

Caaried Away

**Episode I of the Metatheran Caution Trilogy
A One-Round LIVING FORCE Tournament**

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The mines of Tilnes have never been the safest of places, but when the heroes of Cularin find themselves embroiled in what turns out to be a very non-routine stopover, things go from bad to worse. An adventure for LIVING FORCE heroes levels 1-9. It is strongly recommended that this scenario be played before "*Open Arms*" and "*Belly of the Beaast*" (Episodes II and III of the "*Metatheran Caution*" trilogy.)

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Caaried Away is a standard RPGA Network tournament. A four-hour time block has been set aside for this event but the actual playing time should be about three and a half hours.

It is a good idea to ask each player to put a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom and the hero's name, species and gender at the top. This makes it easier for players to keep track of who is playing which character.

Reporting the game for RPGA: The RPGA tracks adventures for the Player Rewards program. The Senior GM or Event Coordinator should provide a form to the GM for this purpose. Both the GM and the players need to list their name and RPGA number on the form.

GMs of RPGA tournaments are expected to be familiar with the RPGA Rules and Penalty documents. These are available as downloads from the RPGA web site at www.rpga.com.

A note about the text: Some of the text in the module is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text intended for the players is in **bold italics**. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

House Rules

There are a large number of players throughout the world playing LIVING FORCE, and it's impossible to supervise them the way one might in a home campaign. As a result, we have a few house rules. These are outlined here for you.

Atoning for Dark Side Points

Heroes may, at the discretion of the GM, atone for Dark Side Points acquired during play by spending one Force Point to atone for one Dark Side Point. Heroes may only atone for one DSP per scenario played, and only if, in the judgment of the GM, the hero shows proper remorse and understanding of the dangers of the dark side. Players are required to keep a running total on their log sheets of all Dark Side Points ever acquired, even if the hero has atoned for them.

Dissipate Energy

Dissipate energy only works against energy damage to Wounds. It has no effect against vitality damage or stun weapon attacks. Also, the DC for the Fortitude saving throw should be "10 + damage dealt," not just "damage dealt".

Illusion

Use of the Illusion skill allows a save when the hero views or otherwise interacts with the illusion. If the player succeeds at the save, the illusion is seen as an outline only, and anything that might have otherwise been hidden inside or behind the illusion is visible. Illusion cannot be utilized to create "an illusion of nothing"; it cannot make something invisible.

Stun

If a hero hit by a stun attack makes his or her Fortitude save, the hero is unaffected by the stun attack and takes no damage. A hero who fails the Fortitude saving throw is unconscious for 1d4+1 rounds. This ruling includes heroes in the area of effect of a stun grenade. This house rule supersedes the rules in the *SWRPG-RCR*.

Hero Earnings

At the beginning of the round, if the heroes are employed, they receive their pay. No matter how much time has passed since the previous round, they receive pay for one week. Heroes may not have more than one employer. Heroes who are not employed but who have Entertain, Gamble, or Profession skills may roll against those skills to see how much they have earned in the last week. Rather than using the method in the core rules for Entertain or Gamble, however, use the method described for the Profession skill on page 96; that is, roll the check, and then multiply the result by 100 credits to determine the amount you made that week. Note that heroes may use only one of the above methods each round and must choose which before rolling (Employment, Entertain, Gamble, or Profession). Per the rules, you may take 10 on Entertain or Profession checks, but not on Gamble. There is no pay for unskilled labor in the LIVING FORCE campaign.

Issuing Force and Dark Side Points

Issuing Force Points: When heroes perform cinematically heroic actions, you may issue a Force Point. Because this is a heroic campaign, we expect heroism and encourage judges to reward it. In the course of a standard LIVING FORCE event, there are many opportunities for heroism. If a LIVING FORCE hero performs in a way that is heroic, dramatic, and cinematic, then a Force Point is definitely in order. Our favorite story involved the hero at the premiere, who leapt from a moving speeder, grabbed a vine, and swung on that vine to attack someone in another moving speeder. THAT is dramatic, cinematic heroism!

Not everything is that extreme, and you don't have to jump from a moving speeder to earn a Force Point,

but if a hero does something that makes you, the judge, say, ‘Wow,’ then they should probably get a FP.

The core rules (pg 178) define “Dramatic Heroism” as follows:

To qualify as an act of dramatic heroism, an action must fulfill three criteria:

- It must accomplish a significant task in the defense of good or the defeat of evil;
- It must occur at a dramatically appropriate time (usually the climax of the adventure); and
- It should require significant risk on the part of the hero.

Issuing Dark Side Points: Unfortunately, it is impossible to produce an exhaustive list of all the possible ways people can get Dark Side Points. There are just too many ways that the beginnings of “evil” can manifest themselves.

To quote the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game Dark Side Sourcebook*... “Evil is not always easy to recognize. An innocent act may ultimately result in great suffering. An act of revenge may save the lives of millions of people. The pure at heart can lash out in anger. Evil may lurk beneath a mask of virtue. Whether an act is evil or not often boils down to a question of motivation, and motivation can be hard to identify.

“When a Gamemaster is in doubt about whether to award a Dark Side Point to a character, he or she should consider the character’s motives: Did the character act out of anger? Hatred? Cruelty? Vengeance? Pride? Did the character choose an option simply because it would allow her to spill an enemy’s blood? Was greed or envy involved? Jealousy?” (Great section, beginning on page 41, which illustrates the problem fairly precisely.) The GM must assess the motivations of the character, and if those motivations derive from the base emotions that are the path to the dark side, then a DSP is appropriate.

Wookiees, Rage and Dark Side Points: Per the sidebar on page 182 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game Revised Core Rule Book*, Wookiee Force users do not gain Dark Side Points for following their natural tendencies and using the Wookiee rage species ability. They do receive a Dark Side Point, however, if they incorporate Wookiee rage with any of their Force skills.

In addition, while in a Wookiee rage, a Wookiee Force user can’t call upon the Force (except for calling upon the Dark Side when using a Force point). All other uses of the Force require more calm and peace than the Wookiee can manage while in the natural frenzy.

General Notes to the GM

When running this adventure, or any *Star Wars*

adventure, keep in mind the *Star Wars* adventures should seem like the *Star Wars* movies. The action should flow quickly and the players should not get caught up in too many mechanical details of what they are doing. Describe things in sweeping statements, and recall scenes from the movies when necessary to help players visualize what is going on. More than anything else, have fun.

LIVING FORCE adventures are not designed purely to kill characters. If you believe a combat is genuinely too tough for a group you are running, scale it down. If you believe it will be far too simple, scale it up—within reason. Do your best to keep fights cinematic and interesting, and if someone dies because they made a glorious sacrifice, that’s fine. What we want to avoid are the “dumb” deaths that result from a string of bad dice rolls. That’s not cinematic, and it’s not what *Star Wars*, or LIVING FORCE, are about.

This is an adventure for to low- to upper-level LIVING FORCE heroes, and therefore characters levels 1 through 9 are appropriate. If a player brings a higher-level character to your table, explain that he or she must use a lower-level hero to play in this event. If your players do not have heroes, help them create new ones (see your event coordinator for hero creation instructions).

GM Overview

Long ago, Darth Bane established the “rule of two.” There would only ever be two Sith, because if there were more, they would hunt one another down and wipe themselves out without any help from the Jedi. Such is the nature of those who want nothing but power. Anyone else who may be a threat – even someone who is presently or potentially an ally – can become a target.

Given their evident devotion to the ideals of the Sith (and certainly, their reverence for the Sith fortress on Almas), it should come as no surprise that the Believers have begun to fall into precisely the trap that Darth Bane sought to avoid. Having established themselves in Cularin’s underworld, they have begun a secret campaign to rid the system of potential competitors before what they see as their ultimate triumph over the Jedi. Their first target? The Metatheran Cartel.

The Believers have more resources at their disposal than anyone might have guessed. They have obtained a nasty virus that can make anyone ill, but is only actually fatal to Caarites. The virus is still being refined, and the first test took place less than two weeks ago, deep beneath the surface of Tilnes.

Following the events of “Tilnes Rising,” in which the Metatheran Cartel’s secret base beneath Tilnes was discovered (as was that of the Thaereian military), both the Cartel and the Thaereians ostensibly vacated the

moon. Verga Mer Mining Corporation (VMMC), though, is a business, and when enough credits flashed from Cartel-held accounts to VMMC accounts, the inspectors for the mining company managed to “miss” a few key doors in their attempts to make sure the Cartel had removed its operations. The Cartel never actually left Tilnes, and only a few select individuals outside their organization knew this to be the case. Among them was a highly placed member of the Believers.

Someone in the Believers knew of the Cartel’s still-hidden base, and chose this as a testing ground for the viral agent developed to kill the Caarites, crippling the Cartel in Cularin and beyond. It seemed a perfect place for such a test to occur. If it worked, the Cartel could say nothing, since the deaths of several hundred Caarites, in a place they should never have been to begin with, would hardly be something they wanted to take to the public. If it didn’t work, then the experiment would still be judged a success; the Caarites could still say nothing about the attempt, and the virus could be refined.

The one element of the plan that failed to cooperate was Tilnes itself. Earlier today, just after the heroes arrived on Tilnes on a routine stopover, an enormous electromagnetic pulse from the moon’s core shut down every electronic device on the moon – including the safety valves on the ventilation system, which had previously kept the virus confined to the portion of the mines the Cartel held.

When the EMP hit, there was a team of 6 Believers in the Cartel base, surveying the results of their “experiment” – and dealing with the horrifying effects. When the EMP passed and power came back up, the base emergency-sealed and the Believers (who have been there for about three hours by the time the heroes arrive) have had their hands full since.

As systems began to come back online, alarms sounded and Tilnes went into quarantine. Not long after, a faint signal began to show up on some of the more sensitive scanners – a distress call, from the portion of the moon formerly occupied by the Cartel.

Far below, two Believers (the only survivors of a team that came to Tilnes to check the status of the “experiment”) have found that three Caarites survived – with some rather drastic changes, as a result of exposure to the virus. All of them – Believers and Caarites alike – are surprised when the distress signal that was triggered by the EMP brings the heroes of Cularin down into the mines of Tilnes.

Encounter 1: Quarantine

It begins with a rough landing, an electromagnetic pulse that fried every circuit and blew every fuse, quarantine, and a distress call. The heroes find themselves in an unpleasant place at an unpleasant time, and if anyone is going to get to leave Tilnes any time soon the source of

the distress call – and the chemical that was released into the mines through the ventilation system when the EMP went off – must be found. To find it, the heroes must go to the “abandoned” Cartel base.

Encounter 2: Abandonment

Getting there is no problem. The way is clear, and there is no security to speak of until the heroes get to the actual entrance. There, things become more complicated, as the electromagnetic pulses have re-configured the security system the Caarites “left behind” when they “moved out.”

Encounter 3: Queasy

As the doors open, the heroes find small dead bodies – Caarites – everywhere. The Caarites are clearly diseased, decayed, and – partially eaten? Something big has been feeding on them, but whatever killed them is probably what got released into the air vents. The heroes need to find out as much as they can, and they have only a 3-hour supply of fresh air.

Encounter 4: Abattoir

A call for help, in basic, in a Human voice, takes the heroes out of the main areas and further into the Cartel facility. There, bodies have been piled, stacked, hung, and generally arrayed in a disagreeable fashion. There are three Human bodies in amongst the Caarite corpses, and none of the Humans have been dead more than a few hours. The Caarites have clearly been dead for days.

Encounter 5: Quarry

Something living, and large, prowls the tunnels around the heroes, hunting them. Technically three somethings – Caarites who survived the release of the toxin through a fairly drastic, and not at all voluntary, mutation. They’ve been feeding off the corpses of their own for some time, and the coming of a number of Humans means fresh food. The first of these three comes across the party and attacks in a rage, trying to get more food in what it knows is becoming a food-poor environment.

Encounter 6: Antidote?

The area from which the mutant Caarite came is strewn with debris, including numerous datachips and, buried in the rubble, a packet of explosives with a series of gel-packs embedded in them. This is another batch of the virus, brought in just in case the first batch hadn’t worked, and brought here because it was, to be blunt, attached to a victim of the creature. While the heroes lack the facilities to identify the toxin here, they have found the source of the infection.

Encounter 7: Quarrel

The heroes find the other two mutant Caarites – along with two members of the Believers, who have managed to use the Force to subdue and control the mutants. During the ensuing fight, an electromagnetic pulse (potentially) shuts down the portable respirators the heroes are wearing, leaving them vulnerable to the effects of the toxin. Fortunately, it's only fatal to Caarites. Unfortunately, the only Caarites nearby have already developed immunity to it, and are not in a reasonable frame of mind.

Important Notes to Judges:

It may be useful to know which of the heroes participated in the events in “Tilnes Rising”. While knowledge of that scenario isn't required, it can provide a sense of story continuity and familiarity for the players. Feel free to have those heroes be recognized by NPCs or have minor contacts that they can use to help them investigate the disaster.

The scenario begins *in media res* and requires that the heroes investigate a distress call. Help the players to come up with their own reasons for being there and together. In addition, some players may be unwilling to investigate -- you may need to encourage them to be suitably heroic.

Situations involving the dead Caarites may be particularly disturbing to some players, especially our younger participants. Please be mindful of the reactions of the players and adjust your descriptions accordingly. It should be suitably horrific, but not so disturbing that it's upsetting rather than fun.

The final encounter is very likely to result in combat. Make sure you leave enough time in the slot, and adjust the tactics of the antagonists to challenge the heroes but not slaughter them.

Opening Crawl

It is a time of change in Cularin. Old ways are being pushed aside as new ways take their place. From the Jedi Academy on Almas to the cloud cities of Genarius to the mines of Tilnes – much has changed, and much more will change. Soon.

The threats to Cularin have been many and varied, some appearing and then disappearing almost as soon as they emerge. Others maintain a peaceful façade – a façade that does little to allay the suspicions of Cularin's citizens. One group, though... a powerful group... has decided that is time to make its move...

Encounter 1: Quarantine

Key ideas of this encounter: the heroes find themselves stuck on Tilnes after an EMP shuts down their ship and results in a quarantine of the moon; an unknown chemical was released into the ventilation system when the power shut down, and it's not safe for anyone to leave until the substance can be analyzed.

It seemed like a standard enough stopover on Tilnes. With the groundport on Cularin as busy as it's been over the last few months, many refueling and cargo stops have diverted to Tilnes. It wasn't even a huge surprise when the walls began to glow and a humming filled the air – precursors to one of Tilnes' notorious electromagnetic pulses. The pulse shut down the ship and sent an astromech tumbling down the ramp of a nearby freighter. What came next seemed, at first, like standard recovery procedures...

Let the heroes determine if they were all traveling together or, if not, how they ended up together after the EMP shut things down. Some heroes may have repairs to make to droids or a ship; these can be assumed to be successful and take 1d6 x 20 minutes to perform. Droids owned by heroes do not have their memories wiped out by the EMP, though they report a certain “flickering of awareness” when the burst went off. Other heroes may want to assist in bringing the landing bay systems back online.

Any weapon with a power pack has a 50/50 shot of needing the power pack replaced, and other small electronic devices have the same chance of needing minor (automatically successful) repairs.

Give the heroes a few minutes to introduce themselves and describe what they're doing in their attempts to get things going once more. Then, when they are ready, read or paraphrase the following and pass out the appropriate pieces of Player Handout 1.

Not long after repairs began, a crew in Verga Mer Mining Corporation uniforms began making the rounds, handing out portable respirator units. Each of the members of the crew wore exactly such a unit, fastened over their noses and mouths.

“Here.” A portable respirator is thrust into your hands. “Three hours of air. Should be plenty for the cleanup.”

Any hero who's been on Tilnes before has heard stories of post-EMP precautions... and those stories have never included personal respirators. Quick thinking players may realize that the heroes have been exposed to something noxious. Note that each player should

only get the portion of Player Handout 1 that's relevant to the species of their hero. What they don't know, and what you do, is that what's described on that handout are the effects that a small dose of the virus has on specific (non-Caarite) species.

Some heroes may not want to put up with illness. Medical skills can diagnose that there is a viral infection (Treat Injury (DC 15), all tiers), but without the original agent to work with, creating an anti-virus is going to take better than a week's work in a fully-stocked lab. It can be done, and when the adventure is over, interested heroes are welcome to assist in the development of the antivirus (and earn a reward for their efforts).

Force skills such as Heal Self and Heal Another are ineffective, since they are used to heal VP, WP, and ability point damage. The virus does not do any of these things to non-Caarites. That being said, if anyone decides they REALLY want to heal someone else, and spends a Force point to augment a Heal Another check, then so long as the final check result beats a DC 20 (including the effects of the Force point), the symptoms the afflicted individual was showing disappear. Beyond that, competence and luck can also succeed. If someone manages to make a DC 35/40/45 Heal Another check without using a Force point, then the symptoms abate for the individual targeted with the healing as well.

NOTE: This does NOT apply to the Caarites we meet in later encounters, whose physiology has been radically altered by the virus. Healing of any kind won't do much but make them angry – but then, most things make them angry...

Once the heroes have had some time to figure out that (a) something strange is going on, and (b) it has to do with the ventilation system, they may want to find out what exactly has happened to them. If they don't, feel free to use stray NPCs or even Neven Khash to urge them into action. In any party there's bound to be at least one hero whose exploits have made them recognizable.

When they ask around, the crewmen who were handing out personal respirators really don't know much, but they can direct the heroes to Neven Khash, the VMMC supervisor currently in charge of the landing bay.

(Adjust the following as needed to accommodate the party's actions – if they're steadfastly refusing to get involved, Neven Khash may need to approach them.)

Neven Khash is a small man, slope-shouldered and twitchy. He sits on a pile of boxes in one corner of the landing bay, alternately straightening his breathing mask and brushing unseen lint from his pant-legs. He looks up as you approach.

“Things'll be straightened soon enough. You just go back to your ship. Everything's under control.”

Deliver the line in as unconvincing a voice as possible. Khash is scared. He's never even *heard* some of the alarms that went off, and he seriously thinks he might die – but he knows that if he lives, he better not have told anyone anything he shouldn't have, or it's his job.

If you play Khash convincingly, no one needs a Sense Motive check to tell that he's withholding information. If anyone wants to roll, the DC is 10.

As a prototypic “weak-minded fool,” Khash doesn't even get a Will save against attempts to intimidate him or use the Force to extract information. Either method is more than it takes, since frankly, he wants help, and immediately recognizes at least one of the heroes. . Once he knows whom he's dealing with, he practically begs for help. It's your call which hero (or heroes) he recognizes – you can choose the hero with the highest Reputation score, the hero who's been quietest, or whatever other criteria you wish to use. He may recognize multiple heroes as well.

Encounter 2: Abandonment

Key ideas of this encounter: speaking with Neven Khash, descending into the depths of Tilnes, and slicing their way into the Cartel's base

“I've heard of you. Didn't you [describe exploits of the hero du jour in another adventure, if at all possible; if not, just describe something that sounds grand and heroic]? Maybe you can help. The regular employees are too scared to death to do anything.”

There are a number of things Khash can tell the heroes; these are presented below.

- ***This seemed like a normal EMP, but when everything came back online, there were a couple things that weren't right.***
- ***The main one? This sensor reading of some kind of contaminant on the ventilation system. It wasn't there before. We did a scan, and there's something strange. We don't know what.***
- ***Yeah, that's why we passed out the personal respirators.***
- ***We haven't figured out what it is, but we think it may be viral. We haven't announced it yet – kinda hoping to get everything settled quiet-like – but we're under quarantine. Nobody's leaving until the agent is isolated.***
- ***The other thing that wasn't quite right? There's a distress signal from down in the moon.***

Khash provides coordinates readily enough, but doesn't immediately reveal what those coordinates correspond to. Heroes who played "Tilnes Rising" can roll Intelligence checks (DC 15) to recognize them as the coordinates of the Cartel's base – which, if accounts were to be believed, was abandoned almost a year ago following the outrage at the hidden base so near to Cularin. A Sense Motive (DC 15) check detects that Khash is not revealing everything he knows about those coordinates.

If questioned about the Cartel and whether or not they actually vacated, Khash becomes nervous and evasive. He looks away, shifts uncomfortably, and tugs at the legs of his pants hard enough that it looks like he may accidentally tear the fabric. Ham it up – Khash has all the Bluff ability of a Bantha on spice, and it should be obvious from his behavior that he knows something he really doesn't want to share about the Cartel.

Any reasonable method for extracting the information works – and it's not even necessary to come within a half-kilometer of earning a DSP. Khash spills at the first sign that someone is onto him, whispering his secrets and begging the heroes not to turn him in, and not to let VMMC know how they found out.

In summary, Khash knows that the Cartel was supposed to move out, but they didn't. Some credits changed hands. Maybe a lot of credits. He's not sure, he didn't see any of it; he's not high enough in VMMC to get paid off when the dataries are flying. But even though most folks thought the Cartel was gone, there were always rumors that they were still around. He believes that the Thareians actually did vacate, withdrawing to more public places from which they could watch over Cularin, but the Cartel, he's pretty sure, stayed around. This distress signal is the first proof he's had, though. Everything else has been rumor.

The heroes may want to do any of a number of things, at this point. Some of these are dealt with below; use them as a guideline for dealing with other possibilities.

Calling a Friend/Mentor (Non-Jedi)

You're where? Doing what? Quarantine? Hey, slow down! I don't know... if it's quarantined, I can't get in there, and I'm not sure it's a good idea if I could. Let people take care of things, and as soon as it's safe, we'll get you out. Maybe you can do something to help out – you seem to like doing that kind of thing.

Calling the Jedi

It sounds like a very serious situation, and precisely the kind of thing the Jedi should be involved in. Do

what you can to assist in the situation. As soon as it is safe, we can send a detachment in. The respirators sound like a good idea, but are they certain that the agent is not contact-infective? There should be teams on-site already who are trained for this kind of emergency. Do your best to protect the innocent, in the way that your judgment dictates.

Calling the Press

Yara Grugara is not available (nor will she be, in any LIVING FORCE event), but members of the press do find information about quarantine on Tilnes of great interest, and set up in orbit above Tilnes to observe everything in excruciating detail.

Please remind any "hero" who attempts to profit from the potential disaster on Tilnes that this is greed, that greed is the path to the dark side, and that if they want to be greedy then they may find themselves qualifying for a DSP. Notifying the press is one thing. Attempting to profit from such notification, when innocent people may die and widespread panic may ensue, is not the kind of thing a hero would do.

Be creative and handle other possibilities in accord with these general approaches. Just don't let this section lag too much, as there is much for heroes to do below.

After he describes the problem, Khash begs once more for the heroes to help. What VMMC really needs is someone to go down, into the "abandoned" Cartel base, and find out what they can about what's happening. VMMC won't send any of its own staff (that would amount to admitting they knew), but if an intrepid band of adventurers took it upon themselves to investigate a weak distress signal and then found something...

Note that Khash is painfully aware of the situation he's putting himself in. He has a scrambler in his pocket that keeps holorecorders and recording rods from being able to capture anything he says or does; the devices seem to be working fine at the time, but on playback, there is nothing.

We're hoping, of course, that the heroes agree to help. If not, Khash reluctantly offers 500 credits per hero if they investigate the distress call. It's coming out of his own pocket, and he can offer no more. If nothing persuades them to investigate, warn them that their "heroes" are going to be sitting in quarantine for a few hours. Allow them to reconsider. If the characters do nothing, eventually Ko Bas finds his way to the landing bay, and innocent lives are likely to be lost. The majority of LIVING FORCE players enjoy cinematic heroics, and we don't think it is very likely that they'll refuse to investigate, so we haven't provided specific guidelines or tactics. Use the tactics and stats from Encounter 5 and improvise as needed. Once they've

encountered Ko Bas, they should be motivated to go below and investigate, but if they don't you can bring up the NPCs, stats and tactics from Encounter 7.

Assuming they accept the request/challenge to investigate... Armed with a datachip from Khash, getting to the entrance to the Cartel base is simple. Getting through the security system... that's more challenging. It used to be straightforward, but the EMP short-circuited the system in a bizarre fashion; the Disable Device DC to bypass the electronic security is 22/27/32 (+2 synergy bonus for 5+ ranks in Computer Use applies, and no more than two other heroes can "aid another" on this task). The other complicating factor is that the EMP shut down power to the door, so in order to open the electronic lock, they first need to bring the door back online (Computer Use or Repair, DC 10/15/20). Alternately, they can just blast through the door, which has Hardness 15 and 150 WP. Either way leads them to a fairly unpleasant discovery.

Encounter 3: Queasy

Key idea of this encounter: discovery of the Cartel's secret base, a chance to slice their computer systems, and a lot of very small bodies

Please tailor this encounter and the next to your group. The descriptions provided in the text are about the most explicit you ever need use, but do NOT feel obligated to use them if your players are likely to find them too disturbing, or if there are very young players at your table. You can create just as much tension and anxiety with only a few choice descriptors as you can by drawing out, in graphic detail, the horror of a situation. Remember... it's what gets *left to the imagination* that's truly horrifying. The human brain is remarkably adept at filling in unpleasant details. A diagram of the relevant sections of the Cartel's base is included as GM Aid 1.

The doors slide open into the Cartel's base, and bodies piled on bodies greet the heroes. All of them are small, some of them are still pinkish, and where faces are visible they wear frozen grins of pain and fear. Decomposition has begun to set in, and the stench from spreading, sticky puddles of ooze would be just about unbearable if the heroes weren't using personal respirators (**time remaining on respirators at this point = time remaining in the slot OR 2:45 if you're running in an environment where time slots don't matter**). There are scratches on the walls beside the doors, as well as the floor in front of the doors and the doors themselves, where the Caarites tried (with great futility) to claw their way out when the base sealed, following the release of the virus.

A huge bank of computers occupies the left (north)

wall, and the rest of the room is bodies. All of the bodies here are Caarites. The two primary things that can be done in this location are a thorough scouring (Search checks) of the area, and an attempt to slice into the Cartel computer, to determine what they were still doing on Tilnes.

Searching the Area

This is unpleasant work. Results, along with Search check DCs, are listed in the table below. As with all such tables in LF, individuals who achieve a higher result notice all of the lower-DC information as well, but you should start with the lowest check result at the table and build towards the highest, in order to include the maximum number of searching heroes. Remind the heroes that they can take 20 on their Search checks (which is why there aren't any results for less than 20 on the table).

Search DC	What is found
20	There are dead Caarites everywhere, and they seem to have been dead for a while. They look like they've been moved since they died.
22	They have standard bits and pieces of gear, but all the electronic apparati have had their circuitry fried beyond repair. All of the bodies wear standard Cartel ID badges, which deactivated when their wearers died.
25	Some of the Caarites have what look like bite marks taken out of their flesh. There are signs that someone – or something – has been moving through here in the last day.
30	One of the Caarites near the computer bank is cradling a smashed silver casing – it looks like the remnants of a smashed, bashed, fried, and melted hard drive. (Note to GM: All data on this drive are non-recoverable.)
35	The bite marks are consistent with Caarite dentition, only larger (that is, it looks like whatever was nibbling on these was an enormous Caarite).

Medically inclined heroes (who should have a great deal to do in this adventure), can roll Treat Injury checks to determine additional information about the bodies. Recall that heroes can "Take 10" in Treat Injury, but not 20.

Treat Injury DC	Information Gained
11	Yup. They're dead and have been for a while.
15	It's probably viral – most likely what

Treat Injury DC	Information Gained
	got released into the ventilation system, though no one in the docking bay died. Mode of transmission indeterminate.
20	No, wait – definitely an inhaled virus. Whatever killed them took its time, though. A very unpleasant way to go.
25	They’ve been dead for about two weeks.
30	It looks like the virus may have had some mutational properties as well. Hard to say exactly what, though.

If the heroes want to communicate with the surface, they’ll have to step outside the Cartel base. There is only one communications frequency functioning down here, and the odds of stumbling across it are 5,327 to 1, since the EMP destroyed the Cartel’s own communication system. The Cartel didn’t want anyone catching them communicating from the secret base. If the heroes just step right outside the main door, they’ll be able to get in touch with Khash (or anyone else they need to) without problems.

Slicing the Computer System

First, the power to this system needs to be brought back online (Repair (DC10) or Computer Use check (DC 15)). The key data on the Cartel’s project here are on the ruined hard drive and are unrecoverable. What can be found is the personal log of Celis Bol, a Caarite technician assigned to this station. It is included as Player Handout 2. The Computer Use DC to find this is 15/20/25.

Encounter 4: Abattoir

Key ideas of this encounter: a call for help from deeper in the base alerts the heroes that someone may still be alive here; they find a horrible scene and learn more about recent incursions into the base

Once the heroes have checked out the bodies and had the chance (whether or not they took it) to slice the computer system, read the following:

From somewhere down the corridor to the south, you hear a scream – part pain and part terror that cuts off in mid-breath!

It’s most probable that the heroes are going to rush straight to Encounter 5, find Ko Bas on the far side of his “kitchen,” and locate the still-intact explosive device before they have a chance to search the various portions of the base. That’s fine. The GM is

encouraged to map the portions of the base that the heroes see as they pass through them; all doors are initially closed, though they are old-fashioned “manual” doors and can be opened easily enough as the heroes go. There are no further screams; the last of the Believers that Ko Bas had captured was just killed, and the only surviving Believers are hiding, with the other Caarites, to be met in Encounter 7.

There are a number of “pieces” to the Cartel base, some of which are more relevant than others. On the map, there are three offices (including Ko Bas’s), a security office, and Ko Bas’s lair and “kitchen.” The security office is almost completely undetectable from outside. The entrance to it is denoted with an “S” to demonstrate that the door is, in fact, secret, and requires a DC 42 Search check to locate; don’t ASK for Search checks, but do pay attention to what the players roll if they elect to search. This is where the antagonists for Encounter 7 have holed up – their stats and details are in that encounter. The base was constructed such that the security office would be difficult to get to, and it is even more so under the current circumstances. Regardless, there are plenty of other things for the heroes to explore.

The Offices

The offices that did not belong to Ko Bas have been thoroughly tossed. Everything electronic in them looks to have exploded, melted, or been otherwise mangled. The most interesting thing about both offices is that there are no bodies in either of them; the first contains five workstations, and the second seven, but there are no bodies in either.

Ko Bas’s Office

There is no body in this room, either; only a single workstation, and a silhouette on the far wall in the shape of a Caarite. (To help you imagine it, think of what it looks like when a cartoon character runs through a wall; that’s what the blast outline of Ko Bas looks like.) A thin blue residue covers most of the flat surfaces. It’s plain to anyone that there was an explosion here.

A Demolition skill check (DC 15/19/23) reveals that the explosion was designed to spread a chemical agent more than to do actual physical damage. It would seem, from the pattern of scorch marks and the silhouette, that the explosion was triggered on the desk and the individual opening it took the main force of the blast – and whatever it was designed to deliver. Searching (DC 10/15/20 Search) shows that small fragments of the explosive device remain, most of them melded to what looks like it might have been the inside of some kind of case (maybe a briefcase, maybe something as small as a PDA case). There aren’t enough pieces left to put it all together again, but even

fragments may prove useful. If the heroes search the desk, they can find stationary with Ko Bas's name on it, and his title – Overseer of Cartel Operations, Tilnes Special Detachment.

There is nothing else of interest in Ko Bas's office.

Ko Bas's Kitchen

Please be mindful of the players' sensitivity and exercise discretion describing the contents of this room. The circumstances are horrifying, but it's the heroes, not the players, who should be distressed.

Ko Bas and the other two surviving, mutated Caarites have collected all of the bodies except the ones in the front room. They simply haven't gotten around to the front room yet, since they've been sticking to the deeper areas and avoiding the main doors. The bodies they have gathered are stored in this room.

Some of the bodies are stacked, some hang on the walls, others are seated in chairs. Since this room is about 30 degrees colder than the remainder of the facility the decomposition is not severe.

In among the Caarite bodies are three Human bodies. Examining them (DC 15 Treat Injury) reveals that they have been dead a short time – less than one hour, in fact. None of them are recent enough kills to have been the screamer, though. One of them (Spot check, DC 15) has had his shirt ripped away, revealing a strange tattoo on the front of his right shoulder. Any hero who played the LIVING FORCE event “A Dark Fortress” or who makes a DC 15 Knowledge: Jedi Lore or DC 30 Knowledge: Local recognizes the tattoo as depicting the spire of the Sith fortress, rising from the sands of Almas. A lightsaber handle – cracked in two – forms the base of the spire. Both of the other Human bodies have this same tattoo.

All of this may occur later, though (or not at all) if the heroes rush through the room filled with piles of dead bodies and into the corridor to the south. It is here that Ko Bas is busy devouring his latest victim.

Encounter 5: Quarry

Key idea of this encounter: discovering what the virus did to at least one Caarite it did not kill, the heroes must face Ko Bas, who is currently in a blood rage and wants only to kill and feed

Ko Bas survived the release of the virus, but only through a fluke. He is no longer the backstabbing, manipulative, social-climbing Caarite who longs to lead the Cartel. The blast made him bigger (he's about 2.5 meters tall, with enormous, long arms and vicious teeth), stronger, and faster, and he's been trapped in these tunnels with two other survivors (similarly mutated) for the two weeks since the virus was

released. The survivors were quite happy when half-a-dozen Humans (all members of the Believers, the Sith-revering cult that has emerged in Cularin) came to this place three short hours ago. Their food supply is beginning to spoil, and eventually the mutants would have had to eat one another.

In terms of raw physical appearance, Ko Bas is grotesque. All that remains of his Cartel uniform is a shredded pair of pants. His upper body is thick and powerful, his arms ending in rancor-like claws. His head is elongated, and his mouth is as wide as ever. What passes for a smile on most Caarites looks like a hungry grin on mutants like Ko Bas – which is, frankly, exactly what it is.

In running the ensuing combat, bear in mind that this is the “warm-up” fight. Ko Bas looks exactly like the other mutant Caarites, while being substantially more capable (due to possessing more levels, and having a few of them in an heroic class), so this is also a small mind game to play with the players. When they see a pair of mutant Caarites in Encounter 7, it ought to worry them.

Ko Bas's tactics should vary based on the group you are running and the tier you are in. Groups that want to fight can certainly do so; groups that would rather stand back and lob grenades, blast him, or try to use Force abilities on him, can also do so. He cannot be reasoned with since more than anything else he's mad, hungry, and confused. He doesn't believe he has any friends who aren't Caarites, and so gains a +4 Insanity bonus to saves vs. Friendship from non-Caarites.

Low Tier

In low tier (levels 1-3), Ko Bas is both fatigued (per the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game Revised Core Rulebook*) and poisoned (10 points of Constitution damage – ouch!). He fought one of the Believers and didn't come out of it too well, having also had an arm broken in the bargain. All of these changes are reflected in his stat block in GM Aid 2.

He's feeding when the heroes find him, and depending on the capability of the party (your call), he either closes with them (no charging or running, as he is fatigued) or throws bones and rocks at them to keep them away. He's not going to surrender, and there isn't enough of his brain left to be useful even if he did. For all that he looks big and scary, he's actually a rather pathetic creature who's been reduced to cannibalizing the bodies of his former co-workers, and who is now looking for other sources of food.

Middle Tier

In middle tier (average character level 4-6), Ko Bas is fatigued, but made his saves against the poison. He is also angry (per the “Maddened” template in *Star Wars Roleplaying Game - Alien Anthology*. See GM Aid 3

for more information on the “Maddened” template. The stats have already been adjusted.) Thus, while he’s not at full vitality, he’s much more of a force to be reckoned with.

Again, though, his tactics depend on your group. He’s still feeding, and may elect to throw things at the heroes. He remains fatigued and incapable of running or charging them.

Upper Tier

In upper tier (levels 7-9), Ko Bas is slightly winded from taking out the Believer, but has not taken wound damage, and thus is not fatigued. He has full access to his faculties in this tier, including his martial arts abilities. In combat, he attacks the biggest threat first (anyone with a lightsaber qualifies, as does anyone wielding a very large gun; he’s crazed, but he knows what shiny sticks and really large guns are). If multiple “big threats” exist, you can have him go after the hero *you* know to be most combat-capable. Use your best judgment. Again, this is a warm-up fight, though it’s possible he might knock someone out (given his damage and threat range).

Do your best not to let him crit a single hero more than once in a round: at 1d10+6 a pop, plus Power Attack and whatever other bonuses he currently has, that just gets ugly.)

For all his potential ugliness, though, Ko Bas is still just one creature, and can reasonably be taken out by one critical hit. That’s fine. If the heroes look really bad, the heroes can discover a pack with a number of medpacs in it buried under some rubble nearby. They’re still under a time crunch and shouldn’t wait around to rest and regain vitality. **(Time remaining on personal respirators = time remaining in the slot, or 1:15 if you are running without time limits.)**

Encounter 6: Antidote?

Key ideas of this encounter: the tunnels lead deeper into Tilnes, but all that the heroes need is actually right here, in Ko Bas’s lair; a “fresh” bomb, containing the viral agent, with its circuitry intact

While the map does not continue down into Tilnes, the tunnels do. Below is a hive of tunnels and caverns, including the quarters for most of the personnel. It appears that the Cartel had between 100 and 150 Caarites stationed here at the time of the incident.

None of what’s below really matters, though. That’s why there is no map provided. What’s important is hidden beneath the rubble in Ko Bas’s lair, tossed aside as he killed his most recent victim. A Search of the area reveals numerous datachips (burnt-out), blaster pistols and hold-out blasters (also burnt-out, with much

oozing of power cells), datapads (melted into irreparable goo) and various other bits and pieces of electronics. Of it all, though, there’s only one thing that works (DC 15/20/25 Search check).

If they succeed, read or paraphrase:

Lifting a chunk of – well, you’re not completely sure you want to know what it was – near the body of Ko Bas’ victim, you discover a silver case with a trio of red lights flickering on its side. A small latch on one edge seems to be a means of opening the case.

If the players don’t realize the importance of this find, allow them to roll Intelligence checks; the individual with the highest check result realizes that this is the **ONLY** thing they’ve seen since they came in that seems to be working. All the other electronic gear they’ve wanted to examine has had to have its power restored prior to usage, and anything with portable power cells went into meltdown mode. Which means... that this case probably wasn’t on Tilnes when the EMP went off.

When the heroes open the case (there are no countermeasures), they find a series of tubes filled with a swirling green gas; tucked in amongst the tubes are small packets of explosives.

An individual with the Demolitions skill examining this case can (DC 13/15/17) identify that the explosives can be disconnected from the tubes, but it’s not safe to remove the tubes from the case itself without knowing what’s inside.

You, the GM, know exactly what it is. It’s a second dose of the virus, brought in case the first hadn’t worked. Unfortunately, the Believer who was carrying it became a light snack for Ko Bas, and now the case is just lying around, waiting for a trigger.

Disabling the explosives is fairly simple (DC 15/18/21 Disable Device), but the gas can still be released if it’s removed from the safety of its suspension matrix (your Demolitions expert, or, barring that, anyone with substantial electronics knowledge, can come to this conclusion). It’s probably not unreasonable for the heroes to decide that this is something they need to take back out, to get tested. Not unreasonable at all.

Unfortunately, someone else has other ideas.

Encounter 7: Quarrel

Key ideas of this encounter: Osia and Aris, the two surviving Believers, having mentally controlled the two surviving mutant Caarites, attempt to stop the heroes as they make their exit from the base – and as they do, another of Tilnes’s famous EMPs goes off

While the heroes battled Ko Bas (and possibly explored

the easily accessible offices and his lair), others were busy elsewhere. Osia and Aris are the two surviving members of the Believer party that came to this base in order to make sure the "test" of the virus worked. They, like the heroes, encountered Ko Bas in his lair. While the mutant Caarite savaged their slower companions, they stumbled into the complex's hidden security office. They found refuge from Ko Bas, but also two more mutant Caarites. Using Affect Mind and speaking in Caarite, they have successfully dominated the two Caarites (we'll call them, for the sake of brevity, U and G, since if they had names, even they no longer know them).

Osia and Aris have been trying to bypass the computer security so they could escape, but unfortunately the technician they brought with them was one of the first snacks for the mutant Caarites.

About the time the heroes began their encounter with Ko Bas, U ran into a series of plugs, jarring them back into connection and allowing the security system to come back online. Osia and Aris watched as the heroes defeated Ko Bas and found the missing bomb.

Osia and Aris can't let the heroes out of this place with the bomb -- too much hinges on this virus remaining secret. Moving quickly, they set up an ambush for the heroes, back in the main room through which the heroes entered the base.

When the heroes arrive at that room on their way out, they are greeted by a layout like that shown in GM Aid 4. Osia has (villain's privilege) a brief speech (sacrificing the surprise advantage of the ambush), while Aris readies an action to Move Object any grenades the heroes might throw. Then the fun begins.

If you are running a low level party of 3, drop one of the Caarites from this fight. Alter the suggested text to say "one more mutant Caarite". We don't want a bloodbath -- we want a challenge. Remember -- just because you *can* kill heroes doesn't mean you *should* kill heroes. If the death is grand, cinematic and heroic (or if the hero is too dumb to live), that's fine. This wasn't written specifically to kill heroes, and it shouldn't be run that way.

If the heroes seem disinclined to return from their explorations, remind them that their air is limited. Be creative -- the Believers don't want to wait in ambush any longer than they must, since they're wearing personal respirators as well. If nothing else works, you could try an artful cry for help to get their attention. The heroes enter the map (GM Aid 4) from the bottom right corner.

You return to the room you first entered when you came to this complex. Awaiting you is an unpleasant surprise. Two more mutant Caarites, and two very alive Human men (both wearing personal respirators),

stand between you and the exit. One of the men speaks.

"Leave what you have found, and we won't kill you." He looks almost disappointed. [It's more than "almost" disappointed if there are any Jedi in the group.]

If the heroes want to drop everything they've picked up and walk out, Osia and Aris are true to their word. They wait until the heroes have gone, pick up the bomb, and head up, through a different set of tunnels, to their ship.

Should a fight occur, the tactics for the first two rounds, by tier, are outlined below; deviate from them as befits your judgment.

Low Tier

(Assuming all 4 stat'd bad guys are present; if not, modify accordingly.)

Round 1: Aris will attempt to ready his action to Move Object the first grenade thrown at them back at the party (the Believers have heard how much the heroes of Cularin like stun grenades). Osia shouts a command in Caarite to the two controlled mutants (anyone who speaks Caarite understands it: "Kill them!") and uses Enhance Ability to enhance his own Dexterity. The two Caarites (who hold until Osia's action) either charge and engage, or simply engage any hero who has already moved up to melee them.

After everyone has acted in Round 1, the EMP goes off. Refer to the "EMP Effects" section below, and depending on what happens, modify the villains' actions in Round 2.

Round 2: Aris readies an action to Move Object an incoming grenade, and Osia attempts to Move Object on the bomb (if it's visible) or, if not, on the most threatening weapon he can see. The Caarites continue to attack.

The first individual to enter melee with Osia or Aris gets a Force Grip for his/her trouble. They may not be much in melee, but in their experience this sends most things scurrying backward. Further threats are met with Affect Mind (they don't have that many VP!).

Middle Tier

Round 1: Aris readies an action to Move Object the first grenade thrown at them back at the party (the Believers have heard about how much the heroes of Cularin like stun grenades). Osia shouts a command in Caarite to the two controlled mutants (anyone who speaks Caarite understands it: "Kill them!") and uses Force Mind to give +2 to the Strength scores of U, G, and Osia. The two Caarites (who hold until Osia's action) either charge and engage, or simply engage any hero who has already moved up to melee them.

After everyone has acted in Round 1, the EMP goes off. Refer to the “EMP Effects” section below, and depending on what happens, modify the villains’ actions in Round 2.

Round 2: Aris readies an action to Move Object an incoming grenade, and Osia attempts to Move Object on the bomb (if it’s visible) or, if someone has ignited a lightsaber, he skips trying to get the box and uses Fear on the nearest Jedi. If the bomb is not visible and there are no obvious Jedi, Osia uses his own Force Mind to give +2 to the Dexterity scores of the Caarites and Aris (otherwise, he does this in Round 3, unless otherwise occupied). The Caarites continue to attack.

Individuals entering melee with Osia or Aris are first met with Fear, and then Force Grip the next round. They may not be much in melee, but in their experience this sends most things scurrying backward. Further threats are met with Affect Mind (they don’t have enough VP to use Force Grip continually).

Upper Tier

Round 1: Aris readies an action to Move Object the first grenade thrown at them back at the party (the Believers have heard about how much the heroes of Cularin like stun grenades). Osia shouts a command in Caarite to the two controlled mutants (anyone who speaks Caarite understands it: “Kill them!”) and uses Force Mind to give +2 to the Strength scores of U, G, and Osia. The two Caarites (who hold until Osia’s action) enter their Rage and either charge and engage, or simply engage any hero who has already moved up to melee them.

After everyone has acted in Round 1, the EMP goes off. Refer to the “EMP Effects” section below, and depending on what happens, modify the villains’ actions in Round 2.

Round 2: Aris readies an action to Move Object an incoming grenade, and Osia uses Fear on the nearest Jedi. If there are no obvious Jedi, Osia uses his own Force Mind to give +2 to the Dexterity scores of the Caarites and Aris (otherwise, he does this in Round 3, unless otherwise occupied). The Caarites continue to attack.

Individuals entering melee with Osia or Aris are first met with Fear, and then Force Grip the next round. They may not be much in melee, but in their experience this sends most things scurrying backward.

Osia and Aris firmly believe that Fear is their ally, and use it like it’s going out of style. Even a Jedi, with enough penalties, has trouble hitting things, and in this tier the Believers can max out their Fear checks better than half the time.

EMP Effects

After Round 1 of the combat, read this:

From somewhere far beneath you, a low humming begins. The walls begin to glow, and then you feel a rush of energy blast through the cavern!

As soon as the EMP goes off, ask what the heroes are doing. If no one says, “I’m checking the bomb!” then things are going to get really, REALLY interesting – since the suspension matrix in which the virus was being held has lost integrity and the virus is about to be released.

Beyond that, you need to have the heroes do a quick check of what’s still working. Any object with a power cell – and yes, this includes lightsabers – has a chance to be turned off by the EMP (the save an item needs to make to prevent being turned off is Fortitude, DC 15). The only ones that are relevant for this combat are the personal respirators (which save at +5, or per the hero’s Fortitude save, whichever is better), blasters of any type (which save at +9, or per the hero), and lightsabers (which save at +12, or per the hero).

It takes one round to change the power cell in a blaster and two for the energy cell of a lightsaber and both can provoke an attack of opportunity).

Anyone who takes that round to check the bomb will find that it has powered down, and the gas has begun to percolate at one end of the tubes, which are expanding. A Repair or Disable Device check (DC 12/15/18) can keep the bomb from going off. There are other alternatives, including the classic “I throw myself on top of the bomb to protect everyone else!” Doing this means that the hero who elects to throw him- or herself on the bomb has voluntarily failed both saving throws against the virus (see below), but has managed to absorb ALL of the virus that was coming out. This is worth a Force point.

Don’t forget to roll for Osia and Aris’s respirators and weapons (powered non-blaster weapons also use the +9 or per the hero/NPC rule). They’re just as vulnerable to the effects of the virus as any of the heroes.

Even if the bomb releases the virus, there are still traces of the virus left in the containment tubes (Search or Spot, DC 10), so the heroes still have a sample available to them to take back.

If the virus gets released, everyone present except the Caarites (who are immune to the virus; it’s part of having been mutated by it) must make a Fortitude save, DC 10/12/14.

Note that this save is ONLY relevant for individuals whose respirators *failed* their saves, or who threw themselves atop the bomb to keep it from harming everyone else. Failing the save means the hero is dazed (can take no actions but can still defend him/herself normally) for 1d3 rounds. Any hero who failed the first save must make a second save (DC 12/15/18) one round later, or take 1d6 Constitution

damage and be stunned for 1d4+1 rounds (this does, at least, negate any remaining daze effect).

If the party is all knocked out, one way or another, the Believers simply collect what is left of the bomb and leave, taking the Caarites with them. They had no instructions to kill non-Caarites, and doing so would likely bring much more trouble than wiping out the Caarites – who are, let's face it, pretty unpopular to begin with.

If the party manages to capture Osia or Aris (who both have the same tattoo in the same spot as the other Human bodies), the Believers do their best to Force Grip themselves to death, voluntarily failing all their saving throws. The best way to keep them from doing this is to knock them out or use Affect Mind to stop them from trying to kill themselves; any Force Sensitive hero can roll a Wisdom check (DC 10) to realize what one of the captured Believers is doing. Ultimately, Osia and Aris know little; they met in a bar on Tolea Biqua, the rest of the crew joined up there as well, someone else brought the bomb, and they came here to check things out. They don't know who is in charge (the Believers are purposely kept ignorant of important facts like that, if they are going to be doing field work), and they don't know why the Caarites were targeted. They don't even know where they were supposed to rendezvous to drop off any information they gained; their pilot and co-pilot are both dead. They do know that death and destruction is coming to all Unbelievers.

The two mutant Caarites are utterly useless as sources of information, though they may be useful from a research perspective, to see what the virus did to them and how they might have been different from the standard Caarites, who simply died.

Finally, it is also possible that if the fight looks to be going particularly badly, Osia and/or Aris simply flee. They are closest to the door, after all, and if they can get out, shut it, and blast the controls. They prefer that solution to being captured or killed.

Whether the heroes have captured or killed all of their opponents, whether the opponents have fled, or whether the heroes were all knocked out, the dust soon clears and the heroes can make their way back to the surface.

Conclusion

You make your way back to the docking bay as a team in full protective suits exits a newly arrived ship. You are hustled on board, congratulated, and treatments begin...

Whether the heroes succeeded in retrieving a sample of the virus or not, they get treated for exposure to the

virus. Frankly, they've been exposed recently enough that even if the bomb went off and they didn't find the traces left in the tubes, the virus is still active *in the heroes*.

The heroes are thanked for their bravery, and congratulated on their ingenuity; who would have thought that the Cartel might still be down there? Well done, to go and investigate!

Any mention of Khash, though, is met with blank looks. He is nowhere to be found, and since he was the only person the heroes talked to who linked the Cartel with VMMC, any such linkage the heroes attempt to make is waved off. The party line? "Of course it was just the Cartel, being the Cartel. VMMC had no knowledge of the Cartel's continued occupation of Tilnes, and regret that our scanners had not detected this duplicity long ago."

Any hero who is (a) interested and (b) qualified will be offered a chance to assist in research into the virus. Qualified means the hero must possess at least 5 ranks (not +5 total; they must have spent at least 5 skill points) in Treat Injury. Before any heroes accept, tell them that doing this they are spending enough time that they do not receive their usual income (certed employment, profession, entertain or gamble) from the next scenario played. If they're still interested, the heroes who choose to assist in the research receive two medpacs each, and are given a Naescorcom P7 trauma kit and a field cauterizer (see treasure summary). Only the heroes who receive the trauma kit and field cauterizer have the penalty to income in the next scenario played.

All heroes receive 500 credits each from a grateful VMMC.

A virus designed to specifically target Caarites, to kill them (not to mutate them). It's quite a feat of bio-engineering. The question is, who hates the Cartel that much?

Or, perhaps... who doesn't?

Here Ends Caaried Away

Experience Point Summary

Experience is calculated as follows for Living Force events.

- 1) Experience awards in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* are not made for achieving objectives, but instead for successfully completing an adventure of a given length. Thus, if the heroes survived and accomplished the primary goal of the adventure, they receive full adventure experience (600 XP for core LF plot scenarios, 350 for non-core LF scenarios).

- 2) Assign discretionary role-playing experience (0-400 points). These should reward accurate character portrayal throughout the adventure, not just how well the PC interacted socially. Do NOT automatically award max roleplaying XP, consider carefully how well the players stayed in-character. This is your opportunity to reward appropriately cinematic behavior, so use it!

Adventure Experience Award:

Did the heroes learn of the Believers' involvement and retrieve the new viral bomb? If so, each hero who survived receives 600 xp.

Adventure Experience:	600 XP
Roleplaying Experience:	0-400 XP

Total Possible Experience:	1,000 XP
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If the heroes did not complete the scenario because of time constraints, but were "on the right track," you may award ½ adventure experience. If the heroes succeeded in learning of the Believers' involvement, but did not retrieve an active sample of the virus, award them ¾ adventure experience.

Loot Summary

If it's not on this list, the heroes cannot keep it. This is a house rule that overrides what they may actually encounter in the scenario.

Viral Mutation (1 per hero): While on Tilnes during an accidental release of an unknown virus, the hero above was exposed to the mutagen. While the hero has recovered without any unpleasant symptoms, it seems there is a lasting effect. Since returning, the hero is stronger/faster/hardier.

[In game mechanic terms, one physical stat (Strength, Dexterity or Constitution) is improved by +1. This is a permanent increase, and must be chosen before the player leaves the table. Mark the stat chosen below. No hero may have more than one of these.]

+1 Strength +1 Dexterity +1 Constitution

Naescorcom P7 Trauma Kit: The hero named above went above and beyond the call of duty in working to identify the virus that killed the Caarites beneath Tilnes and was rewarded with this trauma kit, which grants a +4 equipment bonus on all Treat Injury checks attempted by the hero. (This is the Republic Era equivalent of the BioTech RFX/K Medisensor described in the page 93 of the *Star Wars Arms & Equipment Guide*.) The work involved in the creation of the antivirus took enough time that the hero may not take cert income or make any income roll at the

beginning of their next scenario played. Please record the adventure in which the hero lost their certed income/Income roll in the blank below.

Nilar Med/Tech Corporation Field Cauterizer: (Per the *Star Wars Arms & Equipment Guide*, page 93.)

The Field Cauterizer is a slender rod 16 centimeters long with a button on one end. When activated, it emits a low-frequency laser that disinfects and cauterizes wounds.

Using the Field Cauterizer as part of a Treat Injury check gives a patient a +3 bonus on any Fortitude saves made against diseases from the wound. The use must occur within 24 hours of sustaining the wound.

The cauterizer can also be used to help stabilize a dying character. Use of the cauterizer grants the patient a +3 equipment bonus on his Fortitude save to become stable. This function of the cauterizer can be used only once per dying character.

Player Handout 1: Feeling a bit odd...

THIS PART OF THE HANDOUT DOES NOT GET GIVEN TO PLAYERS: Please cut up the sections below and give them to the players, based on the species of their hero. It describes how they're feeling after exposure to whatever was released through the ventilation system, following the EMP. Note that the symptoms only persist until the heroes have been on "clean air" for about thirty minutes (or, in game-time terms, they feel better around the time Encounter 3 starts).

HUMAN

You feel somewhat queasy, like you accidentally ate something a mynock had slimed. You don't hurt, you just don't feel... good. Nausea is still a step beyond what you're experiencing, but it's not a big step. Fresh air sounds like a good idea.

SULLUSTAN or TRANDOSHAN

It's like someone dipped you in a vat of bantha lard. Your skin just feels... ick. Very unpleasant. You want to wash, but even when you wash, it still doesn't feel like you're clean. Not for long, at least. Fresh air. Yum.

CEREAN

You feel bad. You feel good. Your brain can't decide how it feels. You think you might have a low-grade fever... but only in one lobe. You're very thirsty.

TARASIN

You're turning yellow. It's not a happy yellow. You're also seeing spots. They came on slowly, and now they're pulsing in time with your heartbeat. You can ignore them, for the most part, but whenever you start to get worked up the spots get brighter.

WOOKIEE

You itch. Boy, do you itch. Ever want to just start pulling out big handfuls of fur to get at the itchy skin underneath? Well, you do now. Of course, if you actually DO pull out a handful of fur, it would hurt. A lot. You know what really itches? Your lungs. That can't be good. You also feel a huge cough coming on – though it might be a hairball.

KEL DOR

You're wearing a breathing mask already, and are just happy it survived the EMP. Everyone else around you is acting a little strange, though. Which is, in Cularin, not all that unusual.

RODIAN or DUROS

You never thought it could be possible, but your eyes are cold. How do eyes get cold? Do we even have nerve endings in our eyes to tell us things like that? You're also feeling a little congested. Something's not right here. Not right at all.

TWI'LEK or ZABRAK

You have produced an unseemly quantity of saliva over the past few minutes. At first, it seemed like nothing, but now... now, it's getting hard to speak, because of all the liquid in your mouth. Do you need a respirator, or an aquata breather?

ITHORIAN

You feel downright sly! So much energy, so much to do, so little time! Is it odd? Well, maybe a little – but who cares!

GUNGAN

Yousa not so sure about dis Tilnes place. Itsa bombad, yousa tink. And deesa peoples... deysa not knowin' what deysa doin'? All runnin' around and talkin' and doin' tings – why deysa not askin' yousa for helpin'? Da only peoples here dat's got any sense at all is da peoples yousa comin' wit. Everyone else is bein' incompetent!

BOTHAN

You have a curious desire to share secrets with other people – and not charge for it. With some work, perhaps you can do this without revealing too much of your own history, while telling plenty about other people you've met... but does it really matter? Oh, my... perhaps you should get some fresh air. Those just aren't normal thoughts.

OTHER SPECIES

GM's option. Be creative (the Ortolan may have a craving for diet pills), but kind – don't abuse the heroes TOO much!

Player Handout 2: Celis Bol's Personal Log

[21 days ago]

I can't believe I've been here four months. I want to go back to Caarimon. It's not natural, to hide ourselves below the surface of this rock! We should be out in the light of the suns, arranging trade agreements – not hiding and watching a bunch of wood-loving freaks. There are only so many ways I can keep this job interesting. Scramble this, descramble that, track shipments, do inventory – there is more to running a great trade alliance than hiding. There must be. Are we not one of the most powerful trading concerns in what remains of the Republic?

[20 days ago]

Envoy Loogg spoke today over the Caarite holonet. All seems to be going well. There is prosperity at home, and the alliances he had sought to forge are stronger than ever. As the galaxy divides itself, it is those who stay out of the conflict who will be strongest when the smoke clears. Let the Loyalists and the Separatists kill one another, and when the winner emerges, weak from the fight, those who were wise from the outset will be there, waiting.

Not that wise Envoy Loogg said as much, of course. But that's what everyone believes. Long live the Cartel!

[18 days ago]

Ko Bas asked me to boil bean juice for him today. Is that all I am? A bean juice boiler? I showed him, though – a little spittle in the bean juice may be just what Ko Bas needs.

[16 days ago]

Paycheck docked. Blast Ko Bas and his blasted purifier! They threatened to make me program the bean juice boiler to detect the presence of impurities, and I'd be tempted (since, doing the programming, I could refrain from defining my own spittle as an "impurity") if not for the fact that they have me working on the pseudonet encryption*. It's the most important project around, and I'm just happy they didn't take me off it. It just goes to show, I'm too good for boiling bean juice. I need to be more careful.

[14 days ago]

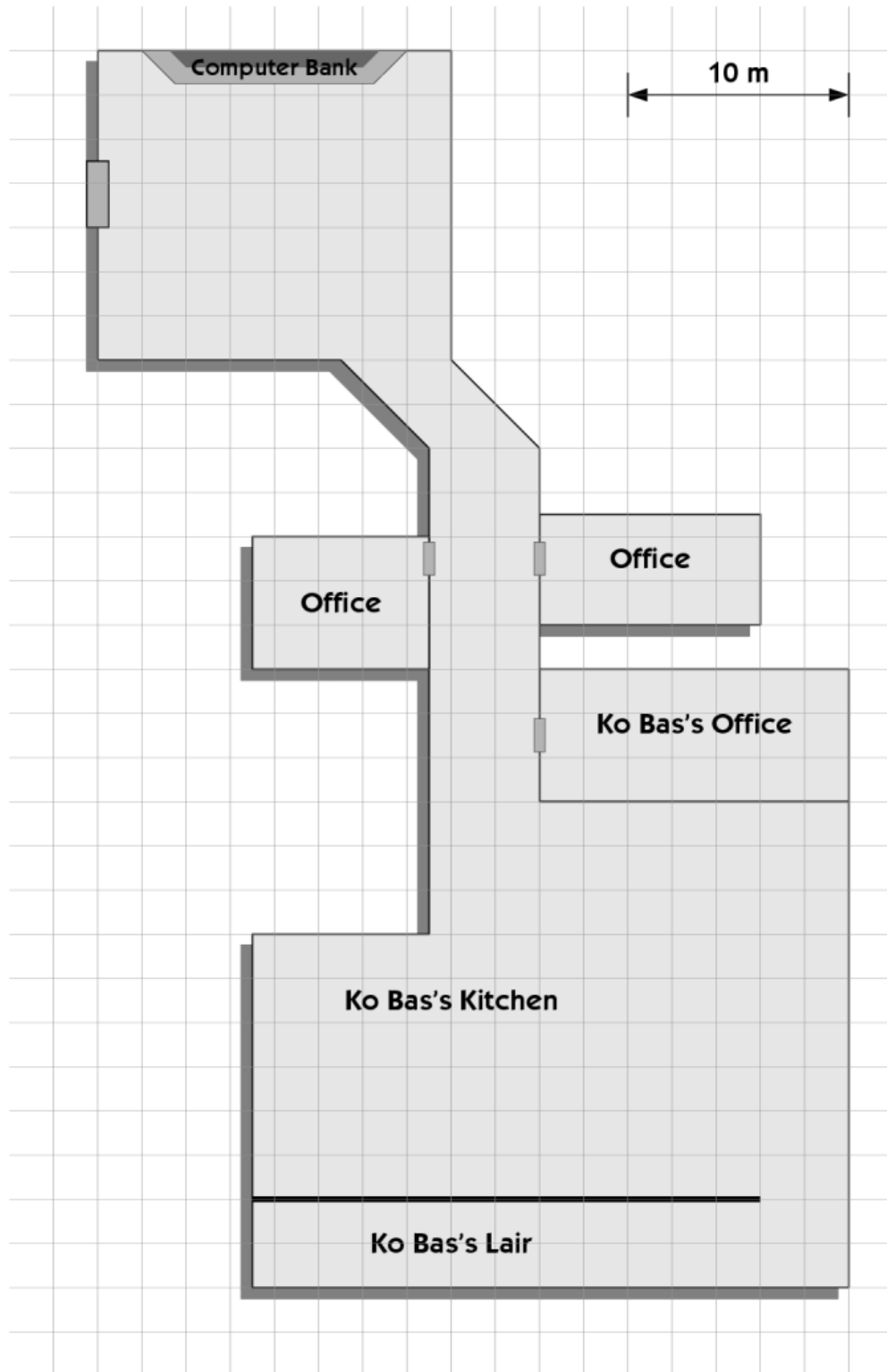
The visitors have gone. It makes all of us uneasy when outsiders are brought here. The people of Cularin really dislike us, and bringing in humans – even those who claim to be our allies – does not do great things for morale. I know that I – will complete this thought later. Explosion in south corridor, near Ko Bas's office. Should
oo
oo
oo**

<file end>

*: You, the hero, have never heard of "pseudonet encryption." Sounds interesting, but completely unfamiliar.

**:. The o's represent corrupted data.

DM Aid #1: Cartel Base Layout



DM Aid #2: NPC Stats

Encounter 5

Low Tier (levels 1-3)

Ko Bas: Mutated male Caarite Noble 5/Predator 5; IM +4 (+0 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Def 17 (+0 Dex, +3 natural, +4 class); Spd 10m; VP/WP 45/7; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+3, 1 claw) or +8/+3 ranged (1d3+3, hurled bones (range 15m)); SQ none; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +6; SZ M; Face/Reach 2 m by 2 m/2 m; Str 18 (16 due to Fatigued status), Dex 12 (10 due to Fatigued status), Con 18 (8 due to poison), Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Bluff +11, Computer Use +2, Diplomacy +8, Hide +7, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (Metatheran Cartel) +4, Move Silently +7, Profession (Bureaucrat) +9; Read/Write Caarite, Filordi, and Basic; Speak Caarite, Filordi, and Basic.*

Feats: Improved Initiative, Improved Martial Arts (in this tier, he has forgotten how to use this feat), Martial Arts (and this one as well), Power Attack, Skill Emphasis (Bluff), Skill Emphasis (Sense Motive), Weapon Group Proficiency (simple, blaster pistols).

Note: In this tier, Ko Bas just chased and barely overcame one of the Believers; this individual succeeded in breaking one of Ko Bas's arms and afflicting him with a contact poison that sapped 10 points of Constitution from the former administrator.

Ko Bas has taken wound damage, and is fatigued (cannot run or charge, -2 to Strength and Dexterity – already figured in above). **If you have a party of all first-level heroes**, it's also perfectly fine to let Ko Bas flee on their approach, since he's pretty badly injured, or to adjust his VP even further downward to provide an appropriate challenge.

* = in all tiers, Ko Bas and the other mutated Caarites only understand their native tongue; they cannot be communicated with in any language other than Caarite

Middle Tier (levels 4-6)

Ko Bas: Mutated maddened male Caarite Noble 5/Predator 5; IM +7 (+0 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative, +3 Maddened); Def 18 (+0 Dex, +4 natural, +4 class); Spd 10m; VP/WP 80/13; Atk +16/+11 melee (1d6+4, 2 claws) or +8/+3 ranged (1d3+4, hurled bones); SQ Rage (per Wookiee rage); SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +10; SZ M; Face/Reach 2 m by 2 m/2 m; Str 20 (18 due to Fatigued status), Dex 12 (10 due to Fatigued status), Con 18, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Bluff +7, Computer Use -2, Diplomacy +4, Hide +3, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (Metatheran Cartel) +0, Move Silently +3, Profession (Bureaucrat) +5; Read/Write Caarite, Filordi, and Basic; Speak Caarite, Filordi, and Basic.*

Feats: Improved Initiative, Improved Martial Arts

(in this tier, he has forgotten how to use this feat), Martial Arts (and this one as well), Power Attack, Skill Emphasis (Bluff), Skill Emphasis (Sense Motive), Weapon Group Proficiency (simple, blaster pistols).

Note: In this tier, Ko Bas has also taken wound damage and is fatigued (see above), but has full use of both of his arms. He has still forgotten how to use his martial arts knowledge, but he now has access to the Rage ability (per the Wookiee species trait). **If he looks like he would be tough enough to overwhelm your party**, feel free to have him hang back and throw bones at them rather than approaching and using his (fairly vicious) claw attacks.

* = in all tiers, Ko Bas and the other mutated Caarites only understand their native tongue; they cannot be communicated with in any language other than Caarite

Upper Tier (levels 7-9)

Ko Bas: Mutated maddened male Caarite Noble 5/Predator 5; IM +8 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative, +3 Maddened); Def 19 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, +4 class); Spd 10m; VP/WP 150/18; Atk +18/+13 melee (1d10+6/19-20, 2 claws) or +9/+4 ranged (1d3+6, hurled bones); SQ Rage (per Wookiee rage); SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +10; SZ M; Face/Reach 2 m by 2 m/2 m; Str 22, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Bluff +7, Computer Use -2, Diplomacy +4, Hide +3, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (Metatheran Cartel) +0, Move Silently +3, Profession (Bureaucrat) +5; Read/Write Caarite, Filordi, and Basic; Speak Caarite, Filordi, and Basic.*

Feats: Improved Initiative, Improved Martial Arts, Martial Arts, Power Attack, Skill Emphasis (Bluff), Skill Emphasis (Sense Motive), Weapon Group Proficiency (simple, blaster pistols).

* = in all tiers, Ko Bas and the other mutated Caarites only understand their native tongue; they cannot be communicated with in any language other than Caarite

Encounter 7

Low Tier (levels 1-3)

Unemployed Grunts: Mutated male Caarite Predator 1 (2); IM +2 (+2 Dex); Def 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural); Spd 10m; VP/WP 11/16; Atk +4 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws/20) or +3 ranged; SQ Rage (per Wookiee rage); SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +1; SZ M; Face/Reach 2 m by 2 m/2 m; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills: Climb +7, Listen +4, Spot +5; Read/Write Caarite, Filordi, and Basic; Speak Caarite, Filordi, and Basic.*

Feats: Power Attack.

Osia & Aris, Believers: Human Male Force Adept 1/Scoundrel 1; IM +4 (+4, Improved Initiative); Def 13 (+3 class); Spd 10m; VP/WP 13/12; Atk +0 melee (DC 15 stun, stun baton) or +0 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol); SQ Illicit Barter, DR 2; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +3; SZ M; FP 2; DSP 2; Rep +0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Demolitions +3, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (streetwise) +2, Listen +5, Spot +4, Tumble +4; Speak Basic, Speak Caarite.

Force Skills: Affect Mind +6, Enhance Ability +5, Force Grip +5, Heal Another +6, Move Object +5.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Force Sensitive, Improved Initiative, Weapons (Primitive, Simple, Blaster Pistols).

Force Feats: Alter.

Equipment: Blast Helmet & Vest, Stun Baton, Blaster Pistol.

Middle Tier (levels 4-6)

Unemployed Grunts: Mutated male Caarite Predator 3 (2); IM +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Def 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural); Spd 10m; VP/WP 31/16; Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, 2 claws/20) or +5 ranged; SQ Rage (per Wookiee rage); SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +2; SZ M; Face/Reach 2 m by 2 m/2 m; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills: Climb +10, Listen +4, Spot +7; Read/Write Caarite, Filordi, and Basic; Speak Caarite, Filordi, and Basic.*

Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Osia & Aris, Believers: Human Male Force Adept 4/Scoundrel 1; IM +4 (+4, Improved Initiative); Def 14 (+4 class); Spd 10m; VP/WP 40/12; Atk +4 melee (DC 15 stun, stun baton) or +4 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol); SQ Illicit Barter, DR 2; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +5; SZ M; FP 2; DSP 3; Rep +0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 15.

Skills: Demolitions +3, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (streetwise) +2, Listen +5, Spot +4, Tumble +4; Speak Basic, Speak Caarite.

Force Skills: Affect Mind +11, Enhance Ability +9, Fear +7, Force Grip +7, Heal Another +8, Heal Self +6, Move Object +7, See Force +5.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Force Sensitive, Improved Initiative, Weapons (Primitive, Simple, Blaster Pistols).

Force Feats: Alter, Control, Force Mind, Mind Trick, Sense.

Equipment: Blast Helmet & Vest, Stun Baton, Blaster Pistol.

Upper Tier (levels 7-9)

Unemployed Grunts: Mutated male Caarite Predator 6 (2); IM +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Def 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural); Spd 10m; VP/WP 61/16; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+5/20, 2 claws) or +8/+3 ranged; SQ Rage (per Wookiee rage); SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +3; SZ M; Face/Reach 2 m by 2 m/2 m; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills: Climb +14, Listen +4, Spot +9; Read/Write Caarite, Filordi, and Basic; Speak Caarite, Filordi, and Basic.*

Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Osia & Aris, Believers: Human Male Force Adept 6/Scoundrel 1/Dark Side Devotee 2; IM +4 (+4, Improved Initiative); Def 18 (+8 class); Spd 10m; VP/WP 67/12; Atk +6/+1 melee (DC 15 stun, stun baton) or +6/+1 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol); SQ Illicit Barter, Force Weapon +1d8, dark side Talisman +2 (**not included in saves below**), DR 2; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +9 (**plus dark side Talisman bonus, if applicable**); SZ M; FP 2; DSP 4; Rep +1; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills: Demolitions +3, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (streetwise) +3, Listen +8, Spot +7, Tumble +6; Speak Basic, Speak Caarite.

Force Skills: Affect Mind +19, Enhance Ability +10, Fear +19, Force Grip +14, Heal Another +8, Heal Self +12, Move Object +10, See Force +7.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Force Sensitive, Improved Initiative, Skill Emphasis (Affect Mind), Skill Emphasis (Fear), Weapons (Primitive, Simple, Blaster Pistols).

Force Feats: Alter, Control, Force Mind, Malevolent, Mind Trick, Sense.

Equipment: Blast Helmet & Vest, Stun Baton, Blaster Pistol.

DM Aid # 3: Maddened Creatures

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Maddened creatures are crazed beings that have lost the ability to act in accordance with normal instincts. Very few races of creatures in the galaxy seem maddened all the time. Some creatures might become maddened under specific circumstances, such as during mating season or when diseased.

Creating a Maddened Creature

“Maddened” is a template that can be added to any creature with Intelligence and Wisdom of at least 2 (hereafter referred to as the “base creature”). Creatures of this type do not act in a rational manner, acting unpredictably and violently. The Handle Animal skill is useless when facing a maddened creature. A maddened creature uses all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Initiative: Maddened creatures gain a +3 morale bonus on initiative.

Vitality Points/Wound Points: Double a maddened creature’s vitality points.

Attack: Maddened creatures gain a +4 morale bonus on all attacks.

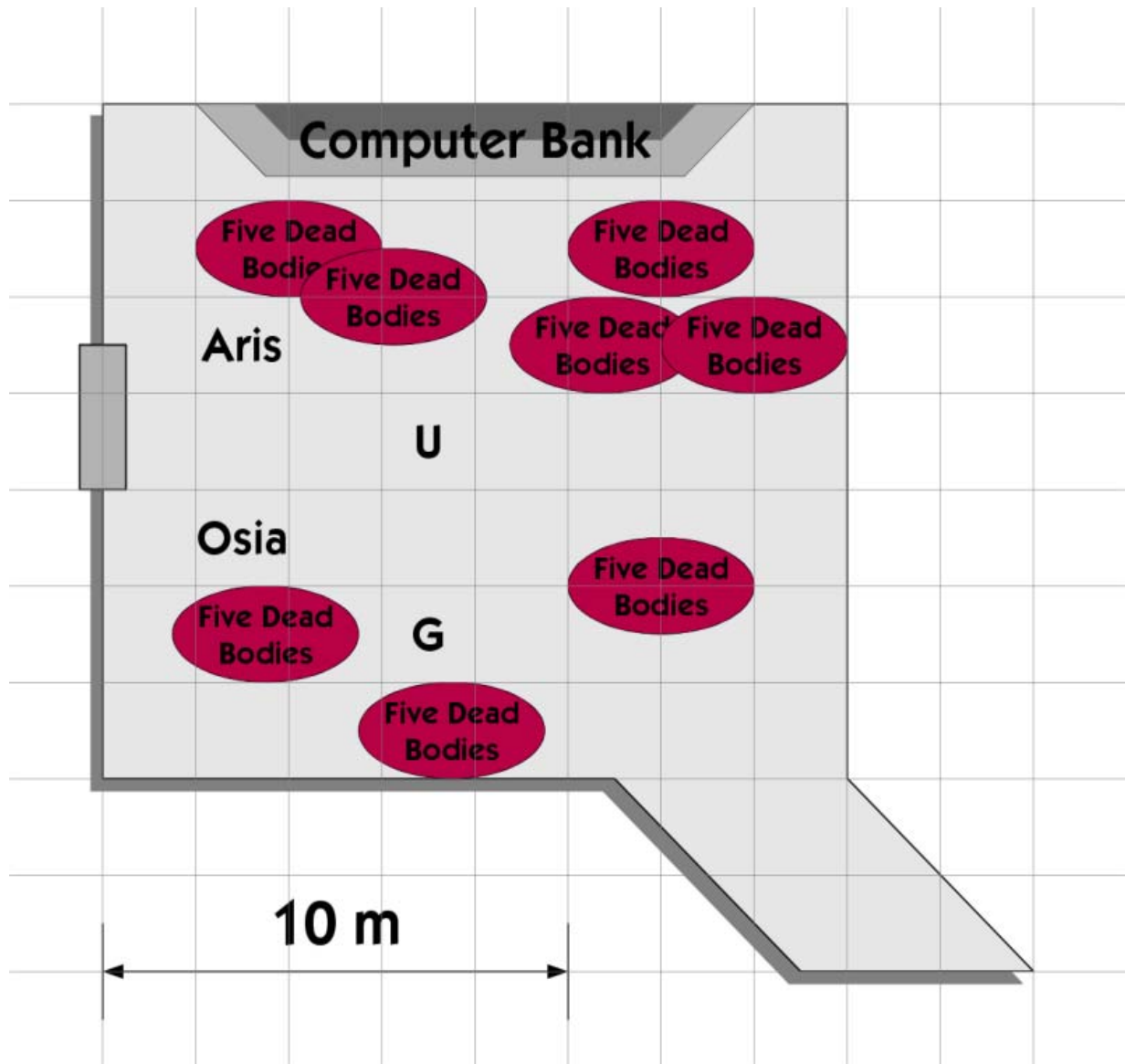
Saves: Give a maddened creature a +4 morale bonus on Will saves.

Challenge Code: Increase the Challenge Code of a maddened creature by one rank.

Skills: A maddened creature cannot use skills effectively, taking a –4 morale penalty on all skills.

Feats: All maddened creatures gain the Power Attack feat if they don’t already have it.

DM Aid 4: Encounter 7 Layout



Critical Event Summary

Caaried Away

1. What happened to the Believers (Osia & Aris)?

☐ Killed/Suicide ☐ Captured ☐ Escaped

2. What happened to the mutated Caarites?

☐ Killed ☐ Captured ☐ Escaped

3. Did any of the heroes volunteer to work with the research team on a cure/vaccine for the virus? If so, list player name, her name, and RPGA # below.

GM Name, RPGA#: _____

GM Email Address: _____

Convention Name/Date _____

Convention Coordinator:

To report these results (for events during the months of June and July 2003 only, you may US mail them to:

RPGA - LIVING FORCE, PO Box 838, East Lansing, MI 48826

Or email to: LFPlots@living-force.net

Or fax to: (517) 351-0288 Attention LIVING FORCE Critical Events

Check <http://www.living-force.net> for other methods.