. As a contact she uses an obscure Cybot Galactica 5DS Ebranite-Cyborg protocol droid designed specifically for Ebranite relations.

Rith is similar in appearance to most Ebranites. She is stocky, has six arms, a sloping forehead, and large, deep-set eyes lacking any noticeable pupils. On the shoulder of her uppermost left arm is her clan’s insignia, a Hag’t’hyr (a native reptilian predator) emblazoned in flame and wielding a simple spear.

Unlike most of the many Ebranites who now serve with the Rebellion, Rith has still been slow to accept the use of high technology. She only uses such items when necessary. She never uses blasters, preferring more primitive melee and projectile weapons, and is very wary of space travel. Rith is even somewhat distrustful of the droid she uses as a contact, only employing it when she is unable to travel to Ebra herself.

Though she has overcome the painful memories of Scandium Team, she is still reluctant to return to the field (though as of late her good friend and former teammate Korgath has slowly been convincing her otherwise). If she were to return to the field, she reasons, she would once again work as a desert or cavernous infiltrator.

**Rith Tar’ak**

**Type:** Ebranite Wilderness Fighter

**DEXTERITY 4D**

Bow 6D, bow: Kallmön 8D-2, brawling parry 5D-1, dodge 6D-2, melee combat 5D-2, melee parry 3D, staff combat 7D-2, staff parry 5D, staff parry: Kallmön 5D, thrown weapons: spear 6D-1

**KNOWLEDGE 3D-1**

Alien species 4D-1, cultures 4D, intimidation 5D, languages 3D, planetary systems: double systems 2D, survival desert 6D-2, survival: mountainous 6D-1, survival: cavernous 9D-1, willpower 6D-1

**MECHANICAL 1D-2**

Beam riding 4D-2, beast riding: darsk 6D-2

**PERCEPTION 4D**


**STRENGTH 4D**

Brawling 7D, climbing/jumping 6D, climbing/jumping: climbing 8D-1, lifting 9D-1, stamina 6D-2

**TECHNICAL 1D**

First aid 4D, first aid: Ebranites 6D

**Special Abilities:**

Rock Climbing: Rith gains a +2 bonus to climbing in rough terrain such as mountains, canyons and caves.

Rock Climbing: Rith gains a +2 bonus to sneak in rocky terrain due to her skin coloration and natural affinity for such places.

**Thick Hide:** +2 Strength bonus against physical damage.

**Vision:** Rith can see in the infrared spectrum, allowing her to see in complete darkness provided there are heat sources.

**Frenzy:** When believing themselves to be in immediate danger, Ebranites will often enter a frenzy in which they attack the perceived source of danger until either it or the Ebranite is eliminated. They gain +1D to brawling or beaming. A frenzied Ebranite can be calmed by companions with a moderate persuasion or command check.

**Story Factors:**

**Technology Disturb:** Like most Ebranites, Rith has a general dislike and distrust for items of higher technology.

**Note:** For more information on the Ebranites, see pages 34-36 of Galaxy Guide 12: Allies — Enemies and Allies.

**Move:** 6, 14 (climbing)

**Equipment:** Bow (4D), quiver with 50 arrows, 2 natural medjacs, Kallmön (double-pointed spear) (STR 2D)

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**A-5DS Protocol Droid**

The 5DS Ebranite-Cyborg protocol droid is a highly-modified unit based on the enormously popular 3PO protocol droid designed and produced by Cybot Galactica. The 5DS was modified by the Imperial tech units who were part of the Ebra occupation force; they were intended to facilitate Imperial-Ebranite relations. Rather, the development of the droid had the opposite effect, but the resident Imperial forces have yet to really notice...
Craken’s Rebel Operatives

this fact. The Ebranites’ very nature — and their distrust of high technology — has only widened the division between the Ebra natives and local Imperial forces. The unit has been reinforced with a heavier body casing, and fitted with six Ebranite-like arms for both climbing and relative acceptance into Ebranite clan warrens.

The droid 8h uses, A-5DS, was actually the first to be produced. 8h Tar’sk captured and reprogrammed it, then resubmitted A-5DS into its work area. 8h now uses it as a contact among the Ebranite settlements around the Grythorin canyon. The native Ebranites don’t like it, but realize that it helps 8h contact her people, so they tolerate it.

A-5DS

Model: 5DS Ebranite Relations Droid (modified Cybot Galactica 3PO protocol unit)
DEXTERITY 3D
KNOWLEDGE 3D
Alien species 6D, alien species: Ebranite 80, cultures 6D, cultures: Ebranite 100, languages 100, survival: cavernous 5D
MECHANICAL 1D
PERCEPTION 3D
Hide: caverns 4D
STRENGTH 1D
Climbing/Jumping: climbing 4D
TECHNICAL 1D
Equipped With:
• Ebranite-style body (six arms, two legs, head)

Two visual and two audio sensors
• Modified vocabulator speech/sound system
• Broad-band antenna receiver
• AA-1 Verbholbrain
• TranLang IIL Communication module with over seven million languages
Move: 6, 10 (climbing)
Size: 1.6 meters
Cost: Not available for sale
Note: For information on stock 3PO units, see pages 52 and 53 of the Star Wars Sourcebook, Second Edition.

This issue’s “Craken’s Rebel Operatives” was created by C. Robert Carey and Trevor J. Wilson, and illustrated by Kathy Barlette.

Welcome to a world of adventure. A time of global upheaval and mystical resurgence. A time when humanity seeks at once to resurrect the past and to destroy the future. A time of dastardly villains, world-wide wars, and—in the midst of the chaos—heroes.

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Smuggler's Log

A WORD FROM PLATT OKeefe

Many fellow spacers have been asking how I got my start in the smuggling trade. Well, it wasn’t all fun and games artfully evading Imperial Customs frigates and setting up lucrative deals with big-time clients. Like most fledgling smugglers, I needed a patron to get me started—you know, providing some capital for the first cargo run, setting me up with a few helpful contacts in various starports, and, don’t forget, fronting the credits for my first ship.

The galaxy is filled with seedy loan sharks willing to rip off every starry-eyed would-be smuggler. They have the credits, contacts, and starships everyone needs to get started. The only problem is, they think they own you. Well, in most cases, they do.

So instead, I decided to get my start with a seemingly legitimate and respectable-sounding shipping organization. The Klatoonian Trade Guild had a nice ring to it. It offered me what seemed at the time to be a pretty decent deal—some initial credits for the down payment on my first ship (the ill-fated Brevith Princess), and a cargo run on my first day. All in exchange for my imprint on a datapad contract.

Big mistake.

Hey, how was I supposed to know all about the Hutts, and Klatoonian lifelong loyalty, and the tiny print at the bottom of that data contract? Rather than bore you with all my early problems with the Klatoonian Trade Guild (that’s another story entirely), the least I can do is illuminate you young, would-be smugglers on what this “trade guild” is all about.

The Klatoonian Trade Guild

The Klatoonian Trade Guild was established several thousand years ago as a means to offer Klatoonians service opportunities far from their homeworld. “Service” often includes slavery and indentured servitude to the Klatoonians’ masters, the Hutts—and the trade guild was no exception. The guild provided a legitimate front for many Hutt shipping operations, and quickly branched out to include illegal activities such as smuggling, loan-sharking, and slaving.
Today the trade guild operates within Hutt Space as well as many sectors throughout the Outer Rim Territories. The guild offers services to spacers (and more often, smugglers). Although there are no official guild halls or headquarters, the Klatooinian Trade Guild often builds and operates entire blocks of starport docking bays, warehouses, and repair facilities. The guild often lends credits to those seeking to purchase and operate these starport facilities, in return for certain favors, a generous cut of the profits, and a degree of power in deciding how things are run. In many cases, a guild docking bay is run by an "owner" actually working for the Klatooinian Trade Guild—but that fact isn’t exactly advertised. Guild members are told which facilities are guild-operated, and are often directed to those docking areas by a guild agent working within starport control. Letting non-guild members know which facilities are fronted by the guild is a good way to guarantee a visit from a Klatooinian bounty hunter squad.

Those starport facilities near guild-owned areas are often coerced to join the Klatooinian Trade Guild. Most succumb to the guild’s protection racket, accepting the presence of guild thugs as guards, paying protection fees, and making most purchases through guild-sponsored “freetraders” and smugglers.

Trade guild members often receive discounts when using guild-operated facilities. In many cases visiting these facilities is a required part of the member’s smuggling transactions for cargo and credit transfer. The guild also owns other starport businesses which cater to spacers—cantis, hotels, casinos—where members are expected to conduct all their business and networking. The Klatooinian Trade Guild likes to keep an eye on its members and their transactions.

Members are supposedly “safe” in guild starport facilities. The guild boasts that it grants full “protection” to all members while in guild-operated areas and systems. The protection includes armed mercenaries in warehouses and landing bays, guarded shifts for cargo transport, and in some cases, starfighter escort in systems with pirate or Rebel activity.

Wayward members have a frightening way of meeting with “accidents” while using non-guild starport facilities. Technical hangars, docking pads and warehouses which don’t enjoy guild protection have an alarming tendency to become victim to the guild’s hordes of saboteurs, ship-jackers, demolitions experts and bounty hunters.

The Contract

Those foolish enough to enter a deal with the Klatooinian Trade Guild often sign away their lives when they imprint their datapad contract. Guild representatives seem to offer quite a bit for a modest share of a smuggler’s profits. (Although the Guild also has other contracts—with everyone from mercenaries, bounty hunters, and slavers to cantina owners, docking bay technicians and starship outfitters—I’m just going to concentrate on their smuggler contracts here.)

The standard contract for new smugglers is what Guild bureaucrats call the “Fre-Trader’s Responsibilities and Liabilities Agreement.” The scandal is several hundred pages long, but is summarized in a cover scan. The agreement promises the smuggler certain things: down payment on a starship of their choosing (to be paid back in full and with interest later...), use of Guild facilities and services, employment through Guild shipping priorities, and access to the Guild’s network of contacts.
Read the fine print. What the average smuggler must pay back for all this sometimes isn’t even worth the smuggler’s life. The terms of reimbursing the Guild for the starship down payment loan are outrageous. And the contract requires smugglers to eventually purchase their own ships — which are, of course, supplied through the Guild. Smugglers also owe the Guild a goodly percentage of their profits as “guild dues,” sometimes as much as 50 percent! The cargo runs the Guild assigns are straight at first, but quickly dive into the realm of the illegal. Smugglers can’t be too choosy about what jobs they take when they’re constantly indebted to an organization that has no qualms about shooting you, repossessing your freighter and taking all your profits if you cross them.

However, the Guild starships are relatively good, although somewhat inadequate for the more challenging smuggling runs. A few freighter captains invest some of their meager profits (after “guild dues”) into modifications, but if the Guild repossesses the ship, it also owns the new components. Guild facilities are also exceptional, if you don’t mind being under its watchful eye all the time. And the services — especially protection by the Klatooinian mercenaries — are well worth the price.

The Enforcers

But those same Klatooinian mercenaries who keep the stormtroopers out of your docking bay long enough for you to take off are the same ones who’ll be knocking on your entry hatch the minute you reveal Guild operatives, dump your cargo to avoid customs inspections, disappear for months at a time, or otherwise frack off the Guild.

The Guild mostly employs Klatooinian strongmen because they’re loyal. It doesn’t matter who’s running your

Guild contract, as long as that person has enough faithful guards with blasters and bad tempers. If your Guild boss sends some Klatooinian goons to make you cough up your starship payment, you’d better have the credits — the Klatooinians don’t care about excuses, they just care about doing their master’s bidding.

And these guys are everywhere. If you’re in a Guild facility — whether it’s a docking bay, tech hangar, cantina, casino or warehouse — expect to see heavily armored Klatooinians at every corner and exit. And they all always seem to be watching you ...

The Klatooinian Trade Guild also hires other mercenaries, especially those like the Nikto and Weequay who commonly serve the Hutts. Gamorreans are often seen in their ranks as well. And when you’re really on the Guild’s bad side, don’t just assume they’ll hire some outside bounty hunters to find you — expect it.

Pok Nar-Ten’s Syndicate

To give you some idea of the seedy individuals who run the Klatooinian Trade Guild, I’ve provided some information on my former employer — a guild boss named Pok Nar-Ten. The Nimbaneese credit-counter is little more than a pushy bureaucrat working for the Hutts (like most guild bosses).

Pok bases his operations in Boztkor starport. In the Outer Rim Territories several sectors from Hutt Space. He owns several starport businesses — seven docking bays, three tech hangars and a cantina — all centered around a tower from which he conducts business. Pok’s main audience chamber is half-way up the tower and is surrounded by windows, giving the Nimbanel a good view of the docking bays and a nearby square where he can clearly see the cantina’s main entrance.
The tower houses his personal offices, his central processing computer (on which he keeps records of all his accounts), barracks for his guards, quarters for his other personnel, repulsorlift bay, dungeons, and other amenities one would expect in a crime boss' home. I've never seen it, but some say Pok's got a turbolaser concealed beneath the topmost tower deck, the one that’s open to the sky. It wouldn’t surprise me if that were true.

Pok rarely leaves his tower. Inside he's always surrounded by Klatooinian guards, and his Advooze major domo Gjeel Dhantra is never far away. Blast doors can be closed to seal off the main street-level entrance and the repulsorlift bay. Although there are plenty of windows throughout the tower (Pok likes to see what’s going on), each is sealed with a good piece of transparisteel at least six centimeters thick.

On the rare occasions Pok needs to leave his tower (most often to report to his Hutt superiors), he travels in a heavily armed and shielded bulk freighter, accompanied by hordes of Klatooinian mercenaries and several bounty hunters hired especially to protect him on these occasions.

**Pok Nar-Ten**

Pok himself likes to project an air of power and authority, even if he is little more than a petty bureaucrat. While he tries to give smugglers the impression that he is the boss, Pok knows full well that the Hutt's provide his real power. But he's not about to let you know that.

So when you have a scheduled (or unpleasant “unscheduled”) visit, Pok makes sure you know who's in charge. He sits up behind his fanefully carved stone desk, several steps higher than everyone else since it's on a dais. Pok always keeps several Klatooinian guards very close by, in case some cocky smuggler decides he'd rather settle a deal with his blaster than with a few hundred credits. And the shifty Advooze major domo Gjeel Dhantra is always barking nearby, making sure all the exits are covered and that enough hidden blasters are pointed at the smuggler in question.

Pok enjoys putting on a show. Besides the usual display of strength, he is fond of wearing imposing if not gaudy outfits — anything in dark colors, embroidered in metallic threads, with large shoulder cut exhaust ports. You'd think he's watched too many Jedi holos with evil dark side magicians as a kid. And he's always talking in some booming voice, interrupting you when it suits his purpose. Pok always considers himself right on all matters — don't show him disrespect by disagreeing.

For all his authoritative showiness, Pok is still a sly bureaucrat. Like any datacruncher working for the Hutt who wants to stay alive, he keeps track of his credits and...
stays well-informed. But Pok knows how to swing a deal, making it seem like you're getting a great bargain when in fact you're selling your life to him. Pok is not easily swindled, although smugglers who fast-talk him with compliments and accolades about anything (even his ostentatious outfits) and make him feel like he's the boss usually come out alive, if not on top of the situation.

**Pok Nar-Ten**

**Type:** Ninbanese Guild Boss

**DEXTERITY 3D**
- Blaster 3D, slugthrower 60, pick pocket 6D-2

**KNOWLEDGE 1D**
- Alien species 3D, bureaucracy 6D-2, bureaucracy: Khtooinan Trade Guild 3D, linguistics 7D-2, business: Khtooinan Trade Guild 5D, culture 4D-2, intimidation 6D, languages 5D, law enforcement 6D, streetwise 3D, value 7D-2

**MECHANICAL 2D**

**PERCEPTION 4D**
- Bargain 6D, command 7D, con 5D-2, forgery 6D, investigation 7D, persuasion 6D, search 3D-1

**STRENGTH 2D**

**TECHNICAL 3D**
- Computer programming/repair 7D, security 5D

**Force Points:** 1

**Dark Side Points:** 3

**Character Points:** 11

**Move:** 10

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

**Gjeel Dhantra**

Pok Nar-Ten's major domo is an Advosian named Gjeel Dhantra, a very orderly and control-oriented assistant and second-in-command. Pok trusts him like a brother, and values his opinions with the respect one would accord a peer. Gjeel is one of the few people Pok does not torment with his domineering manner.

This strange relationship — from Pok's point of view — has been the subject of much speculation among those serving the Ninbanese guild boss. The most common rumor holds that Dhantra was boss of another Khtooinan Trade Guild operation, one that oversaw several powerful slaver interests, including many which raided the Twi'lek homeworld of Ryloth for slaves. Such a guild boss would have been very powerful, but also very vulnerable to jealous enemies within the guild and vengeful enemies without. No doubt some disastrous and embarrassing event happened which caused Gjeel's Hutt superiors to remove him from a guild leadership post and place him in the service of someone else.

Despite these rumors of Dhantra's disgrace, he carries out his duties to Pok without complaint, and shows no signs of secret ambitions to usurp the Ninbanese operations. He coolly stalks Pok's tower, overseeing every function, from repairs in the repulsorlift bay and supply purchases to Pok's audience schedule and his master's rare travel arrangements. Gjeel is barely without his oversized datapad filled with informa-
Dhantra is in charge of the Klatooinian Trade Guild section which supported the Shadr Big Quince's slaving operations in the Outer Rim Territories. I could be wrong, but Tuir lek gunrunner Trud Choobhak and I could have caused Dhantra's downfall when we blasted free of Quince's slaving ship, supposedly killing the Shadr and inducing a reflexified belch. Needless to say, Trud Choobhak is now a frequent Pok's court much these days...

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**Gjeel Dhantra**

*Type:* Advozine Major Domino

**DEXTERITY 3D**
Blaster 6D, dodge 5D, melee combat 5D-2

**KNOWLEDGE 3D-2**
Bureaucracy: Klatooinian Trade Guild 4D-2, business: Klatooinian Trade Guild 4D-2, intimidation 3D, languages 4D, law enforcement 4D, streetwise 7D-2

**MECHANICAL 2D-1**
Repairs/fix operation 4D, space transports 5D

**PERCEPTION 4D**
Command 6D, com 6D, investigation 6D, search 6D-2, sneak 7D

**STRENGTH 3D**
Brawling 4D, climbing/jumping 3D-2

**TECHNICAL 2D**
Computer programming/repair 4D, droid programming 4D-2, security 6D

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**Kuuvat**

*Type:* Klatooinian Mercenary

**DEXTERITY 4D-1**
Blaster 7D-2, blast; heavy blaster pistol 9D, brawling; parry 6D, dodge 6D, grenade 5D, melee combat 6D-2, melee parry 6D, thrown

Kuuvat is a no-nonsense bodyguard. He rarely speaks — even in his native Klatooinian tongue — and often simply grunts acknowledgement of Pok's orders. His face remains stone most of the time, and he rarely reacts to events unless they threaten his master's life. But when Kuuvat needs to move, he does so with deadly speed and accuracy. Kuuvat carries out Pok's orders to the letter, without question. Once he's determined to do something (especially something violent), there's no stopping the hulking Klatooinian.
Snuggler's Log

Peter Schweighofer

**Weapons**: 5D-2
**Knowledge 2D**: Intimidation 5D, streetwise 4D, survival 4D-2
**Mechanical 2D**: Repair, drift operation 4D
**Perception 3D+2**: Command 5D-2, search 5D, sneak 6D
**Strength 4D**: Brawling 3D, climbing/jumping 5D-2, stamina 5D
**Technical 2D**: Armor repair 3D-2, blaster repair 4D, demolitions 3D-1, security 4D-2
**Force Points**: 1
**Dark Side Points**: 2
**Character Points**: 5
**Move**: 10

Equipment: Armored vest (-1) physical, -1 energy, torso only), grenade (5D), heavy blaster pistol (3D), smoke blaster (3D), 2 throwing knives (STR-1D)

**Nazrita Villache**

Although she's rarely seen in Pok's audience hall, Nazrita Villache is one of the more important contacts for smugglers in the Nimbanil's organization. She's Pok's chief technician, and is responsible for maintaining, repairing, and modifying the various light freighters the Klatooinian Trade Guild boss sells to his indentured smugglers.

Nazrita's hardened features still betray some of the beauty she once possessed. She keeps her long black hair tied behind her head in a tail or braid, although she's always brushing stray graying strands from her face. Her dark eyes have a mischievous cast about them whenever she's near starships, although they're often concealed by work goggles when she's engaged in repairs. Nazrita doesn't talk much about her work — she manages to tell pilots the basics about what she's repairing or modifying, and fills them in on how it works.

Nazrita follows Pok's orders regarding repairs, and she charges smugglers standard rates. Don't think you're getting a deal — since she's using Klatooinian Trade Guild facilities, Nazrita is only supposed to charge about 75 percent of the standard repair rate. She pockets the other 25 percent to supplement her pay. Pok doesn't seem to care that she gouges his smugglers, as long as she doesn't cheat him. It also gives him a bit more authority when dictating to Nazrita certain modifications he'd like kept from his smugglers — the inevitable tracking devices, secret compartments, illegal goods that the pilot doesn't know about, and, on rare occasions, explosive devices, just in case someone de

**Addendum/Personal**

**Creefe Platt**

Nazrita is perhaps the best stowaway tech I've ever met. But she doesn't get to be my stowaway. You and then, when she smuggling fails to make a payment, or disappears entirely with one of Pok's light freighters, the Nimbanilese. Nazrita is not above stowaway in the Klatooinian trade guild. She's just as good setting you up for your own ship's security system, scrambling your ignition codes and flying it out of your docking bay as she is fixing a jammed communication tube and integrating your improved hypervision. Remember — if you bought your ship from Pok (and with the Klatooinian Trade Guild, you have to), Nazrita knows it inside and out.
cides to renege on her Guild obligations.

Pok doesn’t mind Nazrita doing extra modifications smugglers ask for (and are willing to pay for), as long as the technician lets Pok know what’s being done to whose ship. But no matter what Nazrita says she does to your ship, always check her work. Make sure it’s operational, and make sure it’s not booby-trapped. Nazrita’s a good technician, but just remember who she works for.

- Nazrita Vilache
  Type: Outlaw Tech
  DEXTERITY 2D
  Blaster 3D, forge 4D-2, pick pocket 4D
  KNOWLEDGE 3D
  Business, starships 5D, value, starships 5D
  MECHANICAL 2D-1
  Astrogation 4D-2, repulsorlift operation 5D, space transports 6D, starship shields 5D
  PERCEPTION 2D-2
  Bargain 5D, con 4D-2, search 5D, sneak 6D-2
  STRENGTH 2D
  Climbing, jumping 3D-2, lifting 3D
  TECHNICAL 4D
  Computer programming/repair 5D-2, demolition 4D, crowd programming 3D-2, first aid 4D-2, security 7D, space transports repair 9D, starship weapon repair 8D-2
  Force Points: 1
  Character Points: 10
  Move: 10
  Equipment: Blaster pistol (1D), security tool kit (+1D to security), starship repair tool kit (+1D to space transports repair), work coveralls

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Other features in this issue include:

- Join smuggler extraordinaire Platt Okeefe on a visit to the Klatooinan Trade Guild in Smuggler’s Log.
- What happens when one of Jabba the Hutt’s accounting droids “wanders off” into the labyrinthine streets of Mos Eisley? Find out in Spare Parts.
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