

# Recursion

**Episode III of the Belted In Trilogy  
A One-Round LIVING FORCE Tournament**

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It's not a calling, and it's not a memory. Something has drawn the heroes of Cularin to the asteroid belt... ever have the feeling you've been here before? An adventure for LIVING FORCE heroes levels 1-9. This scenario should be played after "*Incursion*" and "*Excursion*" (Episodes I and II of the "*Belted In*" trilogy.)

*Recursion* 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](http://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

The shadow lurkers, the after-images of creatures who lived millennia ago in Cularin before destroying themselves with the darkstaff, are dying. They’ve tried to communicate with those who love Cularin, redoubling their efforts after Len Markus stole the darkstaff from the guardians they had put in place. All of this effort, though, takes energy – and energy is one thing the shadow lurkers don’t have in abundance. They live by siphoning off the energy from any powered object that comes too close to them, and in the past year have gone so far on a number of occasions as to drain ships of all their power. Attempts to communicate with those inside the ships proved unsuccessful, as the beings thus captured wanted nothing more or less than to escape. Life support systems failed before any of the captured beings managed to “hear” what the shadow lurkers had to say.

Part of the problem is that the shadow lurkers do not have the capacity to communicate. A barrier exists between them and the galaxy they left behind when their world exploded, and thus far, they were first only able to send images across the barrier. Then came emotions, but the learning of this was the result of something fierce, which the shadow lurkers hoped to be lost and which has now managed to lose itself somewhere in Cularin once

more. Even so, the lurkers learned, and began to transmit some small emotions to those with whom they wanted to communicate.

Most recently (*Excursion*) the shadow lurkers managed to actually bring living beings (the heroes of Cularin) across the barrier and into the shadowy realm that has been their home. Even this, though, ultimately failed. Rather than communicating with the individuals brought through, the shadow lurkers found themselves forced into the background as the heroes struggled to understand the realm and to find their way out. Nothing worked. And, it seemed, time had begun to run out. Following the failure to communicate when Cularin's heroes crossed the barrier, the barrier itself began to weaken. Just as shadows disappear in the light, when the barrier is gone the shadow lurkers will be swallowed by the dark of the galaxy, or disappear into the light. All of the shadow lurkers are weakening, fading. No matter how much energy they absorb, it never seems to be enough.

Accepting the inevitable, the shadow lurkers have turned to what can only be considered a plan of last resort. The images of the end of their world had a powerful effect on some of the heroes who viewed them; taking those images, and combining them with the crossing of the barrier, the shadow lurkers want to bring individuals who truly love their system in, to see what can happen when the darkness is allowed to draw too much power, and to actually speak, for the first and last time, with the essences of the shadow lurkers.

The easiest place for the lurkers to cross the barrier is in the dreams of an individual, and it is here that the adventure begins.

### **Encounter 1: DreamTime**

The heroes awaken from disturbing dreams of destruction, chaos, and helplessness. They are on a ship that has just passed the Asteroid Belt, and each of the heroes has an uneasy feeling that something very bad is going on not far away from them. Droids on board the ship have all been shut down (no permanent damage done), and when they are brought back online each has a set of memories that should not have existed, memories which were implanted electronically during the time the droids were offline. Then a weak distress signal sounds from inside the Asteroid Belt – Nirama's personal distress signal.

### **Encounter 2: Common Ground**

The distress signal is coming from an asteroid so small that it can't possibly hide any of Nirama's ships. What it has inside it, though, is much more remarkable. This tiny asteroid has, for the past six millennia, carried in its core the fossilized remains of a creature that was once of the species that became shadow lurkers. Nirama is here as

well, having brought a tiny skiff to investigate a dream of his own, and has already found the remains. He has also discovered something more. The remains are the most direct link the shadow lurkers have to the galaxy, and this is the spot in the Asteroid Belt where they have chosen to make what may be their final attempt at communication. Their message has had an unfortunate effect on Nirama, though, so whether or not he is able to be of much use to the heroes remains an open issue. As soon as they find him, they too are drawn into the replaying of the last minutes of the lives of the shadow lurkers – from the perspective of those long dead.

### **Encounter 3: Market Value**

The first time the heroes find themselves in this encounter, they cannot interact with any of the people present (and there are a great many of them, and they all greatly resemble Nirama) in a vast open-air market. Above their heads, blackness is spreading across the sky. The assembled people have stopped in their shopping and are focusing their attention on a shard of rose-colored crystal mounted atop a tall pole. The blackness in the sky is struck by a beam of energy, and as it is struck the ground shudders and the planet begins to crumble, then explodes. Through it all, the shard doesn't move. If the heroes take the shard, then the next time they go through this encounter they can question some of the people who are part of the crowd and learn their perspective about what is going on – the first chance to actually communicate with the shadow lurkers.

### **Encounter 4: Priests of Nether**

As with encounter 3, this encounter repeats. The first time through, the heroes find themselves in what appears to be a holy site, with a number of individuals in sky-blue robes gathered around an altar in meditation. On the altar sits a rose-colored shard identical to the shard in encounter three. Through an enormous window, the heroes can see the black spreading across the sky, the bolt of energy, and feel the destruction around them. If the heroes take the shard, when the encounter repeats they are able to interact with the meditating priests and learn their perspective on what happened.

### **Encounter 5: The Scientist-Philosophers**

As with the previous two encounters, this encounter also repeats. Now, the heroes watch as the scientist-philosophers, the individuals who made the decision to utilize the darkstaff to power the weapon they believed would save their world from the threat of the thing in the sky, insert the darkstaff into the weapon and begin the chain of events that destroy the world. There is also a rose-colored shard present here as well, on a workbench nearby. It is not a focal point, but again, when everything is destroyed on the first viewing of this scene,

the heroes can take the shard and form a link to the scientist-philosophers. On the second repetition of this encounter, the heroes can speak to the scientist-philosophers themselves – or what remains of them – and learn what they thought they were doing.

### **Encounter 6: Only the Strong**

The shards have been continuing to funnel energy to the darkstaff for all these years, and with their locations disrupted, the individual in control of the darkstaff has sent a crew of Believers to find the individuals who have disturbed the shards and kill them.

### **Encounter 7: After the Fire**

The heroes must decide what to do with the shards, based on what they have learned. One of four fates awaits the shadow lurkers, and it is **ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE THAT YOU SEND IN YOUR CRITICAL EVENT SUMMARIES** about what your group chooses. The shadow lurkers may either: be sent to the darkstaff, gone forever; become one with the Force; become Force spirits, protectors of Cularin; or be reborn into the galaxy, as they were when their planet was destroyed. Each of these has its own cost, and it is up to the heroes to pay that cost.

**Important Note to Judges:** In the language of scenario construction, there are two general types of adventures one commonly sees. Perhaps the simplest way to construct a scenario is by setting up a linear path that the heroes follow, to a large extent without deviation. Such linear modules make story telling easy, but don't lend themselves to creative approaches to problem solving (though a clever GM and a capable author can do a lot to minimize the extent to which such modules feel as though they offer players no choices). The other major type of module is the matrix module, in which the decisions of the players influence what happens next – Encounter 2 might lead to Encounter 3, or to Encounter 5 or 6, depending on what gets done. *Recursion* falls into neither of these categories, and as such may be either simpler or more difficult to run. After Encounter 2, much of the event becomes random, in terms of the order in which things occur. There is information to be gained in each of the possible encounters, but the heroes may reach a point that they truly understand what is being told them, and manage to find their way out while bypassing much of the remaining information. There is no reason to continue bludgeoning them with the remaining encounters, although as you should see, there are elements of what they learn that have the possibility to really hit heroes who call Cularin “home” pretty hard.

Ultimately, you will want to end the trilogy on a positive note. There is a final combat, but as we hope

you'll see, the module's real conclusion lies not in how the heroes fight, but in how they choose to live.

For the full back-story of the shadow lurkers, who they are and why they exist as they do, please read GM Aid #2 before going any further.

**Clarification regarding tiering notation:** when you see something like “DC 15/20/25”, use the lowest DC for the lowest tier, the middle for mid-tier and the highest for high tier. In this scenario, tiers are for character levels: 1-3, 4-6 and 7-9. Higher-level heroes are unlikely to find the combat in this scenario challenging.

## **Opening Crawl**

*It is a time of turmoil. The people of Cularin, grown restless, have begun to seriously question the motives of their “protectors” from Thaere. Cularin’s Militia grows stronger, backed by powerful allies who remain, for the most part, anonymous. Creatures are born, and creatures die, because in turmoil the cycle of life may be disrupted, but it is never truly altered.*

*Or perhaps it is, however rarely. Perhaps it was, long ago, where Cularin’s Asteroid Belt now spins through space...*

## **Encounter 1: DreamTime**

*Key ideas of this encounter: awakening from a dream of chaos and destruction, the heroes find the ship they are on passing through the outer fringes of the Asteroid Belt, and all the droids on board with impossible memories programmed into their circuits; then, a distress call*

Before you begin, find out whether any of the heroes have a freighter they wish to use for the event. Only one hero may bring a freighter, and all the other heroes begin the adventure as passengers. There is no call for a fighter escort; the heroes already have an escort, courtesy of Nirama's smugglers, so all the heroes begin the adventure aboard the same ship. If no one has a ship, all the heroes are on a ship chartered to take them to Cularin, for whatever reasons make sense to the characters.

For some, what we start with is a dream. For others (Jedi or other Force-sensitives who might have been predisposed to meditate rather than sleeping), it comes as a vision that intrudes on their meditations. Everyone experiences the same thing, though – even individuals

who have no reason to be asleep find themselves jarred awake when the dream ends, surprised that they fell asleep in the middle of whatever they were doing.

***The twin suns, Morasil and Termadus, hang low in the sky. Too low, and too small to be the way they would be viewed from Cularin. Too large to be the view from Almas. You're not alone. [# of other party members] stand with you on a vast plain, staring at a horizon spiked with the most graceful crystalline mountains you've ever seen. Three peaks rise above the rest.***

***A cloud moves between you and the suns, blacker than any you've ever seen. It begins to expand. It eats the sky. Shadows leap across the plain, and the mountains are devoured – all but the three highest peaks. A beam of silver light arcs up from the horizon, slams into the black. The air shimmers, then shudders.***

***The ground shakes. Rumbling, louder, then louder still. Rocks shatter. Beneath your feet, the world begins to crumble. The breath is sucked from your body as the air contracts, pulling away from you – then it slams back, and the sky roars, and the ground falls away.***

***Light. Heat. Pain.***

***Then, nothing.***

***Your eyes open and you find yourself staring at the interior wall of the ship on which you were traveling. You aren't sure you meant to fall asleep, but you must have – that was quite the dream.***

The entire party is aboard the ship, plus an NPC pilot (if necessary). Allow the players a chance to introduce and describe their characters, and to take a few minutes to discuss this dream – which all of them shared, down to the smallest detail.

It is likely that the ship's pilot may be disconcerted by falling asleep at the controls (although if the ship has an NPC pilot, that NPC had actually planned to take a nap, and set the autopilot to take them past the Asteroid Belt). We rather hope that the heroes find the entire dream disturbing, since each of them had a very clear realization that they were dying – and, for those to whom it matters, dying in such a way as to prevent them from becoming one with the Force.

There are a number of things the heroes may be curious about, as they come out of their unplanned reverie. We've listed several things that may be of interest below, for heroes who are inclined to check. If we don't list something, it's safe to assume that it's completely normal.

#### The Ship

The ship is unharmed, though a Computer Use check (DC 10/13/16) reveals that its course has been slightly

altered. It should have been skirting the edges of the Asteroid Belt, but instead it's been navigating through some of the outer asteroids. Further Computer Use checks (DC 15/20/25) reveal that the individual who reprogrammed the nav-computer was either the hero who owns the ship, or the most computer-savvy of the heroes. That individual has NO recollection of having re-set any coordinates.

#### Droids

Any droids on board come stumbling (or rolling) in shortly after the heroes finish discussing their dreams. Droids owned by the heroes experienced a temporary shutdown, during which time they had memories implanted into their CPUs that make no sense to them. The droids now “remember” being on a planet that exploded, and the visual portions of their memories can be transferred to devices that allow viewing of the visuals. What the droids “saw” was exactly what each of the heroes saw.

There is no real damage done to the droids, and no sign at all of who did the reprogramming. If anything, it looks (Repair check, DC 20/25/30) like they experienced a power surge, and that the surge was responsible for reconfiguring some of their memories.

If none of the heroes have droids, then the droid that manifests this problem is an R2 unit that was being sent to Cularin for delivery to a customer. This droid is convinced that it needs to go back to the factory. Any droid owned by a hero is interested in getting rid of the “new” memory, which the droid finds to be out-of-place in its processor.

#### The Heroes

The heroes themselves are unharmed, and in perfect health.

Once they've checked everything they want to check, read the following.

***The ship's sensors begin to blink. The “distress signal” alarm goes off, and examining the nearest monitor you see these words:***

***“This is Nirama. I am in need of assistance. Please come to this signal. This is Nirama. I am in need of assistance. Please come to this signal.”***

***The message continues to repeat.***

The heroes can run whatever tests they want. Either Computer Use or Knowledge (Cularin Lore, Streetwise, or anything else relevant), DC 12, allows them to determine that this really **is** Nirama's distress signal. The system's crime lord needs help – and in a different way than he's ever asked for it before.

## Encounter 2: Common Ground

*Key ideas of this encounter: find Nirama and a skeleton that looks a great deal like him, and get drawn into the replaying of the last moments of Oblis*

The main (potential) problem in the scenario occurs here – getting the heroes to go and help Nirama. Hopefully, all of the heroes are familiar with him, but if you happen to have a bunch of new players, you may give them the following as “common knowledge” in Cularin.

Nirama is Cularin’s crimelord, having bested Riboga the Hutt in a fairly chancy gamble and taken control of all the smuggling and illegal traffic that moves into and out of the system. He is fiercely opposed to slavery in any form, and has recently shown himself to be VERY protective of his home system. He does not like Thaere, nor does he like the Cartel, and he has stated publicly that he wants them all gone, that Cularin should be allowed to protect itself and determine its own course. He has worked with the heroes of Cularin a number of times in the past, or had them work for him, and has generally been a fair and reasonable employer. He does not lie (some speculate that he is incapable of it) and he values loyalty above all else. Finally, he looks unlike any species the heroes have encountered before. He has two sets of eyes – one atop the other – and a third arm that grows from the middle of his back, which frequently holds a blaster pistol.

That’s just off the top of my head.

The trick (if such is required) may be getting the heroes to answer Nirama’s distress signal. Not everyone has gotten along with the illustrious crimelord. Some heroes, for a variety of reasons (some valid, some less so), have taken issue with Nirama and managed to develop what is, at best, a “stable” if unpleasant relationship with him. Far be it from me to fault heroes who believe that someone who lives outside the law may not be worth saving.

Unfortunately, to play the scenario, they have to at least give it a go and answer the distress call. Besides, answering distress calls is something heroes do – being a hero isn’t just about saving the people you *like*, after all. Below are a couple of possibilities for how heroes may try to deal with it, without going to help Nirama, and how we would recommend handling those contingencies. Use these as a guide for any other way the heroes try to use to avoid the module.

***“His own people will hear the distress call. We don’t need to help him.”***

Actually, it’s weak enough (check your sensors; DC 10 Computer Use) that you, where you are, can only barely pick it up. Unless his people happen to patrol this specific area very soon, they probably WON’T hear it.

***“We can just let his people deal with it. Get on the comm and get them over here.”***

He’s in trouble now. There’s no way to tell if the trouble is really serious, and if you wait for someone else to take care of it, he may die. If he dies, who takes over as crimelord? At least Nirama is a “known” quantity. (If you’d like some dice rolling to go along with this, make it a Wisdom check, DC 10.)

***“Nirama should die. I say we just leave him. Hit those thrusters!”***

This is the one that I really hope you, the judge, don’t have to deal with. First, because if it’s said with malice, anger, or a disregard for life, you may be justified in giving the “hero” a Dark Side Point. Take the hero’s emotions into account, and warn them that leaving someone to die may be considered an act leading to the dark side. Make sure they’re sure.

Otherwise, the scenario is over for them, and the players are at liberty to do something else for the next 3 ½ hours.

However they get there, for the scenario to continue, they *do* eventually get there. When they do, read this.

***The asteroid is small. No, it’s tiny, less than 30 meters across. A one-man shuttle is parked in a shallow crag, and a couple of meters away from the shuttle a dark hole leads into the asteroid’s interior.***

Sensor scans (Computer Use DC 15/18/21) reveal two things about the asteroid. First, there is a life form inside, but the signs of life are weak. Second, the asteroid does have a thin atmosphere – which it shouldn’t, given its size. Things are often strange, out here in the Belt.

Once the heroes disembark (and they can make whatever preparations they like, within reason; emphasize the weakness of the life signs as appropriate), they can make their way into the hole that leads into the asteroid. Read or paraphrase the following.

***As you descend into the asteroid, the rock walls grow paler, until they are pale enough that they seem to glow. It’s a gentle glow, almost pleasant. The passage you’re in twists a couple of times, and you realize the walls really ARE glowing. Just as you realize this, the tunnel opens out into a large cavern – much larger than what you would have expected from***

*the size of the asteroid. In the center of the cavern are two forms. One is Nirama. He's curled in a fetal ball and breathing in strained gasps.*

*The second form is a skeleton. It lies beside him, two arms extended toward him and one arm extended away from him.*

Yes, friends. That's right. The skeleton on the floor beside Nirama has EXACTLY the same structure as Nirama. Exactly. Its skull even has four eye sockets. When the heroes approach Nirama, give them Spot checks (DC 15; or, if anyone goes straight for the skeleton, as some medical types may, skip the Spot checks) to notice the similarity between his form and the skeleton's. Once anyone touches Nirama, all four of his eyes slide open.

*It takes him a moment to focus, and when he does, his eyes look wetter than you've ever seen. He almost looks as though he's been crying. "You're here. I'm not alone."*

*And then, everything changes.*

## **IMPORTANT NOTE TO THE JUDGE:**

### ***Running Encounters 3-5***

The next three encounters should run differently for every group that plays the module. At best, the shadow lurkers have imperfect control over how the information they have is conveyed, and we've chosen to simulate this by having you randomly determine what happens first, second, and so forth.

To determine which encounter to run first, roll 1d3. On a roll of 1, run the "No Shard" portion of Encounter 3. On a roll of 2, run the "No Shard" Encounter 4, and on a 3, the "No Shard" Encounter 5.

Once you have run the first part of an encounter, roll 1d3 again. If the heroes took the hints and picked up the shard the first time through and you roll the same encounter again, then they get the "Shard In Hand" portion of that encounter.

An example may help. The heroes finish Encounter 2 and you roll 1d3. You roll a 2, which means you run the "No Shard" portion of encounter 4. Not knowing what to do, the heroes don't pick up the Shard. As soon as that is over, roll 1d3 again. Again, you roll a 2. Because they still don't have the shard, you run the "No Shard" portion of that encounter again. It repeats like this until they pick up the shard. Say that this time, they get the shard from encounter 4. You roll 1d3 again, and this time you roll a 1. They have a shard, but it is the encounter 4 shard, and now they are in encounter 3, where there is another shard they need to collect. It is only when they already have the shard for a particular encounter that they can experience the

"Shard in Hand" portion of that encounter. Thus, the group that has the shard for encounter 4 but ends up in encounter 3 MUST STILL COMPLETE the "No Shard" portion of encounter 3, and get the shard for it, prior to being able to interact with the encounter 3 Oblee.

Because of this structure, it is possible for the module to run L O N G if you happen across a clue-impaired group. You may have tables where they just don't figure out that they need to grab the shard. If this happens, and they leave shards twice, have Nirama grab one on the third time and give it to someone. Hopefully, it won't become necessary. You also have the option of including information from one encounter in another, if you need to speed things along. We've separated the information heroes can gather based on what people in each location are likely to know, but that's a guideline for you – not a requirement.

If you're short on time, feel free to compress the encounters. If you aren't, go ahead and fudge the dice rolls and let them experience more of the scenario. We strongly recommend going through all of the encounters and allowing for maximal interaction/role-playing if you are working without a time limit (as in home play). There's a lot for the heroes to experience and learn, and the final decision is more meaningful if they've had more chances to interact with the Oblee.

### ***Dealing with the unthinkable***

It's not heroic, and we frankly hope it won't come up, but in order to help you, the GM, deal with the full range of possibilities, we need to address what to do if the heroes decide to kill Nirama while he's helpless. Warn them that such an act is wholly of the dark side, and that if they follow through their character is removed from the campaign. Please notify the campaign administration via email ([lfadmin@living-force.net](mailto:lfadmin@living-force.net)) of the player name, rpga# and character name, and inform the character that he or she is done with the scenario. The rest of the party continues with the scenario. You'll have to make alterations on the fly to accommodate the absence of Nirama from the rest of the story. Nadan Pal, the Gran who is Nirama's remaining senior staff member, can take over the role of rewarding the heroes for their contribution to resolving the fate of the Oblee.

And we really hope that none of this comes into play.

## **Encounter 3: Market Value**

*Key idea of this encounter: the heroes must obtain a shard that is channeling energy to the darkstaff; once it is obtained, they can interact with the crowd gathered in an Oblisian marketplace and learn their perspective*

on the end of Oblis

When you roll 1 on 1d3, run this encounter.

#### No Shard

*You are standing in the middle of a crowded marketplace – all of you, and Nirama. Around you are hundreds, maybe thousands of individuals who look to be of the same species as Nirama.*

*All their eyes are turned skyward, and if they see you, they make no sign of it. They are staring at a blackness that is spreading across the sky, a blackness that is moving down, toward the horizon. On second glance, though, many of them seem to be staring at a rose-colored crystalline shard, mounted atop a 4-meter pole.*

*From somewhere to the west, a bolt of blue energy leaps from the ground and slams into the blackness. The black starts to dissipate, then the ground shudders.*

*Everyone in the marketplace, except your group, falls to the ground.*

The heroes have 2 minutes, real-time, to do whatever they want to do. They can't affect any of the Oblee, but they **can** grab things. You can describe the market as having anything you like, and the heroes can touch it all as if it were real. The only thing that matters, though, is the shard. The shard is also the only thing that remains with them after 2 minutes, when the loop tries to begin again. No roll is required to grab the shard during this period.

At that point, if they do not have the shard, read this.

*The ground shudders and falls away beneath your feet. The blackness overhead becomes complete, and the world around you is gone, as if it had never been there. All that remains is the shard, suspended in nothing...*

If anyone wants to try and grab it at this point, getting to it requires a Will save, DC 12/17/22. If they get it, cool. If not, next time you roll a 1 on 1d3, they have to do "No Shard" again.

If they have the shard when the 2 minutes expire, read the following.

*The ground shudders and falls away beneath your feet. The blackness overhead becomes complete, and the world around you is gone, as if it had never been there. Nothing of the world remains, except for the shard in your hand...*

When two shards are in the possession of the heroes,

both shift from their gentle rose hue to a blood red. If the heroes hold all three, they all turn black.

#### Shard In Hand

The second time you roll a 1 on 1d3, if the heroes have the encounter 3 shard, read the following.

*You are standing in the middle of a crowded marketplace – all of you, and Nirama. Around you are hundreds, maybe thousands of individuals who look to be of the same species as Nirama.*

*All their eyes are turned skyward, and if they see you, they make no sign of it. They are staring at a blackness that is spreading across the sky, a blackness that is moving down, toward the horizon. On second glance, though, many of them seem to be staring at a rose-colored crystalline shard, mounted atop a 4-meter pole.*

*From somewhere to the west, a bolt of blue energy leaps from the ground and slams into the blackness. The black starts to dissipate, then the ground shudders.*

*Everyone in the marketplace turns and looks directly at your group.*

This is the largest group the heroes encounter, and it contains some fairly disgruntled individuals – Oblee who have existed for millennia as shadow lurkers, and who are angry about it. These are the common folk, who never had a chance to make any decisions, who only did what they were told and who suffered a fate much worse than death – being trapped in a place where they were aware of the galaxy they loved, but could only interact with it in a destructive manner.

This is a time for diplomatic heroes to shine. The crowd is angry; they need to be spoken to, to be assured that the heroes are there to help. Make it clear that the crowd looks displeased to see the heroes, and ask for intentions. Anyone who pulls a weapon adds a –2 penalty to any Diplomacy checks made this encounter, by anyone in the party.

Combat statistics for the market-goers are included in GM Aid #3.

The Diplomacy check DC is 16/21/26 to calm the crowd. Two re-tries are allowed, past which point the heroes find themselves shunted out of the encounter (i.e., re-roll 1d3, and they can come back here fresh, if the dice cooperate).

If they succeed in the Diplomacy check, they can obtain answers to the following questions from the Oblee. And yes, in here the heroes are able to speak to the Oblee, and the Oblee are able to respond. All of it seems to occur in Basic.

Who are you? ***We are the Oblee.***

What are you doing here? *We live here. Or, we did.*

What planet are we on? *Oblis. It is what you now know as your Asteroid Belt.*

Is this the planet we saw destroyed? *Yes.*

What did it? *We aren't sure. We were afraid of the thing in the sky, but the destruction didn't start in the sky. It started down here.*

What is the thing in the sky? *A creature of shadow. We weren't told much, but we saw what it could do. It took emotions and used them. People should not have their own emotions used against them.*

What is this crystal shard? *We don't know. It was put up in the market so that we could concentrate on it. To destroy the creature of shadow, we all needed to help.*

Help how? *By channeling our energies into the crystal, so that they could be used to send the thing away.*

Who told you to do this? *The scientist-philosophers. They rule our world.*

Is that what you were doing? *Yes. We were channeling of ourselves. Then it took more than we wanted to give.*

What do you know about the shadow lurkers? *Is that what you call us? It must be. We are the shadow lurkers, then.*

Why do you drain energy from things? *Because our connection to the shard was never severed. If we don't drain energy from other things, we will be drained out of existence.*

What would happen if we destroyed the shard? *We don't know. We aren't sure how to destroy it. Weapons won't harm it. Any form of energy that is sent against it is absorbed. Even the energy of motion, it absorbs. But this is only one shard, and we feel as though there must be more. But we didn't see them, before we died.*

What do you know about the darkstaff? *The what?*

How did you die? *Our planet exploded. But this does not feel like death. More like... un-life. We are shadows of what we were.*

Did you all really look like him/Nirama? *We did. He*

*must be the last of us.*

How did he survive? *We do not know.*

What do you want? *To be free.*

Do you want to become one with the Force? *We want to be free.*

There is a lot the folks in the market don't know. They were, after all, commoners. They were told what to do, they tried to do it, and their planet exploded. Hence, their anger and confusion. Use the answers here as a guideline, and remember that these individuals only ever knew what they were told – which wasn't much.

#### Subsequent Visits

If you roll 1 on 1d3 after running both the “No Shard” and “Shard In Hand” portions of the encounter, the heroes find themselves in the marketplace, but it is empty. The Oblis who were here have gone elsewhere. Soon, the market, and the world, simply crumble to dust.

#### Nirama in Encounter 3

Nirama is largely stunned. He may ask questions, but this isn't much fun for you, since it puts you in the position of having one NPC talking to others. He's in shock to see so many like him, when he believed himself to be the only one of his kind in the galaxy.

## Encounter 4: Priests of Nether

*Key ideas of this encounter: obtaining a shard and, on a subsequent visit, speaking with spiritual leaders of the Oblis*

When you roll a 2 on 1d3, run this encounter.

#### No Shard

*You are standing in a doorway, looking down into what appears to be a small temple cut into a basin of pure marble. Everything is white, streaked with silver, and it all seems to be a single piece. Opposite you, a window opens on a beautiful landscape of green and blue mountains. But there is a blackness, spreading in the sky overhead.*

*In the center of the temple is a round marble altar, and in the center of the altar rests a rose-colored crystal shard. Individuals in silver robes kneel around the altar. Every one of the kneeling individuals is focusing his attention on the crystal; none of them notice your existence. And every one of them is of the*

*same species as Nirama.*

*Outside, a beam of energy blasts from a nearby mountain and strikes the blackness in the sky. The ground shudders. One by one, the kneeling figures fall to the floor.*

As with encounter 3, the heroes have 2 minutes to do whatever they want. If this includes picking up the shard, that's great. It means they don't have to repeat this exact experience all over again.

After two minutes, if they do not have the shard, read this.

*The ground shudders and falls away beneath your feet. The blackness overhead becomes complete, and the world around you is gone, as if it had never been there. All that remains is the shard, suspended in nothing...*

If anyone wants to try and grab it at this point, getting to it requires a Will save, DC 12/17/22. If they get it, cool. If not, next time you roll a 1 on 1d3, they have to do "No Shard" again. No dice roll is required to grab the shard at this point.

If they have the shard when the 2 minutes expire, read the following.

*The ground shudders and falls away beneath your feet. The blackness overhead becomes complete, and the world around you is gone, as if it had never been there. Nothing of the world remains, except for the shard in your hand...*

When two shards are in the possession of the heroes, both shift from their gentle rose hue to a blood red. If the heroes hold all three, they all turn black.

#### Shard In Hand

The second time you roll a 2 on 1d3, if the heroes have the Encounter 4 shard, read the following.

*You are standing in a doorway, looking down into what appears to be a small temple cut into a basin of pure marble. Everything is white, streaked with silver, and it all seems to be a single piece. Opposite you, a window opens on a beautiful landscape of green and blue mountains. But there is a blackness, spreading in the sky overhead.*

*In the center of the temple is a round marble altar, and in the center of the altar rests a rose-colored crystal shard. Individuals in silver robes kneel around the altar. Every one of the kneeling individuals is focusing his attention on the crystal; none of them notice your existence. And every one of them is of the same species as Nirama.*

*Outside, a beam of energy blasts from a nearby*

*mountain and strikes the blackness in the sky. The ground shudders. One by one, the kneeling figures rise, and turn to face you.*

I could tell you who they are, but it's easier to just put it in their own words. Run this as another Q&A encounter. The Priests speak of the world around them as if it still existed, though they are aware of what they have become. Unlike the market-goers, the Priests understand what is being asked of the heroes, and can provide them with slightly more detail.

Who are you? *We are the Priests of Nether, watchers of that which lies beyond.*

What are you doing? *Melding the thoughts of many into the energy of One.*

No, seriously. What are you doing? *We are assisting the rest of the Oblee in channeling their personal energies into the tool that will allow us to remove the threat to our safety.*

What tool? *The scientist-philosophers call it "darkstaff". They say it is a source of great power.*

Is it safe? *Nothing is "safe". Any tool can be misused. We fear that the tool, though, may be using those who believe themselves its master. The power it uses is immense.*

What happened to the darkstaff? *After the destruction of our world, we all worked to hide the darkstaff away, to keep it from ever disrupting the continuum again. For years beyond counting, we succeeded. But as all things must change, so too did this.*

Who are the scientist-philosophers? *They are our leaders, those great minds who best represent our people.*

Who are you, as a people? *We are Oblee. You are on Oblis, the planet that became your Asteroid Belt.*

What do you worship? *We do not worship. We strive to understand that which is beyond. Because that which is beyond, is also that which is within. All things are one. We exist on a continuum. Always.*

I don't understand. *Take a lifetime to reflect, and you may.*

Right. Back to the issue at hand. What do you know about the shadow lurkers? *Is that what you call us? It must be. We are the shadow lurkers, then.*

Why do you drain energy from things? *Because our connection to the shard was never severed. If we don't drain energy from other things, we will be drained out of existence.*

What would happen if we destroyed the shard? *We don't know. We aren't sure how to destroy it. Weapons won't harm it. Any form of energy that is sent against it is absorbed. Even the energy of motion, it absorbs. But this is only one shard, and we feel as though there must be more. But we didn't see them, before we died.*

Did you all really look like him/Nirama? *We did. He must be the last of us.*

How did he survive? *He didn't. He was born. The scientist-philosophers made arrangements for such, if we were to all die.*

Is that why he's here? *He was probably called to this system, which you call Cularin. He could not have told you this, though. He must search, as we all must search.*

What do you want? *To be free.*

Do you want to become one with the Force? *We want to be free.*

What can we do? *This "Force" you speak of – it seems to be our continuum. It is this that will set us free of the shards. But beware – do not attempt anything until you have fallen out of this place.*

What's going on? *The scientist-philosophers spoke to us. We agreed that there must be communication. All of us are weakening, and previous attempts to communicate have failed. The shard you hold is what ties us to the darkstaff. We are too weak to feed it much longer, and it will absorb us if we are not freed.*

So what's up with us seeing things twice? *It is the continuum. You are not-here, then you are here. You must see what we have seen, and feel what we have felt, before you can bring about change. And you must have the shards, if you are to succeed.*

How many shards are there? *Three. You must destroy at least two of them, but be warned – they can't be harmed physically.* [Note to GMs: Anyone who whacks one of the shards with a lightsaber gets to make a Fortitude save, DC 15, for their lightsaber; if they fail this save, the lightsaber's power cell burns out. Do try to give at least one of the "standard warnings" from one of the encounters to the heroes

**before they try something like this.]**

What was the thing that attacked your planet? *We don't believe it wanted to be hostile. It was an energy creature that toyed with emotions. The scientist-philosophers thought it a threat; we thought it was confused and frightened. It may have been brought upon us by the darkstaff.*

So what happened to you when the planet exploded? *We shifted on the continuum. We moved from the realm of light, to the realm of shadow. We have been there ever since. Now, we would like to be free. As freedom is along the continuum from imprisonment, it is inevitable. It is simply a matter of what form the freedom takes.*

What are the forms? *Nothingness. Restfulness. Watchfulness. Life. These are the forms.*

You can come back to life? *We can. We never died, simply shifted along the continuum.*

How? How do you do any of those? *Follow your instincts. We are not sure. But life is the most difficult. Life requires the continuum remain balanced. More, we cannot say.*

These are the basics of what the Priests of Nether know. They know more than the market-goers, but not as much as the scientist-philosophers. Always remember that their perspective centers on this idea of the "continuum", which links back to what the heroes experienced in the last encounters of "Excursion". The fundamental idea is that there are no opposites, and that things which appear to be so are simply different versions of the same thing.

#### Subsequent Visits

If you roll 2 on 1d3 after running both the "No Shard" and "Shard In Hand" portions of the encounter, the heroes find themselves in the temple, but it is empty. The Oblee who were here have gone elsewhere. Soon, the temple, and the world, simply crumble to dust.

#### Nirama in Encounter 4

Nirama is largely stunned. He may ask questions, but this isn't much fun for you, since it puts you in the position of having one NPC talking to others. He's in shock to see so many like him, when he believed himself to be the only one of his kind in the galaxy. On learning that there is a chance that his species could return to life, he looks to be on the verge of tears (Spot check, pick your favorite DC).

## Encounter 5: The Scientist-Philosophers

*Key idea of this encounter: obtaining a shard and, on subsequent visits, speaking with the Oblee who decided to use the darkstaff to combat the shadow creature*

When you roll a 3 on 1d3, run this encounter.

### No Shard

*You are standing at one end of a great hall, which bustles with activity. Individuals – all of whom resemble Nirama – rush from one place to another, carrying ancient-looking datapads and making notes by hand. In the center of the room is an enormous machine, topped with a trio of black tubes that point toward a hole in the ceiling. A covered tray rests beside the machine.*

*One of the individuals walks solemnly to the covered tray and removes its cover. Beneath are two objects – a black rod, a meter in length, which seems to suck at the light, and a rose-colored crystalline shard. The individual takes up the black rod and inserts it into the machine in the center of the room. All three tubes erupt with blue energy that blasts through the hole in the ceiling.*

*The ground beneath your feet shudders, and every one of the individuals around the machine collapses.*

As with encounters 3 and 4, the heroes have 2 minutes to do whatever they want. If this includes picking up the shard, that's great. It means they don't have to repeat this exact experience all over again. They do not need to make a roll to get the shard at this point.

After two minutes, if they do not have the shard, read this.

*The ground shudders and falls away beneath your feet. The world around you is gone, as if it had never been there. All that remains is the shard, suspended in nothing...*

If anyone wants to try and grab it at this point, getting to it requires a Will save, DC 12/17/22. If they get it, cool. If not, next time you roll a 1 on 1d3, they have to do "No Shard" again.

If they have the shard when the 2 minutes expire, read the following.

*The ground shudders and falls away beneath your feet. The world around you is gone, as if it had never*

*been there. Nothing of the world remains, except for the shard in your hand...*

When two shards are in the possession of the heroes, both shift from their gentle rose hue to a blood red. If the heroes hold all three, they all turn black.

### Shard In Hand

The second time you roll a 3 on 1d3, if the heroes have the encounter 5 shard, read the following.

*You are standing at one end of a great hall, which bustles with activity. Individuals – all of whom resemble Nirama – rush from one place to another, carrying ancient-looking datapads and making notes by hand. In the center of the room is an enormous machine, topped with a trio of black tubes that point toward a hole in the ceiling. A covered tray rests beside the machine.*

*One of the individuals walks solemnly to the covered tray and removes its cover. Beneath are two objects – a black rod, a meter in length, which seems to suck at the light, and a rose-colored crystalline shard. The individual takes up the black rod and inserts it into the machine in the center of the room. All three tubes erupt with blue energy that blasts through the hole in the ceiling.*

*The ground beneath your feet shudders, and every one of the individuals around the machine turns and looks directly at you.*

These, of course, are the scientist-philosophers. They are the ones who decided to use the darkstaff to fight off the thing in the sky, to send it back into the realm of shadow, and they are the ones who know exactly how wrong they were, and what the consequences were for their decision. Again, you have the chance for a Q&A. Make sure you spread the opportunity to question the Oblee around; don't let just one hero do all the questioning, and if necessary, have the Oblee directly address a hero or heroes who have been relatively less active than the rest.

*Who are you? As a species, we are the Oblee, inhabitants of the planet Oblis. Our planet is now your asteroid belt. We are not even a memory, to you. Those of us gathered here were the scientist-philosophers. We were the leaders of our people. It was our mistakes that led us to ruin.*

*Why are we here? Because your homes are in danger from the darkstaff, and because we could find no other way to communicate with you. This may kill us, but what we know is too important.*

*What is this machine? This is the weapon we created*

*to send the blackness in the sky back into the realm of shadow. The science is complicated, but the thing that came to our planet was from a different dimension, and we wanted it gone.*

Was it a real threat? *We thought so at the time. Now it appears we may have been manipulated into attacking it.*

By what? *By the darkstaff.*

What is the darkstaff? *It is an object that draws on what we would call the continuum, but which you would more likely call the “Force”. It can do amazing things. It is perhaps the most powerful object we have ever seen.*

Where did it come from? *It came to us from a wandering trader. His name was never known to us. We analyzed it and saw its power, but also saw no need for such power. Then the shadow creature came, and we had a need.*

The darkstaff manipulated you into using it by calling the creature? *We believe it did.*

So you put it in the weapon... *And it began a chain reaction that destroyed Oblis.*

What happened to it after that? Someone found it recently, didn't they? *A powerful man came and took it. We could not stop him.*

Did you make the lightning come from Almas? *We do not know “Almas”. We made no lightning, though. There were likely other defenses than ours in place.*

Was the darkstaff destroyed? *No. If it had been, we would have been freed. We are not.*

How do you know? *Because the shards still bind us. The shards, like the one you have, were placed around Oblis. They collected the energy of the Oblee – our emotions, our life essences – to further power the weapon. We believed the thing in the sky would kill us; it seemed our only option.*

How many shards are there? *Three. You must destroy at all three of them, but be warned – they can't be harmed physically.* [Note to GMs: Anyone who whacks one of the shards with a lightsaber gets to make a Fortitude save, DC 15, for their lightsaber; if they fail this save, the lightsaber's power cell burns out. Do try to give at least one of the “standard warnings” from one of the encounters to the heroes before they try something like this.]

They tie you to the darkstaff? *Yes.*

What would happen if we destroyed the shards? *We would be free. But you cannot destroy them by normal means.*

Then how? *In your terms... the Force. The Force, or blood, spilled willingly.*

And you would be free? *We would be freed to one of four paths. Down one path, we simply cease to exist. We are absorbed into the darkstaff. This is our inevitable fate, without intervention, but the wrong intervention can send us there as well. To do this, you need only call on the darkness within yourself.*

We'll skip that one. How else can you be freed? *If you call on the light within yourselves, the shards cannot hold us and we become free, but we cannot move on. We will remain in Cularin, guardians.*

That doesn't sound so bad. What else? *If you call on both the light and the dark in yourself, then we go to rest. As you might say, we become one with the Force. Because we exist on a continuum, this final resting requires both the light and the dark to be recognized.*

And the last option? Life? *We would not ask this of you. For there to be life, there must first be death. We would not ask this.*

Tell us. Please. *We did not die. We were... shifted. We could come back, but it would take the death of one who truly wishes it. Only blood can give life. We DO NOT ASK THIS of you. And we cannot ask it of him, [gesturing to Nirama] because he is the last of us.*

How many of us have to die? *We do not want any of you to die. But to bring us back, at least some of us... one. One life, freely given.*

Did you all really look like him/Nirama? *We did. He is the last of us.*

How did he survive? *He didn't. He was born. We spread our genetic material throughout the galaxy, so that we could never be fully destroyed. His host-mother must have been very surprised at her child.*

Is that why he's here? *He was probably called to this system, which you call Cularin. He could not have told you this, though. He must search, as we all must search.*

What do you want? *To be free.*

Do you want to become one with the Force? *We want to be free.*

What do you know about the shadow lurkers? *Is that what you call us? It must be. We are the shadow lurkers, then.*

Why do you drain energy from things? *Because our connection to the shard was never severed. If we don't drain energy from other things, we will be drained out of existence.*

What is it that's so important you had to tell us? *That the darkstaff's wielder must be stopped. We have not felt his presence in Cularin, but his influence is here. He controls those who believe. We have heard their violent thoughts on the continuum. They wish destruction. What was done to Oblis, they wish done to all your worlds. You must stop all of them, but most especially, him. He must be removed from the continuum, or the galaxy will be destroyed.*

By him? *By the darkstaff. But he is its agent. He must be removed from the continuum.*

Can the darkstaff be destroyed? *We do not know.*

What happens if the shards aren't destroyed? *They will continue to drain the life from whatever is around them, after we are absorbed, and to channel that which they drain to the darkstaff.*

It's a lot of information. That's three encounters with a lot of information, and frankly, if your group isn't up for that, go ahead and run the priests and the scientist-philosophers and skip the marketplace. The most critical information here is how to destroy the shards that connect the Oblee to the darkstaff.

Watch the players' faces when you tell them that they can bring an entire species back from another dimension by sacrificing their characters. Let that sink in. Remember, though, that the Oblee are not ASKING to be brought back. They'd love to be able to live again, but they aren't going to ask anyone to die in order to do it. It's presented very matter-of-factly. It's one of the options. If the heroes choose to do something else, that's fine. The Oblee are honored to have anyone trying to help them, in any way.

#### Subsequent Visits

If you roll 3 on 1d3 after running both the "No Shard" and "Shard In Hand" portions of the encounter, the heroes find themselves in the lab with the weapon, but it is empty. The Oblee who were here have gone

elsewhere. Soon the lab, and the world, simply crumble to dust.

#### Nirama in Encounter 5

Nirama seems on the verge of a breakdown. He has just found out that he really is the last of his kind and that there is a way his "people" – probably the earliest inhabitants of the Cularin system – could be returned to life, only to be told that **he** cannot do it. He respects his forebears' wishes and does not ask the heroes to sacrifice themselves. If directly asked, "Do you want one of us to die to bring them back?" his answer is something like this.

*You have given much to Cularin. There are some things that I cannot ask. I never felt alone until I knew there had been others. I will not be alone if they remain memories. I cannot, and will not, ask you to do this for me. But if it is right for you, then I give you my word – you will not be forgotten.*

## Encounter 6: Only the Strong

*Key ideas of this encounter: the darkstaff, aware of the linkage to the shadow lurkers, alerts its wielder, who sends the Believers to find and kill the heroes before they can destroy the shards*

It may be that encounters 6 and 7 overlap somewhat, depending on how the heroes choose to spend the time of the upcoming fight. That's fine. The darkstaff has sensed that someone other than the shadow lurkers/Oblee has come in contact with the shards, and has commanded its wielder to stop or kill the person(s) responsible. Thus, as the heroes come out of the time loop, they find themselves face to face with an unpleasant-looking group.

*Standing in front of you is a Wookiee, his shoulders shaved and a bald strip running down the center of his head. A pair of Trandoshans stand to either side of him, and other shapes move in the shadows.*

The number of opponents is left vague so that you can adjust the composition of the Believers' party based on how many heroes there are, and how combat-capable they are. This could be brutal. In fact, that's exactly what the darkstaff and its wielder want.

The Believers have been told that they need to do one of two things. They either need to kill everyone they find in this asteroid, or they need to recover three crystal shards. Their initial plan is to kill everyone – but all of them used to work for Nirama, and are quite intimidated by him. They shoot at anyone BUT him, in

fact, unless he makes himself a significant enough target that they can't avoid shooting at him.

Combat statistics for Nirama, and the Believers, are included in GM Aid #1.

Captured Believers are fairly typical fonts of information. These know the following.

- Oy, we were sent to kill youse.
- It come down from the big boss.
- We's not going to not do something the big boss said.
- Death to the unbelievers.
- You got three crystals you not supposed to have.
- So we either kill you, or take them.
- You can give them to us now and we'll go away. [Note: Said by someone who's already been subdued; the Believers don't offer this option pre-fight]
- Death to the unbelievers!
- We don't know the big boss's name. Why does he have to have a name?
- Death to the unbelievers.
- Yeah, we work with Len Markus. Nah, we's not thinking that he's the big boss. But we never seen Len and big boss in same place at same time, no.

As we said... veritable fonts of information. Or not. Turning these guys over to the Jedi or Militia is certainly an option, although Nirama would be more than happy to take them back and have them more thoroughly interrogated. (If asked directly, he tells the heroes in a very business-like fashion that yes, this probably means the Believers will be killed. But wouldn't that be the likely sentence anyway? Besides, they deserve to die. Nirama, remember, doesn't lie. He's also feeling rather cranky about having his emotions brutalized, and then having these chuckle-heads attack him and the people who answered his distress call.)

## Encounter 7: After the Fire

*Key ideas of this encounter: deciding what to do with the shards, and doing it*

IF THIS EVENT IS PLAYED BEFORE JULY 2004, PLEASE CONTACT THE CAMPAIGN STAFF WITH THE RESULTS OF THE CHOICE. Whether Cularin has a new species, light side protector spirits, or just a sense of quiet in the asteroid belt that it hasn't had in a while – the campaign staff needs to know. Please email the plots team (lfplots@living-force.net) with the choice.

There are four options open to the heroes as to

what to do with the crystal shards. Remember, the heroes need to destroy at least two of the shards, but these can be destroyed in a number of fashions. If the heroes have trouble interpreting what they were told by the Priests, and by the scientist-philosophers, you may feel free to have the shadow lurkers whisper explanations in the minds of various individuals.

We recommend taking aside one or two players for each of the options, and conveying the gist of the information to them in whispered tones. For the first, for example, you might whisper, "Spend the Force that is tied to your life, calling on your own darkness."

### Nothingness

The Oblee, without intervention, would run out of energy to feed to the shards and be absorbed completely by the darkstaff within a week. They spent **that much** of their energy to communicate with the heroes. If the heroes want to hurry things along, they can call on the darkness within themselves and shatter the shards using the dark side. To do this, the majority of heroes must channel a Force point into the crystals, while calling on the dark side.

Spending a Force point to call on the dark side grants the hero a dark side point. They then get one additional dark side point for each of the life essences they just sentenced to eternal suffering within a Sith artifact. Each character (note that we are not using "hero" on purpose) that participates in this is permanently removed from play. Please include the character name on the critical event summary, since we'd like to give names to Believer NPCs in years 4 and 5.

Oh, and make SURE the players understand that by doing this, they're sending the Oblee into the darkstaff. If they choose this route, knowing that, we can't have much sympathy for them.

If this is done (and we really hope it isn't), read the following.

*The shards shatter, black pieces flying in all directions. A black cloud hangs where the shards had been, and from that cloud you hear a thousand screams, fading to nothingness.*

### Watchfulness

To create watchers (some variant of light-side spirits), the majority of heroes present need only call on what is light within themselves. That is, they can destroy the shards by each channeling a Force point into them, calling on the light side of the Force. If none of the heroes has a Force point, give them one if they really want to pursue this option. For this option, read the following.

*The shards shatter, and as they do the black within*

***them turns to silver, and the room is flooded with light. All around you appear shapes, figures who look like Nirama but who are all different. They gaze upon you for a few seconds, seeming to smile, and then drift away. You have a definite feeling they will be watching out for you, in the future.***

#### Restfulness

To truly allow the Oblée to become one with the Force, their continuum must be satisfied. The majority of the heroes present must channel TWO Force points into the crystals – one calling on the light side, and the other calling on the dark side. It is only this way, with balance achieved, that the Oblée can truly be at rest.

Generally, calling on the dark side results in the awarding of a dark side point. Heroes know this. Any hero who chooses this route, knowing the outcome, IMMEDIATELY gains a Force point upon completion of the destruction of the shards, which can be used to atone for the DSP awarded.

If this choice is made, read the following.

***The shards shatter, a mix of silver and black vapor spreading throughout the cavern. The vapor settles, and in the silence that follows you hear a gentle voice from far, far away...***

***“Thank you.”***

#### Life

How heroic is “heroic”? What are the limits? Most likely, the upper bound to heroism is sacrificing one’s life, so that someone else may live. Here, the heroes may do exactly that. No one is asking them to do it; Nirama isn’t, nor are the other Oblée.

Once the fight is over, the heroes may converse freely with the shadow lurkers. One or more priests may be made available (at your discretion) to answer questions. Things to know:

- To do this, one hero need only use one of the shards to end his or her own life.
- Once that is done, all the shards shatter.
- The hero becomes one with the Force. A life freely given with compassion and love cannot be absorbed by the darkstaff.
- If by some chance the rest of the Oblée are not returned to life by this sacrifice (because we don’t know what the critical events are going to tell us) the hero can at least be confident that those not restored are returned to the continuum – one with the Force.

Again, the Oblée do not ask the hero to do this. If their time in the galaxy is done, then so be it. If not, then so be it.

Before allowing any hero to go through with this,

Nirama pulls the hero aside to make sure that this is really what the hero wants to do, and to re-emphasize that he does not WANT anyone to die. If the hero is emphatic that this is what s/he feels is necessary, Nirama says the following.

***“My friend, I lack the words to express what I feel. I have tried to do what is best for many. You have set a standard that I will forever strive to uphold. Your bravery – your sacrifice – will not be forgotten. You have my word.”***

If this option is chosen, the hero who does it is dead. The shards shatter, and – well, read the following.

***[Character name] crumples to the floor. As [he or she] does, the shards seem to disintegrate, becoming so much dust, and there is a sense of life, of vibrancy, of rightness.***

***Then, standing before you, is a young adult Oblée. It blinks all four of its eyes and looks at you with a sense of wonder.***

The Oblée doesn’t know its name. It doesn’t remember anything of its world before the shifting; being brought back into the galaxy effectively wiped its mind clean.

It is the same gender as the deceased hero (or, the opposite gender if the player requests it) and is, in fact, an allowable character species for the player who sacrificed his or her character – if the player wants it. Whatever the outcome of the critical event summaries, any player who sacrifices their hero to bring the Oblée back to the galaxy DOES succeed in bringing back at least one. Only these players are allowed to play Oblée in LIVING FORCE. Stats and other information on the species are provided on the certificate that allows the player to create an Oblée hero.

Of the four choices, the only “wrong” choice is sending the Oblée on to the darkstaff. We deal with that in the conclusion (below). No one holds any ill will toward the heroes if none of them choose to sacrifice their own lives to bring back the Oblée, but instead sent them on to be one with the Force, or to become watchers of Cularin. If the heroes choose either of the latter two, Nirama has this to say.

***My friends... I thank you for what you did for my people. They are no longer under the sway of the darkstaff, no longer forced to do anything to keep themselves alive.***

***While it might have been nice to know them, I have other people. I am of Cularin. You are of Cularin. That both of these statements are true makes me very proud.***

***Thank you***

## Conclusion

A lot of things happen in the aftermath of this event. There are, potentially, some number of Believer prisoners to be turned over to whatever authorities the heroes choose. In the long term, though, something has changed permanently in Cularin; the shadow lurkers – the Oblee – are gone, and it won't be until the results of the critical event summaries are tabulated that their actual fate is known.

If the “heroes” decided to send the Oblee to the darkstaff

We really, truly, deeply, sincerely (and many other adverbs) hope that you don't have to run this ending. We can't think of a reason, other than sheer obnoxiousness, that any group would DO this. But, if you did everything in your power to keep them from doing something irreparably dumb and made it clear that this was a sentient species who had been forced to do what they did, or perish entirely, well... proceed, then.

*The day after you return, Nirama releases a holovid. In it, he looks tired, and very sad.*

*“People of Cularin, I come to you on a day of mourning. There are those among us who do not value life, who are willing to condemn an entire species to oblivion. So be it. I am a fair individual, and am allowing them a fair choice. Their decision renders them unsuitable as citizens of Cularin. They may leave if they so desire. If they do not, I will have them killed. They know who they are. They have one day.”*

The heroes in question have been contacted directly by Nirama. ONLY THOSE HEROES who actively participated in the destruction of the Oblee are forfeit; heroes who did not earn the 191,322 dark side points for killing a species are not automatically removed from play, nor does Nirama have any intention of hunting them down and killing them; he knows who was responsible. He was there.

If one hero sacrificed him-/herself

*The day after you return, Nirama releases a holovid. In it, he looks as relaxed and happy as you have ever seen him look in public. Another individual, who looks very similar to Nirama, stands beside him.*

*“People of Cularin... I have heard many individuals speak of Cularin's heroes, and while I have worked with many, I come to you today to speak of one in particular. [Dead hero's name] sacrificed*

*[his or her] life in an attempt to allow my people – the Oblee – to return to the galaxy.*

*“There is no one as remarkable, as important, as the hero who would give up his life for another. If, when I die, I do so in as noble a manner as [hero], I will consider my life well lived.*

*“Tomorrow, the Cularin Militia will receive a medical frigate. Its name is [hero's name]'s Choice – to remind us all that our choices can save lives. Thank you, [hero]. Thank you, Cularin.”*

If the heroes chose to make the Oblee watchers, or to allow them to become one with the Force

*The day after you return, Nirama releases a holovid. His standard almost-angry edge is absent as he speaks.*

*“People of Cularin... in life, we make choices. Through choices, ordinary men and women become heroes. Cularin is blessed with extraordinary heroes.*

*“Long ago, a species who very much resembled myself inhabited Cularin. A darkness threatened Cularin then, a darkness that threatens Cularin again today. My people did not realize the threat. They paid an awful price, and were imprisoned by the darkness until yesterday. I cannot begin to guess how many years they remained subject to its power.*

*“A hero is not someone who does things for power, glory, or wealth. A hero does things because they must be done – because there is no other way. Yesterday, I watched as true heroes freed the Oblee – not because of any promised reward, but because it was right.*

*“Thank you, Cularin. You have again validated the love I feel for my home.”*

## Here Ends “Recursion”

## Experience Point Summary

Experience is calculated as follows for LIVING FORCE events.

- 1) Experience awards in the SWRPG 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 destroy the shards and learn of the specific danger posed by the shards, and the darkstaff? If so, each hero who survived receives 350 xp.

Adventure Experience: 300 xp  
Roleplaying Experience: 0-350 xp

**Total Possible Experience: 650 xp**

*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 destroying the shards, but did not ask the right questions to learn of the threat posed by the darkstaff, 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.

### **Encounter 7**

Equipment listed for the opponents the heroes actually fight in this encounter.

### **Conclusion**

#### **Nirama's Gratitude**

Nirama is deeply and publicly grateful to the hero named above. Any debts the hero might have to Nirama are erased. If the hero is subject to Nirama's Disfavor, this is also forgiven. This hero can reasonably claim to be a friend of Nirama, and gains +1 to Reputation.

In addition, Nirama will exercise his influence one time for the hero, without question. Choose only one of the following when needed, after which this portion of the certificate is void.

\_ +10 circumstance bonus to a Gather Information check.

\_ Restoration/replacement of one restricted item that has been confiscated.

\_ +10 unnamed bonus to Bluff/Diplomacy to get out of a sticky situation (dropping Nirama's name and having it backed up).

#### **Permission to play an Oblee**

In recognition of the sacrifice made by the LIVING FORCE hero, \_\_\_\_\_, this hero's player, \_\_\_\_\_, has permission to play an Oblee hero in the LIVING FORCE campaign. This permission applies

only to the player whose name is written on the certificate; no other player may use this certificate to play an Oblee. Further, if the awarding of this certificate is not reported to the campaign staff by the judge following the conclusion of the event at [lfplots@living-force.net](mailto:lfplots@living-force.net), the permission is subject to revocation at the discretion of the staff. Possession of this certificate is the **ONLY WAY** any player may play an Oblee hero.

The Oblee are Nirama's race, and the hero created using this certificate is considered by Nirama to be a cousin. This Oblee can be either gender, and can begin as any non-Jedi class (there were no Jedi in Cularin when the Oblee ran afoul of the darkstaff). The hero Oblee, however, remembers virtually nothing prior to his or her rebirth in this young adult body. Only the vague images of the destruction of Oblis, and the scenes experienced in this event by the other heroes, remain in the newly-created hero's memory; the years of shadowy existence have been mercifully stripped from the memory of the Oblee, as have most memories of what life was like on Oblis so many centuries ago.

Oblee possess the following species traits:

- +2 Intelligence, -2 Wisdom; Oblee are highly intelligent, but given to lapses in judgment
- Medium-size: As medium-size creatures, Oblee gain no special bonuses or penalties due to their size
- Base speed is 10 meters
- Low-light vision: The Oblee's lower set of eyes allows them to see twice as far as a Human in dim light (e.g., moonlight). Oblee retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions
- Darkvision: The Oblee's upper set of eyes allows them to see in the dark up to 20 meters. Such darkvision is black and white only, but it is otherwise like normal sight. Oblee can therefore function quite well with no light at all
- Rear-hand Dexterity: Oblee have a third arm which extends backward from their left shoulder; this arm is awkward to use, because it is behind the Oblee, and as such any checks or attacks made using this rear hand suffer a penalty of -2; other penalties (such as penalties to hit things the Oblee cannot see) should be adjudicated on a case-by-case basis by the judge
- +2 species bonus on Diplomacy checks: Oblee are adept at communication, and can often convince others that a bad idea may, in fact, be quite a good idea
- Automatic Languages: Speak Oblee and Basic

## GM Aid #1: NPC Statistics

**Nirama: Male Oblee Scoundrel 6/Crimelord 10;** IM +1 (Dex); Def 20 (+9 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 96/15; Atk +11/+6 melee (d3+2, club) or +10/+5 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Illicit Barter, Lucky (2/day), Precise Attack +1, Rear Hand Dexterity, Contact x 4, Resource Access, Inspire Fear -6, Minions, Exceptional Minions; SV Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +10; SZ M; FP 5; Rep 17; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Equipment: two blaster pistol, expensive clothing, one-man shuttle (*Bank It*).

Skills: Appraise +19, Bluff +20, Computer Use +16, Diplomacy +25, Forgery +19, Gather Information +19, Intimidate +16, Listen +9, Knowledge (Alien species-Caarite) +7, Knowledge (Cularin system) +9, Knowledge (streetwise) +12, Pilot +5, Profession (Accountant) +10, Read/write Basic, Read/write Caarimala, Read/write Huttese, Search +10, Sense Motive +20, Sleight of Hand +7, Speak Basic, Speak Caarimala, Speak Tarasinese, Speak Huttese, Speak Sullustan, Spot +10.

Feats: Alertness, Heroic Surge (4/day), Infamy, Persuasive, Point Blank Shot, Sharp-eyed, Skill Emphasis (Diplomacy), Skill Emphasis (Forgery), Weapon Group Proficiencies (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

SQ: Rear Hand Dexterity – Nirama can use hand pointing rearward for tasks with only a -2 penalty.

NOTE TO THE GM: Nirama is primarily here as window-dressing, not to outshine the heroes (particularly low-level heroes). If he would make too much of an impact, have his blasters' power cells drained. He would then need to either pummel opponents in the fights, or take some time to find and install a new power cell. As a 16<sup>th</sup>-level NPC, he's available if the heroes need help (and he's a great target for being shot at, as long as you avoid crit-ing him, since he has plenty of vitality), but do not use him to steal their glory.

### Encounter 3

**Angry Oblee Crowd (variable #): Oblee Commoner:** Init +0; Defense 10; Spd 10 m; VP/WP 0/10; Atk +0 melee (1d3, unarmed) or +0 ranged; SQ Darkvision, low-light vision, rear-hand dexterity, +2 species bonus to Diplomacy checks; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -1; SZ M; FP 0; Rep +0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Equipment: basic clothing.

Skills: Craft (any one) +1, Diplomacy +4, Profession (any) +1, Speak Basic, Speak Oblee.

The Oblee crowd can be calmed, as described in Encounter Three. This is not a "required" fight.

### Encounter 6

NOTE: Treat the combat area for this as a cavern of radius 24 meters. The heroes reappear on one side of the cavern, while their enemies are all over the far side; this makes things fairly cramped, in top tier.

#### Low Tier (Average hero level 1-3)

**Gaar and Ulis, Trandoshan Believer Thug 1;** IM +1; Def 12; Spd 10 m; Sz S; VP/WP -/15; Atk +2 melee (1d6+2, baton), +0 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ none; SV Fort +3 Ref +1, Will +0; SZ M; FP 0; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Jump +4.

Feats: Toughness, Simple Weapons, Blaster Pistols.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, baton, 2 medpacs.

**Rorvek: Male Wookiee Soldier 2;** IM +1 (Dex); Def 14 (+3 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 20/14; Atk +6 melee (2d6+4, vibroblade), +3 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Wookiee rage; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will -1; SZ M; FP 1; Rep 0; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills: Demolitions +2, Intimidate +7, Pilot +4.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Equipment: Blaster pistol, vibroblade, 2 medpacs.

If you have a particularly combat-capable group, feel free to add more Trandoshans to the mix; if your group is combat-light, allow the goons to try to open up on Nirama first, while the heroes actually get to engage in offense. In this tier, Rorvek does not rage unless your party can handle it. Scale the fight as appropriate to challenge and entertain your players, in other words.

#### Middle Tier (Average hero level 4-6)

**Gaar and Ulis, Trandoshan Believer Thug 1;** IM +1; Def 12; Spd 10 m; Sz S; VP/WP -/15; Atk +2 melee (1d6+2, baton), +0 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ none; SV Fort +3 Ref +1, Will +0; SZ M; FP 0; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Jump +4.

Feats: Toughness, Simple Weapons, Blaster Pistols.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, baton, 2 medpacs.

**Rorvek: Male Wookiee Soldier 2;** IM +1 (Dex); Def 14 (+3 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 20/14; Atk +6 melee (2d6+4, vibroblade), +3 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Wookiee rage; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will -1; SZ M; FP 1; Rep 0; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills: Demolitions +2, Intimidate +7, Pilot +4.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Equipment: Blaster pistol, vibroblade, 2 medpacs.

**Syd Thardis, Believer: Human Male Force Adept 4/Scoundrel 2;** IM +4 (+4, Improved Initiative); Def 14 (+4 class); Spd 10m; VP/WP 47/12; Atk +4 melee (DC 15 stun, stun baton) or +4 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol); SQ Illicit Barter, Lucky (1/day), 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) +3, Listen +9, Spot +8, Tumble +4; Speak Basic, Speak Caarite.

Force Skills: Affect Mind +9, Enhance Ability +13, Fear +9, 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.

Syd hangs back and uses Enhance Ability (Dex) on himself while observing the tactics of the heroes. He then either uses Force Mind to boost the Strength of the melee combatants or uses Fear on anyone who attacks him. The Trandoshans and the Wookiee have been told to attack – so they do. In this tier, Rorvek rages.

### *Upper Tier (Average hero level 7-9)*

**Gaar, Kilon, REXX, and UliS, Trandoshan Believer Thug 1;** IM +1; Def 12; Spd 10 m; Sz S; VP/WP -15; Atk +2 melee (1d6+2, baton), +0 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ none; SV Fort +3 Ref +1, Will +0; SZ M; FP 0; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Jump +4.

Feats: Toughness, Simple Weapons, Blaster Pistols.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, baton, 2 medpacs.

**Rorvek and Kropporrr: Male Wookiee Soldier 2;** IM +1 (Dex); Def 14 (+3 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 20/14; Atk +6 melee (2d6+4, vibroblade), +3

ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Wookiee rage; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will -1; SZ M; FP 1; Rep 0; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills: Demolitions +2, Intimidate +7, Pilot +4.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Equipment: Blaster pistol, vibroblade, 2 medpacs.

**Syd Thardis, Believers: Human Male Force Adept 6/Scoundrel 2/Dark Side Devotee 2;** IM +4 (+4, Improved Initiative); Def 18 (+8 class); Spd 10m; VP/WP 74/12; Atk +6/+1 melee (DC 15 stun, stun baton) or +6/+1 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol); SQ Illicit Barter, Lucky (1/day), 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 +7, Knowledge (streetwise) +3, Listen +11, Spot +10, Tumble +4; Speak Basic, Speak Caarite.

Force Skills: Affect Mind +19, Enhance Ability +14, Fear +18, Force Grip +14, Heal Another +9, Heal Self +13, Move Object +12, 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.

Sid first uses Force Mind to boost the Strength of his many melee combatant allies. He then takes a round to assess the capabilities of the heroes, unless they notice him and attack, in which case he defends himself. Fear is very much his ally – he relies on it to keep Jedi from being able to hit him with their lightsabers and to weaken them against his attempts to influence their minds.

In all tiers, Nirama knows all of these individuals; they all left his organization a little over a year ago.

## GM Aid #2: History of the Shadow Lurkers

A full, detailed history of the shadow lurkers is unnecessary. What you need to know this event is below; much of it is echoed in the module text, particularly in the Q&A sections with the shadow lurkers, but it seemed important to put as much of it as possible in one place for you, the judge, to reference.

The shadow lurkers were once a living, breathing species that lived in the Cularin system, on a planet called Oblis. Oblis orbited the space now occupied by the Asteroid Belt, and the belt is, in fact, the remains of the planet.

Oblis was destroyed by the darkstaff. This artifact, a creation of a long-dead Sith, wants nothing more or less than to consume energy – most especially, it wishes to consume the Force. Its creator (as reported in the journals of Darth Rivan) regretted the creation of the darkstaff, but the artifact killed him (or her) before its unmaking could be accomplished. The darkstaff exists to destroy, and it manipulates the emotions of those around it in order to achieve this goal.

It lay dormant for years prior to being brought to Oblis by a wandering trader. The people of Oblis (the Oblee), not long after the darkstaff arrived on their world, found themselves threatened by a dark creature, an enormous shadow that seemed to be created of pure energy. This alien energy force (which made an appearance in “Philosophy”) was not a manifestation of the darkstaff; rather, it was being drawn to the darkstaff because of the artifact’s powerful drain. The energy force settled into orbit above Oblis and began to meld itself into the planet’s atmosphere. This was exactly what the darkstaff wanted, as it made the Oblee fearful, and opened their minds to its influence. The leaders of the Oblee were the scientist-philosophers, who had learned of the darkstaff when it was brought onto their planet and now found themselves “inspired” to use it to power a weapon that would send this black shadow, which continued to grow larger and larger in their atmosphere, out of the galaxy. Thus, the darkstaff took two species that had no natural enmity, and turned them against one another to power itself.

In order to turn away (or destroy) the shadow creature, the scientist-philosophers created three focusing crystals to be placed at key points around Oblis. The Oblee were told to channel their hopes and fears into the crystals, to allow the Force to flow through them to the crystals. Together, they could remove the threat to their home. These three crystals are the shards that the heroes must gather over the course of the event; they are the only physical evidence that Oblis ever existed, since when the weapon powered by the darkstaff was discharged at the shadow creature, Oblis was destroyed. The Oblee and the shadow creature were all thrust out of the galaxy, literally made into shadows of their former selves. The only things that remained unharmed by the destruction of Oblis were the darkstaff and the three shards.

The darkstaff, the Oblee (now shadow lurkers) managed to hide away, and made it their mission to maintain just enough contact with the galaxy to protect it from this threat that had destroyed their homes and lives. The three crystals scattered throughout the new asteroid belt, but *continued to drain energy from the Oblee*. Thus, to maintain their vigil on the darkstaff, and to keep from being absorbed into it themselves, the shadow lurkers were forced to drain the energy from anything they could reach. As long as the darkstaff continued to be fed, it didn’t care whether it was getting pure Force energy or energy of another kind; power, after all, is power.

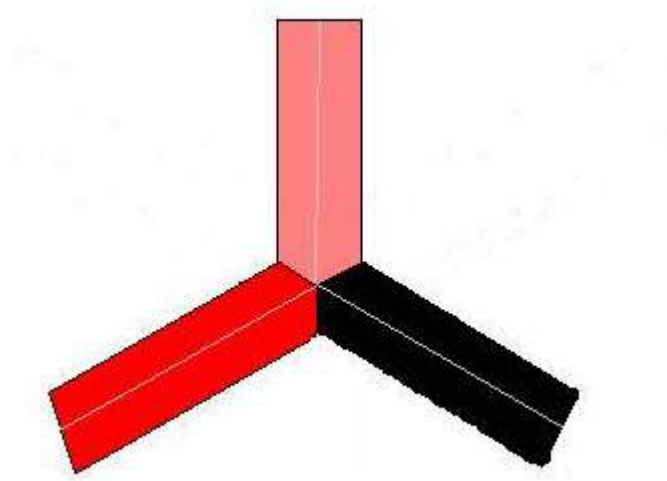
Now, the shadow lurkers have seen the darkstaff gone too long, and have failed in their attempts to communicate too many times. This is their last effort, and they are pouring every joule of energy they have into connecting the heroes with the shards. Once the heroes possess a shard, they can communicate with the shadow lurkers who were near it when the destruction occurred, find out the truth of what happened, and warn the galaxy of the nature of the darkstaff.

More importantly, though, once the heroes know what is going on, they must make a choice as to what to do with the shards, and whether (or how) to keep the shadow lurkers from having their life energies absorbed by the darkstaff. Such is our story.

## GM Aid#3 - The Shards

If the three shards were to be fitted together, they would fit like this.

Remember that the first shard that is found is rose-colored. The second is also rose-colored, until it is held near the first. At this point, both turn blood red. The third shard also appears to be rose-colored, until it is held near the first two. At that point, all three turn black. The picture below is not a configuration that could ever happen, since if all three shards were together, they would all be black; it is provided simply as a reference for you.



## Critical Event Summary

### *Recursion*

1. Which choice did the heroes make, for the Oblee?

☐ Nothingness    ☐ Restfulness    ☐ Watchfulness    ☐ Life

2. Did any of the heroes sacrifice themselves to bring back the Oblee? If so, list player name, hero name, and RPGA # below. IF THIS OCCURS, THIS CRITICAL EVENT SUMMARY MUST BE REPORTED OR THE PLAYER RISKS LOSING THE OBLEE CHARACTER. It doesn't matter when it happens, the staff must know about each Oblee character that is allowed into the campaign.

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3. Was it necessary to remove any characters from play? If so, please provide player name, RPGA#, hero name and reason below.

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GM Name, RPGA#: \_\_\_\_\_

GM Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Event Name/Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Convention Coordinator:**

To report these results (for events during the months of December 2003 through July 2004 only, or any time a hero sacrifices themselves to bring back the Oblee, or is removed from play), you may US mail them to:  
RPGA - LIVING FORCE, P.O. Box 707 Renton, WA 98047-0707

Or email to: [rpgahq@wizards.com](mailto:rpgahq@wizards.com)

Or fax to: (425) 687-8287 Attention LIVING FORCE Critical Events