

The Dark Side Beckons

**Episode III of the Jedi Code Trilogy
A One-Round LIVING FORCE Tournament**

by Ron Heintz

Edited by Margaret van Poelgeest-Heintz and Jae Walker

The Almas Academy has come to know that it can trust Cularin's heroes, even those who do not always agree with the Jedi traditions. Master Lanius again seeks your aid, this time to bring in the Black Queen. She was once an Almas student -- is she now Cularin's latest crimelord? An adventure for LIVING FORCE heroes levels 1-12. This scenario should be played after "*Padawannabes*" and "*The Way of the Force*" (Episodes I and II of the "*Jedi Code*" trilogy.) While this scenario may hold special meaning for Jedi heroes, Jedi are not required. This is a particularly appropriate scenario for heroes whose strengths lie in negotiation and diplomacy.

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

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

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

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

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

House Rules

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

Atoning for Dark Side Points

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

Dissipate Energy

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

Illusion

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

Stun

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

Hero Earnings

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

Issuing Force and Dark Side Points

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

General Notes to the GM

When running this adventure, or any *Star Wars*

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

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

This is an adventure for low- to upper-level LIVING FORCE heroes, and therefore characters levels 1 through 12 are appropriate. If your players do not have heroes, help them create new ones (see your event coordinator for hero creation instructions).

GM Overview

This scenario tells a very old sort of story, potentially one of great drama, with many trials, tests and the possibility of redemption.

In it, the heroes follow a variety of clues and have to make certain decisions, while tracking down the Black Queen. They cannot fail to find her—for she intends to be found. However, as the heroes learned in the scenario “*The Way of the Force*”, the method of seeking can be very important. Here, they may learn that what you find is sometimes not at all what you thought you sought.

Encounter 1: Knight to King’s Bishop Three. Closed Opening.

A story is being told to the assembled students and teachers of the Almas Academy as the scene fades to some time earlier...

The heroes are recruited by Master Lanius Qel-Bertuk to track down and capture the Black Queen, a former Almas graduate.

Encounter 2: Pawn To Queen Four: Queen’s Gambit Declined.

The heroes meet with someone who claims to have information about the Black Queen to sell. The meeting is interrupted and the contact abducted, but not before the heroes get their first clues.

Encounters 3 and 4 can be played in any order. If you are short on time, you may eliminate Encounter 3. You should have an hour or more left for Encounters 5 and 6.

Encounter 3: Exchange of Pawns: Refused.

When the heroes track down one of the Black Queen's henchbeings, he takes a hostage. The heroes may be forced to kill to save the hostage. Are they willing to do so, and risk losing the trail, or do they risk the hostage's life to save the mission?

Encounter 4: Knight Takes Bishop.

The trail leads to the starport, where a lieutenant of the Black Queen works and passes the gang information. When the heroes arrive he tries to ambush them and then runs. In the ensuing events, his life is threatened by an accident. Are the heroes willing to take risks to save him, even though they have already found the next clue?

Encounter 5: Knight Sacrifice. Check...

A contest of arms or of philosophies, or of both, follows. Can the Black Queen be turned aside from the path of self-destruction she treads? Or, must she be destroyed—that is, if she doesn't destroy the heroes, first? It's possible that this encounter may do a quick dash into the future, and back again.

Encounter 6 (Conclusion): ... and mate.

A story ends at the Almas Academy. But, as always, new stories begin. (This section takes about 10 minutes and then you are into Loot and XP.)

Important Note to Judges:

Encounter 5 is intended to be very, very cinematic and dramatic. Think "*Duel of the Fates*", from *Star Wars: Episode One – The Phantom Menace*, though in terms of dramatic conflict, not necessarily violence. In order for this to happen without use of "boxed text" or "plot hammers", you, the judge, need to be very familiar with your hero group's capabilities and with the parameters of the scenario.

Depending upon the heroes' actions, Encounter 5 may also use something not yet seen in *Living Force*: a literary "flash-forward" that is actually part of the played encounter. The set-up for this is in Encounter One.

Technically, this entire scenario is a story being related to the Almas Padawans, at the end of their Trials. The identity of the Narrator of the story is to be carefully kept a secret. If the scenario results in the death or capture of a Black Queen who is still conflicted, or who has gone over to the Dark side, the

Narrator turns out to be Master Ki-Adi Mundi, who finishes the story in Encounter 6.

If the scenario has resulted in the greatest success level possible — the Black Queen has been turned from darkness, back to the light— then the Narrator was she, all along, as she publicly thanked the heroes for her redemption and for demonstrating the true, fundamental meaning of the Jedi Code: to love and care for others' lives even more than for your own. She continues the story for a moment of frozen time, in Encounter 5. Then, the heroes are returned to the action.

The flashback also allows for true closure to the encounter, since the heroes have to defeat the Black Queen's remaining followers, who do not take kindly to her "retirement".

Rewards note: This scenario has some potentially huge rewards for player heroes (Jedi or not). These rewards should not be given out lightly. Only heroes who have truly demonstrated *Star Wars* heroics and theme should be given the "special" awards, as stated in the "Loot Summary". Nonetheless, the call is yours, Judge. If all of them *were* true heroes, reward them all.

To make it very clear, the rewards at the end are listed as Stage One (marginal completion of goals), Stage Two (the normal rewards, for a successful mission) and Stage Three (bonus). It is not expected that every hero group qualifies for the bonus; it's just an add-on rather than having you send us a report and having Plots follow it up. Think of it as an experiment in instant gratification. Stage Two is the normal, "big" reward.

In fact, we hope that for the real heroes, being held up for admiration as what everyone in the *Star Wars* universe should strive to be is the *real* reward.

Still, "cookies" are always nice...

A very important note (avoiding a low tier "total party kill" in Encounter 5): It is technically possible for heroes to come to this as their first scenario. This would be a very bad idea, from a numbers point of view, though not thematically. Unless they have had incredibly bad performances in the first two scenarios of the trilogy, or have not played them, they would be at least 2nd level. Still: although it would be quite possible to scale down the Black Queen to suit a group of 1st to 3rd level heroes, the plot would require a good deal of suspension of disbelief at that point. She would simply not be a dire enough threat, although a rogue Jedi would not be tolerated by Master Lanius, regardless of "level".

As a result, the Black Queen uses the same statistics for hero parties of low or middle tier, that is, 7th level Jedi (Guardian) Knight. For high and upper tier groups she becomes even more powerful.

With a low tier group, she also has some low-level flunky thugs present. There are special instructions for

running Encounter 5 with a low tier party, found in the encounter. Please be very familiar with them. Encounter 5 does *not* require combat with the Black Queen at all. In fact, we hope that combat, with her specifically, is the last resort. However, combat is a possibility and a low tier party is very unlikely to survive, much less succeed. Only if the players *demand* to fight is a fight inevitable with a low tier hero group. If the “heroes” simply feel that every situation must be solved with weapons, even when they are hopelessly outclassed, then one hopes that their next incarnations learned better from their example.

Encounters 3 and 4 can be played in any order. If you get short on time, then you may scrap Encounter 3 and play only Encounters 4, 5 and 6.

Before the scenario begins: The players may make their heroes’ income rolls, if any. Also, have them each fill out **Player Handout #1**, a questionnaire that provides you with information concerning their handling of the previous two parts of the trilogy. Their answers then help you customize the interactions in Encounter 5.

If you ran the same hero team through the first two scenarios of this trilogy, then you may dispense with the questionnaire if you feel that you do not need it.

Also, a **warning**: the questionnaire contains some vague spoilers about the first two scenarios of the trilogy. If you have a player who has not played the first two parts of this trilogy, try to get the information in a 2-minute interview, without giving out the form to that player.

Clarification regarding tiering notation: when you see something like “DC 15/20/25/30”, use the lowest DC for the low tier, the middle for middle tier and so forth. In this scenario, tiers are for character levels: 1-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12.

Opening Crawl

The Almas Academy Jedi Trials have ended. In the Great Hall, where some of Cularin’s heroes recently instructed students in the Way of the Force, the final lesson of the Trials is taught. The Narrator is a special guest and almost all the members of the Academy who are not occupied with important duties are there, listening.

The heroes of Cularin, too, are there, and are finding the story very, very personally involving.

Encounter 1: Knight to King’s Bishop Three. Closed Opening.

Key idea of this encounter: This scenario tells the story of the heroes’ mission for Master Lanius, to find and bring in the Black Queen.

The encounter is set up as a story, and “dissolves” into the heroes’ actions. Thus, as they are playing the scenario, they are actually creating the story that is being told at the Academy.

The identity of the Storyteller is a secret now, and determined later by the actions of the heroes.

The storyteller in the Almas Academy Great Hall is very accomplished. The voice is authoritative and has great presence, and the imposing aspect of the speaker draws the eye.

“Master Lanius Qel-Bertuk was seated in his office, with a number of Cularin’s adventuresome individualists, entrepreneurs — heroes. He had assembled them for a mission as sensitive as it was perilous, as dark as it was essential,” the Storyteller relates, and you can see the Padawans and not a few Knights are riveted by the beginning.

The next part is the transition into the scenario. The heroes are now not just listening to the story; they are part of it.

“Thank you for coming once more,” Master Lanius says to you. “After all that happened during your collection of those items that we needed for the Trials, it was obvious that something would have to be done. I have called upon my sources of information, and I have confirmed that the criminal individual known as the Black Queen was responsible for altering the Tests. Also, I have confirmed that she is a former member of this Academy.

“To put it simply, I would like you to track her down and bring her in, if possible.”

If the players are a bit confused about the perspective shift, it is certainly all right to tell them that they are now determining the story that will be told in the Academy Hall. No, this does not mean that the story has been foreordained; in fact, the outcome of this scenario completely depends upon serious and dramatic choices made by the heroes.

Doubtless, the heroes have questions. Here are some answers. As always, paraphrase as needed, and try to make sure that the heroes get the majority of the information presented here.

Who is the Black Queen? *“Her name is Zelice Sturm. She is Human. She is a Jedi Knight. She left the Almas Academy about two years ago.”* (The name is pronounced “Zayleece”).

Where is she? *“Her main center of operations is on Tolea Biqua. We believe that she has contacts with smugglers, thieves, pirates — and, recently, perhaps, the Wyrd, on Cularin.”*

Who are the Wyrd? *“They are a group of Tarasin Force Adepts who, as far as we know, are so opposed to ‘outside interference’ on Cularin that they have gone over to the Dark side in their efforts to keep Cularin for the Tarasin. We also think that they hate Jedi. But I doubt that they would be above using a renegade. They rarely leave Cularin— but it has been known to happen. They may have links to the Believers, though that is not confirmed.”*

Who are the Believers? *“They are a group of fanatics who revere a very ancient order of darksiders, and who follow the dark paths of the Force, if they are sensitive to it. This ancient order was known as the Sith.”* Master Lanius’s gaze wavers ever so slightly. *“It is commonly held to be true that the Sith are extinct.”*

(Further questions related to the Sith.) *“That topic is not related to your current undertaking, and truthfully, I know little that is more than ancient history and conjecture.”*

Is she in league with the Thaereians? *“Almost certainly not.”*

Why did she leave the Academy? *“Zelice disagreed with my basic philosophy. She was a Jedi trained from infancy. She always was sensitive to the slightest failing in Padawans who had joined us later in life, and felt that they were not ‘worthy’ to become Jedi Knights. That was the error of pride and elitism, of course, one of the main things that I am trying to avoid with Almas graduates. When she became a Knight, she resisted being partnered with ‘Latecomers’, as she called them. I insisted. As it turned out, her first partner who was not Jedi-trained from infancy did poorly on his first mission. Sadly, he did not survive it. She was distraught at his death and vowed that she would never again partner with a ‘Latecomer’. I indicated that that decision could not be hers alone. She went into seclusion shortly thereafter, indicating that she had to come to terms with her thoughts and feelings. We respected that need. Then after a few months, she dropped out of sight, after accepting a solo mission to investigate*

some criminal action on Tolea Biqua. We knew that she was still alive; she sent a message saying that it was going well. Since then, so many things have happened to occupy us that I could not make tracking her down a very high priority. Only when it became a concern that she might not be intending to return, and might be turning down the dark path, did I make earnest inquiry. The result is this meeting.”

What does Zelice Sturm look like? *Lanius shows you a holo of a young, strikingly attractive, dark haired female in Jedi robes. Lanius is in the picture as well, one hand resting on her shoulder and a look of pride on his face.*

How powerful is Zelice Sturm (low to high tier tables)? *Lanius looks bleak. “She is a fully-trained Jedi Knight who has left our Order without sanction or explanation. She is very powerful, as most measure power. She has been absent for two years and she may have progressed on her own, or with the wrong sort of help. My belief is that she was in the Cularin system when it disappeared.”*

How powerful is she (upper tier table, where the Black Queen is level 12)? *Lanius looks bleak. “She trained with me from childhood, for 20 years. She is one of our most powerful graduates, not much weaker in the Force than I. Had she remained with us, she would be a Master and teacher. I still find it difficult to believe that she could go astray. She has been absent for two years and she may have progressed on her own, or with the wrong sort of help. My belief is that she was in the Cularin system when it disappeared.”*

What makes you think we can take her? *“I would advise against turning this into a fight. I am hoping that you can find her and convince her to come in and talk. If you think the situation too dangerous, you can also call for help. If you do make contact and feel that your group is a match for her, then if she won’t come voluntarily, she should be captured, for her own good. I fear that she is falling towards the dark side.”*

If it gets to a fight, we might have to kill her—strictly in self-defense, of course. *Pain washes over Lanius’ face for an instant, and then submerges. “I have called upon you because I trust that you will do the right thing. I do not expect you to sacrifice yourselves to save her. If it comes to that, and if there is no other way, do what you must do.”*

Do you have any leads? *“Yes, in fact, we have a potential informant in Tolea Biqua who may be able to direct you to a hideout of the Black Queen. Her name is Pindy Streeto, and she is asking a high price*

for the information. Still, if it's genuine, it will be worth it, and our agent made her agree to no more than half in advance. Of course, such meetings are inherently dangerous, but I am sure that you'll take appropriate precautions. I will give you a secure comlink that you can use to contact her, once you are in the city. Keep the contacts brief. It should not be easy to trace these calls, but it is wise not to take chances. Call her as soon as you arrive."

What are you paying her? *"1500 credits in advance and 1500 if her information proves correct and you find the Black Queen. Here is the credit chip. Plus, transport off Tolea Biqua when it is over. You can bring her back with you, if you wish. She intends to use the money to start a new life."*

What are you paying us? *"What do you want? With the current anti-Jedi sentiments being stirred up by those who would divide the system, I do not wish to send a full team of Almas Jedi to do this. We are also needed in too many places. I have called upon you because you have shown yourselves trustworthy. Of course, we'll certainly cover reasonable expenses, up to 1000 credits. Do you require more?"* (Paraphrase to "because I think that I can trust you" if the heroes are very new at this.)

NOTE TO THE GM: we hope that the above answer does not send the heroes into paroxysms of greed. If it does, Lanius can be squeezed for up to 3000 credits per hero, in cash or legal, unrestricted equipment, if the Black Queen is captured, or 2000 if she is killed. They each receive 1000 and expenses, at the very least. Money for expenses is offered to non-Jedi, even if the heroes do not ask for it. Jedi are not offered money: their expenses, if any, are covered by the Academy, less formally. Lanius pays the 1000 "up front". Note that greedy heroes do not do as well in the adventure rewards section at the end, but don't warn them of that directly. Just have them be very sure this is what they want to do.

Can you offer any other help? *"Considerable, I hope. We have a ship that we can lend you. Also, I have had documents drawn up that state that you are acting with the backing of the Almas Academy. They will satisfy most officials of the law or government, if your own reputations are not enough. Moreover, we have obtained temporary licenses to allow you to bear any ordinary arms that you might wish into Tolea Biqua. Note that these do not cover military weapons, nor do they make you immune to prosecution for crimes. Not that Tolea Biqua is renowned for its law enforcement."*

NOTE TO THE GM: The temporary licenses have no certificates and expire at the end of the scenario. They allow any nonmilitary hardware. No repeating blaster rifles or grenades, although the heroes may have some licenses of their own. Vibro weapons, heavy blasters and so forth are all allowed with these permits. This is more to set atmosphere; the heroes are unlikely to run into any battles that require them to cut loose with a lot of firepower, except perhaps in Encounter 5. Any military hardware would have to be smuggled in, with the usual penalties (confiscation and a fine equal to the value of the weapon) applying if they are caught.

The loaner ship is the old Almas faithful, *Seeker*. It should not be of any great significance, as this scenario takes place on the ground, so no stats have been provided. If the heroes need a pilot, an R2 droid is available.

Try not to have the briefing take too long. The heroes arrive at Tolea Biqua without difficulty and are cleared to bring in anything that the licenses allow (theirs or Lanius'). They have directions to a warehouse meeting site, plus 1000 credits each, Pindy's 1500 credit chip and the comlink. They can take speeder bikes on board the ship, if they wish transport for Tolea Biqua. If they have none, Lanius can loan them some or provide enough credits to rent them at the city. Make sure they only get ground transport; no airspeeders or swoops. Perhaps the airspeeder rental places on Tolea Biqua have friends in low places and can enforce a monopoly.

Encounter 2: Pawn To Queen Four: Queen's Gambit Declined.

Key idea of this encounter: The heroes meet with Pindy Streeto, but the meeting is, of course, interrupted by elements of the Black Queen's gang. During the confusion, Pindy is lost to the heroes. This is actually a set-up by the Black Queen, who is masquerading as Pindy. As her opening gambit, she wishes to confront the heroes with their own ineffectuality and to make them despair at Pindy's "loss". She intends to then lure them to a final confrontation and justify her own, despairing spiral to the dark side.

As described in the *LIVING FORCE Campaign Guide*, pp. 29-30, Tolea Biqua is the garish, crowded, disorganized-looking remnant of Riboga the Hutt's time in Cularin, "a monument to bad taste and excess". The buildings are of every shape and hue, at odd angles to each other and with garish glowing tubes set into rooftops and corners for "accents".

If your heroes have been in the Cularin system (i.e., the *LIVING FORCE* campaign) for any length of

time, they may have been here. Of course, if they played the scenario before this one, “*The Way of the Force*”, they have been to Tolea Biqua recently. Read or paraphrase as appropriate:

As your ship drops into the clouds of Genarius, towards Tolea Biqua, the city gleams like some multifaceted rainbow gem— until you can get a good look. Then it looks like what happens about 5 minutes after your pet eats a set of miniature plastic buildings, complete with the colorful wrapper.

This testimony to the bad taste and extravagance of the vanished Riboga the Hutt could drop into the gas giant and leave no city planner unhappy. Yet, it is crowded and full of commerce of all sorts, legal and illegal. It isn’t a “wretched hive”; it’s a whole wretched metropolis.

You make it to the spaceport and through the inevitable docking fees and “greasing” without anything really interesting happening. Your contact is supposed to meet you in the oldest warehousing and shipping district, the one that grew immediately around the starport and its associated buildings. It is also here that the Black Queen has supposedly taken over a share of the crime, smuggling and black marketeering of Tolea Biqua.

NOTE TO THE GM: Lanius’ instructions were that the heroes should use the comlink to try to contact “Pindy” once they had arrived. If they do so right away, she answers. If they dawdle about doing it, you can do a couple minutes of “atmosphere” if you like, and then have her call them. She claims that she has been trying them for the past few hours, but in fact people in the pay of the Black Queen alerted her that the heroes have arrived.

If they call her, she sets up the meet quickly:

“You made good time, if you’re who you say you are. Prove it: who am I and what have you got for me?”

After they identify themselves, she gives them directions to the warehouse and says, “I’ve got what you need. It’ll take me about 15 minutes to get there. I don’t want anyone following, so I’m going to change up a bit. Later.”

She does not answer attempts to raise her. They should get moving.

The heroes can make it in 5 minutes if they have speeder bikes or rent a landspeeder. (If they happen to try for air vehicles, those are only available to local residents with a lot of clout, or so they are told. Just about anything is allowable on Tolea Biqua, but the heroes really do not have enough time to negotiate an airspeeder or the like. Not even a Noble favor can be called in on 10 minutes notice. Keep them from getting an air vehicle if you can, or it could make a few events

later much harder to run.) Go to Three minutes before the meet time subsection.

If she had to call them:

A few minutes after you are clear of the Docking Facility, the com unit that Master Lanius gave you chirps. The young woman’s voice is edgy, but pleasant to the ear.

“Is this who it’s supposed to be? If so, who am I and what do you have for me?”

Presuming that the heroes answer appropriately, “Pindy” says: *“Fine. I’ve been trying you on and off for about two hours. If you’re just in, then you shouldn’t be too far away. I’ve got what you need. It’ll take me about 15 minutes to get there. I don’t want anyone following, so I’m going to change up a bit. Later.”*

She does not answer attempts to raise her. They should get moving.

Three minutes before the meet time.

NOTE TO THE GM: The heroes can plan the meet all they like, within their 5 or 10 minutes leeway, or on the flight in, if they like to do that sort of thing, but in fact you shouldn’t let them waste too much time. “Pindy” is stacking the deck in her favor. Accept that they are casing the area, or doing whatever they think best, if they bother to plan. About 3 minutes before the meet is to go down, the comlink chirps again.

“It’s Pindy. I think they’re on to me. I had to find another spot. Here are the directions. You got 5 minutes to get here with my dataries, or I’m gone. It’s getting too warm here.”

The call cuts off and attempts to raise her are unsuccessful. She gives directions to another warehouse that is about 4 minutes away by whatever transport method the heroes are using. They can just make it if they go there and head into the meet site, but do not have time for grandiose plans, although they can discuss strategy en route.

The warehouse is shown on **Player Handout #2**, with a GM version on **GM Aid #3**. Don’t hand the players the map until things start to happen, or it may influence their actions.

The Black Queen is detailed in **GM Aid #2**. Her disguise is very, very good, done by a well-paid professional, in a city where many people like to hide who they are. (Spot DC 25/30/33/36 to notice that she has a *lot* of makeup on, so much that it could be a disguise. Even then, that does not reveal that she looks like Zelice Sturm.)

Her Force Stealth is set up and running, making the See Force target to determine that she is Force Sensitive a (DC 40/43/46/49). She rolled very well, and because

it's so important that no-one realize that she's the Black Queen, used a Force Point. Note that, since she has Force Stealth active, a hero with See Force must actually declare its use for you even to make a roll. If the hero fails, then simply say, *"She isn't Force Sensitive"*, since that is what the hero's senses would show. If the hero makes the roll, then Pindy is "more powerful".

Any indication that the heroes sense or know that something is amiss triggers the attack by the thugs in the building, detailed below. Regardless, the attack happens very quickly.

As shown on the map, there's an open door, or they can go in the side door; it is unlocked.

If the heroes proceed straight in, read or paraphrase the following:

As you enter, you see that the interior is dark. The touch pad beside the entrance does not turn on the lights; it seems as though there is no power supplied to this building.

The heroes may have light sources or be able to see in the dark. If so, read:

In the new illumination, you can see that the warehouse has several stacks of old packing containers, some open, some closed. The air is musty and the stacks of packing modules cast long shadows. Something moves, slightly, behind a short stack of modules.

If they have no light and can't see, read:

A glow rod comes on, from behind a short stack of packing modules. In the new illumination, you can see that the warehouse has several stacks of old packing containers, some open, some closed. The air is musty and the stacks of packing modules cast long shadows.

Follow either of the above with:

The hesitant, fearful voice of a young woman breaks the silence.

"Who are you? Don't come any further. I gotta blaster."

If the heroes identify themselves, "Pindy", who is actually the Black Queen using an excellent physical disguise, rises. They can see that her blaster is a pitiful, little, underpowered thing, a weapon of the streets. It is identical to the weapons used by the Rancor Riders, if the heroes encountered them in *"The Way of the Force"*, the second scenario of this trilogy. In fact, she is wearing Rancor Rider "colors", which is to say her jacket has a crudely designed patch on its back that vaguely resembles some sort of dyspeptic, annoyed lizard.

The real Pindy was actually a member of the Rancor Riders. The Black Queen used her to monitor the gang's interaction with the heroes, then actually did pay for her to leave the Cularin system altogether.

If the heroes encountered the Rancor Riders before, she says, *"Wait a minute—I seen some of you before, from a hiding place. Didn't you guys wipe up the street with my gang?"*

Regardless of the answer, her attitude is: *"Small loss. They were all nullbit slimos. Toleda's full of people like that. I want out. You gonna protect me? You got my dataries?"*

She wants assurances that the heroes intend to protect her until she can get to the starport and away. This is important to the Black Queen, as she wishes the heroes to fail at the task of "protecting her" and feel guilty about it.

Once assured, she exchanges a datapad card for the money and the transport ticket, or the assurance that the heroes will take her off Toleda Biqua in their ship.

"There's two places in there, and two people. One's a courier for the Black Queen's gang, a Toydarian named Berpo. He's a real slime grub. He'd knife someone in the back for pocket creds; in fact I've seen him do it. He may be carrying a message for her. The place is where he usually hangs out while waiting to make his contact. It's called the Near Vacuum Cantina.

"The other's part of her gang. He's a Devaronian named Oxvar Niph. I'm not sure what his job is in the gang, but he's important. He works in the starport, has something to do with the stuff that gets shipped in and out. So, he probably helps the gang steal or smuggle stuff. I heard he keeps some stuff in a stash in his office, somewhere. You could try to find them, or put the muscle on him. He doesn't have a house, lives out of his recreational speeder, so I can't tell you where to roust him.

"Either of them could be a good lead, or could come up blank, but they're your best bet."

The *Near Vacuum Cantina* was featured in the scenario *"Who Goes There?"*

The card has directions to the cantina and a physical description of the Toydarian, including a holo. His name, mentioned in "Pindy's" text, is Berpo. (Watto, who owned the junkyard and Anakin in *Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace*, is a Toydarian, to give you a reference point.)

It also has the location of his office at the starport and the name of one of the Black Queen's Lieutenants, a Devaronian named Oxvar Niph. As "Pindy" stated, he has the typical Devaronian wanderlust, to the extent that he lives in a speeder "recreational vehicle", rather than at a house.

Once the exchange is made, "Pindy" says, *"Now you get me to the starport; I gotta hide. The Black Queen's gang is on my trail, and they gotta be close."*

As a couple of canisters hit the floor and disgorge thick, black clouds of choking smoke, you hear an eerie, growling voice snarl, "Closer than you think,

traitor!”

Before detailing the rest of the encounter, an aside about reluctant heroes follows.

If the heroes hesitate about going into the warehouse: they hear the muffled sound of a blaster shot, from within the warehouse. If they *still* hesitate, or try to set up some grandiose plan, then by the time they get in, there is no one there, but there are some blaster marks and a scrap of burnt fabric on the floor. Search (DC 15/20/23/26) find the datapad card. Heroes may take 20. Search with +10 difficulty for each tier finds a hatch in the floor in the bottom of a false container, on the stack shown in the map. It leads to a service tunnel under the city floor, but there is no one present and exploration simply reveals that some of the city's power conduits, water and waste go through here.

There are little maintenance droids scurrying about, but they don't understand Basic, aren't very bright, and haven't seen anything. The service tunnels are dimly lit.

The warehouse scene should convey the impression that the contact was shot and everyone is gone. Still, they have the datapad card.

If the heroes rush in when the blaster shot goes off: her glow rod illuminates “Pindy” for a moment, as they come in. She barely has time to say, *“What kept you? You were supposed to protect--”*, and then the canisters fly and chaos breaks out.

The events in the warehouse:

The assailants are twice the party number of Defel Scoundrels (see **GM Aid #1**, NPC stats), wearing their required visors and also breath masks. The smoke bombs fill the warehouse on this first round, making visibility next to nil and breathing somewhat difficult (-1 circumstance modifier to skills and saves, due to hampered breathing, until breath masks are put on). The smoke blocks regular vision and infrared, but not ultraviolet. Therefore, the Defel can see quite nicely, because they have big UV lamps mounted on their weapons and helmets. The lamps have only a 20-meter effective range, but that should be enough. The smoke lasts for 20 rounds, unless ventilation, or the equivalent, can be brought to bear, in which case it can be cleared in three or four rounds. Remember, though, that the warehouse has no power, though it does have ventilation ducts.

Heroes have an effective visual range of about two meters in the smoke, unless they have UV vision or some other sense that helps. Neither darkvision or low light vision help. Full helmets with respirators keep out the smoke, but do not clear it from the warehouse, so the hero still has reduced visibility due to darkness and/or smoke. Targets that cannot be seen get a concealment miss-chance of 50% and the firer must guess which 2-meter square they are in. Defel get a +2

circumstance bonus to attacks and the target loses DEX modifiers to defense. The attack and DEX modifiers even apply in conditions of low light.

The Defel stats are in **GM Aid #1**, as mentioned above. Their job is simply to delay the heroes and, if possible, stun them, while someone else abducts the young woman. They were warned that if they kill anyone, their lives are forfeit also. A Devaronian hired them; their pay-off is to be delivered by a Toydarian at the *Near Vacuum Cantina*. If any are captured, they do **not** reveal this information voluntarily, but Force Skills, Intimidation or other techniques might get it out of them. They know nothing of the Black Queen.

As for the Black Queen herself, “Pindy” bases her actions upon whether any of the heroes are of a species that can see in the smoke. She douses her glow rod as soon as shooting starts, as a “reasonable precaution not to draw fire”.

Your job here is to get her away from the heroes during the fight and to make them think that she has been kidnapped. It's a bit mean, but she is not a very nice person at this present moment. They eventually find out that this was a set-up and they are not to blame. The Black Queen wants to make them feel useless and guilty, though you needn't prompt such thoughts in their characters' heads.

Guidelines follow, but you may be able to do this more naturally or logically based upon the actions taken by your players' heroes. As always, do what works best, with the overall story considerations in mind.

If the heroes cannot see through the smoke: she drops and gets out of the way as stun bolts start to fly. Her comlink has been broadcasting since before the heroes arrived. The Defel are firing at the heroes. Describe the darkness illuminated by blaster bolts, momentary glimpses of deeper shadows within the shadows. Dark, inhuman forms, impossible to focus upon clearly, are out there (the Defel). She waits until the large, front loading door blows open on round two, then moves to it and lets out a despairing wail as she is “manhandled” into an airspeeder: *“You said you'd protect me!”* The airspeeder zooms off.

The heroes are not able to see anything clearly, so this can be described as the sounds of repulsors, the chuffing of doors and so forth. On round three, while the fight in the warehouse is still ongoing, the airspeeder takes to the sky and vanishes. As it flies, ground vehicles cannot trail it effectively, since it can cut over buildings, etc.

If the heroes have some way of retaining full vision right away: Pindy douses her glow rod and heads for the small stack of crates nearest the front door, taking cover. The Defel fire at the heroes. Describe the eerie

scene: even though there is some light and some shadow, there are momentary glimpses of deeper shadows within the shadows. Dark, inhuman forms, impossible to focus upon clearly, are out there (the Defel). On round two, the large, front loading door blows open. Pindy yelps, makes as if to run further into the warehouse, and then suddenly jerks backwards *through the air* and out the door. It looks like someone used Move Object; but in fact it's her own Force Flight, masked by the Force Stealth. She disappears into the airspeeder's open door, wailing, **"You said you'd protect me!"** as it disappears. It is unlikely, but not impossible, that a hero could get to it and disable it within the round, but if that happens there are two droids inside, one piloting, one armed. Their stats are irrelevant, because if they are intercepted, their heads, along with all information in them, explode. (Reflex Save DC 15/17/19/21 to take half damage from a total of 2d4 piercing shrapnel.) The vehicle contains no evidence; registration is optional on Tolea Biqua.

If Pindy has been "abducted", the Defel spend a maximum of two more rounds trying to stun heroes, and then try to escape either into the night or into the service tunnel mentioned above. They have speeder bikes about a block away. It is possible that the heroes may capture some of them; that's fine. They volunteer nothing and, if coerced (described above) lead to either or both of the next two encounters, which is also perfectly all right.

If the heroes are just too good and it is obvious that you would have to "plot hammer" them to get the Black Queen "abducted" and away: don't. If she cannot make it to the airspeeder reasonably without heroes coming after her, she sends a tone on her comlink and the airspeeder leaves. If the heroes win the encounter, then they can get "Pindy" to the starport before they continue. She is "very grateful" and pretends that she might be getting interested in any human/humanoid male who looks like he **"could really take good care of a woman"**, especially any one who either directly helped her or came off looking very good at the warehouse. Pride and distraction can also lead to the dark side, and pride is one of her own failings. She does not refrain from making a pass at a Jedi, since **"all those rules seem pretty silly to anyone with some real life experience, don't they?"**

Note that the preceding is actually an ironic, cynical "dig", as Zelice is vehemently opposed to Lanus' belief that Jedi could and should be trained from older beings with "life experience". Her own lack of ability to judge how ordinary people were motivated led to her terrible mistake. Once they leave her in the safety of the starport, she simply vanishes and resumes both her real identity and her monitoring of their

progress. If they ever check back on her com frequency, it does not respond. She is no longer using it; there is no "carrier" or traceable signal, etc.

Encounters 3 and 4 can be played in any order. If you are already getting behind time, then you may scrap Encounter 3 and play only Encounters 4, 5 and 6.

Encounter 3: Exchange of Pawns: Refused

Key idea of this encounter: When the heroes get to the Near Vacuum cantina, their quarry, the Toydarian panics and takes a hostage. He is vicious and very willing to kill. In this case, to protect the innocent, the heroes may have to use enough force quickly that their lead could be killed. Do they risk the hostage, or risk losing the trail?

Some of the heroes may be familiar with the *Near Vacuum Cantina*, if they have experienced the scenario *"Who Goes There?"* Check with your players, and if they have been there, you can put out the map (**Player Handout #3**) and let them explain the scene, if they like. Ask them to avoid spoilers about their past experiences, if some players have not played the other scenario. The bartender is the same and there are one or two "regulars" there who may remember them and call out a friendly greeting, if they did well last time they were there. On the down side, that draws Berpo's attention to their arrival, and if the scuttlebutt is that these people are competent, are the law, or include Jedi, then he panics as soon as they so much as look at him.

If the heroes have never been to the place, hand them **Player Handout #3** and answer any scene-setting questions. Your version is **GM Aid #4**. Berpo's position is marked. The description from *"Who Goes There?"* is reprised below:

It's a Spacer Bar, but its inside is about as tasteless as all of Tolea Biqua's outsides are. There's a phony holo-starscape flickering on the ceiling and walls. Waitresses wear ludicrous "spacesuits" with transparent arms, legs and midribs. The Gamorrean waitress should really have an opaque suit. Really. But nobody's telling her that.

Still, the cantina is reasonably clean and the drinks are decent, and not too overpriced. There's a live band that's still playing a recent razzu tune that's pretty catchy. It will probably make its way out to cantinas in wretched hives of scum and villainy on Rimworlds in about twenty years or so.

The patrons are transients of every species, mostly

spacers. Of course, in Tolea Biqua, “spacer” covers a lot of categories: trader, scout, pilot-for-hire, smuggler, pirate— or even people like yourselves.

If at least some of the heroes have been here before, and have done well (didn't use too much firepower and “defended” the patrons from the Thaereians):

The grubby, but cheerful, Human bartender nods and waves.

“Good to see you back. What'll you have? First drink's on me.”

The Gamorrean waitress approaches and simpers. Scary sight. Very scary.

If at least some of the heroes have been here before, and did **not** do well (offended the employees/caused trouble/used guns in a fist fight):

The grubby Human bartender glowers at you as you enter, and keeps one hand under the bar.

“You again? There'd better not be any more trouble in here, or I'm shootin' right now.”

If none of the heroes has been here before:

You can get drinks from servers at tables or booths, or order right at the bar. As with almost every cantina in creation, patrons glance at you when you enter, but go back to their drinking and conversation.

The cantina is shown on the **Player Handout #3** and **GM Aid #4**. The “Fish Tank” runs floor to ceiling and is actually full of amphibians, so the poor things won't die if it gets broken. There is actually no good reason for it to get broken this time, unlike the first time. This is a more serious encounter, so breaking it gratuitously might spoil the atmosphere. Besides, thanks to the contributions of generous heroes, the rebuilt tank has blaster resistant, reinforced walls.

Guns are allowed in Tolea Biqua, but nobody gets into the *Near Vacuum* with anything heavier than a blaster pistol, courtesy of the Twi'lek “weapons check” girl who hangs out at the end of the bar. Hidden holdouts and vibrodaggers make it in without problems.

No vibroblades, axes, force pikes or anything obviously scary. No grenades, or nonsense like that. It's a cantina, even if it's in a rough part of a rough city.

Presume that most patrons have the equivalent of a regular blaster. The six staff members can grab blaster carbines from behind the bar, if needed, but it shouldn't be.

In case the heroes actually have the inclination or the time to order, drinks range from one to two credits. Buying a round for the number of patrons here would cost about 40 credits. Even if some of the heroes are

disliked, the drinks aren't, and patrons scurry up for free drinks and think better of the heroes. Berpo and his cronies do **not** come to the bar if this happens, and that might draw attention to them.

The showdown: Eventually, or perhaps immediately, the heroes are going to attempt to grab or interrogate Berpo. That's when things get nasty. The situation is described below, but is kept loose. Play it to suit the type of group that you have. Although rather a lot of description and alternatives follow, this encounter is likely to be very short: the heroes take in the situation, decide how to deal with it, and it resolves. Negotiations could make it take a little while longer, but that is all right.

The problem to solve, here, is that Berpo panics as soon as he sees that he has attracted any attention whatsoever from the heroes. He is seated in the first booth to the right as they enter, in the position marked on your **GM Aid #4**, and has seen them come in. While he has a good view of the place and his back to a wall, he fell short of picking the perfect spot: he cannot get to an exit unseen. Now the cornered rat, he turns vicious.

Seated with him are a male Rodian and two women. One woman is also a Rodian, the company of the thug. The other is a Twi'lek and she has passed out, as Berpo has been feeding her drinks nonstop to make her “relax and unwind”, and he unwound her a little too well.

Stats for Berpo and the others are in **GM Aid #1**. Only Berpo is stattd; the others are “extras” in your movie.

Berpo isn't expecting company, though he is paranoid about his many enemies. The moment Berpo thinks that the heroes are after him, or even heading for him, he grabs one of the female Twi'lek's head-tails and jerks her head up, putting a vibrodagger to her throat. He does this while the heroes are still some distance away; he won't wait for them to get close. Since she is unconscious, if he attacks her it counts as a coup de grace and kills her instantly. Because the vibrodagger is at her throat, any heroes trying to “outdraw” him act as if flat-footed: no DEX bonuses to initiative, actions or defenses, not that he's attacking them. For actions that do not involve DEX, their initiative still suffers, of course.

Any hero that making a Sense Motive check (DC10) or any other Psychology-related skill (DC15) can detect that Berpo is in deadly earnest, when he calls out:

“Back off! Anyone comes closer, I kill her! Just get out of here and leave me alone! I fly, or she dies!”

Of course, panic spreads like wildfire through the cantina. Patrons start heading for the door. The

bartender threatens to shoot, to which Berpo replies ***“You move, she dies!”*** The bartender holds his action until he sees a chance to stop Berpo without killing the girl.

The Rodian woman starts to screech in terror and the male tries to sidle out of his seat, wanting to be anywhere but here.

“Sit down!” Berpo screams at him. ***“Shut up!”*** he yells at the woman.

It should be obvious that Berpo is losing it.

The heroes' main task is to save the Twi'lek woman. They may want to interrogate Berpo, but Berpo's sole goal is to get out of here free, and he'll do absolutely anything to achieve that. He is paranoid enough to force the Rodian to carry the Twi'lek, while he sits on her shoulders with the vibrodagger, should people try to dupe him into thinking that they're going to let him go.

Some possible actions and results:

The heroes decide to let him go: Berpo has the Rodian carry the woman and himself out to a parked groundspeeder. They zoom off. Whether they are pursued or not, at some point the passenger window opens and Berpo flies off, or attempts to. If he is shot down, the fall kills him. As he is evil, a known murderer, and trying to escape justice, killing him does **not** make anyone eligible for a DSP, though warning him to stop would be nice. Note that the Twi'lek female is still alive in the speeder and has not even woken up.

The heroes try to shoot Berpo: Make sure that they understand that he is very likely to kill her, unless they are instantly successful. Berpo only needs to *think* that he is about to be attacked to become homicidal. Give the heroes plenty of warning if they are pushing him over the edge, unless they are doing it intentionally (which **would** be worth a DSP). Trying to stun him means that they must both succeed in hitting (he has 50% cover from his victim), and he must fail his Fortitude save. Use of lethal force by the heroes, in this situation, is acceptable. He is threatening to murder an innocent. Note that he cannot get the full benefit of his incredible Toydarian DEX while holding the woman tightly, so drop his Defense by three, but he does have 50% cover from her.

Mind-affecting powers: Berpo is a Toydarian; he is immensely resistant to mind powers, though not absolutely (see his stats in **GM Aid #1**). However, no mind power is going to make him commit suicide, and he believes that relinquishing his hostage would be suicide. Successful use of Affect Mind, Illusion, or

similar powers gives beneficial modifiers (GM discretion) to other actions, rather than simply making him give up.

Negotiations: Berpo is half out of his mind with fear. It is not impossible to negotiate the release of the woman, but it requires a truly heroic effort. It also has to defeat his Sense Motive if it involves lying. Essentially, Berpo wants to get away, free. He does not wish to talk to the heroes or give them any information. He wants to be assured that he can safely escape. Any arguments that he cannot possibly get away with this push him nearer to the edge. If he truly feels that he is about to be captured, he tries to kill the woman and get away in the panic. Notwithstanding this, this is a chance for a negotiator to shine. If Berpo can be convinced that the heroes will let him get away, he starts to calm down a bit and listens to a plan. If the plan actually guarantees his escape, then he is willing to let the woman go.

A hero offers to exchange himself or herself for the captive: Berpo is not a fool. The Twi'lek is easily disposed of and cannot fight back. This is a case where successful Mind powers or negotiations could make him agree. However, his new hostage has to be similarly helpless. The Rodian has to tie them up (and he's good at it) and Berpo transfers the dagger to the new hostage's throat (yes, that eliminates the flat-footed status of the others; regular initiative works). Make sure that any hero who volunteers to do this knows that they are now be eligible for a coup de grace, as they are immobilized and in Berpo's power. If they don't like that, then they should not volunteer. Do not tell them this in advance, but if any hero **does** volunteer to go into a coup de grace situation during this dramatic standoff, they should immediately receive a Force Point, after they are committed to it and have been bound. If the others nail Berpo during the transition, the volunteer still gets the Force Point if you are convinced that they meant it.

Other ideas: Sure. The point here is not to let get Berpo away or to kill anyone. If it's logical, or reasonable, or clever, or simply heroic enough, evaluate the idea and give them their try. Just make sure that they realize that since Berpo can and will kill; they are unlikely to get a second chance. Also, Berpo is not going to stand idly by while they discuss the tactics of taking him out; he wants to leave safely and leave *now*.

If it all goes bad: Berpo tries to take his action and kill the Twi'lek woman, and then tries to fly to safety. Coup de grace is a full round action. He has a holstered, standard blaster pistol, which he draws before he flees. He shoots to kill. He is very unlikely to make it away, but if he escapes, he turns up in the

last encounter.

It is possible, of course, that even with all his advantages the heroes can still beat Berpo to the draw and take him out before he can kill the Twi'lek. This is a good thing, but don't force it. The heroes must have the real moral and tactical decisions to make. The players should not think that either they or the Twi'lek have "script immunity" -- they don't.

Once the situation is resolved, or if a fight breaks out, the bartender and staff start laying down stunning fire from blaster carbines.

If the heroes somehow take Berpo alive, he is unwilling to tell them anything. If intimidated or otherwise coerced into giving information, the heroes can learn that the Black Queen has used him as a spy and messenger. He was in Bayonard when they ran into the people chasing the Padawannabes. From a nearby rooftop, he also recorded their encounter with the false Cularin Militia. He has only met the Black Queen personally once. If they get a description from him, it does *not* match the description given by Lanius (young, dark haired Human female, quite striking in looks). She was physically disguised again, but Berpo of course does not know this. Berpo doesn't much care that the descriptions don't match; he's sure that it was the Black Queen. He met her about a year ago and she scares him stiff. He met her on Cularin, not here.

Currently, he has some dataries that he was supposed to pay to some Defel, when he got a confirmatory comcall. He hasn't gotten the call, and the Defel haven't showed up. He has 3000 credits in a small satchel, in large denomination tokens, rather than chips. People on Tolea Biqua like cash that leaves no data trail. Technically this is evidence, not "loot", despite Tolea Biqua's lack of formal law enforcement. It's not as if this is a wilderness and they've just knocked off a Tusken Raider.

He cannot lead them to any hideout, but if they do not already have the information, he can finger the Devaronian, Oxvar Niph, featured in Encounter 4.

Encounter 4: Knight Takes Bishop.

Key ideas of this encounter: The heroes get to the office of Oxvar Niph, the Devaronian starport official in the pay of the Black Queen. They are able to find a hidden container with some information about the gang, and the location of one of their meeting places, the Dark Edge Dancetorium. Niph, alerted by a silent alarm built into the hiding-spot, tries to ambush the heroes, and then tries to flee. He manages to get

himself into a lethal situation, behind the starting engines of a freighter about to lift off. Will the heroes risk death to save him, even though they already have the information?

NOTE TO THE GM: Since infiltrating the starport and getting to Niph's office could turn into a scenario all by itself, the format of this Encounter is loose, and there is no specific map provided. The main points and set events are detailed, and your task is to get the heroes to the exciting point where they have to decide if they'll risk life and limb to rescue Niph from incineration by a starship's engines.

If they do not save him, they can go on to Encounter 5. If they do save him, he gives them some additional information that is not essential to finding the Black Queen, but may be very useful for deciding about how to deal with her.

Getting in: Evaluate this abstractly, but using hero skills, feats and special abilities. On Tolea Biqua, people can bribe their way into a lot of places. Your heroes have a huge raft of skills that they can employ. They may even simply wish to try negotiating with the starport authorities (if they think that they can trust them).

Assign the difficulty of getting in, with the ability to search Niph's office privately, at (DC 20/23/26/29). It is up to you to evaluate which skills and other advantages the heroes might use: security kits and subterfuge, a Noble calling in a favor to get in without "entanglements" from security, bribery and negotiations, invoking "favors" earned in other scenarios, and so forth. Various modifiers may accrue: if the heroes have certificates or evidence of friends in powerful places (high or low), or are actual Militia members, and so forth. Multiple methods or modifiers that make sense together will allow for "assist" modifiers. Up to a +3 can be gotten for bribing, at the rate of +1 per 200 credits. You get the idea. When the plans are done (and it can be quite short, and likely should be held to 10 minutes maximum), then nominate the primary roll, add the mods and go for it.

If the heroes fail, this can be adjudicated in a number of ways (since they have to make it):

- They can try a totally different method;
- They can retry by expending more influence/money, etc.
- They can use a Force point on the original roll (that would have to be done immediately).

Regardless, they should find themselves in Niph's office eventually.

Finding the evidence: Quite simply, this requires a Search roll. The spot is not obvious, (DC 25/28/31/34). The heroes may take 20 (uses about 30

minutes in scenario terms) if they got in through some relatively quiet means, or were permitted to get here without “overseers”. They may either search separately and simultaneously, getting separate rolls, or combine with up to a +6 from assistance (all may roll to beat the DC10 for assisting, but a maximum of +6 counts). If they take 20 and get the maximum assist, then it is a sure thing. If not, they may always expend a Force Point.

Again, this should be *short*, not more than a couple of minutes of real time.

The hiding-spot is inside the seat of a chair at the computer workstation in Niph’s office, very cleverly concealed. Note that there is a hidden alarm in the top of the compartment. It is not possible to deactivate it; it is silent and actually built into the chair, so almost invisible. It goes off even when Niph opens the compartment: he just turns down his receiver when he opens it himself. This alerts him; he happens to be in the near area, having a meal. He comes back in his mobile home and awaits the heroes’ exit. This sets the scene for the more dramatic part of this encounter.

Inside the compartment are 500 credits, a snub-nosed holdout blaster that has had modifications made to it (there is a certificate), and a datapad card. The encryption on the card can be broken with a Computer Use check, (DC 20/23/26/29), no more than one assistant. Breaking encryption requires a minute. The heroes may elect to take 10, but not 20 (failure wipes the data). Again, with an assistant and anyone with decent Computer Use skill, and the backup of a Force Point if needed, they should get the data. There is a failsafe later in this encounter if they blow it.

The data incriminates Niph as aiding the Black Queen’s organization with smuggling, black market operations, and theft of items that were in starport storage. Of course, it doesn’t list this in the manner of a confession, but comparing notes about items lost from the starport warehouse and stashed in certain gang storage depots, plus the fact that this card has some restricted information about the contents of various companies’ and individuals’ storage containers, shows the criminal nature of his activity. Interestingly, he was also responsible for diverting the lightsaber power cells into Alto Janss’ warehouse in the previous scenario.

Among his notes to himself is a list of rotating meeting spots for receiving instructions from the Black Queen. For the balance of this week— ending tonight, as a matter of fact— the spot is a converted shipping office/warehouse space. It was used for a while as the “*Dark Edge Dancetorium*”, a trendy dance spot, until the trend changed. The address is here. Obviously this is the next step in the trail. Actually, it’s the last step, but the heroes do not know that yet.

The Ambush: Oxvar Niph has either been warned by

his silent alarm, tipped off by someone inside, or just got lucky—well, bad luck is luck, too. He is waiting outside the port authority buildings in his recreational vehicle and is intending to run down the heroes as they exit the building. As he guns the engine and hurtles towards them, they can become aware of this with Spot or Listen check (DC 10/13/16/19) checks (the hero may roll *one* check, whichever is best). Force Sensitive heroes may, of course, try to make a DC 20 Wisdom check as well. If they fail, they are surprised, lose initiative, and can do nothing to avoid the vehicle, though armor DR still protects. If they make their checks they may roll initiative to see if they are flat-footed or not. If they make the checks by an extra 10, they are not flat-footed, even if they lose initiative, as they had enough forewarning.

Heroes who win initiative can get out of the way and might have clever ideas about rescuing companions; work with it reasonably if that comes up. You have to decide which of the heroes are potential targets: if they travel in a clump it could be all of them; this is a large vehicle. If Niph’s Pilot check against any heroes in his path equals or exceeds the Defense (which may be reduced due to the checks above), they get to make a reaction check (Reflex save DC 15) to take half damage, or take full damage for 3d6 blunt physical at low tier, plus 2d6 more per tier level (so upper tier, level 9-12 heroes could take up to 9d6 from the speeding, massive vehicle, in the unlikely event it hits). Keep an eye on the damage, though – it would be awfully unheroic to die run over by a speeding RV! Any hero who is hit and fails the save needs to make a second save, this time Fort DC (damage taken), or be knocked down and to the side as the vehicle hurtles past. That hero may do nothing but stand up this round, if they are able to do that.

Heroes who are missed or who make the save may also take actions against the vehicle.

If any hero succeeds in damaging the RV, then it careens out of control, through a fence and into harm’s way behind a freighter about to take off. See below.

If no hero manages to damage the vehicle, then the panicking Niph blows his “get out of here” Pilot check and ends up similarly to the above— it’s just more satisfying for the players if their heroes get to do some dramatic blaster/vibroblade/lightsaber work on the vehicle.

Niph’s “stats” are listed here only, rather than in the **GM Aid #1**, as he is not tiered and is more just someone who drives the vehicle and is a target for rescue. He has no desire to get into combat. Assume that he has 12s across the board and a tiered Pilot skill of +6/+9/+12/+15. He uses his Pilot skill at –4 as his attack value to ram any heroes. So, he rolls a d20 + +2/+5/+8/+11.

The Rescue: Oxvar's vehicle has ground to a halt right behind the ion engines of a freighter in the process of taking off. The RV crashed down on its side and Niph is stunned and only semi-conscious.

It requires a Spot check (DC 10) to tell that the freighter's ion drives are about to ignite. A Scout or anyone with the feat Starship Operations (space transports) knows that the engines should start in 5 rounds. It takes 3 rounds to get to the vehicle on foot, running, without the benefit of something like Burst of Speed or any of the Force speed feats. On round 5, the freighter lifts on repulsors and on round 6, its ion drives fully ignite, at which point Niph and his vehicle—and anyone else in the path—are likely to be blown to pieces and scattered across the landing-pit.

Calling the Control Center to stop the takeoff takes 1d2 rounds, if the heroes have comlinks and declare an emergency. Processing the request takes another 1d2 rounds. So, it's very chancy, even if they think of it.

Time for heroism? If a hero or heroes dash to Niph's aid, remember that the base time quoted was for ordinary people on foot, at a run. They may be able to gain a round with some feat or skill, GM call. The only accessible doors are on the passenger side, up in the air, one in the cab and one in the side. Of course, when they get there, with either 2 or 3 rounds to act, the cab door is jammed. One round to open it with a STR check (DC 20) roll, maximum one assistant. A lightsaber or vibroweapon is also a possibility. The door has DR 5 (not against a lightsaber) and can take 10 damage points.

The side door is not jammed, but then the hero has to get to the cab and get Niph out of his seat-belt (1 round, if the hero is thinking ahead and has something handy to cut him out) and get him out.

It is impossible to guess all the ways that the heroes might think to save him: they might even try to interfere with/delay the freighter's launch, somehow.

Moreover, exceptionally daring, dramatic, risky, etc., methods may qualify for a Force Point.

As GM, you want to evaluate the situation fairly and warn them if they are not going to have enough time. If they are actually on the way out of danger on round 6, have them all make initiative rolls. They get a -4 if they have to hustle the stunned Niph along, but any sort of Treat or Heal Another check made during the rescue gets him fully aware and he runs with them.

The freighter's initiative roll, on round 6, is 15. Anyone who is fleeing on round 6 hears the engines roar to life and may want to dive for cover in one of the depressions or behind one of the bits of machinery near the edge of the landing-pit. Reflex saves, with a +2 for having ranks in Tumble or Jump, are needed. The target is (DC 10/12/14/16) and Force Points are allowable. Special Evasion skills also apply.

The base damage from the ion wash is

4d6/6d6/8d6/10d6.

The hero wins initiative on Round 6, while getting away: If the hero succeeds in the Reflex save, his or her rib cage rattles with the hurricane howling of the lift-off, but no damage is taken. If the hero fails, half damage is taken.

The hero loses initiative on Round 6, or is caught inside the vehicle and unable to get away: If the hero succeeds in the Reflex save, his or her rib cage rattles with the hurricane howling of the lift-off, and the fringe of the scorching ion wash toasts him or her for half damage. If the hero fails, full damage is taken. Remember those Force Points, if the Reflex save was failed. It is possible to die here.

Niph makes his save if one of the people helping him out does, and he moves on their initiative. If under his own steam, evaluate his rolls. His Reflex modifier is +2 and his initiative modifier is +1. He has 8 Vitality and 12 Wounds, so if he blows his save, he's likely bantha pudu.

If the heroes rescue Niph: He is amazed that anyone would risk dying to save him. He is more or less grateful, but is still in shock. He tried to run them down because his life is ruined, since he figures that they've found his cache of data, and he was desperate to prevent them telling anyone. If it becomes apparent that they did *not* find the data, he clams up fast on that point, but can be coerced into giving the data in the next paragraph.

He spills his guts about the Black Queen's meeting place (Encounter 5). He knows the location and that she is expecting the heroes, and that she'll be there with about 6 to 8 people. It seems odd to him that she actually doesn't want the heroes dead. He believes this, because he is absolutely sure that if she wanted them dead, they'd be dead. He also knows that she has been directly monitoring them for some time and that she was responsible for them running into the Rancor Raiders during *The Way of the Force*. She also hired the Defel in Encounter 1.

Niph also owns up to being the one who re-routed the lightsaber energy cells into Alto Janss' storage, on the Black Queen's orders, in *The Way of the Force*. He doesn't know anything about Janss; he selected that storage spot at random.

FINAL GM NOTE: If the heroes did not rescue Niph and managed to either destroy the computer data or not find it, then there is a last way of prompting them to go on. In his vehicle, or what remains of the wreckage of it, is a flimsiplast advertisement for the "*Dark Edge Dancetorium*". As they have no other leads remaining, it's time to get down...

Encounter 5: Knight Sacrifice. Check...

Key idea of this encounter: The heroes arrive at one of the Black Queen's hideouts. She knows that they are on their way, as she herself set up this confrontation. Now that she has learned all that she wants to about these "heroes", it is time to see whose way is to be her way: theirs, or the path that leads to the dark side.

When the heroes arrive at the hideout, which is a fairly simple and decrepit-looking office/warehouse structure, the front door is open. Read or paraphrase:

Well, the hunt hasn't exactly brought you full circle, but pretty close. You're in the older warehousing and shipping district, not to far from the Tolea Biqua starport.

The hideout seems to be a rather shabby, nondescript shipping office and storage building: two stories high, with the windows shuttered with blast louvers. The exterior decoration has peeled and flaked away repeatedly, each time replaced with advertising of the latest incarnation of the building's use. The last coating seems to have been decoration for the "Dark Edge Dancetorium". Cute. Well, at least it wasn't "dark side".

There seems to be some sort of new notice, in holo form, playing in front of the open entrance. The open entrance? Yes, the front door is open.

Anyone who uses binoculars from a distance, or ventures close enough, gets the following information, played in holographic, gothic looking letters and recited by a somehow familiar, sultry, enticing woman's voice:

"Re-opening for One Night Only, the Dark Edge Dancetorium. Come on in and dance with us. We have exactly <hero number> places left. Hurry, or you'll miss the show."

Odd, there doesn't seem to be any music coming from inside...

The building is laid out and keyed in **GM Aid #5**. The player map on **Player Handout #4** shows only the central room and some locked doors. You can describe what's behind the locked doors if it ever becomes important. However, there is nothing of interest in any of the rooms.

The players may plan, and even succeed in, other modes of entry, rather than taking the front door. It doesn't matter. All of the rooms except the central one are devoid of life. The only thing that they affect is

their entry path into the last room.

The set-up for the shipping room, inside the building:

In the main shipping room are the Black Queen and one of her lieutenants, Jax Norveel. Also there, on the second-level catwalks, are a number of smugglers and black marketers. Her other lieutenant, Gubo Durab, is in one of the offices with two gunsels, in case the heroes are reluctant to come in. Presuming that the heroes find their way to the shipping room, Gubo and his two men join the party about two rounds later.

Note that Gubo's two men are part of the total number of smugglers for this encounter.

If Berpo got away alive in Encounter 3, substitute him for Jax in this encounter, so that the heroes may eventually have a chance to get him.

Once the heroes get there, read or paraphrase the following:

Around and above the shipping-room floor, on the second-level catwalks, are members of the Black Queen's entourage, a motley collection of Humans and aliens. All are armed, though few have anything like real body armor. None make any hostile move; they are waiting for something.

Down on the "dance floor" is the object of your search: the Black Queen. She is certainly kitted out to suit her new name: gone are the austere robes of a Jedi. They have been replaced with a form-fitting costume that seems to be composed of an articulated series of leather bands, running from her neck to her calves. At first glance, they are black, but then you see that they are actually an extremely dark green, the color of some exotic plants you've seen. The clothing is accented with far too many steel buckles and studs for them all to be functional: if the effect is intended to convey menace, it certainly does the job. She wears a hooded half-cape of slate gray, with the hood down.

Zelice Sturm looks to be in her late twenties, but that could be deceiving. In fact, there is something vaguely familiar about her— but not until she speaks with the sultry tones of Pindy Streeto does it become obvious. She looks very different from the "scared young woman" whom you tried to help.

Her skin is paler, suggesting a lot of time spent indoors or out only at night. Her hair is a glossy black; so black it seems almost to have blue highlights.

She is looking at your group dispassionately, as if this moment were long awaited, inevitable.

Then she speaks, with a humorless smile upon her face.

"So, shall we get down to the business of killing each other, 'heroes', or do you have anything that you want to say first? Lanius always loved talk."

The correct answer is...

Seriously, unless the heroes are being played as psychopaths, everything in the entire trilogy and especially Lanius' advice at the start of this scenario should suggest that they try to effect a peaceful solution.

If the "heroes" simply want to turn this into a fight: Remind them that Lanius advised against it and that the Black Queen is a fully-trained Jedi Knight who has had time to discover their strengths and abilities. If they are bound and determined to flex their muscles, then fine, the Black Queen will fight them. Combat strategies and statistics for the Black Queen and her gang are given in her profile and the NPC stats sheets.

"So be it. Your choice, 'heroes'."

She does not continue against anyone who is taken out of combat (unconscious or dying), but neither does she pull any punches. Do not forget her skills, (especially Battlemind), feats and Force Points. She is a combat monster. She tries to take out any Jedi first, and then the most powerful non-Jedi, and so on down the list. She deflects and redirects hero blaster bolts at other heroes, preferably non-Jedi who cannot deflect them again.

Her gang does not attack unless attacked, for now. However, at the first sign of her being seriously hurt or losing, they then open fire, to stun at first, switching to kill if she continues to lose or goes down.

The first time that the Black Queen kills a hero, if it happens at all, any Force-sensitive heroes feel a pang of the ***dark side*** as she acquires another DSP. If she finds it necessary to use an actual Force Skill to harm a hero, then she acquires another DSP. They are contributing to her final turn towards the ***dark side***. This should be noted as it reduces their Adventure Experience maximum at the end; it is definitely not heroic. Moreover, battle should not have been their first solution.

She should not find it necessary to call upon the ***dark side*** of the Force with her Force points, but roleplaying still trumps. If the heroes infuriate her or make her fear for her life, she might draw on the ***dark side*** with any used Force Points, GM call. As always, this gets her a DSP.

Her intent is to incapacitate all of the heroes, not kill them, but a lightsaber is deadly. If they all go down, the gang simply leaves, although Zelice has any heroes who can be stabilized seen to. This hideout has already been cleaned out. No gear is stolen. Even if she has been driven completely to the ***dark side***, she does not kill them at this point in time, if it can be avoided.

If the heroes decide to surrender, she allows it. In this case, they must fully disarm. Her gang gathers their weapons (void any certs at the end) and they all leave, without any further harm to the heroes. She is no longer willing to talk. The characters have confirmed her worst fears about the essentially selfish and violent nature of sentients.

NOTE TO THE GM: This is the *only* case in which the heroes lose their weapons, namely, if they decided to fight and then surrendered.

Proceed to Encounter 6; there is no more for the heroes to do. Zelice and her gang are gone.

For the Critical Event Summary, Zelice's status is either "Dark" or, at best, "Inconclusive".

If the heroes manage to kill her or knock her out and capture her, the gang attacks, to kill, unless the heroes can cow them with appropriate skills, in which case they run. If they've defeated her and at least half the heroes are still fight-worthy, they get a +4 to convince the gang to bug out. The gang does not surrender. The target to drive the gang off is (DC 18/23/28/33).

If the heroes win, they can take her back to Almas. Go to Encounter 6.

NOTE TO THE GM: For the Critical Event Summary, Zelice's status is either be "Dark" or, at best, "Inconclusive".

If the heroes decide to talk or negotiate:

Smart move, though a fight is still not impossible.

Now, this encounter is intended to be very cinematic, very dramatic. That can be very hard to do, but is also very satisfying if it comes off. If needed, combat strategies and statistics for the Black Queen and her gang are given in her profile and the NPC stats sheets. The heroes are almost sure to have to fight her gang members at some point, unless they can simply cow them into submission, but a combat does not have to develop between them and Zelice Sturm. Please be familiar with the background and motivations on her GM dossier.

Here, the rationale for this scene and the overall flow is set out. After that, the set-up and reactions of the other gang members are detailed, along with some tactical notes and so forth. While this may seem backwards, again let it be stressed that this scene is supposed to be very dramatic and the theme is more important than any shoot-'em-up. There is the possibility of combat even for successful characters, if they want it and you have time for it. It's at the end, though, because it is just action candy, not the important stuff.

Simply put, Zelice is a woman and a Jedi, at the

turning point of her life, and it is the heroes who may make the difference. She is in a state of terrible emotional conflict, and in this encounter, as she is no longer employing Force Stealth, those who are Force Sensitive, or who are successful in a basic Sense Motive “hunch” (p. 98, RCR, DC20) realize that she is warring within herself. Other appropriate skills may apply for the DC20 check, GM option.

Even the “dark” part of her is more self-destructive than anything else; it stems from guilt because of the deaths that she caused and others that she *feels* that she has caused, especially that of her first “partner”. She is looking to justify herself with the rationalization that Jedi trained in Lanius’ path are the whole source of Almas’ problems. Also, it would be a comforting lie if she could convince herself that current events of the galaxy require the Jedi to be more rigorous and ruthless in their interpretation of the law, and justice. She is confusing such things with the way of the Force.

Some basic guidelines for her reactions: actions and arguments by the heroes that suggest that violence should be used to resolve this, or that she is a criminal who must atone, or that she is not deserving of being called a Jedi, are eagerly accepted as truth by the guilty, dark part of herself. That part does not want to be forgiven, does not feel worthy to come back to the light side.

If all the heroes can do is think to resolve this by threat, or by telling her to surrender herself as the criminal she is, then a fight (though not intentionally a fight to the death) is likely. In the course of that fight, it may also happen that Zelice slides deeper into the dark side, as she punishes herself by living up to their expectations that she is a villain.

If the heroes talk forgiveness, repentance, and reacceptance into the Order, they are on the right track. But it cannot be phony. In fact, it helps Zelice to accept forgiveness if she knows that the road to atonement is long and hard. Remember, she is punishing herself. First, she must choose the right; then she must make amends. But despair is a path straight to the dark side.

Obviously, the heroes have to use every part of the beliefs and all the experiences that have *made* them heroes to convince her that all is not lost, and that conflict and combat are not the inevitable solution to this meeting. If they have “passed” their tests of character in the series of scenarios of this trilogy, that should come out now, in their conversation with her. Also, she has reports of many of their actions, and knows if they are being hypocrites or if they have put their lives on the line for what they believe in. If they are truly heroic types, this both makes her feel less adequate and, at the same time, gives her a slight ray of hope that people can follow the Jedi Code and still prove victorious in the cause of good.

However, there is still one more test. This cannot just be “dueling frontal lobes”; that doesn’t feel like *Star Wars*.

Zelice still denies that there is good in her and that she can walk the Jedi path that Lanius tried to show her. And she does not think, any more, that people are truly willing to sacrifice themselves for such a cause, least of all, that non-Jedi and any Jedi who were “Latecomers” would do so. In the opinion of her dark self, the heroes simply outclassed most of their opposition.

NOTE TO THE GM REGARDING FORCE LIGHT: It’s possible that one or more of the heroes may wish to use Force Light (*Power of the Jedi*, pg 12) to redeem Zelice. This can be used unskilled. An early use of Force Light might very well kill the drama of the conflict with and for Zelice, but we also don’t want to punish players for using legitimate skills. Just don’t make it an ultra-simple exercise in dice rolling. This is an opportunity for some pretty spectacular role playing. Keep the following in mind:

- Zelice is still the same person, with the same guilt, doubts and prejudices. There is no easy out for her; in fact, down deep she feels that she should be punished. If Force Light is attempted, she’s angered, fearful and guilt-driven, and is likely to call on the dark side (+1 DSP) to augment her Will save against it.
- Also, if she is not distracted immediately *after* the Force Light attempt, Zelice spends a full-round action taking 10 on an unskilled Force Defense check. Her result, since this is the same round, would be 10 + 2 (CHA) + her force dice result, and gives her additional defense against all further force powers employed against her for the next 10 rounds. Note that she is not using the Force Defense bonus reflexively against the very first Force Light “attack”, so she gets the full bonus, not the half bonus, against future force effects. She can also say something to the effect of: ***“Don’t try that again, unless you want a fight on your hands. Do you think there’s any point to giving amnesty to a killer who still has a blaster pointed at you? There’s no easy out for me.”***
- The attempt has to succeed multiple times, as each successful attempt removes only one Dark Side Point.

Force Light (Wis). Light Side; Requires the Force Sensitive and Alter feats. You can channel the Force into withering blasts of light that can destroy dark side spirits or purge the taint from dark side locations. **Check:** When you use this skill, a wave of light side energy emanates from you 10 meters in all directions. A Force Light check sets the effect of the skill’s use on dark side characters, dark side creatures, dark side

spirits and dark side sites.

| Check Result | Dmg | ----- Effect On Spirit ----- | ----- Effect On Dark Side Site ----- |
|--------------|-----|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <= 15 | 5 | 1d8 | No effect |
| 16-25 | 10 | 2d8 | No effect |
| 26-40 | 15 | 3d8 | No effect |
| 41 or > | 20 | 4d8 | Reduce site power by 1 step |

Force Light may not be used to remove Dark Side Points from player characters. When used against a dark side spirit, Force Light deals damage to the spirit by weakening its connection to the dark side of the Force. When a dark side spirit is reduced to 0 wound points, it is permanently destroyed. **Time:** Using Force Light is an attack action; it draws an attack of opportunity. **Vitality Point Cost: 8**

Convincing Zelice Sturm: Stage One.

The heroes can choose the person with the best basic skill or CHA stat as their spokesbeing. Consult the table below and then have the party make a roll. The modifiers are based upon your survey of what the heroes have accomplished in the trilogy, to date, as well as their role-playing here. Many of the relevant points are covered on the questionnaire that you had the heroes fill out.

Success in convincing the Black Queen that she can turn from her path of despair and anger is done through roleplaying. Guidelines for this roleplaying and for her responses and attitudes are given in **GM Aid #2**, Dossier on the Black Queen; you should have it handy for this Encounter.

Once the heroes have had a chance to make their arguments, have a spokesbeing picked, get the modifiers from this table, and make the roll. They may not take 10 or take 20. A Force Point (light side only, duh!) may also be used and has it ever been more appropriate? Remember, they may see the result first and *then* use the point.

Make the heroes realize that the turning point of the scenario has been reached, by your description. Something like this could be used:

“Sometimes a contest of philosophies is more exhausting than a battle with blasters. It is obvious that you are not just trying to convince Zelice Sturm to return to Almas for judgment: you are waging a battle for her spirit, which has begun the downward spiral to the dark side. Despite her arguments, Zelice has hung upon your every word with the intensity of a drowning woman watching a lifeline. The question now is: will she grasp it and be saved, or will she doom herself forever to be a pawn to the dark side of the Force?”

The dark side cannot easily be thwarted: the roll is almost impossible unless the heroes have access to some of the (many) positive modifiers below. All modifiers are cumulative, to the maximum shown. Of course, a Force Point can be used.

Success DC: (28/31/36/39) (GM, the jump in the middle to high difficulty range is because a Force Point for a high or upper tier group yields more points, if they choose to use one.)

| Mod | Source |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| +2 (max 6) | Per hero assisting, who scores 10 or better on an appropriate skill or CHA check. Maximum bonus from this is +6. |
| +1 (max 4) | Per Force Point any of the heroes received <u>during this whole trilogy</u> , totaled. Maximum bonus is +4. |
| +2 (max 10) | Per hero, if the hero roleplayed a really good argument to help bring Zelice back to the fold. Maximum bonus is +10. If you have less than 5 heroes, they can still get the maximum if they made enough good arguments and all participated. |
| +2, once | If the heroes rescued the hostage unharmed in this scenario and weave that into their arguments. |
| +3, once | If the heroes rescued Oxvar Niph in this scenario and make the point that even the opposition’s lives are precious, or that people can always change for the better, etc. |
| +1 (max 4) | Per hero that has ever <u>atoned</u> for a Dark Side Point, in the group, if they admit that they strayed towards the dark side but were able to pull back. Maximum bonus is +4. |
| -2 (max -8) | Per Dark Side Point any hero has accumulated <u>during this whole trilogy</u> , and not already atoned for, totaled. The dark side can smell a hypocrite, or a fresh convert, a parsec away. Maximum penalty is -8. |
| -1 (max -4) | Per hero that has one or more Dark Side Points accumulated at any other time, <u>and not atoned for</u> . (Atoned points are actually a potential bonus, above.) The dark side can smell a hypocrite a parsec away. Note that if the hero got one in this trilogy, and was counted above, the hero is not counted here again. Maximum penalty -4. |

VERY IMPORTANT GM NOTE: The table above is structured to reward heroes who have done well in this trilogy and who have proven themselves actually

heroic, by “LIVING FORCE standards”. It is also designed to lower the chance of success for Tainted heroes or for those who have not succeeded in emulating LIVING FORCE heroism. What it does *not* do is allow for “growth”. So, you are the GM, and you have the final say, if they blow their roll. If you truly, honestly think that they have done an award-winning job of roleplaying, and if they truly, honestly are trying to turn her from the dark side back to the light, then ignore a failed die roll and go to the “Table Roll Succeeds” section, below. Note that if they were that determined, they should have spent a Force Point, so don’t do this unless they are willing to on a failed roll. If they fail, go to “Table Roll Fails”, below.

Again, it should be stressed that you are the director in a scene that is intended to evoke the same kind of behavior and motivations that were shown by Obi-Wan Kenobi and Luke Skywalker in Episodes IV through VI. Heroes know that some things are worth dying for. Other things should just not be done. Do not hammer your heroes into a specific role, but try to be as receptive as possible for people who wish to have a true “*Star Wars* moment”. It’s your show.

VERY IMPORTANT LOW TIER NOTE: The Black Queen is grossly overpowered for a low tier table. This is intentional. No matter what happens, even if the party is a bunch of Tainted foul-ups, if a low tier table gets into combat with the Black Queen, she simply deflects everything, destroys all their weapons and eventually leaves. If necessary, use her gang, with weapons on stun, to take the heroes out before they can manage to hurt themselves. It would be completely cheesy to have her kill a low tier group, no matter how much they deserve it. Have her point out how powerless they are instead, if they have really played non-herotically and have simply refused to consider a low-testosterone solution.

Note that a low tier party has just as much chance to succeed through negotiation and good roleplaying. It is only in combat that they cannot hope to win.

TABLE ROLL FAILS: If the heroes failed the roll and have not, in your opinion, convinced her, she simply shakes her head and says, ***“You speak well, but I don’t think you actually practice what you preach. Drop all weapons and leave, now— or fight. After we leave, you can come back for your gear”.***

If the heroes choose to leave, they can. Proceed to Encounter 6. They are very thoroughly searched for weapons, but after the gang left, they indeed find that their gear had been left behind.

If they won’t leave, but also refuse to fight, regardless of the fact that they are about to be attacked (perhaps

while appealing to her not to do this evil act), then it looks like they may be successful in representing the light side after all. Go to the “Table Roll Succeeds” section, below.

If they choose to fight, she ignites her lightsaber, nods to her guards and says, ***“Stun only”*** and combat begins. Zelice does ***not*** enter combat at the start. Here are some guidelines.

At this point, Zelice is still very conflicted. The heroes have not convinced her that the Jedi Code is real, or that she is redeemable. Nonetheless, she has not yet turned to the dark side.

She backs off as her guards attack, and activates Battlemind. If a hero attacks her with a blaster, she deflects and redirects the bolt back at the hero. If a hero attacks with a melee weapon, she goes full defensive for now. If she takes any significant damage, she warns, ***“one more and I attack”.***

This leaves one more chance for a little dialogue. However, unless the hero does something truly amazing (you can use the details from the “success” section as a guideline), talk likely does not help. If the hero roleplays very well and happens to be someone who might have gotten a success without the “averaging” effect that the hero group has on the table above, then they might turn this around to a success. If so, you may still go to the success section, but cue a dramatic pause in the fight as the climactic tableau is enacted.

Meanwhile, the Black Queen’s gang moves into position (if outside 4 meters) and shoots to stun, to take the heroes down. If the heroes switch to lethal force, the gang does too and Zelice enters the fray in earnest: ***“So be it. You’ve made your choice!”***

Zelice, if she attacks in this section, only attacks to destroy weapons: based upon the rules in the RCR, p. 168, she needs to roll 15 + (object size modifier, S/M/L) + (character’s DEX mod) + (character’s class Defense bonus). You may wish to have those pre-calculated before going much further in combat. If she misses, it is a clean miss. She also may use Move Object to hurl people away from her (stun damage only, if any, GM call), and so forth. She does not use dark side skills, or call on the dark side when using Force Points. Glory in her power, but the object here is to drop the heroes without killing them.

If she kills a hero, even accidentally, she gets a DSP, and those sensitive to the Force feel it. (For the purpose of experience penalties, this does ***not*** count as the heroes contributing to her slide to the dark side. They did try to talk her out of it.)

If all the heroes are dropped, they and their gear are left alone while the gang escapes. Any hero that needs to be stabilized is.

The fight could now go four ways: the heroes beat her people; they decide to make a fighting retreat; they

surrender; they all get dropped. “Dropped” is covered above.

If the heroes beat her people (without Zelice entering the fray), then Zelice uses all of her powers and abilities to get away as the fight winds down.

If the heroes make a fighting retreat, she allows it. She and her gang escape via another exit

If the heroes ever decide to surrender, she allows it. In this case, they must fully disarm. Her gang gathers their weapons and they all leave, without any further harm to the heroes. She is not willing to talk, now. The gear is left outside after the gang zooms off in an airspeeder.

Proceed to Encounter 6; there is no more for the heroes to do. Zelice and her gang are gone.

NOTE TO THE GM: For the Critical Event Summary, Zelice’s status is likely to be “Inconclusive”.

If the heroes manage to kill her or knock her out and capture her, the gang attacks, to kill, unless the heroes can cow them with appropriate skills, in which case they run. If they’ve defeated her and at least half the heroes are still fight-worthy, they get a +4 to convince the gang to bug out. The gang does not surrender. The target to drive the gang off is (DC 18/23/28/33).

If the heroes win, they can take her back to Almas.

Go to Encounter 6.

NOTE TO THE GM: For the Critical Event Summary, Zelice’s status is either be “Dark” or, at best, “Inconclusive.”

TABLE ROLL SUCCEEDS: If the heroes are making convincing arguments, and if it seems to you that Zelice honestly might turn away from the darkness and come back to the light side, then the dark side of the Force makes its last, desperate attempt to claim her.

This occurs after the conversation, so any points suggested on her dossier have already been covered.

She slowly advances on the heroes. Read or paraphrase:

Zelice has been looking at the floor for the last minute. She looks up, and there are tears in her eyes. Her right arm extends out from her body, sideways, her fingers curled lightly around her lightsaber. There is the characteristic click and rushing hum as it ignites. It is a brilliant, emerald green.

“I accept that you truly believe that what you say is the truth. But it is not. And now I have to show you. I have had reports of all of those wonderful things you have done as you’ve tried to help Lanius. But in the end, you’re just too good at what you do. You always win -- because you outclass your opponents. That is the weakness of the Jedi Code.

What do you do if your opponent is simply more powerful than you, simply a better killer? As I am.

“Can you still be a hero, if you cannot win?”

The Black Queen seems to take all the time in the world, and a hush descends over the room. She grasps her lightsaber two-handed and, while still several paces away, slowly raises it high and to the right, in a classic killing stance.

Then she looks you in the eyes, with tears in hers.

“All you can do, in the end, is kill me. There is your truth.”

Zelice begins to walk forward, in no hurry.

In this situation, her gang knows that she’ll kill them if they interfere, and they fully expect that she can kill all of the heroes. What they do not expect is that she would rather die, now, than kill another innocent person. The heroes have unknowingly saved their own lives, by convincing her that the Jedi Code is real. She is sentencing *herself* to death, not them.

The heroes have not had to stand completely idle, and they have certainly had time to arm themselves. They are not flat-footed. If they wish to attack or defend, they can.

Also, Zelice has had time to activate Battlemind, just like hero force users have.

There are now two probable directions, listed below.

Enough asides – on to the likely directions!

Direction ONE: If the heroes feel they have no other option than to fight: Zelice uses all of her Jedi powers to win. However, what she is doing is striking at weapons, aiming to destroy them. Based upon the rules in the RCR, p. 168, she needs to roll 15 + (object size modifier, S/M/L) + (character’s DEX mod) + (character’s class Defense bonus). You may wish to have those pre-calculated, before going much further in combat. If she misses, it is a clean miss. She also may use Move Object to hurl people away from her (stun damage only, if any, GM call), and so forth. She does not use dark side skills, or call on the dark side when using Force Points. She first destroys any weapons that have the capability of doing stun damage, leaving the weapons on kill settings for last. She deflects and redirects blaster bolts against other heroes’ weapons, not the heroes themselves.

Even if the heroes end up killing her, she does not try to kill them. Unfortunately, this is not a turn to the light side -- for her; it is suicidal despair that she cannot be a good “hero.”

Her intent is to render them powerless, and then simply escape, if they cannot kill her.

“You see? You’re only a hero if you can win.

Isn't that right?"

Well, no, it's not right, but that hasn't been proven to her, yet.

If necessary, once their weapons are gone, and if they still don't back off, she has the gang open up on stun only, and then they abandon this place. It has already been cleaned out.

If she is somehow absolutely forced to attack a hero, then if they take wound damage sufficient to kill them, in this case, she has severely damaged an arm or leg, incapacitating them. They are not dead, but definitely out of combat. No, it's not in the rules. Sue us. They don't die if they did the right thing and just didn't get quite high enough a roll. It's not cinematic. Instead, they get badly injured and live to fight another day, as both Luke and Anakin did in the *Star Wars* movies.

If Zelice goes down, either unconscious or dead, her gang loses a round staring in disbelief. If the heroes can use an appropriate Skill (Intimidate, Bluff, Diplomacy, etc.) with a +4 circumstance bonus, the gang is willing to escape without battle. They don't simply surrender. The target to drive the gang off is (DC 18/23/28/33). If they fight, they shoot to kill, and the heroes may justifiably use whatever force they need to survive.

Note that a hero can *still* turn this from a battle into a clear win in the first few rounds of combat, if they follow the pattern in the following, non-combat section, but they'd have to get their friends to stop attacking and then go into the "we don't want to fight you" mode. This would have to happen very early in the fight; otherwise it is just surrender. It only works if the heroes realize very quickly that she is not fighting to win and then all stop fighting. The only other acceptable case is if they are clearly *winning* and just don't want to kill her, and want to stop the fight.

If that really does happen, let them state their case and go to the next, "Direction Two", section. However, do not suggest this course of action to them. The rewards for the ultimate victory are too great to hand them out for just "fence sitting".

IMPORTANT NOTE TO THE GM: If the fight plays out, then for the Critical Event Summary, Zelice's status is likely to be "Inconclusive".

Direction TWO: If the heroes do not wish to fight, regardless of the cost: Congratulations; you really have heroes. Allow them to be as dramatic as they wish in what they say, just make sure that they are really serious that they don't want to fight her, even though she has a drawn lightsaber and seems quite prepared to kill them. Note that it is legitimate that they can still sense terrible conflict within her. If anything, it has raised to a fever pitch. She is practically broadcasting

it. But don't tell them this until they at least suggest that they are not going to fight her, or that they are wondering if what they have done has helped at all.

Note that there has to be a complete lack of hostility on their part. They can have weapons ready, but may not be attacking.

You must determine, in your judgment, whether it is only one or two heroes who are ready to stand and take it, while the others are getting ready to attack if she does hit them, or whether they are actually all agreed. Obviously, dramatically tossing away weapons is an indicator (unless they're getting another one ready behind their backs).

In fact, if they toss away weapons, if you feel it's appropriate this is a good place to award them a Force Point, even if they have earned one earlier. That's just plain gutsy, and it is just plain *Star Wars*.

(Those who refuse to attack her, regardless of the cost, who are willing to sacrifice themselves if need be, are eligible for some special "Stage 3" rewards at the end. It is fine if the others stand and do nothing, unwilling to take the hit, as long as they do not attack. They still do well at the end, just not quite as well as those who were prepared to actually sacrifice themselves to save Zelice.)

The Black Queen raises her lightsaber.

"What's the matter with you? Don't you understand that you're going to die? What use is a dead hero?"

They must understand that simply standing still while someone strikes at them is effectively losing all DEX bonuses; it's just short of leaving themselves open to a coup de grace. In effect, they are daring her to kill them, after all that they have said.

Put simply: it is your job as a GM to make this a real sacrifice. The hero(es) should be convinced that he or she (or they) have a very good chance of dying right here.

And if they still refuse to fight, if they allow her to attack, then, of course— they win. They win everything, including Zelice's spirit.

Read or paraphrase the following, ONLY if you get to this section:

Time grinds to a halt: The Black Queen moves forward jerkily, like some impossible marionette. Her face is working. She looks at you with something that could be love, or hate, or both.

You have never felt so connected to Life, to the Force, to whatever they call it, before.

The lightsaber sweeps down in its terrible arc—

Pause for effect, but don't let anyone make the mistake of trying to react: they've been through enough. Change your tone to that used in the beginning of the scenario. You could even get up and walk away from

the table a pace or two, if they get the idea something special is happening. As you recall, this is a story that is being told to the Padawans and Knights. Read:

The Storyteller in the Great Hall of the Almas Academy is very accomplished. Her voice is authoritative and has great presence, and the imposing aspect of the speaker draws the eye.

“And so, that day, the Black Queen died.”

Pause for just a moment, then:

“But Zelice Sturm lived— lived to tell you this tale.

“Because of these people, the creature that I was becoming, a creature of despair, of hatred, of the dark side, was shown the true meaning of the Jedi Code: to love and care for others’ lives even more than for your own.”

The silence in the hall is deafening. There are tears in more eyes than Zelice’s.

“But,” she says, turning to the younger Padawans, “that didn’t mean that the danger was over.”

All right, GM, back to your “in the shipping room” tone. Repeat and continue:

You have never felt so connected to Life, to the Force, to whatever they call it, before.

The lightsaber sweeps down in its terrible arc—and at the last instant, the blade flickers out of existence.

Zelice drops the lightsaber.

“Perhaps... perhaps you’re right. In the end, only what you make of your life matters, not how much of it you have.

“It’s over. Thank the Force, it’s over.”

“The void it is!” snarls a voice, as a blaster shot rings out. “What about us?”

With the senses and reflexes of a Jedi, Zelice jumps in the path of the bolt even as the gangster fires. You can feel the dark side fading from her like a bad dream. The bolt catches her in the back. She goes down, although you can see that the wound isn’t lethal.

“I’m the new leader! Fry them!” says a heavy-set Human.

NOTE TO THE GM: The two lieutenants are Jax Norveel and Gubo Durab. It was Jax who just broke in. If Berpo got away in Encounter 3, substitute Berpo for Jax, above, and in all references below. The heroes deserve a chance to rub out the little sleemo.

Zelice just got a Force Point and used it to atone for one of her DSPs. She also got nailed with a crit and

failed her Fort save, wouldn’t you know? That’s for the numbers lawyers. For those who like good books and movies, she made a dramatic sacrifice and began the long, hard road to redemption. (*Just for you*, GM: she may complete her journey at the end of Season 4.)

For the next round, everyone but Jax and the heroes are confused and taking things in.

First, any heroes who elected to sacrifice themselves, if need be, gets a Force Point. If you awarded them one for dropping weapons (it was not a given that they had to), they should not receive another.

However, they are still eligible even if they got one in Encounters 1 through 4.

Next: the only gangster that is absolutely set on fighting is Jax. If the heroes take him out, the rest of the gang runs off. However, if a full-blown fight ensues, the gang trades shots. All but the infuriated Jax are now seriously demoralized and have a –2 circumstance penalty to all attacks and saves (not damage, their guns are not demoralized).

This battle is just for closure, GM. It would be terribly anticlimactic to have any hero killed here.

It now becomes your job to see they survive this one, because they truly are the stuff of *Star Wars* heroes.

If it runs for more than 4 rounds, or if you are short on time, one or two of the remaining gangsters shout something like, *“You’re nuts to fight these guys!”* *“You’ll get us all killed!”* and then they shoot Jax in the back, killing him, and try to run off. Clean it up and go to Encounter 6. Zelice can be revived without trouble and brings along all of her data about the remainder of her gang, for the authorities.

Encounter 6 (Conclusion): ... and mate.

Key ideas of this encounter: Back at the Almas Academy, the story ends. Once more, they meet Ki-Adi-Mundi, of the Jedi Council on Coruscant.

Ending #1 (Temple of Doom Mix): If the heroes elected immediate combat, without even trying to work things out (whether they captured or killed the Black Queen, or whether she got away):

You listen as Master Ki-Adi-Mundi, of the Jedi Temple at Coruscant, finishes his story. All eyes are riveted upon him; all is silent. Sorrow is reflected in the faces and bearing of pretty much everyone in the room.

“Let the events which I have recounted serve as a warning to all present, especially to those who are about to embark upon the next phase of their lives as

Jedi.

"The dark side is ever present. The dark side beckons to you at every moment in your life when you do not feel the Way of the Force within you. If you despair, or give in to fear or anger, or doubt that the path of peace and dispassionate judgment is as effective as the quick way of violence or hate, the dark side will be there to tell you that you are right— and, so, it will consume you."

"The dark side has many tools, and many of them are unwitting of what they do."

"Nevertheless: the Black Queen was a Jedi of the old school philosophy. While my report to the Council may fault Master Lanius for certain choices that he has made, and perhaps for his overestimation of the Almas Academy's resources and support, the Council will not interfere in his chosen methods of instruction. Yet."

"These people," Ki-Adi-Mundi continues, indicating your group, "have been through grievous trials in the Academy's behalf. It is not for us to judge their decisions and their tactics. Every time life presents us with decisions, we have a chance to learn from them. There lies another path to the dark side: if we err and hide from the fact, or rationalize our error, or claim to have been unable to do anything else, then we reject the lessons which life offers us— and the dark side is waiting, to beckon once more."

"Once more, we thank the helpers of the Almas Academy for being both learners and teachers."

"I must now return to Coruscant. There are many events in motion, and all of our abilities and service are needed. To the Padawans, and to our new Knights, I give this admonition from the Coruscant Temple: learn well the lessons of the light side of the Force, lest the dark side beckon."

"We will be watching."

Go to "Here Ends...", below, skipping the "The year ahead..." section, and the Experience and Loot Sections. The heroes receive the Stage One Rewards.

Ending #2 (Politician Mix): If the heroes captured or killed the Black Queen, after trying unsuccessfully to talk things out:

You listen as Master Ki-Adi-Mundi, of the Jedi Temple at Coruscant, finishes his story. All eyes are riveted upon him; all is silent. Sorrow is reflected in the faces and bearing of pretty much everyone in the room.

"Let the events which I have recounted serve as a warning to all present, especially to those who are about to embark upon the next phase of their lives as Jedi."

"The dark side is ever present. The dark side will

beckon to you at every moment in your life when you do not feel the Way of the Force within you. If you despair, or give in to fear or anger, or doubt that the path of peace and dispassionate judgment is as effective as the quick way of violence or hate, the dark side will be there to tell you that you are right— and, so, it will consume you."

"The dark side has many tools, and many of them are unwitting of what they do."

"Nevertheless: the Black Queen was a Jedi of the old school philosophy. So, while my report to the Council may fault Master Lanius for certain choices that he has made, and perhaps for his overestimation of the Almas Academy's resources and support, the Council will not interfere in his chosen methods of instruction. Yet."

"These people," Ki-Adi-Mundi continues, indicating your group, "have been through grievous trials in the Academy's behalf. When confronted with violence and deception, they chose to offer reason and a chance to return to the light. For the present, that offer would seem to have been rejected by our lost sister." (GM: paraphrase the preceding if she was killed).

"Every time life presents us with decisions, we have a chance to learn from them. There lies another path to the dark side: if we err and hide from the fact, or rationalize our error, or claim to have been unable to do anything else, then we reject the lessons which life offers us— and the dark side is waiting, to beckon once more."

"So, once more, we thank the helpers of the Almas Academy for being both learners and teachers. Look to the example that they provide, not to the decision made by the Black Queen."

"I must now return to Coruscant. There are many events in motion, and all of our abilities and service will be needed. To the Padawans, and to our new Knights, I give this admonition, from the Coruscant Temple: learn well the lessons of the light side of the Force, lest the dark side beckon."

"We will be watching, in hope."

Go to "The year ahead..." and "Here Ends..." below, and the Experience and Loot Sections. The heroes receive the Stage Two Rewards, which are the normal rewards for complete success.

Ending #3 (Return of the Jedi Mix): If the heroes turned Zelice back to the light side:

From the audience, a figure that had been listening, unobtrusively, at the back, comes forward. Murmurs and whispers end as Master Ki-Adi-Mundi of the Jedi Council at Coruscant moves up to stand beside Zelice Sturm and Master Lanius Qel-Bertuk.

For a moment, the Cerean Master simply looks at Zelice. Then, he murmurs, "Welcome home."

Zelice smiles, again, tears bright in her eyes, and then impulsively hugs the reserved-looking Cerean. Not everyone watching can restrain his or her amusement.

"Well," says Ki-Adi-Mundi, somewhat breathless, "it seems that not only you Padawans and Knights have learned a lesson from the story, here, tonight."

"In behalf of the Jedi Council, and for myself, I must thank Master Lanius and our special guests, for providing us with such a fine storyteller."

He turns to face you.

"These people have proven themselves the dauntless and selfless heroes of this system of Cularin, time and time again." (GM: paraphrase the preceding, if the heroes are new. Mind you, if they got here even through just this trilogy, they've been put through a wringer by now, so it may still work.)

"Tonight, they have also vindicated Master Lanius' choice to allow older, more worldly-experienced students to enter the Jedi Order. For, as Zelice Sturm recounted, if she had had more knowledge of the world and its ways and motivations, she might have been able to avoid the pitfalls that the dark side set before her. Still, we of the Coruscant Temple will continue in our traditional methods, while continuing to keep an open mind."

"They have taught us— no, they have exemplified for us— a very, very important lesson for all Jedi, and perhaps all people:

"Though only those who can act with the flow of the Force may be trained as Jedi, it is not only Jedi who hear the will of the Force, or who can adhere to its ways. In fact, every one of these heroes has demonstrated some of the finest qualities that a Jedi may hope to possess."

"I would be proud to serve with any of the beings here tonight, who have helped our sister back to the light. Who knows, perhaps one day I shall?"

"While Jedi can aspire to be heroes, Jedi can also learn much about heroism from these people. How do we thank them?"

As one, the entire hall rises to its feet and there is a tumult of applause, outcries of thanks and praise. Zelice comes to you and hugs and kisses anyone who allows it.

After a few minutes, the crowd subsides, but there is a definite air of celebration in the room that visitors to the Academy have rarely seen here. As the Jedi themselves know, not all is serious and grave, in the Order.

Master Ki-Adi-Mundi holds up a hand.

"I must now return to Coruscant. There are many events in motion, and all of our abilities and service will be needed. To the Padawans, and to our

new Knights, I give this admonition, from the Coruscant Temple: learn well the lessons of the light Side of the Force, lest the dark side beckon.

"We will be watching, confident that you will prevail."

Continue below. The heroes receive the Stage Three Rewards, intended only for hero groups who exemplify the ideals of dramatic heroism and the Living Force campaign.

Finish with the following "end credits":

The year ahead portends to be one of turmoil, conflict and maybe even open war for Cularin. But Senator Wren is fighting for the system's rights in the Senate. The Almas Jedi are countering the dark side and galactic criminals wherever they are found.

And, you, the heroes of Cularin, are going to be in the vanguard of the forces battling for justice and peace in the galaxy — as always.

Here Ends "The Dark Side Beckons"

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 redeem or capture the Black Queen? If so, each hero who survived receives 600 xp.
- Full points for **killing** the Black Queen are awarded only if the characters attempted some other reasonable solution, or had no choice, in the GM's judgment.
- Otherwise, the maximum Adventure award is 400. This is also the maximum award if she escapes.

- *If, in the GM's judgment, the heroes **actively and willfully contributed** towards turning the Black Queen to the dark side, then in addition to the DSPs mentioned in the scenario, the maximum Adventure award is 200 (some XP are still awarded for accomplishing the earlier encounters, but the heroes operated in a manner exactly opposite to the actual goal and possibly opposite to the roleplaying ideals of the LIVING FORCE campaign, if they drove someone to the dark side). Roleplaying experience should be awarded strictly for that, not for the success level of the heroes.*

Adventure Experience: maximum 600 xp
 Roleplaying Experience: 0-400 xp
Total Possible Experience: 1,000 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 getting to the Black Queen's base and were intent on turning her to the light side or capturing her, but ran out of time, award them ¾ adventure experience. Intent is very important in this scenario.

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.

NOTE TO THE GM REGARDING AWARDS OF "LOOT" AND "CERTS": Everyone loves goodies. However, it is important not to make rewards phony, or to give them out just for warming a chair. In essence, all rewards in a roleplaying game should be for roleplaying one's character appropriately within the milieu, and for accomplishing the goals of the scenario.

To be very clear, here is what the heroes can earn, depending upon their level of success. Not every one at the same table will get the same rewards, or the same number of certificates.

Stage One (*did not accomplish the main goal, as set out in the explanation in the Rewards section*). This represents marginal accomplishment of goals, so the heroes get what they negotiated, if anything, plus what they picked up along the way. 1000 credits (or more, if negotiated). Note that Encounter 1 specifies that non-Jedi get at least 1000 credits apiece for expenses, even if they did not ask for it.

Oxvar Niph's modified holdout (maybe), 500 credits from Oxvar Niph's stash (maybe) and 3000 credits from Berpo's carryall (maybe).

Summary: the holdout (maybe), plus 1000 to 4500 credits (possibly slightly more if negotiated).

Stage Two (*accomplished the mission goal of capturing or, only if absolutely necessary, killing, the Black Queen*): Stage one rewards (possibly the holdout, plus some cash). Added to this: the *Favor of The Jedi Academy* (if they did not negotiate unreasonably), and the certificate for Coruscant Temple Utility Belt (**OR** 1000 credits if they negotiated unfairly).

Summary: max so far is the holdout, the belt and about 4500 credits, **OR** the holdout and about 5500 credits, plus some negotiated credits.

Stage Three (*bonus for redeeming Zelice. NOT expected to go out to everyone*). Note that not all certs apply to all heroes, so they get one, or at most two, if they were "clean". These represent accomplishment of the scenario goals, to the best of the heroes' abilities. There is no penalty for not "redeeming" Zelice; that's very hard to do.

- Those who are NOT Force Sensitive (only): Call of the Force (free Feat) and offer to become Jedi Padawans.
- Low or mid tier Jedi heroes OR high or upper tier Jedi heroes (only): training cert for a free feat. (Technically, this is the **ONLY** one that could double up, if a hero took the offer to become a Jedi and then scored the free training as well.)
- Force Adept heroes (only): slightly different training cert for a free feat.

So, the only "big cookie" for those who got to stage three is the training, unless the hero was not Force Sensitive at all, as the scenario represents a climactic, potentially life-changing encounter with the Force. It is possible that a hero who is not Force Sensitive could pick up the Call, opt for Jedi-hood (and doom, before long) and then take the training Feat, too, but that's the only double-dip.

There are also a couple of certificates that give people who have active DSP or "atoned-for" DSP some choices, as we have had numerous inquiries from players who would like to be cleansed of the stain so that they may progress as Jedi. You do not even have to look at these certs ("Light Side Loyalty", "Focused on the Light Side") unless there are people at the table who have DSP or "atoned-for" DSP (i.e. "DSP ever earned").

Certificate and Reward Descriptions, by Encounter

Encounter 4

500 credits from Oxvar Niph's stash, if the heroes decided to keep it. It's not exactly evil to steal it, but not very heroic, either. However, unless they turned it over to the authorities at the time, no-one back on Almas wants the credits and they can keep them.

Modified Hold-Out Blaster Pistol - This hold-out blaster has been modified to provide more "punch", but at the cost of energy efficiency. Most hold-outs can fire six shots before needing a new energy cell, but this weapon runs out after 3 shots. Energy cells cost 20 credits. Weapon type: Hold-out blaster; Proficiency Group: Blaster Pistols; Damage: 3d6; Fort DC: 15; Critical: 20; Range Increment: 4 m; Hardness: 5; WP: 2; Type: Energy; Weight: 0.5 kg; Size: Tiny; Break DC: 14

Encounter 3 or 5

Berpo's 3000 credits, from Encounter 3 or 5. Even if the heroes returned it, no one claims it, and it comes back to them. Technically, the money is Zelice's and she'd want the heroes to have it.

Encounter 6

Stage One Rewards: Non-Jedi get at least 1000 credits apiece for expenses, even if they did not ask for it. Jedi are not offered credits.

Stage Two Rewards:

The heroes receive the Stage one rewards, plus the following.

NOTE TO THE GM: HEROES WHO DEMANDED PAYMENT ABOVE REASONABLE EXPENSES (THE FREELY-OFFERED 1000, FOR NON-JEDI) DO **NOT** RECEIVE THIS FAVOR. THEY RECEIVE A MONETARY BONUS IN THE NEXT SECTION.

All heroes except as Noted:

- **Coruscant Temple Jedi Utility Belt** - In recognition of services performed for the Jedi Order by the hero named above, the Jedi Temple on Coruscant has provided a Jedi Utility Belt. While these are usually not provided to non-Jedi, this individual is considered to exemplify the spirit of the Jedi Code. The buckle bears the symbol of the Coruscant Jedi Temple, with the logo of the Almas Academy inset. This belt has several pouches containing a three-day supply of food capsules, a medpac, a tool kit, a spare power pack, a spare energy cell, a glow rod, a comlink, and an Aquata Breather as well as a couple of empty pouches. Jedi heroes who have already placed a 600 cr. deposit on a Utility Belt may refund that

deposit to their funds. If the belt is worn openly, it provides a +2 circumstance bonus to interactions with Jedi. It provides a -2 circumstance penalty with those opposed to the Jedi

GM Note: heroes who demanded payment above reasonable expenses (the freely-offered 1000, for non-Jedi) do **not** receive this reward; instead they receive a "performance bonus" of 1000 credits, more than what they negotiated. "If money is all that you love, then that's what you'll receive."

Stage Three Rewards: Heroes receive the Stage One and Two benefits, plus the following. These bonus awards can *only* be obtained for redeeming Zelice Sturm to the light side. Note that many of these certificates will not apply to all heroes; these are a selection of choices. Most heroes will only receive two, unless they have dallied with the dark side and need/want to atone. Also, several of these certificates will become available in future scenarios, as well, if the heroes did not earn them here.

- For heroes who are **not** Force Sensitive:
The Call of the Force. *Note: taking this certificate is optional, as it conveys drawbacks as well as advantages.* During a climactic moment, you discovered that you do, indeed, believe in the Force and that, down so deep it you never realized until now, you are connected to it. If you make Master Lanius aware of this, he offers admission to Almas Jedi Academy. Welcome to a larger universe... [Game mechanic: This certificate provides the feat "Force Sensitive" for free, immediately. The hero need not accept the offer to become a Jedi to gain the feat. All benefits and disadvantages of Force sensitivity are as normal. The hero is NOT required to accept the feat or admission to the Academy. The hero may begin taking Jedi levels at his or her next character level.]
- For heroes with Dark Side Points, for which they have **not** atoned. **Light Side Affirmation** During a climactic moment, you made a powerful and personal connection with the light side of the Force. In a moment of blinding insight, you committed yourself to the light side of the Force, turning away from the lure of the dark side. [Game mechanic: You may use this certificate to immediately atone for all remaining DSP, at the usual rate of 1 Force Point expended per DSP atoned and assuming you have the Force Points. Moreover, this certificate counts as one Force Point, thereby reducing the cost by one. However, as a prerequisite, you must accept the "Focused on the Light" certificate and abide by its strictures.]

- For heroes with DSP that *have been atoned for*, but which are, as LIVING FORCE rules require, still noted as “DSP ever gained”. Choose *either* the “Light Side Loyalty” *or* the “Focused on the Light Side” certificate, following:
- **Focused On the Light** During a climactic moment, you made a powerful and personal connection with the light side of the Force. In a moment of blinding insight, you committed yourself to the light side of the Force, shedding the darkness within. You are fully cleansed. Because you have been forgiven? No, because you have forgiven yourself. However, this implies a certain fanaticism about the light side. [Game mechanic: this effectively sets your "DSP ever earned" total to zero. When calling on the light side in the future, you get +1 to your die roll total. Warning: if you ever again "backslide" and obtain a DSP, you instead accrue TWO DSPs per incident.]
- **Light Side Loyalty:** During a climactic moment, you made a powerful and personal connection with the light side of the Force. You feel the shadows of past misdeeds withdraw. Because you have been forgiven? No, because you have forgiven yourself. [Game mechanic: This cleansing effectively reduces your "DSP ever earned" total by up to 2 points, with no other strictures.]
- For low or mid tier Jedi heroes only, including those who may just have joined the Academy:
Advanced Training, Low and Mid tiers - As part of her atonement for her errors, Zelice Sturm, formerly the Black Queen, will take the time to personally instruct you in a free, bonus Force feat. You must otherwise qualify for the feat. Choose from: Burst of Speed Force Flight
Alternatively, you may train with her as she completes Lightsaber Form V. A Jedi in Living Force may have only one Lightsaber form. Note that this feat is only considered "learned" if you have 7 Jedi Levels. Until then, you are training in it. When you achieve 7 Jedi levels, it becomes active after the next scenario.
- For high or upper tier Jedi heroes only
Advanced Training, High and Upper Tiers. As part of her atonement for her errors, Zelice Sturm, formerly the Black Queen, will take the time to personally instruct you in a free, bonus Force feat. You must otherwise qualify for the feat. Choose from: Burst of Speed Force Flight Lightsaber Defense, Lightsaber Form V
Alternatively, you may learn Lightsaber Form I from another instructor. A Jedi in Living Force may have only one Lightsaber form. Note that this feat is only considered "learned" if you have 7 Jedi Levels. Until then, you are training in it. When you achieve 7 Jedi levels, it becomes active after

the next scenario.

- For Force Adepts only
Advanced Training, Force Adept In gratitude for your aid to the Almas Academy and the Jedi, though you follow a different path, Master Lanius has been authorized to have you taught a free, bonus Force Feat. You may receive this instruction from the Almas Academy or from the Tarasin on Cularin, with whom Master Lanius is developing good relations. The feat must be available to your level, you must otherwise qualify for it, and it may not be a dark side or Jedi feat, i.e. not a "Knight", "Master" or "Lightsaber" feat. Choose one with your GM and fill it into the Bonus Feat blank, below.

Bonus Force Feat:

To be distributed to each player at the table – make enough copies.

Player Handout 1: Questionnaire to Help Customize an Encounter.

Please answer the following questions as accurately as possible. This is an attempt to make the experience of this scenario more like a home game, where the GM can to provide a bit of continuity. **WARNING:** contains spoilers for the first two scenarios. If anyone is playing *The Dark Side Beckons* before playing both of the first two: (a) that is inadvisable; (b) the GM should likely interview you for about 2 minutes and get to know a bit about your character, rather than having you fill this out.

Hero Name: _____

Section 1: In the first scenario of this Trilogy, *Padawannabes*:

How many Force points did you acquire? _____ Dark Side Points? _____

Did the “bad guys” ever capture you? _____

If so, did you get away on your own? _____

Did you succeed in preventing the problem at the end? _____

Section 2: In the second scenario of this Trilogy, *The Way of the Force*:

How many Force points did you acquire? _____ Dark Side Points? _____

Did you stop the problem in the factory without wrecking it? _____

Did you retrieve any crystals, or leave them there? If you got some, how did you? _____

Did you stop the gang without killing anyone? _____

Section 3: In general:

Do you have any DSP currently? If so, how many? _____

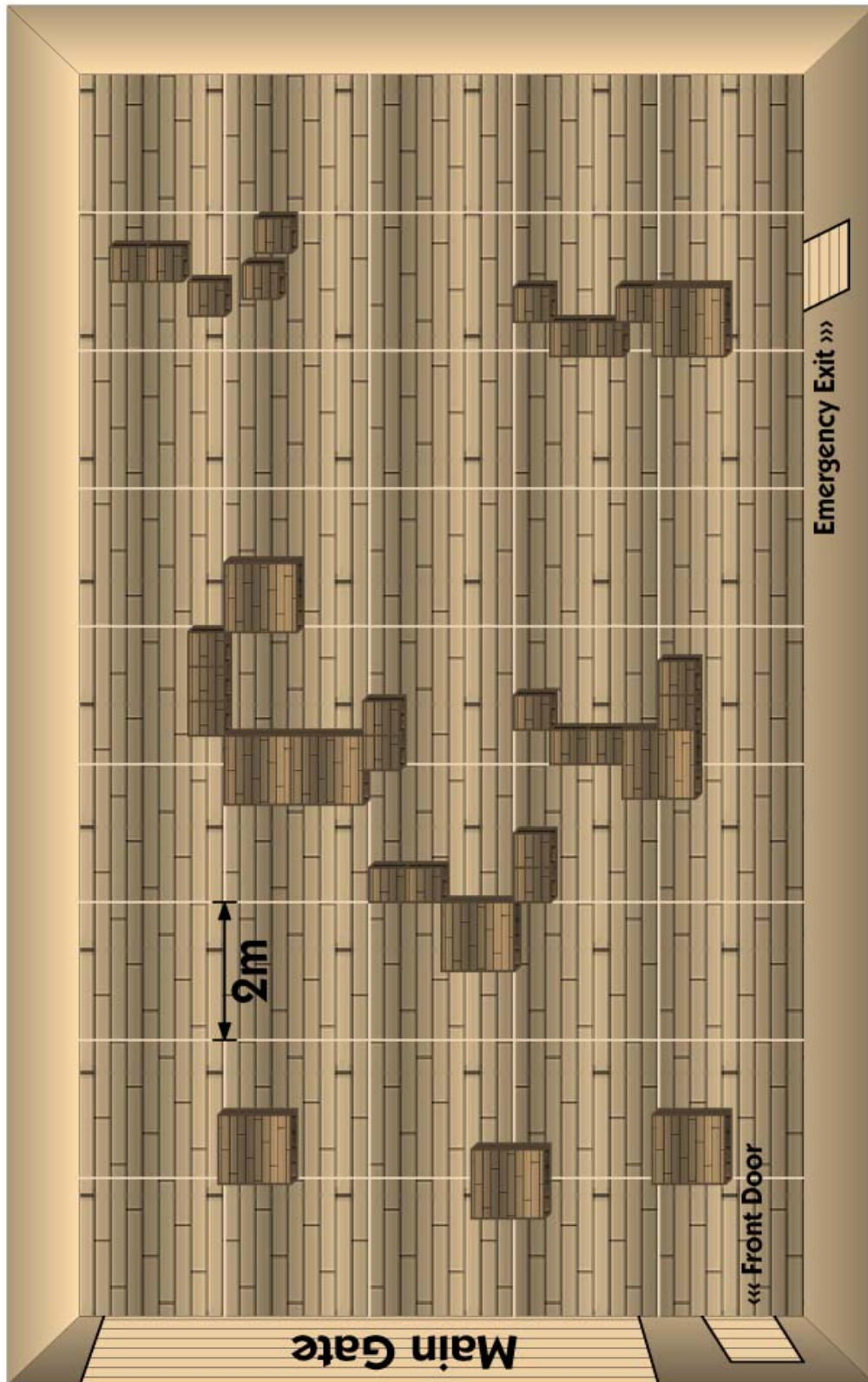
Have you ever atoned for any DSP? If so, how many? _____

Briefly: what is your hero’s attitude towards the Force? _____

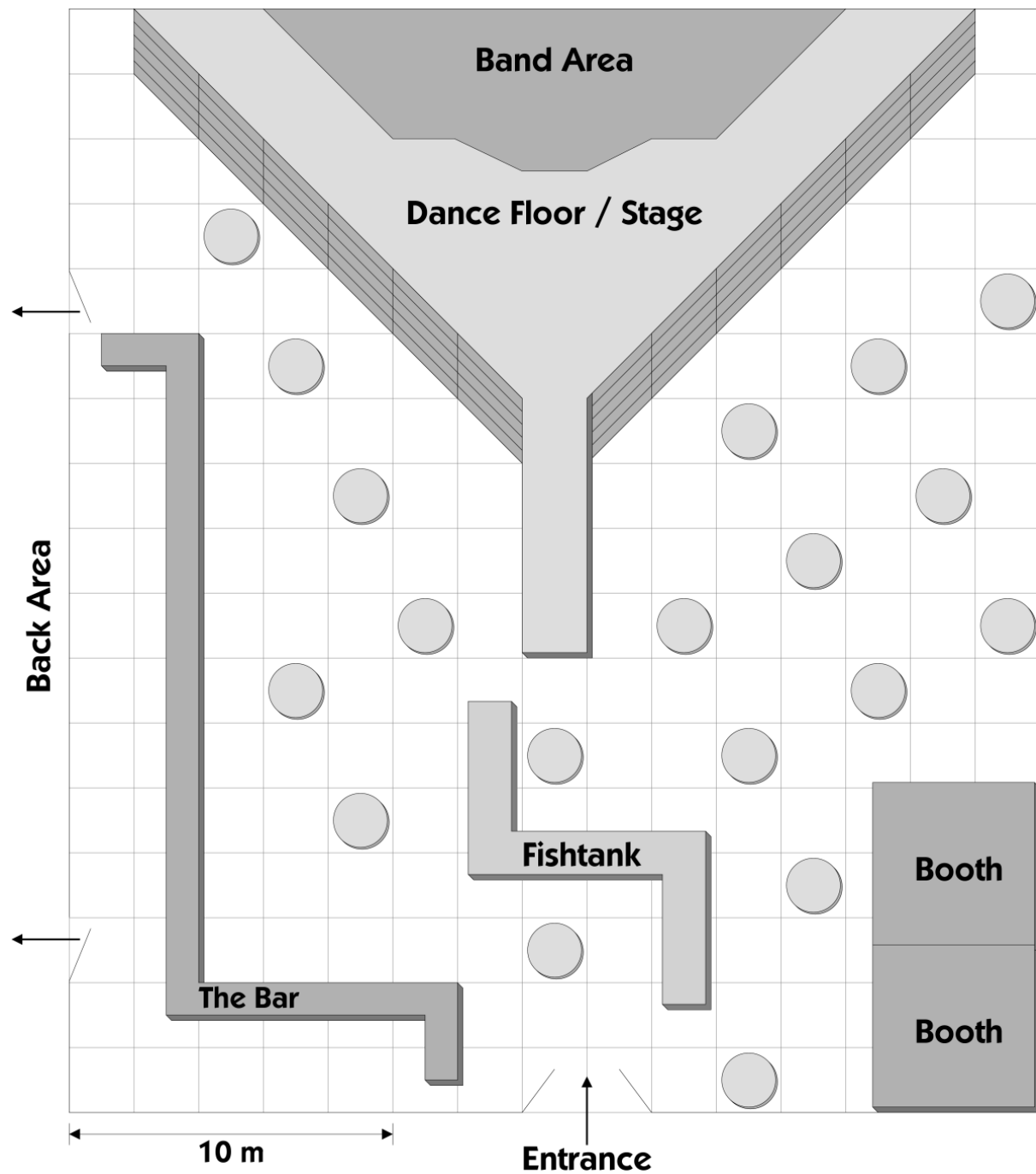
Briefly: what is your hero’s attitude towards the Almas Academy? _____

Thanks, pass this back to your GM and we at LIVING FORCE hope you’ll have a great time.

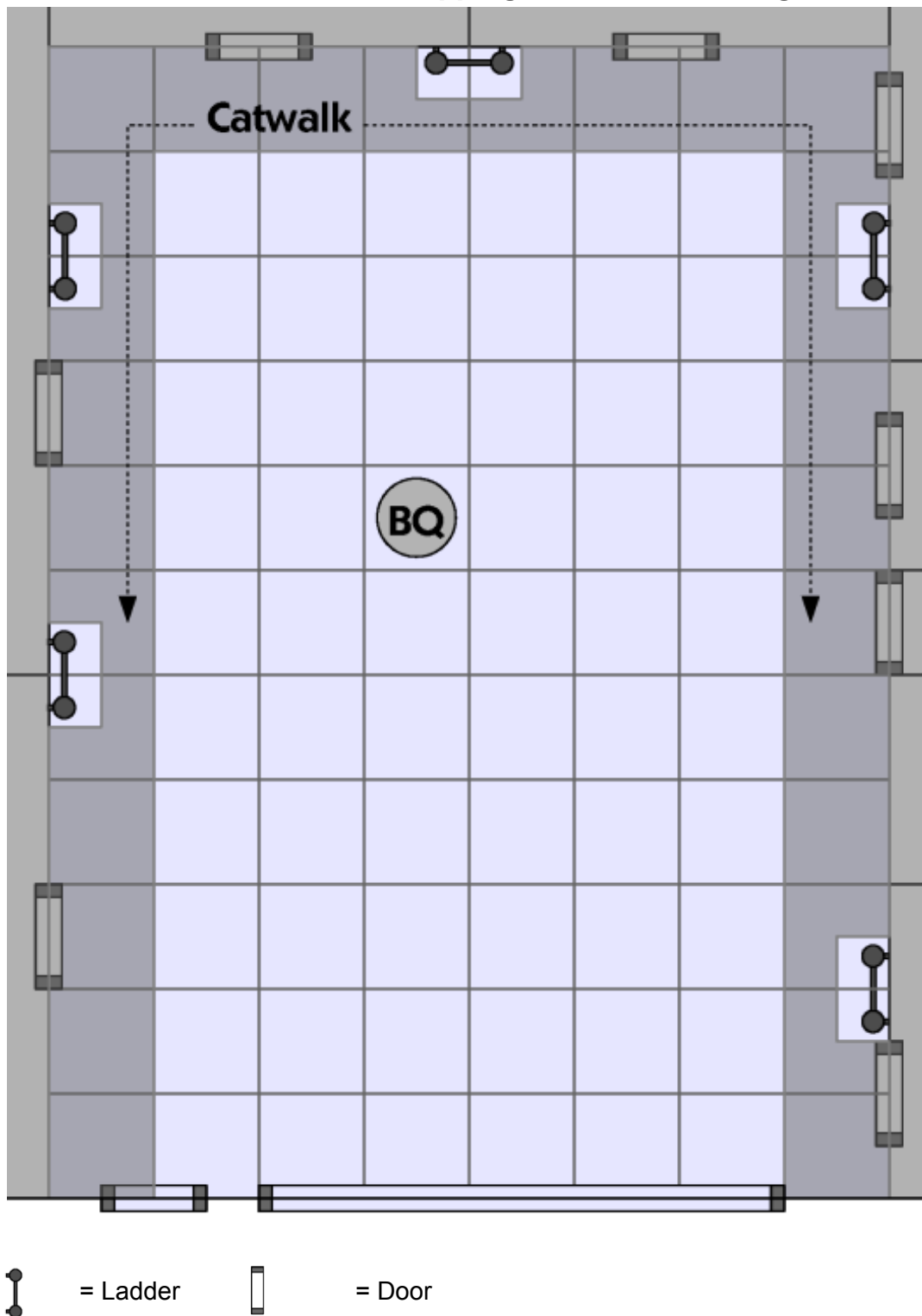
Player Handout 2: Encounter 2 -- Warehouse Map



Player Handout 3: Encounter 3, The Near Vacuum Cantina



Player Handout 4: Encounter 5, Shipping Offices and Storage Building.



GM Aid #1: NPC Statistics

Encounter 2: Pawn To Queen Four: Queen's Gambit Declined.



The Defel in this encounter have a number of species Special Traits. An extract from the *Ultimate Alien Anthology* follows. The stat blocks just say “SQ: Defel”. The SZ S modifiers and species skill mods are factored in. Their Invisibility circumstantial mods are **not** included, so they get a +2 to hit, in all likelihood, in addition to the stats below. They are blind in normal light

without their visors. Extract from p. 45, UAA:
Invisibility: In normal light, Defel appear as visible patches of darkness, much like shadows. In areas of low light, they are effectively invisible. Unless the Defel is under direct normal sunlight (or the artificial equivalent), it gains a +2 circumstance bonus to attacks, and its target loses its Dexterity bonus (if any) to Defense. Attacks against a Defel in these circumstances suffer a 50% mischance. Under especially low light conditions, the attacker must also guess which 2-meter square the Defel occupies.

Distribute your total number of Defel evenly around the indicated positions on the map, **GM Aid #3**.

LowTier (levels 1-3)

Hirelings, Defel Thug 1/Scout 1 (3, or 4 if you have 6 heroes); Init +2; Defense 17 (note Invisibility); Spd 6m; VP/WP 8/15; Atk +3 melee (DC 15 stun, stun baton) or +6 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol, weapon focus feat); SQ DR 2 (vest and helmet), Defel; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; SZ S; Rep 1; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +6, Hide + 11 (including species bonus), Intimidate +3, Knowledge (Crime) +5, Profession (Smuggler) +2, Pilot +4.

Feats: Armor (light), Weapons (simple, blaster pistols), Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (blaster pistol), Starship Operations (space transports).

Equipment: Blaster pistol, stun baton, armor vest and helmet with goggles, and breath mask. UV lamps mounted on guns and helmets.

Tactics: See the encounter.

Middle Tier (levels 4-6)

Hirelings, Defel Thug 4/Scout 1 (number equal to heroes); Init +2; Defense 17 (note Invisibility); Spd 6m; VP/WP 8/15; Atk +7 melee (DC 15 stun, stun baton) or +9 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol, weapon focus feat); SQ DR 2 (vest and helmet), Defel; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +3; SZ S; Rep 1; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +8, Hide + 14 (including species bonus), Intimidate +7, Knowledge (Crime) +8, Profession (Smuggler) +8, Pilot +5.

Feats: Weapons (simple, blaster pistols), Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (blaster pistol), Starship Operations (space transports), Great Fortitude.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, stun baton, armor vest and helmet with goggles, and breath mask. UV lamps mounted on guns and helmets.

Tactics: See the encounter.

High and Upper Tier (levels 7-12)

The Defel hirelings only get so good, but at upper tier, “Pindy” herself should have no real trouble in getting “kidnapped”.

Hirelings, Defel Thug 6/Scout 1 (6 at high tier, 9 at upper); Init +2; Defense 18 (note Invisibility); Spd 6m; VP/WP 8/18; Atk +9/+4 melee (DC 15 stun, stun baton) or +10/+5 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol, weapon focus feat); SQ DR 2 (vest and helmet), Defel; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +3; SZ S; Rep 1; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +8, Hide + 13 (including species bonus), Intimidate +9, Knowledge (Crime) +8, Profession (Smuggler) +11, Pilot +6.

Feats: Weapons (simple, blaster pistols), Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (blaster pistol), Starship Operations (space transports), Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, stun baton, armor vest and helmet with goggles, and breath mask. UV lamps mounted on guns and helmets.

Tactics: See the encounter.

Encounter 3: Exchange of Pawns: Refused.

Berpo. Berpo is slime. He’ll do anything for money, and thinks only of his own hide. He’d betray the Black Queen in a minute, but he’s sure she’d kill him. Berpo is irredeemable and if he gets out of this scenario alive, it is vastly more than he deserves. His SZ modifiers are factored in below.

Low Tier (levels 1-3)

Berpo, Male Toydarian Scumbag, Scoundrel 2; Init +9; Def 18 (Dex, Class, Sz S); Spd 6m/18m flying (poor); VP/WP 12/12; Atk +1 melee; +7 ranged; SV Fort +0, Ref +8, Will +1; SQ Illicit barter, Lucky 1/day; Bonus Species Feat: Trick; SZ med; FP 0; DSP: 3; Rep +0; Str 8, Dex 20, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +7, Disguise +4, Escape Artist +9, Hide +9, Knowledge (streetwise) +5, Move Silently +9, Pilot +10, Profession (Gambler) +7, Listen +6, Spot +6, Tumble +8.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Trick (+2 to Bluff and Gamble).

Equipment: Blaster pistol.

Tactics: Remember Lucky 1/day.

Middle Tier (levels 4-6)

Berpo, Male Toydarian Scumbag, Scoundrel 5; Init +9; Def 20 +1 Dodge (Dex, Class, Sz S); Spd 6m/18m flying (poor); VP/WP 28/12; Atk +3 melee; +9 ranged; SV Fort +1, Ref +9, Will +2; SQ Illicit barter, Lucky 1/day, Precise Attack +1, Skill Emphasis: Tumble; Bonus Species Feat: Trick; SZ med; FP 1; DSP: 5; Rep +1; Str 8, Dex 21, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +11, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +11, Hide +11, Knowledge (streetwise) +8, Move Silently +11, Pilot +13, Profession (Gambler) +10, Listen +9, Spot +9, Tumble +15.

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Trick (+2 to Bluff and Gamble).

Equipment: Blaster pistol.

Tactics: Remember Lucky 1/day, Precise Attack +1, Tumble bonus if fighting defensively and his 1 Force Point.

High and Upper Tier (levels 7-12)

As Berpo is not an important NPC, he does not change for upper tier. The greatest heroes of the LIVING FORCE universe are simply going to have an easier time with him.

Berpo, Tainted Male Toydarian Scumbag, Scoundrel 8; Init +9; Def 22 +1 Dodge (Dex, Class, Sz S); Spd 6m/18m flying (poor); VP/WP 42/12; Atk +6/+1 melee; +12/+7 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +11, Will +3; SQ Illicit barter, Lucky 2/day, Precise Attack +1, Skill Emphasis: Tumble; Skill Emphasis: Gambler; Bonus Species Feat: Trick; SZ med; FP 2; DSP: 7; Rep +1; Str 8, Dex 22, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +13, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +16, Hide +16, Knowledge (streetwise) +9, Move Silently +16, Pilot +16, Profession (Gambler) +16, Listen +10, Spot +10, Tumble +18.

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Trick (+2 to Bluff and

Gamble).

Equipment: Blaster pistol.

Tactics: Remember Lucky 2/day, Precise Attack +1, Tumble bonus if fighting defensively and his 2 Force Points. His Mobility could become very important during a getaway attempt.

Encounter 5: Knight Sacrifice. Check...

The beings detailed here are the Black Queen's two lieutenants and bodyguards. Their names are Jax Norveel and Gubo Durab. Remember, if Berpo got away alive in Encounter 3 *substitute* him for Jax; do not just add him in. Also note: the smugglers include nonhuman aliens, but the stats are not much modified, as individual variation usually absorbs any species pluses or minuses. If you want one to be something like a Wookiee and feel that you really should adjust the STR up, go ahead. It should not make a big difference to the encounter.

Low Tier (levels 1-3)

The Black Queen's Male Human "Lieutenants" and Bodyguards, Scoundrel 2 (2); Init +7; Def 15, DR2; Spd 10m; VP/WP 12/12; Atk +2 melee; +4 ranged; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +1; SQ Illicit barter, Lucky 1/day; SZ med; FP 1; DSP: 0; Rep +0; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +5, Demolitions +6, Disguise +4, Escape Artist +7, Hide +7, Knowledge: streetwise +5, Move Silently +7, Pilot +6, Profession (insert appropriate) +3, Listen +4, Spot +4, Tumble +6.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot

Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (illegal), blast helmet and vest, medpac.

Tactics: Remember Lucky 1/day and their 1 Force Point each.

Smugglers, various Thug 1/Scout 1 (2, or 3 if you have 6 heroes); Init +2; Defense 16; Spd 10m; VP/WP 8/15; Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, baton) or +5 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol, weapon focus feat); SQ DR 2; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +8, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (Customs Protocol) +4, Profession (Guard) +2, Pilot +4.

Feats: Armor (light), Weapons (simple, blaster pistols), Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (blaster pistol), Starship Operations (space transports).

Equipment: Blaster pistol, baton (not a stun baton, just a club).

Tactics: See the encounter.

Middle Tier (levels 4-6)

The Black Queen's Male Human "Lieutenants" and

Bodyguards, Scoundrel 5 (2); Init +7; Def 17, DR2; Spd 10m; VP/WP 28/12; Atk +4 melee; +6 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +2; SQ Illicit barter, Lucky 1/day, Precise Attack +1, Skill Emphasis: Tumble; SZ med; FP 2; DSP: 0; Rep +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +9, Demolitions +9, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +7, Hide +8, Knowledge: streetwise +6, Move Silently +9, Pilot +6, Profession (insert appropriate) +5, Listen +8, Spot +8, Tumble +13.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Heroic Surge.

Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (illegal), blast helmet and vest, medpac.

Tactics: Remember Lucky 1/day, Precise Attack +1, Tumble bonus when fighting defensively and their 2 Force Points each.

Smugglers, various Thug 4/Scout 1 (2, or 3 if you have 6 heroes); Init +2; Defense 16; Spd 10m; VP/WP 8/15; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, baton) or +8 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol, weapon focus feat); SQ DR 2; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +3; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +8, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (Customs Protocol) +7, Profession (Guard) +5, Pilot +4.

Feats: Weapons (simple, blaster pistols), Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (blaster pistol), Starship Operations (space transports), Great Fortitude.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, baton (not a stun baton, just a club).

Tactics: See the encounter.

High and Upper Tier (levels 7-12)

The Black Queen's Lieutenants do not change for this level, but she has a better quality of thug for smugglers.

The Black Queen's Male Human "Lieutenants" and Bodyguards, Scoundrel 5 (2); Init +7; Def 17, DR2; Spd 10m; VP/WP 28/12; Atk +4 melee; +6 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +2; SQ Illicit barter, Lucky 1/day, Precise Attack +1, Skill Emphasis: Tumble; SZ med; FP 2; DSP: 0; Rep +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +9, Demolitions +9, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +7, Hide +8, Knowledge: streetwise +6, Move Silently +9, Pilot +6, Profession (insert appropriate) +5, Listen +8, Spot +8, Tumble +13.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Heroic Surge.

Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (illegal), blast helmet and vest, medpac.

Tactics: Remember Lucky 1/day, Precise Attack +1, Tumble bonus when fighting defensively and their

2 Force Points each.

Smugglers, various Thug 6/Scout 1 (6 at high tier, 9 at upper); Init +2; Defense 17; Spd 10m; VP/WP 8/18; Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+2, baton) or +9/+4 ranged (3d6 or DC 15 stun, blaster pistol, weapon focus feat); SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +3; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +8, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (Customs Protocol) +7, Profession (Guard) +5, Pilot +4.

Feats: Weapons (simple, blaster pistols), Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (blaster pistol), Starship Operations (space transports), Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, baton (not a stun baton, just a club).

Tactics: See the encounter.

GM Aid #2 – The Black Queen

Low and Middle Tier (Levels 1-3, 4-6)

The Black Queen (Zelice Sturm), Human Female Jedi Guardian 7; IM +8 (DEX, Improved Init.); Def 20/22 with ignited lightsaber (+4 Dex, +6 Class, Class special), DR 5; Spd 10 m; VP/WP 60/12; Attack +12/+7 melee (3d8 lightsaber); SQ DR 5 (mastercrafted armor); SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +4; SZ M; FP 5 (+3d6 Light or +4d6 Dark); DSP 3; Rep 2; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Equipment: lightsaber (bright green blade), mastercrafted (+2) combat jumpsuit, Jedi utility belt, 2 medpacs. Zelice has constructed her own lightsaber. The +1 to attack is factored in, above.

Skills (attribute mods included): Computer Use +4, Craft (Lightsaber) +7, Intimidate +5, Jump +6, Knowledge (Jedi Lore) +5, Knowledge (Criminal) +5, Pilot +6, Tumble +9.

Force Skills: Battlemind +11, Empathy +5, Enhance Ability +5, Force Stealth +16, Heal Self +5, Heal Another +1, Move Object +10. Note that Force Grip, Force Strike and Force Lightning skills may be used untrained. She gets a +4 from INT, but never uses these unless pushed very hard towards the dark side. See the Encounters.

Feats: EWP: Lightsaber, Armor (light) (purchased feat), Force Sensitive, Improved Initiative, Skill Emphasis (Force Stealth), Weapon Finesse (lightsaber), Weapons G.P. (simple, blaster pistols).

Force Feats: Alter, Burst of Speed (Knight Feat), Control, Force Flight, Sense.

Jedi Guardian Specials: Deflect (Defense +1, attack -4, extend defense and attack), Increased lightsaber damage (3d8).

Tactics: see Encounters 2 and 5. Her tactics are thoroughly explained. Do not forget her Force Points and Battlemind, or her ability to enhance her stats.

High Tier (Levels 7-9)

The Black Queen (Zelice Sturm), Human Female Jedi Guardian 10; IM +8 (DEX, Improved Init.); Def 21/25 with ignited lightsaber (+4 Dex, +7 Class, Class special, Feat), DR 5; Spd 10 m; VP/WP 84/12; Attack +15/+10 melee (4d8 lightsaber); SQ DR 5 (mastercrafted armor); SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +5; SZ M; FP 8 (+4d6 Light or +4d6 Dark); DSP 3; Rep 3; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 15.

Equipment: lightsaber (bright green blade), mastercrafted (+2) combat jumpsuit, Jedi utility belt, 2 medpacs. Zelice has constructed her own lightsaber. The +1 to attack is factored in, above.

Skills (attribute mods included): Computer Use +4, Craft (Lightsaber) +7, Intimidate +5, Jump +6,

Knowledge (Jedi Lore) +5, Knowledge (Criminal) +5, Pilot +6, Tumble +9.

Force Skills: Battlemind +14, Empathy +7, Enhance Ability +5, Force Stealth +19, Heal Self +5, Heal Another +5, Move Object +13. Note that Force Grip, Force Strike and Force Lightning skills may be used untrained. She gets a +4 from INT, but never uses these unless pushed very hard towards the dark side. See the Encounters.

Feats: EWP: Lightsaber, Armor (light) (purchased feat), Force Sensitive, Improved Initiative, Skill Emphasis (Force Stealth), Weapon Finesse (lightsaber), Weapons G.P. (simple, blaster pistols).

Force Feats: Alter, Burst of Speed (Knight Feat), Control, Force Flight, Lightsaber Defense, Lightsaber Form V, Sense.

Jedi Guardian Specials: Block, Deflect (Defense +2, attack -3 [due to Form V], extend defense and attack), Increased lightsaber damage (4d8).

Tactics: see Encounters 2 and 5. Her tactics are thoroughly explained. Do not forget her Force Points and Battlemind, or her ability to enhance her stats. Note: due to Lightsaber Form V, the Black Queen may deflect any blaster bolt that misses her by TEN (10) or less, rather than the customary 5 or less.

Upper Tier (Levels 10-12)

The Black Queen (Zelice Sturm), Human Female Jedi Guardian 13; IM +8 (DEX, Improved Init.); Def 23/28 with ignited lightsaber (+4 Dex, +9 Class, Class special, Feat), DR 5; Spd 10 m; VP/WP 108/12; Attack +18/+13/+8 melee (4d8 lightsaber); SQ DR 5 (mastercrafted armor); SV Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +6; SZ M; FP 11 (+5d6 Light or +4d6 Dark); DSP 3; Rep 3; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Equipment: lightsaber (bright green blade), mastercrafted (+2) combat jumpsuit, Jedi utility belt, 2 medpacs. Zelice has constructed her own lightsaber. The +1 to attack is factored in, above.

Skills (attribute mods included): Computer Use +4, Craft (Lightsaber) +7, Intimidate +6, Jump +6, Knowledge (Jedi Lore) +5, Knowledge (Criminal) +5, Pilot +6, Tumble +9.

Force Skills: Battlemind +17, Empathy +7, Enhance Ability +11, Force Stealth +22, Heal Self +5, Heal Another +5, Move Object +16. Note that Force Grip, Force Strike and Force Lightning are skills that may be used untrained. She gets a +4 from INT, but never uses these unless pushed very hard towards the dark side. See the Encounters.

Feats: EWP: Lightsaber, Armor (light) (purchased feat), Force Sensitive, Improved Initiative, Skill

Emphasis (Force Stealth), Weapon Finesse (lightsaber), Weapons G.P. (simple, blaster pistols).

Force Feats: Alter, Burst of Speed (Knight Feat), Control, Dissipate Energy, Force Flight, Knight Speed, Lightsaber Defense, Lightsaber Form V, Sense.

Jedi Guardian Specials: Block, Deflect (Defense +3, attack -2 [due to Form V], extend defense and attack), Increased lightsaber damage (4d8).

Tactics: see Encounters 2 and 5. Her tactics are thoroughly explained. Do not forget her Force Points and Battlemind, or her ability to enhance her stats.

Note: due to Lightsaber Form V, the Black Queen may deflect any blaster bolt that misses her by TEN (10) or less, rather than the customary 5 or less.

Motivations, Background and Conversation for Encounter 5.

Zelice Sturm never agreed with Master Lanius Qel-Bertuk, regarding his policy to allow older, more worldly-experienced students to enter the Jedi Order. Master Lanius was wise enough to encourage his students to discuss, but not to allow dissent. Part of the Jedi path is obedience.

After the mission during which her first “latecomer” Jedi Padawan partner was killed, Zelice swore that she would never team up with another such. She knew that this would not be her choice, in the end, but again, Lanius was content to let her work things out, simply making her aware that he and her other brothers and sisters would always be available for help and to act as sounding-boards, if needed. After a few months of introspection, she requested that she be allowed to go on a low-threat, solo mission to Tolea Biqua, to gather evidence about a smuggling/theft gang and to eventually stop them. She promised to call for backup if it were needed.

That was two years ago. Zelice made an error that has cost her dearly. Ambushed by some street gangers who regularly dealt with the smugglers, she tried to intimidate them and face them down into surrender. She badly misjudged how making the leaders lose face would enrage them. When the gangs swarmed at her, she became afraid and reacted with far more force than was needful. By the time they fled, she had killed one leader and five other gangers, who turned out to have been pitifully under-equipped and under-skilled. (In mechanics terms, she acquired her first DSP during this incident.)

Zelice was consumed by regret and shame. She was no longer fit to be a Jedi. Her lack of worldly experience had caused her to kill. She was fit only to be a hunted criminal— and so, she became what she had hunted. She confronted the smuggling/theft ring and demanded to become a full partner. The leader attacked her with lethal force. Again, she killed.

Although it was technically self-defense, the rage and dark joy that welled within her as she struck him down brought her yet closer to the dark side (mechanics: DSP #2).

Since then, the Black Queen has ruled the gang with an iron hand, and has not had to kill again. They have prospered gradually, under her control, but she has not let the gang grow. Her lieutenants have become impatient for truly huge profits, for expansion. Could one such as she not displace even Nirama?

At about the same time that Master Lanius’ forebodings made him consider sending people after Zelice, the events of *Padawannabes* occurred. This was of a high enough profile to bring the heroes to Zelice’s attention. She did some searches about them and began to feel the old anger coming back. How dare Lanius employ such tools? She knew that the Trials were approaching again, and waited to see if he would actually involve these “heroes” in so important a Jedi tradition. When he did, he sealed their fates. She would manipulate them, humiliate them, bring them down and show them for what they were: fallible, impure, willing to use any force to accomplish their goals, willing to kill to save themselves— much, much worse than she had become. They had to be.

(If the heroes were captured in The Way of the Force, Zelice got her 3rd DSP by slaughtering their captors, as she came to free them and was attacked. If that did not happen, her 3rd DSP may be accounted for by her callous manipulation of her own gang and her hirelings into situations where they could be harmed. She is now 2 DSP from becoming Tainted, and attracting the attention of certain powerful, shadowy figures who would doom her. She could easily acquire those 2 DSP in this scenario.)

Zelice is very conflicted. Down deep, she craves forgiveness and return to the Jedi fold. The dark side has twisted that to guilt, self-hatred and self-destructive impulses. Ultimately, those impulses became her quest for justification by one of the oldest methods known: misery loves company. If other “heroes” fall from grace, then maybe that fall is inevitable. So, maybe her fall wasn’t her fault, wasn’t due to her own pride, ignorance and weakness.

Here are some points and questions that she can make in Encounter 5, if the heroes are minded to talk things out or try to “redeem” her.

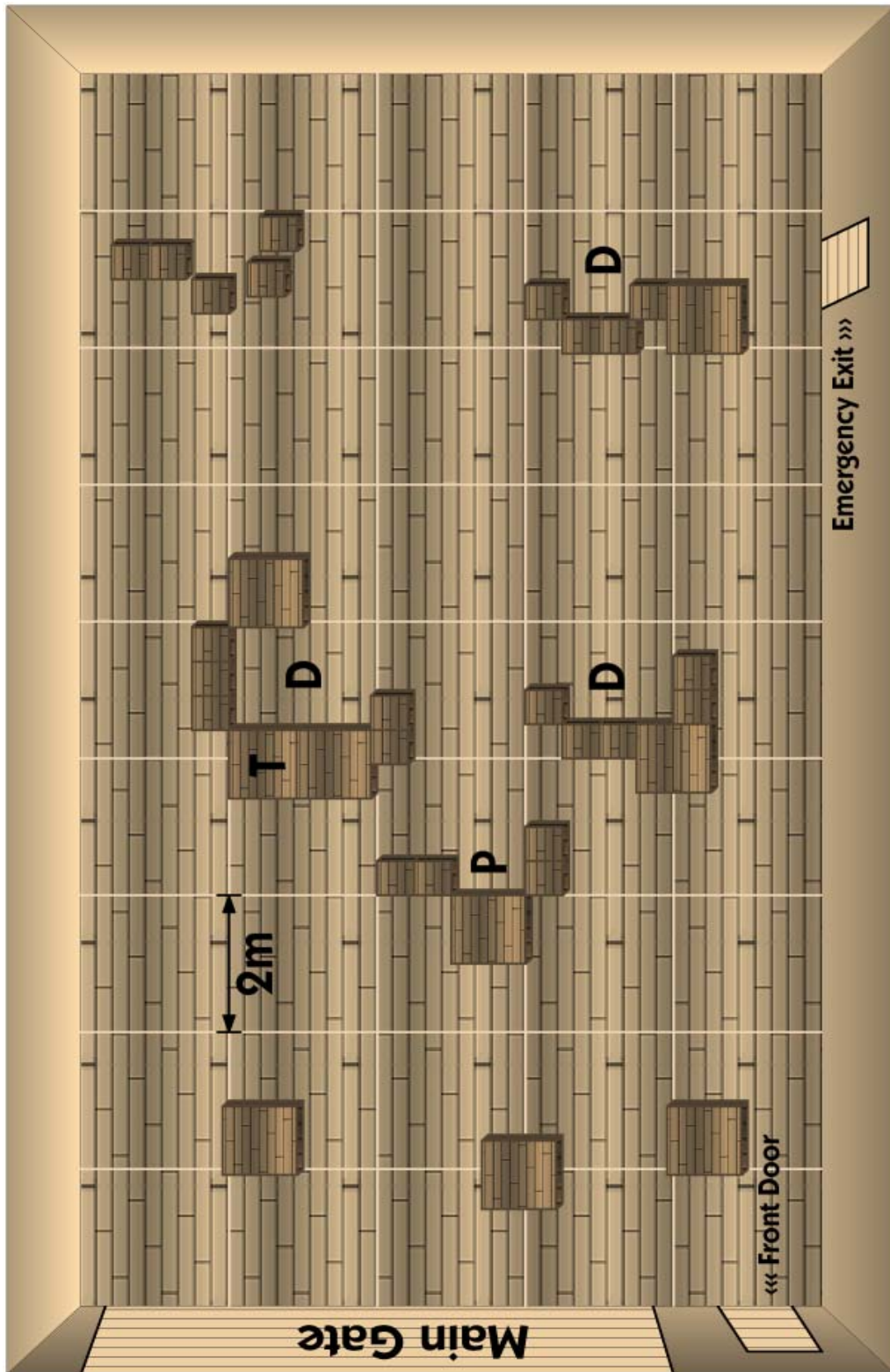
Some of the points concern the heroes and their philosophy; some concern Zelice and her guilt. Try to get a sense of the character and then use as much or as little as you are comfortable with and have time for. Points in bold italic may be used as direct dialogue, if appropriate.

- ***You’re only the hero if you win.***
- Lanius’ idea of allowing latecomers to train to become Jedi is wrong: they are inherently impure, full of passions, desires, and greed.
- ***Jedi are not heroes; they simply have a lot of tricks and a lightsaber. They can fall on their faces like anyone else. But letting them start beyond childhood will make things even worse.***
- ***Ultimately, everything resolves through violence. If your opponent, the “bad guy”, doesn’t do what you want, you pull out your blaster or your lightsaber and let him or her have it, right?***
- ***What do you hope to accomplish here? I’m not coming back.***
- ***You weren’t so hot in the warehouse, were you? What if that had really been a desperate young woman counting on you to get her to safety?*** (This presumes she was “kidnapped”)
- ***You’re heroes because you have better skills and toys than everyone else. Take those away and you’re nothing.***
- (If they saved Niph and tell her) ***So why on Genarius would you try to save someone who just tried to kill you? To succeed in your “mission” right?***
- (If they killed Berpo) ***Case in point, Berpo. You killed him, right? Congratulations, heroes. It’s all right, though; he was slime.***
- (If they really blew something in Padawannabes or *The Way of the Force*, and you have the details on the questionnaire, items marked with a * are ones that she could know about.) ***I’d actually say that you were past masters at falling from grace yourselves. What about <insert incident>?***
- (Evidence of repentance) ***You really think you can just say, “I’m sorry?”***
- (Hero has a DSP) ***I can smell something—rotten—in you, my sweet. Just like me. I think that you and I could make a good pair. Ever considered a life of crime? The pay is very, very good.***
- (Hero has atoned for a DSP) ***I know you. I can feel it. You’re on the downslide, but you’re trying to scrabble back up. It won’t work. You’re too***

weak. We all are. Save yourself the trouble.

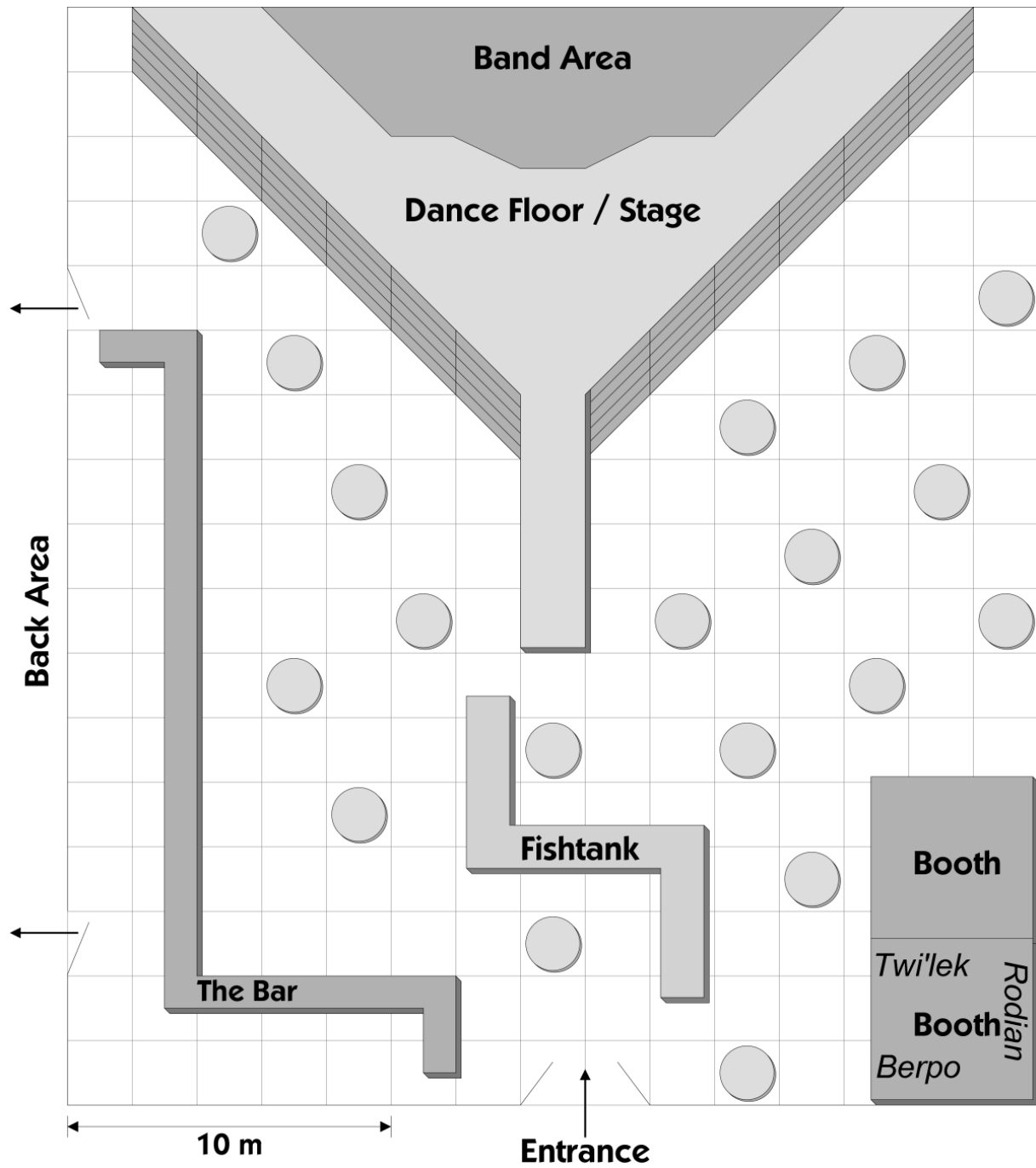
- (Hero tries to convince her she can turn aside from this path.) ***Are you crazy? I’ve killed people. I enjoyed it.*** (She is referring to DSP #2; leaving out that she was attacked with lethal force, rather unfairly to herself.)
- (Hero tries to convince her she can return to the Jedi.) ***Why bother? We’re not good enough. If we were good enough, we could win without ever having to kill. But we can’t. So, in the end, we’ll lose.***
- (Hero makes some pretty convincing argument that Zelice’s arguments are nonsense: evidence of redemption, logic that just because you have to use violence sometimes doesn’t make you a mass murderer, etc.) Zelice becomes visibly agitated and her strong facade crumbles a bit. Sense Motive or appropriate similar skill, (DC 10/13/16/19) reveals that she does not really *want* to be right, but that she has great guilt and is punishing herself.
- (You have to start redemption with small steps. No-one said it would be easy.) ***I’m not worth worrying about. You should worry more about your own future.***

GM Aid #3: Encounter 2 Warehouse Map.

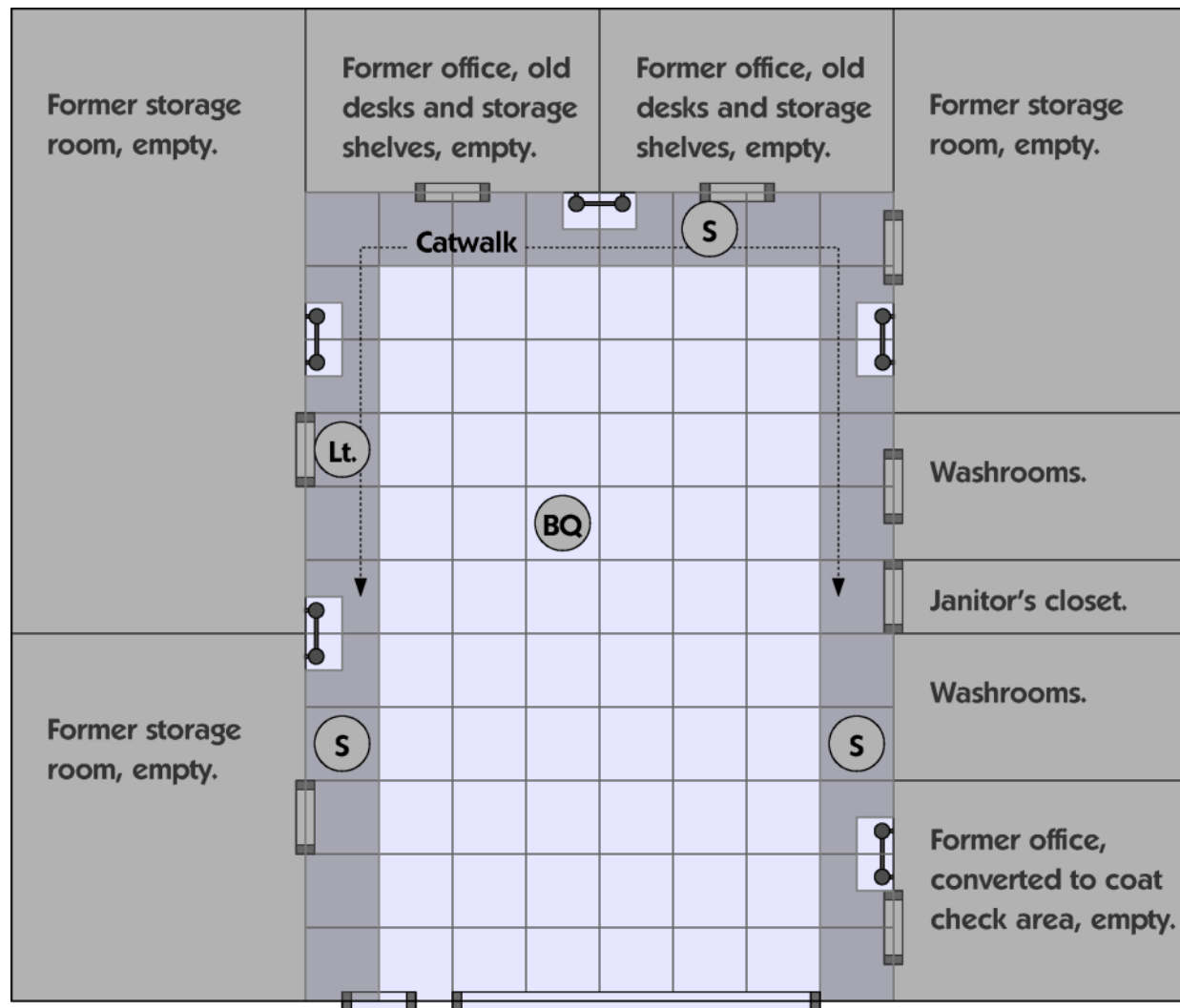


P = Pindy. D = Ambushing Defel positions. T = Trapdoor in dummy crate.

GM Aid #4 - Encounter 4, The Near Vacuum Cantina.



GM Aid#5 - Encounter 5, Shipping Offices and Storage Building.



 **Black Queen**
 **Door**
 **Ladder**
 **Lt.** **Lieutenant**
 **S** **Scoundrel**

The catwalk (medium grey) is 2 meters above the floor; keep that in mind when they are shooting to stun, as stun has a range limit of 4 meters. While they might prefer to shoot from safety, they may need to slide down the ladders and move onto the floor to be within range.

The Lieutenant is on the first floor (though his icon makes it look as though he's on the catwalk).

There are two doors at the bottom of the map – a person-sized door (on the left) and a large loading door which rolls back up into the ceiling if opened. It's been rusted shut.

The rooms are double height and all doors are closed. The catwalk provides $\frac{3}{4}$ cover to anyone directly beneath it (or from anyone directly beneath it).

Critical Event Summary

The Dark Side Beckons

1. What happened to the Black Queen/Zelice Sturm?

☐ Killed ☐ Escaped ☐ Captured ☐ Redeemed

Other (please specify) _____

2. As of the end of the scenario, Compare Zelice's DSP to her WIS score, at the end of your scenario. Is she:

☐ Dark (DSP equal to or more than her WIS),
☐ Tainted (DSP half of to 1 less than WIS),
☐ Inconclusive (no change from her listed DSP, or more but less than half WIS)
☐ Light (less DSP than when she started the scenario).

3. Were any of the heroes either turned to the dark side, or cleansed of all "Atoned" DSP? If so, list which happened, plus the player name, hero name, and RPGA # below.

GM Name, RPGA#: _____

GM Email Address: _____

Convention Name/Date _____

Convention Coordinator:

To report these results (for events during January through July 2004), you may US mail them to:

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

Or email to: LFPlots@living-force.net

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

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