

Lockdown

By August and Cynthia Hahn

Shadow has covered Cularin these last few months, with the passing of heroes, the rumors of the war growing across the galaxy, and the unexplained exodus of Jedi back to their hallowed halls on Almas. The citizens of Cularin and its sister planets are rightfully concerned but are not the kind to wait for tragedy. Learn more in our latest supplement to the **Living Force** campaign.



Without shadow, one could not appreciate light, but without light, there could be no shadow. Indeed, shadow has covered Cularin these last few months, with the passing of heroes, the rumors of the war growing across the galaxy, and the unexplained exodus of Jedi from across the system back to their hallowed halls on Almas. The citizens of Cularin and its sister planets are rightfully concerned. What could be so terrible as to cause the mighty Jedi to seek shelter?

No answers are forthcoming, but the people of Cularin are not the kind to wait for tragedy. Many have taken to the stars in search of answers on their own. Others have joined the militia and pledged their lives to defend the system of their birth. Still others have their own way of dealing with the stress of the unknown. In a world of deepening shadows, people seek whatever light they can find . . .

"Dishen . . . dishen . . . dishenfranchized. Dat's whut dey calls us, righ'?"

Everyone else at the cantina had given Old Kuurt a great deal of room, but the wiry old Human hadn't let that slow him down. He was one of those people whose mouth started moving faster than his brain once he had some suds in him. At least this time, the wizened sot had a reason for his ramble.

They were all watching the Crosstown's holo-projector and the news program it displayed. Normally, such background noise would have been treated as just that, but this time the report had opened with images of a space battle. The sight of flaming debris burning its way through the atmosphere of a distant planet had caught the attention of the cantina's normally jaded clientele. The morbid news that some of the wreckage had rained down on a populous settlement and killed hundreds kept them watching.

Even Old Kuurt's bleary eyes were glued to the projector, but that didn't keep his voice from wandering over every topic imaginable. Most people at the Crosstown were happy to let Old Kuurt talk as much as he liked. He was as much a fixture as the weapons bolted to the back wall of the cantina or the nearby remembrance plaque with a handful of names on it -- friends of the owners who had made the ultimate sacrifice.

At least this time, the old spacer's rant was about something comprehensible. The report had just finished mentioning that the majority of the ship debris had fallen into a section of the alien settlement reserved for its socially disenfranchised population. By this, of course, the attractive Twi'lek reporter had meant the city's poor, ill, and unemployed.

"Ya see. Dis ish whut I been sayin' all along. Them clones go out and fight, but iss us whut gets the hammer dropped down. De Republic, it don' give a frell 'bout any of us. As long as we pays our taxies and behave like good lil' citizuns, we get ta have freighters dropped on us. Whutta deal!"

Despite themselves, the other people at the cantina chuckled. Even Geelo, the resident Rodian cynic, burbled with mild amusement. Old Kuurt, deep into his sixth drink of the night, heard the echoing laughter and kept going, emboldened by the alcohol, the appreciation, or both.

"So I'm sayin'. We mus' be sum dum people to just sit back an' take thish from the Republic. I mean, if da Seppertists want ta go do their own thing, who're we ta stop 'em? Out on da Fringe, we didn' take nuffin from nobody and we didn' get offered nuffin needer. And dat was okay by us. Dat's where da real freedom is, lemme tell you. Out on da Fringe . . ."

Old Kuurt pushed his empty mug toward the bartender with a barely audible "fillerupp." The mug came back to him full, but this round was a synthetic ale with very little alcohol in it. The Crosstown and Old Kuurt had been playing this game for a while now. It was possible he even knew about the fake drinks, but if he did, he was either too drunk or too polite to complain. It wasn't like the cantina really charged him for any of it. Old Kuurt was a veteran of more wars than anyone on Cularin could count; whatever he ate and drank in these last few years of his life was on the house.

An hour later, Old Kuurt was in the middle of his longest rant yet about the government and how the entire Republic was designed to keep little planets small and propel the rich to even greater wealth. His audience was mostly ignoring him now; their attention was focused on the holo-vid and the latest news out of Coruscant. These days, it seemed like a ship couldn't take off from the capital world of the Republic without another one blowing up somewhere.

That was exactly the topic of the current report from the Senate Port Complex #2, where the cruiser returning from Cularin had detonated a thousand meters over its landing platform. Details were still coming in, but it appeared Senator Wren was unharmed, having been pushed into a crash pod by one of her guards moments before the explosion. Recorded footage showed the fragments of the burning hulk hurtling down over the broad platform and into the darkness of the undercity below.

As the people in the Crosstown watched, dozens of small emergency vehicles began moving around the scene. They were clearing away debris, moving sections of melted hull, and searching for survivors. From the look of the ruined ship, that was unlikely at best. A few of the cantina patrons also noticed that while there was a lot of activity, especially around the crash pod near the edge of the platform, none of the emergency speeders were heading down below the port itself.

Old Kuurt watched the wreckage with vague disinterest. "Well, I wunner which 'dishenfranchized' that's gonna fall on."

This time, no one laughed.

Living Force Game Notes

Effective immediately, the Cularin system is under a state of military emergency. The Thaerean Navy has reinforced their positions around the system in accordance with their Republic Charter in response to the recent attempts on the Senator's life. This has made life difficult on the Militia; numerous small clashes have led to losses on both sides. As a result of these ongoing encounters, all heroes of 3rd level or higher with membership in the Cularin Militia begin each adventure down by 1d6 Vitality points and 1 Wound point.

Governor Chistor and the Cularin government, in an effort to make things easier and safer for its citizens, have begun passing small amendments to system law. These have so far made it past the notice of the Thaereans, but they could be repealed without notice if a grievance is filed with the Republic, as they are quasi-legal at best.

In summary, heroes may now:

- Add a +2 circumstance modifier to Gather Information and Diplomacy checks when dealing with the OPS or the government of Cularin itself.
- Add a +3 circumstance bonus to Forgery checks made on their behalf by the GM when an OPS officer checks a forged permit of theirs. This simulates the fact that OPS officers have been asked not to be too careful.
- Purchase heavy blaster pistols and blaster rifles through known but not technically legal venues. Heroes still need to obtain permits through normal channels. Because these vendors won't sell to anyone they don't recognize, only heroes of 3rd level or higher can buy the weapons.

To obtain any of the preceding benefits during an adventure, a player must have a copy of this website page printed and available for review by the GM. This is effectively a "certed" ability, with the printout acting as the certificate in question.

*If you want to learn more about the **Living Force** campaign and how to take part in the adventure, this [introduction](#) will get you started.*